

'Hacker' breaches police's security

Message left on news page of website

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POLICE officers in Durham have been left red-faced after a hacker broke through their online defences and left offensive messages.

The web attack happened at around 6.30am yesterday, when a web crook updated the "Latest News" section of the force's site with his own messages.

Now, officers are probing how the hacker, who claims to be motivated by the situation in Pakistan, managed to crack the supposedly high-level security surrounding the site.

The two malicious notes, which were dated November 4 and November 6, appeared on the home page and news page of Durham police's website.

Visitors logging onto the site found the posts in place of the normal news about the force's work across the county.

But it is believed both messages were posted at around the same time yesterday.

In the messages, the hacker, who calls himself "Ali Mani from Pakistan", claimed he had easily breached the force website and that police security was "zero %".

He also threatened he would return with repeated attacks on the site and server, which he claimed would cause chaos for police.

In his messages the hacker suggested the attacks came as "revenge" for supposed British military action in Pakistan.

The country has recently been rocked by a series of bomb attacks as a response to its clampdown on insurgents. The

hacker wrote on November 6: "U have been owned by L33T hacker Ali Mani.

"Ur security sucks UK police. This is my revenge against u, u are the one who are blasting bomb in Pakistan.

"Now stop this all battle else I will **** ur site and server. Ur security is zero %."

A second message, dated two days earlier, read: "Pakistani hacker ownz u."

Police IT specialists are still investigating how much of the website was exposed to the hacker, but at this stage it appears he was only able to access the system for posting news.

Durham constabulary said they had noticed the attack this morning and immediately took down the comments.

They are now investigating how the hacker managed to bypass the police's high-level website security to access the news section of the site.

It is possible that the breach occurred at the website host, rather than through police systems.

A police spokesman said: "We are aware of the problem with the force website and the offending material has been removed.

"An investigation into how this occurred is underway."

He stressed that the website is a standalone system, with no connection to police logs, staff emails, the national police computer, or any other day-to-day law enforcing systems.

It is not believed that any police files, email accounts or other data held by the force have been placed at risk by the website attack.

"It is an inconvenience, but it has not caused us any operational problems," the spokesperson added.

"The website is completely standalone with no connection to our other operational systems."

The website was taken offline at around 8.45am while IT staff worked to remove the posts and resolve the issue – and stayed closed most of yesterday to prevent any repeat attacks.



INVESTIGATION
The malicious message left by the hacker on Durham police's website, left.

DRESSES MAKING SOME FOOTBALL CLUBS CRAZY



DRESSED UP Models Kate Hindhaugh and Sarah Bell in the football strip outfits with designer Angy Morton.

FASHION aficionado Angy Morton is taking on top Premiership clubs when she reveals her football-inspired clothes collection at a show in Newcastle this week.

The designer has been told she cannot use the logos from either Chelsea or Liverpool in her 'Stolen Dreams' range of evening wear

which uses football strips in the designs – even though it is not for sale.

But she has had more luck with North East teams Newcastle United and Sunderland and will be taking them down the catwalk at Newcastle's Eldon Gardens on Thursday. She said: "Stolen Dreams

is a unique fusion of fashion and football which has been inspired by the ups and downs of top-flight football.

"This is an artistic collection. All of my outfits are unique, one-off designs created to raise my profile as a new designer and awareness of my rather unusual creativity."