

Policing cyber-crime

Exploring the requirements of
effective specialist cyber-crime units

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INTRODUCTION



- Specialist cyber-crime units are increasingly becoming a norm in state/local police organisations.
- However, with few exceptions, empirical research on such units is very rare.
- Much of the scholarship is 'theoretical or impressionistic', or victim-focused.
- Different understandings of 'cyber-crime' also exist, both in the extant literature and within policing, which makes meaningful comparisons somewhat difficult.
- There is a clear need for more research with police, within and between police organisations, including overseas.

OUR RESEARCH: Aims and objectives



- This paper is part of a larger project examining a range of research questions such as:
 - How specialist cyber-crime units in state/local police organisations form and function;
 - Comparative models/structures; and
 - Effectiveness and best-practice.
- Our key research questions:
 - What are the primary challenges facing specialist cyber-crime squads?
 - According to operational and managerial staff, what are the key changes needed to strengthen police responses to the escalating threat of cyber-crime?

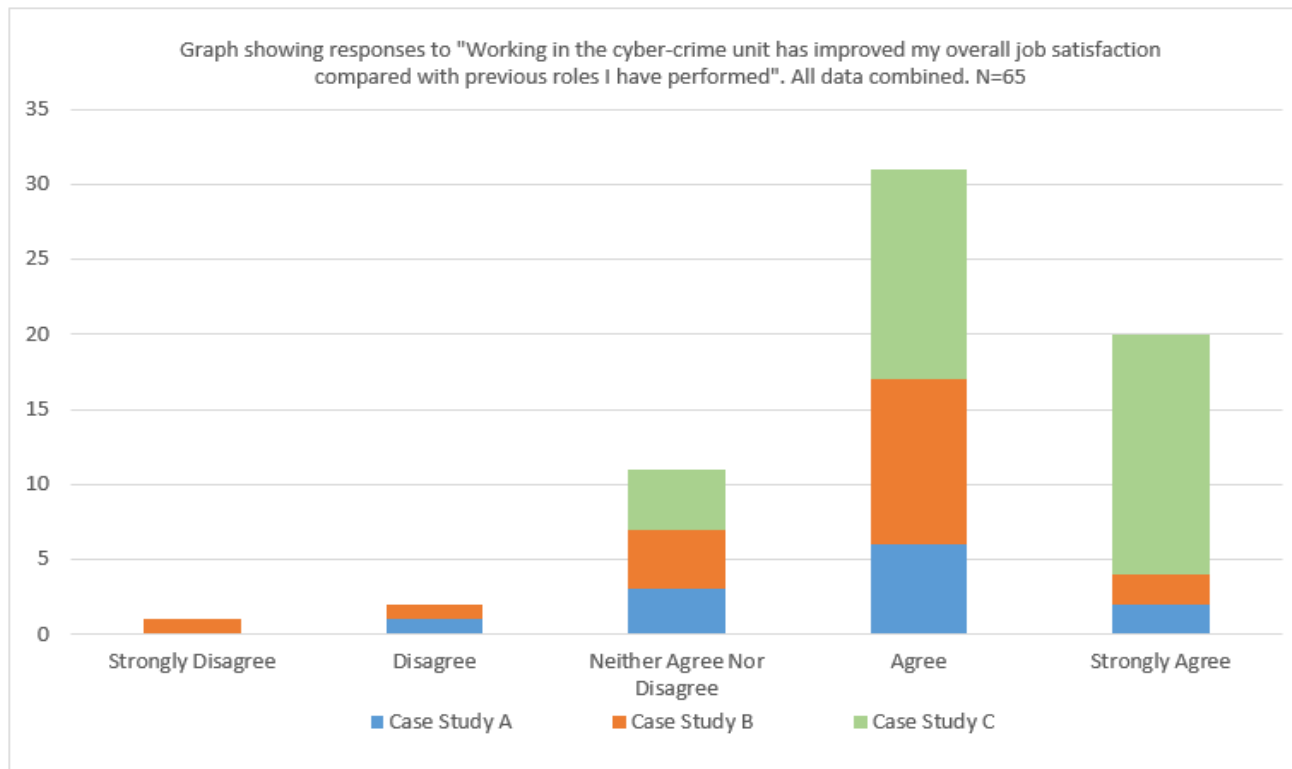
OUR RESEARCH: Data and methods



- Three specialist state-based cybercrime units in Australia.
- Mixed-methods approach, including survey data (n=66) and interviews (n=43).

| | Survey Data | | Interview Data | |
|--------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------------|---------------|
| | Sworn Officer Responses | Unsworn Staff Responses | Sworn Officers | Unsworn Staff |
| Case Study A | 17 | 2 | 10 | 2 |
| Case Study B | 5 | 8 | 5 | 4 |
| Case Study C | 25 | 9 | 20 | 2 |
| Totals | N=66 | | N=43 | |

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS: Job Satisfaction



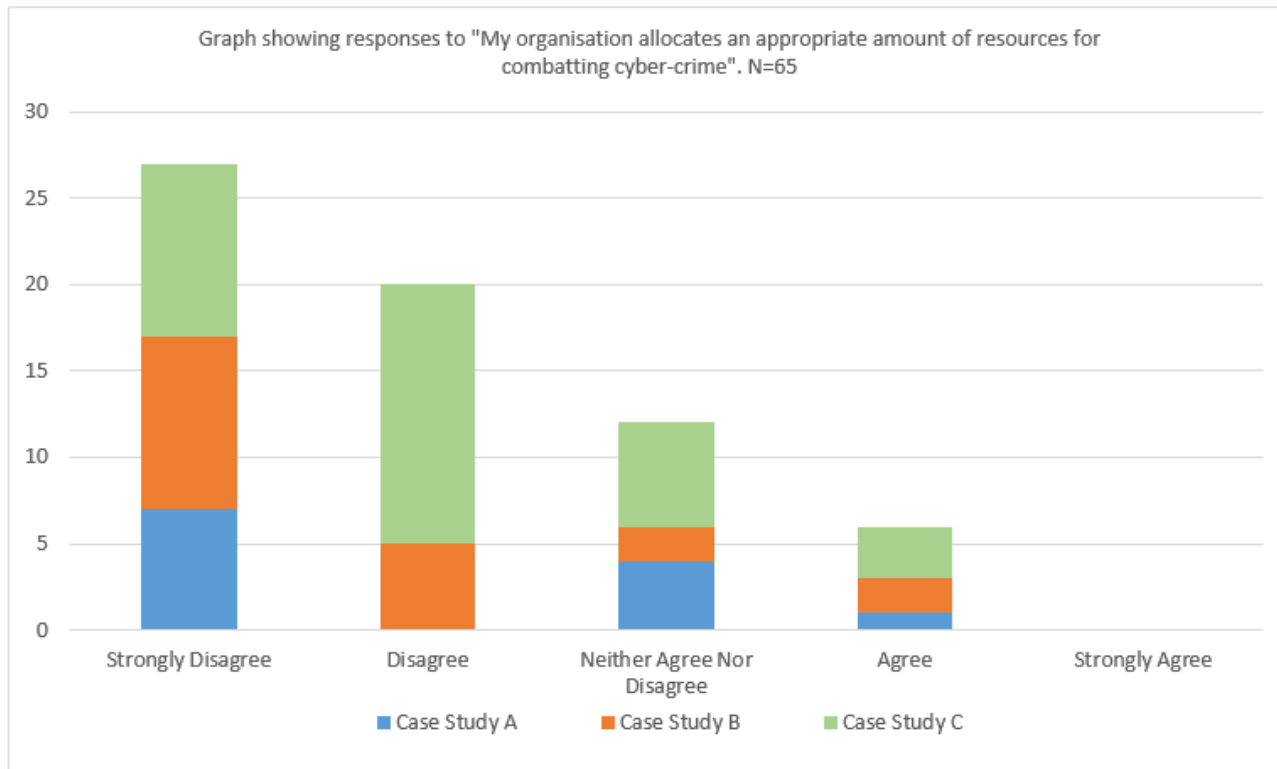
PRELIMINARY FINDINGS: Volume of work



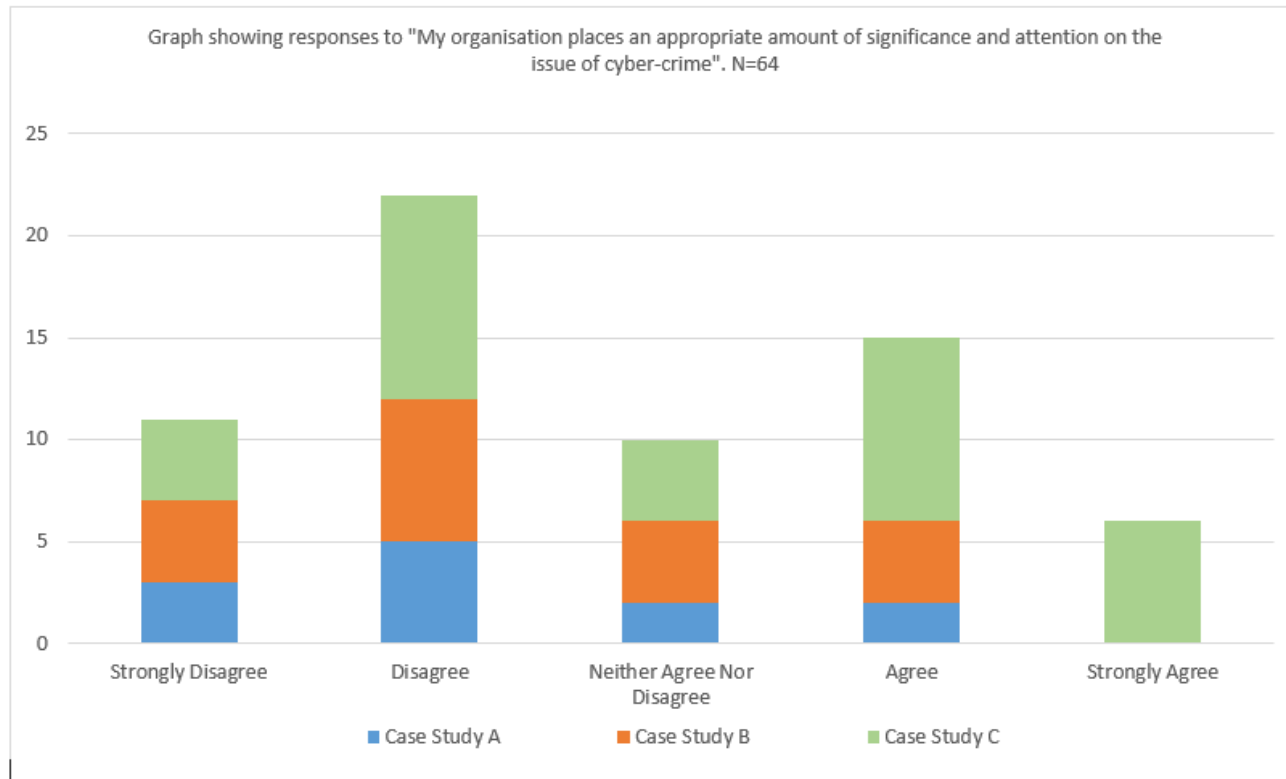
So we are looking at every single report. I think last month we got 800 ACORN reports just for one month. Between six people it is kind of ridiculous... We just cannot keep up with the volume of reports.

We used to do 900-1000 jobs a year, whereas now it's more like 3500-4000 jobs a year. Each one of those is so much longer. If someone comes in with a 64GB iPhone it's going to take a lot longer to process than what used to be a little Telstra Next-G device. ... But the problem is when you're talking about jobs when we see at least 80 exhibits from someone's house because everyone's got laptops and PCs [personal computers] and phones now.

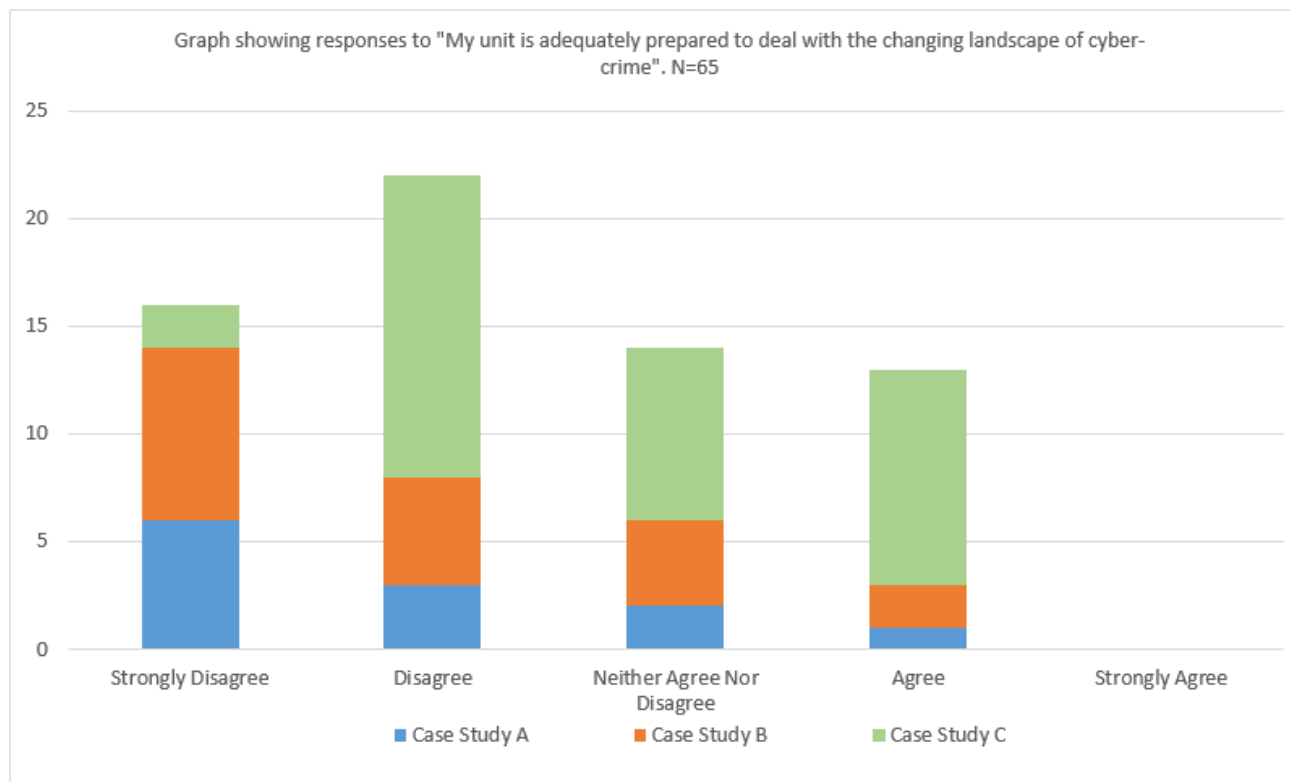
PRELIMINARY FINDINGS: Resourcing



PRELIMINARY FINDINGS: Cyber-crime perceived as under-prioritised



PRELIMINARY FINDINGS: Knowledge, skills, training



PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS



- Resources to address the growing challenges.
- Knowledge, skills, training.
- Opportunities and constraints concerning civilian staff.
- Tend to focus more on *cyber-enabled* offences (harassment, fraud, scams, etc.) rather than *cyber-dependent* crimes (computer intrusions, hacking, etc.).
- Turnover of staff (rotation and/or career progression).
- Managing- (and educating-) vertically and horizontally.
- Pull of the private sector (and even other public sector agencies).

Questions?

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