Preface and Acknowledgements

The Internet is one of the world's great inventions expanding the way many people live their lives. However, it is also a 'double-edged sword.' While people are enjoying the advantages brought by computers and the Internet, criminals also see new opportunities. Not only are conventional crimes, such as disseminating child-pornography, illegal online-gambling and fraud, facilitated by computers and the Internet, the Internet itself has also attracted a new breed of users including hackers, crackers and cyber-terrorists. Both individual users and nation states are vulnerable to cyber criminals.

Cybercrime is a worldwide problem of rapidly increasing magnitude. Anonymous and transnational in nature, cybercrime is seen by criminals as a 'low cost, high benefit' type of crime. This is because cybercrime investigation relies highly on timely cooperation between States, but this is difficult to achieve. Juridical and political concerns, and the limited capabilities of crime investigators, all obstruct timely cross-nation cooperation on cybercrime investigation.

In order to facilitate cooperation among States against cybercrime, international organizations such as the United Nations and the Council of Europe have drafted a number of conventions and agreements. The Convention on Cybercrime drafted by the Council of Europe has been deemed the first Convention on cybercrime and the United Nations has encouraged its member States to adopt its provisions.

The People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Republic of China (Taiwan) play important roles in cyberspace. There are around 2.25 billion internet users in the world and approximately one fourth of them (about 534 million) are in PRC and Taiwan. And, of the countries in the Asia Pacific region, Taiwan and China are suffering most in terms of cybercrime. Most hacking into Taiwanese computer systems is initiated from within China and most hacking into Chinese systems originates within Taiwan.

However, the special political situation across the Taiwan Strait has made this problem even more complicated. It is important to examine how the international conventions and agreements work in dealing with cybercrime in the Greater China region, especially across the Taiwan Strait, and in what

situations Taiwan and China will cooperate with each other against cybercrime. Also, how can third parties, such as international companies and Non-Government Organizations, assist in the investigation and prevention of cybercrime across the Taiwan Strait?

Possibly because of the sensitivity and the complexity of the topic, there is very little published research (in either Chinese or English) on cybercrime across the Taiwan Strait. This book aims to fill this gap in the literature. It discusses the extent and nature of cybercrime in and between Taiwan and China, focusing especially on the prevalence of botnets (collections of computers that have been compromised and used for malicious purposes). The book uses routine activity theory to analyse Chinese and Taiwanese legal responses to cybercrime, reviews mutual assistance between the two countries and discusses third party cooperation. To prevent the spread of cybercrime, the book argues the case for a 'wiki' approach to cybercrime and a feasible pre-warning system. Learning from lessons in infectious disease prevention and from aviation safety reporting, *Cybercrime in the Greater China Region* proposes a feasible information security incident reporting and response system.

The idea of writing this book arose in 2005 when I was a researcher and project manager at the Science and Technology Law Center (now Science and Technology Law Institute), the Institute for Information Industry in Taipei. My work at the Institute sparked my interest in the under-researched field of cybercrime in the Greater China region, which eventually led to my PhD research topic at the Australian Research Council Center of Excellence of Policing and Security, Regulatory Institutions Network, the Australian National University. This book is based on research undertaken in 2008–2009 in PRC, Taiwan and Hong Kong and some of the findings have been published previously in *Journal of Criminology* (Chinese language), *Strategic Insights*, *Australian Journal of Forensic Sciences* and *Issues and Studies* (see Chang, 2009b, 2011, 2012a, 2012b).

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Someone said to me that they didn't believe that this book was written by me as English is not my first language. Indeed, a lot of effort has gone into correcting my writing. I would like to give special thanks to two important people, Nicholas Coppel and Ronald Foster for their professional proof-reading and their patience. They not only helped correct the grammar, they also provided helpful suggestions.

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