Attribution of Chinese cyber-enabled commercial intellectual property theft

Joint media release
21 December 2018

Today, the Australian Government joins other international partners in expressing serious concern about a global campaign of cyber-enabled commercial intellectual property theft by a group known as APT10, acting on behalf of the Chinese Ministry of State Security.

The sustained cyber intrusions by APT10 were significant and focussed on large scale Managed Service Providers (MSPs) – specialist companies that manage IT services and infrastructure for many medium to large businesses and organisations, both in Australia and globally.

When it is in our interests to do so, Australia publicly attributes cyber incidents, especially those with the potential to undermine global economic growth, national security and international stability.

Australia calls on all countries – including China – to uphold commitments to refrain from cyber-enabled theft of intellectual property, trade secrets and confidential business information with the intent of obtaining a competitive advantage. These commitments were agreed by G20 Leaders in 2015. Australia and China reaffirmed them bilaterally in 2017.

The worldwide cyber security compromise serves as a reminder that all organisations must remain vigilant about security and that organisations such as MSPs must be responsible and accountable to those they serve.

The Australian Cyber Security Centre (ACSC) has issued advice on concrete steps that MSPs and their clients can take to limit their exposure and protect their information.
All Australian businesses and organisations that use a MSP are strongly encouraged to visit www.cyber.gov.au (http://www.cyber.gov.au) and to implement this advice.

The Australian Government is committed to providing confidence and a level playing field for Australian businesses, exporters and research communities. We are proud of Australian innovation and ingenuity, and we want to ensure Australians retain the benefit of our effort.

The Australian Government is committed to promoting a resilient cyber security culture that benefits all Australians.

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