

Client Update

UK Government Launches Five Year National Cyber Security Strategy

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On 1 November 2016, the UK Government issued its new National Cyber Security Strategy, outlining its goals for the next five years and committing £1.9 billion to combat cyber-threats. A link to the UK Government's Strategy can be found [here](#).

Replacing the UK Government's 2011 National Cyber Security Strategy, the new Strategy aims to ensure that the UK remains "at the vanguard of the digital revolution" while protecting national interests, the UK economy and its citizens. The Strategy also reflects a global trend towards greater focus on businesses' cybersecurity controls. In particular, the UK Government will work with regulators, insurers and investors to compel businesses to manage cyber-risk effectively.

While acknowledging that it is impossible to eliminate cybersecurity risks entirely, the UK Government stresses the pervasive need for improved cybersecurity, not only in the public and private sectors but also on a collective and individual level. It notes that tackling cybersecurity threats "is a task for us all", including businesses, and calls for "whole-society capability" to address cyber-risk.

Businesses should, therefore, be mindful of the UK Government's Strategy and how it might impact them. One of the Strategy's key themes is collaboration and businesses will have the opportunity to work alongside the UK Government to ensure that their needs are met. For example, businesses will be able to benefit from Government resources such as threat intelligence from the National Cyber Security Centre which launched on 3 October 2016. The UK Government also commits to work closely with the private sector to define how businesses should engage with Government when a cyber-incident occurs.

Notwithstanding this collaboration, the Strategy makes clear that ultimate responsibility for businesses' cybersecurity "sits with boards, owners and operators". The UK Government also stresses that it will use all available levers to ratchet up businesses' cybersecurity including the EU General Data Protection Regulation requirements which enter into force in May 2018.

Businesses should therefore ensure that they are ready to meet the UK Government's expectations and, in particular, become GDPR compliant if they are not already.

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Debevoise & Plimpton has a leading global Cybersecurity & Data Privacy practice. If you would like to discuss how the UK Government's new National Cyber Security Strategy may impact your business, please do not hesitate to contact us.