

Britain recruiting cyber-warriors

LONDON, UK: Britain is to set up a dedicated military unit to counter cyber attacks, the defence secretary announced over the weekend as he issued a call for technology-savvy new recruits to apply for jobs.



The Ministry of Defence is looking to recruit hundreds of computer experts to help defend Britain's national security. The "cyber reservists" would work alongside regular forces in the new Joint Cyber Reserve Unit in a bid to protect key computer networks and safeguard data.

The new capability would be able to "counter-attack in cyber-space and, if necessary, to strike in cyber-space as part of our full-spectrum military capability", Prime Minister David Cameron's Conservative Party said. The centre-right party kicked off its annual conference on Sunday (29 September).

"In response to the growing cyber threat, we are developing a full-spectrum military cyber capability, including a strike capability, to enhance the UK's range of military capabilities," said a Defence Ministry spokesman

"Increasingly, our defence budget is being invested in high-end capabilities such as cyber and intelligence and surveillance assets to ensure we can keep the country safe. The cyber reserves will be an essential part of ensuring we defend our national security in cyber-space," he added.

Recruitment drive

The spokesman said the recruitment drive provided an exciting opportunity for Internet experts in industry to put their skills to good use for the nation, protecting its vital computer systems and capabilities.

As well as targeting regular personnel leaving full-time roles and existing reservists with the right skill set, the Defence department hopes to attract experts who would not otherwise consider joining up. Recruitment starts in October.

In January, parliament's defence scrutiny committee warned in a report that the British military's dependence on

information technology meant it could be "fatally compromised" by a cyber-attack.

The committee heard evidence that cyber-attacks could disrupt military communication and information systems, radars and satellites, and leave combat units such as planes or ships dysfunctional.

The MPs expressed concern that the government did not have a back-up plan in the case of a failure of technology, instead focusing on averting such attacks in the first place.

Source: AFP via I-Net Bridge

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