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The Dangers of Open Wi-Fi

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An American expatriate living in Mumbai, India was detained and questioned by the Maharashtra Anti-Terrorism Squad after e-mails sent to the media warning of terror attacks in Ahmedabad, which occurred five minutes later, were traced to his open Wi-Fi access point. His three computers, and those of several neighbours were seized by Police. Kenneth Haywood, the American involved, has been instructed not to leave the country.

Becoming a terrorist suspect is, fortunately, a low frequency risk of running an open Wi-Fi access point. The Indian Press is [discussing](#) the need to "uniquely identify" every user. This should raise concerns about free speech and privacy. Also, there is the intractable problem of proving a link between the actions of a computer and a particular user who might not have been physically present.

More Information

[Dangers of wireless net access](#)

[Open Wi-Fi network wraps Mumbai man in bomb blast probe](#)

[Is there wifi system in Mumbai and Newark international airports?](#)

Computer Virus in Space

[<web-link for this article>](#)

NASA has admitted that a worm, W32.Gammima.AG, has been found on laptops on the International Space Station. NASA spokesman Kelly Humphries downplayed the incident, saying, "This is not the first time we have had a worm or a virus. It's not a frequent occurrence, but this isn't the first time", but did not say whether previous incidents were in space. As most laptops on the ISS are reported to not have anti-virus protection then the number of previous incidents in space must be very small. It is assumed that the virus was either in the initial software load, or introduced on removable media. The ISS does not have a direct internet connection, though email is transferred though a "KU band data link". The infected laptops were used for non-mission tasks, command and control systems were unaffected.

Whether or not this is the first computer virus in space (the film "Independence Day" notwithstanding), it highlights the importance of Defence in Depth, even (especially!) for systems considered "isolated".

More Information

[NASA Discovers Computer Virus Aboard the International Space Station](#)

[Virus Infects Space Station Laptops \(Again\)](#)

[W32.Gammima.AG \(Symantec\)](#)

[Houston, we have a virus](#)

Major Changes in Hong Kong's Domain Name Governance

[<web-link for this article>](#)

A new governance structure was approved at an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Hong Kong Internet Registration Corporation Ltd (HKIRC) on 23rd August 2008. Under the new structure, which will take effect after the AGM, there will be eight Directors on the Board, four appointed by the Hong Kong Government, two elected by the Supply Class (HKIRC members who are service partners) and two elected by the Demand Class (all other HKIRC members, i.e., anyone with a .hk domain name that has registered as a member). The Directors will elect a Chairman from among themselves (the Government would decide if they cannot agree), and the Chairman would have a casting vote on all resolutions.

This structure clearly gives full control of the HKIRC to the Hong Kong Government. However, there will also be a Consultative and Advisory Panel - the Board would not have to follow the CAP's recommendations, but would have to explain why not if any member of the CAP asked. The CAP will consist of one Government representative and at least 13 Government-appointed advisers. It is unclear whether these Government appointees will be able to represent the full range of opinions of .hk domain name users.

This is the biggest change in the governance of .hk domains since HKIRC took over responsibility from the Joint Universities Computer Centre in March 2002, but the process was not entirely well-managed. On the 8th August, before the EGM, HKIRC held a meeting to explain the proposed changes, coinciding with the Olympic opening ceremony. The meeting was poorly attended. Also, at least one member decided not to attend because HKIRC staff wrongly informed him that the meeting would be conducted in Cantonese. Also, for the EGM itself, no proxy voting was permitted, and some members were out of Hong Kong. The date, 23rd August, was the last full day of Olympic finals, an event known in advance, and just hours after Typhoon Nuri hit Hong Kong, which HKIRC would not have been able to predict. The turnout at the meeting was 48, less than 4% of the membership, and the motion was passed by just 6 votes over the 75% required for any changes to the M&A of HKIRC.

Yui Kee Chief Consultant, Allan Dyer commented, "The old HKIRC Board appeared remote, unresponsive and opaque, can this new structure, which drastically reduces the user representation, improve that?"

The changes made by the EGM also pave the way for .hk adopting the Registry/Registrar model, a move supported by some who have strongly questioned the advisability of the governance changes and the conduct of the EGM, such as Shareholder activist David Webb among others. Dyer was not so sure, "I would like to see a fuller discussion of the proposals and issues. The Registry/Registrar model is promoted as increasing competition and therefore improving service to users. However, .hk is a relatively small domain, the revenue would not be sufficient to support many competitors and the result could be registrars pestering users, desperately trying to increase sales volume and cross-sell other services. This would be a nuisance to users and could lead to a repeat of the [mis-use of .hk domains](#) seen earlier this year. .hk should be run for the benefit of the whole of Hong Kong".

More Information

[New Governance Structure Approved at HKIRC's Extraordinary General Meeting](#)
[Stop the .HK Takeover](#)
[Abuse of .hk Domain Names Falls](#)
[Lies, Damn Lies and the Mean Cyber-Streets of Hong Kong](#)



Suite C & D, 8/F, Yally Industrial Building
6 Yip Fat Street, Wong Chuk Hang, Hong Kong
Tel: 2870 8550 Fax: 2870 8563
E-mail: info@yuikee.com.hk
<http://www.yuikee.com.hk/>

