

Ireland's hub status brings extra demands

CYBER crime and attacks on information systems have become increasingly problematic and challenging and they can have a devastating impact on businesses, from both a financial and reputational perspective, a Killarney conference has been told.

There can also be major issues for individuals who can be the target of serious crimes such as fraud and theft, Minister of State at the Department of Justice, David Stanton, told the Cyber Security Transatlantic Policy Forum in Killarney.

“Cyber-attacks on governments and elections can be equally devastating, if not more so, having the potential to seriously jeopardise national security and the integrity of democratic institutions,” he said.

The minister noted that Ireland's promotion as a tech centre and cyber hub brings with it additional demands, both at the practical and policy levels given the myriad debates on cyber related issues in international fora.

The Europe, Middle East and African headquarters for social media giants Google, Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn are to be found in Dublin's Silicon Docks and Ireland will become the data storage location of choice for Microsoft, Facebook, Yahoo, Google and Apple whose services are used by millions of EU citizens.

“The governance of cyberspace is different to that in the offline world. This is because cyberspace is less regulated than and its control primarily resides with private, commercial entities. The private sector, in cooperation with law enforcement, plays a crucial role in the regulation of cyberspace,” Minister Stanton told delegates at The Brehon in Killarney.

The whole cyber-security agenda is a growing policy priority at both national and EU levels, he stressed.

Minister Stanton said the Government is currently in the process of developing Ireland's second National Cyber Security Strategy and it will include close cooperation with the FBI and Department of Homeland Security that have reciprocal roles in the area of cybersecurity and cyber resilience.

“Ireland is in a position to play a leading international role in cybersecurity and combatting cybercrime. Indeed, while security in the digital era has presented new problems to overcome, these challenges can equally be viewed as opportunities.

“It is essential that Government, industry, law enforcement, and other stakeholders continue to work on finding solutions to the cybersecurity threat,” he said.