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The only way is (Cyber)Up: bringing the UK's cyber crime laws into the 21st Century

The Criminal Law Reform Now Network (CLRNN) has launched an independent report, which calls for an urgent reform of the Computer Misuse Act (CMA) 1990, the legislation that effectively governs the UK's cyber security industry today.

Brought together by academics, practitioners, legal experts and industry professionals, the report highlights how the 30-year-old legislation is compromising the UK's cyber resilience.

NCC Group, alongside other industry specialists, acted as expert editors for the report and will be supporting its parliamentary launch in the House of Commons.

Recommendations put forward by the CLRNN include:

- A range of measures to better tailor existing offences in line with the UK's international obligations and other modern legal systems, including new corporate offences.
- New public interest defences to untie the hands of cyber threat intelligence professionals, academics and journalists, to provide better protections against cyber-attacks and misuse while ensuring consistency with overlapping offences within the Data Protection Act 2018.
- The creation of new sentencing guidelines and details of their formation and function.

In its current form, the Act threatens critical national infrastructure by preventing cyber security professionals from carrying out vital threat intelligence research, as well as restricting journalists and academics from researching cyber threats in the public interest.

This report signals the next step in the CyberUp campaign to reform the CMA, which is backed by a number of industry leaders. This includes NCC Group, as well as Orpheus Cyber, Context Information Security, Nettitude, techUK, CREST, F-Secure, and Digital Shadows.

Commenting on the report, Ollie Whitehouse, global CTO at NCC Group and spokesperson for the CyberUp campaign said: "This report shines a welcome light on the UK's outdated cyber security crime laws, which leave the cyber industry tackling one of the biggest threats facing our national security within a regime drawn up 30 years ago – when less than 0.5% of the world's population had access to the internet.

"The government needs to take urgent action by updating and upgrading the Computer Misuse Act, so our nation's cyber defenders no longer have to act with one hand tied behind their backs, paralysed by the fear of being prosecuted for doing their jobs.

“In today’s uncertain international climate, the ability of cyber criminals and geo-political threat actors to disrupt our technology systems will only continue to grow. We must seize the opportunity to develop 21st century rules to allow the industry to flourish and make the country safer and more secure.”

Download the report [here](#) and join the CyberUp campaign to Update our laws, Upgrade our defences and Upskill our protectors.

About NCC Group

NCC Group exists to make the world safer and more secure.

As global experts in cyber security and risk mitigation, NCC Group is trusted by over 15,000 clients worldwide to protect their most critical assets from the ever-changing threat landscape.

With the company’s knowledge, experience and global footprint, it is best placed to help businesses identify, assess, mitigate and respond to the evolving cyber risks they face.

To support its mission, NCC Group continually invests in research and innovation, and is passionate about developing the next generation of cyber scientists.

With over 1,800 colleagues in 12 countries, NCC Group has a significant market presence in North America, continental Europe and the UK, and a rapidly growing footprint in Asia Pacific with offices in Australia and Singapore.

Contacts



NCC Group Press Office

Press Contact

All media enquires relating to NCC Group plc

press@nccgroup.com

+44 7824 412 405

+44 7976 234 970



NCC Group - Financial Media Enquiries

Press Contact

Maitland AMO

Financial Results Media Enquiries

+44 (0)20 7379 5151



Regional Press Office - North America

Press Contact

NCCGroup@cdc.agency

+1 408 776 1400

+1 408 893 8750