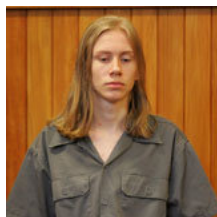


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By: George Craciun, Security News Editor



AKILL sentenced by  
NZ court of law  
NZ Herald

## **"AKILL" Hacker Gets Off with a Fine**

### *New Zealand police want to recruit him*

A hacker known online as AKILL - his real name is Owen Thor Walker - has recently been brought to justice in New Zealand. The 18 year old admitted to six charges of e-crime as well as to being the mastermind behind a botnet that led to damages of over \$20 million and caused a Pennsylvania University server to crash. The hacker was fined a total of NZ\$15,526 (\$9,526 for the server and \$5,000 for other damages) and ordered to surrender all PC related assets to the authorities. The NZ police stated that they would like to use the hacker's skills in the future. On the 23rd of February 2006, AKILL hacked into the University of Pennsylvania engineering school's system, causing part of it to crash. Also, the botnet that he directed is responsible for infecting a staggering 1.3 million computers and spreading all sorts of malware, as well as obtaining the users' private information (usernames, passwords, credit card info). These security credentials were later on used by e-criminals to line their pockets. According to the police the total amount of money that the e-criminals got their hands on amounts to millions of dollars; AKILL's share of the honey pot was of about NZ\$40,000. The crackdown was a joint effort of the FBI, US Secret Service and Dutch and NZ law enforcement agencies. So far a total of 8 people have been arrested, brought before a court of law and sentenced. An additional 13 warrants have been issued and will be carried out in the US and abroad. During the court hearing, judge Judith Potter was informed by Ross Douch, attorney for the prosecution, and Tony Balme, attorney for the defense, that the NZ police have shown an interest in Walker and in the future would like to use his skills for law enforcement purposes. Peter Devoy, detective inspector with the NZ police said that the "option is being kept open" but "there is no offer on the table."