Foreign Secretary highlights the work of the Centre for Cyber Assessment

Philip Hammond, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, highlights the important work of the CCA, the cyber equivalent of the Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre (JTAC), by making public its existence.

Speaking about the Cheltenham-based organisation, which includes members from across government, the Foreign Secretary said:

"*While the growth of the internet has brought huge social and economic benefits, the cyber threat to the UK is increasing. Hostile states and criminals are honing their technical skills while terrorists are using social media for recruitment and radicalisation. We have seen a number of recent high profile international attacks and it is only a matter of time before we have to deal with a major attack on UK interests.*

"*The Centre for Cyber Assessment is the latest tool in our intelligence and security armoury to protect Britain and our worldwide interests from cyber attacks, drawing together expert insight and understanding of this complex and fast-moving domain. But it cannot work alone in an environment whose security and stability depends on shared responsibility. That is why we are formally making public its existence now to allow greater partnership with top industry bodies and companies as part of our wider work to protect British national security, our citizens and businesses.*"

Set up in April 2013 the CCA's remit is to provide independent all-source cyber assessments for government departments to inform operational and policy response. However, unlike JTAC it doesn't set or publicise national threat levels because the nature of the threat is completely different. CERT-UK is responsible for national cyber security incident management.

CCA assesses intelligence and open source relating to cyber. It produces independent and authoritative reports for government customers, and in doing so takes in the full breadth of the cyber threat, from hostile states to lone-wolf hackers.

CCA is funded by the National Cyber Security Programme. It is based in GCHQ allowing it to draw on some of the most sensitive intelligence and provide full and reliable assessments. CCA does not collect intelligence itself, but analyses and integrates existing intelligence and open source information. Its staff are seconded from a broad range of government departments, law enforcement and the security and intelligence agencies.

The Head of CCA is accountable to the Director of GCHQ, who in turn reports to the Foreign Secretary. Oversight is provided by a board of directors chaired by the Cabinet Office Chief of Assessment Staff which includes representation from 12 government departments and agencies. The board monitors how effectively CCA engages with the rest of government and ensures it provides appropriate analysis and information.

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