

## Cyber Security Strategy a strong step in safeguarding legal profession and their clients' confidentiality

The Federal Government's announcement of a multifaceted, \$230 million [Cyber Security Strategy](#) is a significant initiative that will strengthen the legal profession's ability to protect their clients' confidential information, according to the Law Council of Australia.

The cyber threat faced by Australian organisations, including law firms, is growing at an alarming rate, with the incidence of cyber attacks increasing from 313 attacks in 2011, to 1131 last year.

Law Council of Australia President Stuart Clark AM said cyber attacks represented a very real risk to the delivery of legal services and the sector is a willing government partner in combating this threat.

"Widespread use of the internet and information technology has created opportunities for criminals, terrorists, and nation states to undermine the delivery of legal services," Mr Clark said.

"The threat — to both lawyers and their clients — is undeniable, unrelenting and growing at an exponential rate.

"Legal practitioners obviously deal with sensitive client information on a daily basis and face potentially devastating damage unless appropriate digital infrastructure is in place.

"We know law firms across the nation are working hard to keep their systems and their information secure. Today's announcement of a national Cyber Security Strategy will send a clear signal across the world that the Australian government is working cooperatively with Australian business to boost the nation's defences against online assaults.

"The \$15 million in grants to small businesses to have their systems tested and improved by accredited experts will be especially welcomed by Australian small law firms."

Mr Clark said that business is globalising at a rapid rate and the legal profession is very much part of this.

"A key aspect of Australia's competitive global advantage in legal services lies with our reputation for safety and security. It is paramount that clients have confidence in the security of privileged or commercially sensitive information," Mr Clark said.

The Law Council has been engaging with relevant security and business stakeholders regarding the development of a cyber security information initiative for legal practitioners in Australia and today's announcement is a real boost to these efforts.

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