

HKPF and DPO jointly organise 9th Inter-departmental Cyber Security Drill to enhance ability of government departments to counter cyber attacks

The Cyber Security and Technology Crime Bureau of the Hong Kong Police Force (HKPF) and the Government Computer Emergency Response Team Hong Kong (GovCERT.HK) under the Digital Policy Office (DPO) jointly held the 9th Inter-departmental Cyber Security Drill today (May 26) to further enhance the overall defensive capabilities of government departments against cyber attacks.

Addressing the opening ceremony of the drill, the Commissioner of Police, Mr Chow Yat-ming, said that "The Chief Executive's 2024 Policy Address" announced the introduction of a "Three-tier Prevention Framework" to strengthen counter-terrorism efforts. In this connection, a counter-terrorism segment titled "Counter-Terrorism Information Security Awareness Challenge" and the "Cyber Defence (Defense UK spelling) Tournament", were introduced for the first time this year, aiming to bolster the Government's overall defense capabilities against cyber terrorism threats and enhance personnel's ability to handle cybersecurity incidents.

He pointed out that while the Government promotes digitalisation to improve administrative efficiency, it also faces increasingly severe cybersecurity challenges. All government departments must be well-prepared and strengthen inter-departmental collaboration to further prevent cyber incidents and enhance response capabilities, ensuring that Hong Kong continues to play an important and unique role within the national security framework, contributing to social stability and safeguarding national interests.

Addressing the event, the Assistant Commissioner (Project Governance and Cybersecurity) of the DPO, Ms Candy Chan, said that with the continuous development of the digital economy, cybersecurity has become a critical cornerstone for driving efficient government operations and innovation in public services. She hoped that through this exercise, participants would gain hands-on experience in detecting threats, analysing intrusions, and responding attacks effectively, thereby accumulating valuable practical experience and mastering effective strategies to counter real-world cyber threats.

The drill this year included representatives from 71 bureaux and departments, as well as industry experts from six professional and academic institutions. More than 280 personnel participated, setting new records in both scale and attendance.

The counter-terrorism segment, "Counter-Terrorism Information Security Awareness Challenge" was co-ordinated with the support of the Information Security and Technology Application Working Group. It utilised a highly interactive real-time Q&A platform to raise information security awareness and improve decision-making capabilities in responding to cybersecurity threats among senior management and IT security officers across various bureaux and departments.

In addition, the "Cyber Defence Tournament" was conducted in the form of a "blue teams versus red teams" approach, where participants formed "blue teams" to collectively respond to simulated cyber attacks launched by "red teams" composed of cybersecurity industry experts and academics in a virtual network environment.

This drill also serves as a prelude to the second Hong Kong Cybersecurity Attack and Defence Drill which will be held in October this year. The second drill will be further expanded in scale, encompassing more government departments and public organisations. Through the Inter-departmental Cyber Security Drill, participating departments can strengthen their readiness and enhance their response capabilities, laying a solid foundation for the participation in the Hong Kong Cybersecurity Attack and Defence Drills.

The Government will continue to implement various measures to enhance its cybersecurity capabilities in order to ensure all departments can effectively counter cyber attacks and uphold overall cybersecurity.