Tasmanian Government Submission in response to the 'Australia's 2020 Cyber Security Strategy – A call for views' Discussion Paper

November 2019

Introduction

The Tasmanian Government welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the development of Australia's 2020 Cyber Security Strategy.

The Tasmanian Government stands ready to work with the Australian Government to continue developing cyber security capability. From the Tasmanian Government's perspective, it is important the Strategy targets investment in Tasmania including:

1. An Australian Government funded Joint Cyber Security Centre (JCSC) in Tasmania similar to those provided in every other state, that is scaled the needs of the Tasmanian context;

2. Targeted investment by the Australian Government to build cyber security capability to make Tasmania and the nation hostile to malicious cyber actors;

3. Regulation that provides the flexibility to respond to rapidly changing cyber security threats;

4. Support for small to medium ICT service providers to be effective at supporting Tasmanian businesses to be cyber resilient; and

5. Providing more visible advice and channels of communication to the community.

Tasmanian context

The Tasmanian Government is proactively working to create an environment that is hostile to cyber threats. The Tasmanian Government has established a program to mitigate cyber security risks to government ICT infrastructure and services. The program supplements agency programs to address agency-specific cyber security risks aiming to improve the cyber resilience of the Tasmanian Government; and to promote cyber security awareness within government.

The Tasmanian Government is also working alongside ICT industry bodies, such as TasICT, to focus efforts on developing an environment that is hostile to cyber threats. TasICT convenes a cyber security sub-committee to progress development of cyber security capability in the ICT industry. It includes a Tasmanian Government representative on the sub-committee to assist coordination of cyber security development across sectors.

Small to medium ICT enterprises are providing Tasmanian businesses and government with services to prevent cyber threats and to respond to cyber incidents. Developing the cyber security capability of small to medium ICT firms is essential to reducing the likelihood and impact of malicious actors.

Joint Cyber Security Centre

JCSCs coordinate cyber security incidents, education and awareness and risk mitigation with local businesses, state and federal governments and education institutions. The JCSC program needs to include Tasmania, so Tasmania can make an effective contribution to building a local and consistent approach to national cyber resilience.

The JCSCs funded in five other states have helped different parties to understand their roles and improve resilience in the face of increasing cyber threats. This opportunity should be extended to all jurisdictions.

In February 2019 the Australian Cyber Security Centre (ACSC) hosted a workshop in Hobart with industry, research and government organisations. The workshop identified priorities for a local JCSC node based on Tasmanian strengths and leveraging this to contribute to the development of national defences.

A JCSC liaison role, located in Tasmania, would be the key JCSC contact and promote liaison across all sectors in Tasmania. A JCSC in Tasmania would not need to mirror the existing model that has been implemented in other jurisdictions. A new approach could be trialled in Tasmania that would draw on the learnings from existing JCSCs to establish a node that is scaled and tailored to Tasmanian needs.

Without a JCSC, Tasmania will not have the same ability as other states to build cyber capability and contribute to strengthening Australia's cyber defences.

Targeted investment

The 2020 Strategy should detail actions for investment by the Australian Government that is targeted to the specific needs of Tasmania and Tasmanian industries to provide:

- training and capability development for ICT and cyber security personnel in government and business;

- programs targeted at increasing the cyber capability of small and medium ICT service providers; and

- threat intelligence that enables organisations to prevent or reduce the likelihood and/or impact of cyber threats.

Regulation

The discussion paper notes that some sectors have mature cyber security requirements, for example telecommunications. Others sectors that are less mature may not be ready for rapid regulatory uplift. Care should to be taken to ensure that the existing regulation in some sectors is considered and cyber security uplift occurs without an unnecessary increase in regulatory burden to business.

The Tasmanian Government supports a regulatory approach that is high level, flexible and principles based. Such an approach will enable organisations to be agile in the context of rapidly changing cyber security risks, and avoid the development of detailed controls that may interfere with existing regulatory regimes or operational capacity.

Community awareness

Increased visibility of cyber security campaigns is needed to build on the existing resources. Broader and higher profile campaigns should stress what is to be gained from improving personal or organisation cyber security. For example promoting 'cyber fitness' could reduce uncertainty and empower people to realise the benefits of cyber security.

Australian Government community awareness channels have been streamlined. This work should continue to provide clearer advice to the community on what individuals can do if they are experiencing a cyber security incident.

Concluding comments

The Tasmanian Government will continue to work with the Australian Government to implement a JCSC and other targeted programs that are tailored to Tasmania's needs. This will build on existing cyber security investments and enable Tasmania to play its part in the national cyber defences.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission. The Tasmanian Government looks forward to further engagement during the development of Australia's 2020 Cyber Security Strategy.