

China defends VPN management measures

Chinese authorities Tuesday defended their management measures on virtual private networks (VPN), saying the measures will have no negative impact on law abiding businesses and individuals.

All businesses operating within China need to properly register with the authorities and every business with a website needs to obtain an Internet Content Provider license and display it at the bottom on their website.

“Our measures aim to better regulate the behavior of China’s VPN market and they will only target unregistered businesses and individuals providing VPN services for cross-border use,” Zhang Feng, chief engineer of the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology (MIIT), said at a press conference.

Authorities are aware that some foreign trade companies and transnational companies need to use a VPN for office work and they are allowed to have access to VPN service via registered providers, said Zhang.

The chief engineer noted that authorities have set different standards for various services including big data and cloud computing.

“Most of the registered VPN services are available in the cloud and are backed up by data centers. If the data centers [of unregistered providers] lack sufficient protection, there will be huge risks for enterprises,” he said.

While countries differ in their management of VPN services, it is a common practice for authorities to develop an registration system for these services, said Wen Ku, another official with the MIIT, adding there are similar systems for VPN providers based in the United States, European and other Asian countries.

“Chinese law prohibits the spread of harmful, violent and terrorist information,” said Wen.