



EMPOWERING
COMMUNITIES
CON23



ANNUAL REPORT

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2023 | 2024

Dear Reader,

Since June 2023, we have witnessed FIRST grow both in membership and programs. As of May 2024, membership consists of 735 teams and 156 Liaisons across 110 countries – 10 new countries have been added since last year!

Now in its second year, FIRST's Community and Capacity Building (CCB) Program made great strides not only with the delivery of new activities and events, but also through securing new funding sources and the hiring of two full-time Africa Regional Liaisons. A strong foundation has been laid for the CCB Program's continued growth and sustainability.

In addition to the various recurring FIRST events, we also saw the successful launch of new events. For example, a regional symposium for the Pacific and the first VulnCon both explored important security topics and facilitated collaboration among groups of people focused on common goals.

FIRST remains dedicated to reach diverse audiences and bring together incident response and security teams from every country. At the 2023 Annual Conference, the Board of Directors presented FIRST's updated statement on diversity and inclusion which highlights the commitment to create a safe and inclusive environment and seeks to encourage diverse and balanced representation across FIRST's programs and activities. For the second year, the members' commitment to diversity and inclusion was reflected by the election of a gender balanced Board of Directors who represent diverse geographical regions and ways of thinking.

Diversity of thought and group composition is essential to the success of FIRST's activities, including Special Interest Groups, Standards Development, and engagement with policy bodies. I hope you will explore this report further to learn of this year's growth and success in each of these areas.

However, the strides made in each program area were not met without challenges. As the organization still recovers financially from the COVID-19 pandemic and the expenses associated with growth, the Board of Directors worked this year to develop and implement plans to make FIRST a more financially sound organization. I look forward to seeing the positive results of those efforts in the coming years.


I encourage you to learn more about this year's activities and identify areas where you can contribute your expertise. After all, it takes each of us to create a safer online environment for everyone.

It has truly been an amazing year across FIRST, and I look forward to meeting and collaborating with you at FIRSTCON 2024 in Fukuoka, Japan as we mark the start of another year for FIRST!

Tracy A. Bills

Chair, Forum of Incident Response and Security Teams.





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Vision

FIRST aspires to bring together incident response and security teams from every country across the world to ensure a safe internet for all.

An effective response is a global task, mirroring the global nature of the internet. Based on a peer- to-peer network governance model, Computer Security Incident Response Teams (CSIRTs), Product Security Incident Response Teams (PSIRTs), and independent security researchers work together to limit the damage of security incidents. This response requires a high level of trust. FIRST fosters trust-building among members through a variety of activities. Incidents are not restricted to one cultural or political corner of the internet, nor do they respect borders or boundaries. FIRST thus promotes inclusiveness, inviting membership from all geographic and cultural regions.

FIRST Mission

1 **Global Coordination - You can always find the team and information you need.**

FIRST provides platforms, means, and tools for incident responders to always find the right partner and to collaborate efficiently. This implies that FIRST's reach is global. We aspire to have members from every country and culture.

2 **Global Language - Incident responders around the world speak the same language and understand each other's intents and methods.**

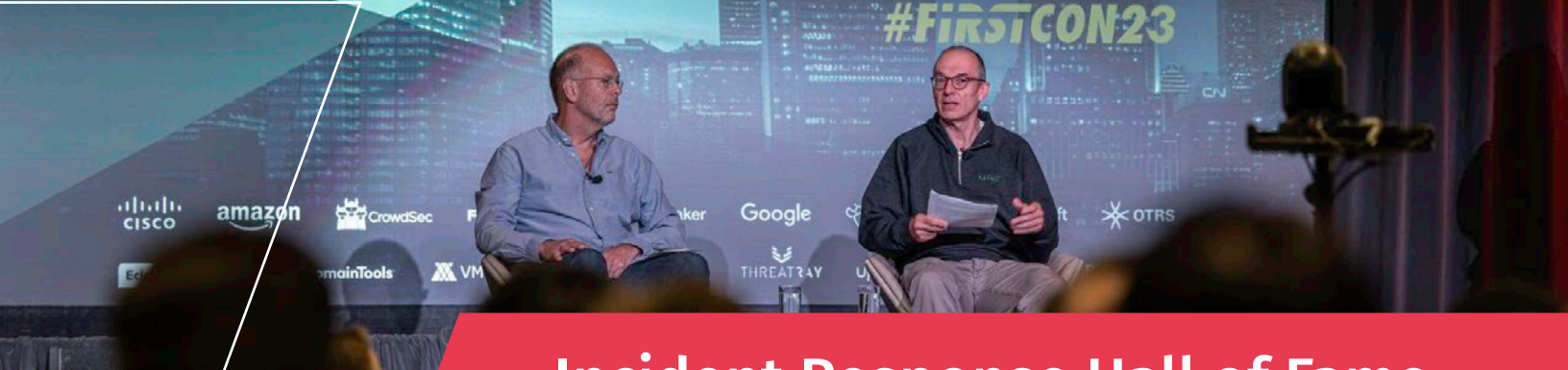
During an incident, it is important that people have a common understanding and enough maturity to react in a fast and efficient manner. FIRST supports teams through training opportunities to grow and mature. FIRST also supports initiatives to develop common means of data transfer to enable machine-to-machine communication.

3 **Policy and Governance - Make sure others understand what we do and enable us rather than limit us.**

FIRST members do not work in isolation but are part of a larger system. FIRST engages with relevant stakeholders in technical and non-technical communities to ensure teams can work in an environment conducive to their goals.

Security teams need to collaborate - especially during a crisis. FIRST, as a community, works tirelessly to build an inclusive and high-trust environment between our members before such a crisis.

Our vision statement is a challenging target - but we have a plan of action to bring this to reality.



Incident Response Hall of Fame

Don Stikvoort (left: 2020 inductee) and Serge Droz (Right: Board of Directors) sharing their memories of Andrew

The Incident Response Hall of Fame is a recognition program to virtually celebrate contributions specifically to the Incident Response Community. Since its inauguration in 2019 at the 31st Annual Conference in Edinburgh, 6 persons have been inducted into the Hall of Fame.

For 2023, Andrew Cormack was inducted into the Incident Response Hall of Fame posthumously, and a session to remember him took place at the 35th Annual Conference in Montreal.

Andrew Cormack started the UK's academic CERT as well as managed the EuroCERT project. During his career at JISC he transitioned to the organizations Chief Regulatory Advisor and pursued Law studies in which he graduated as a Master of Law.

Andrew's contributions to the Incident Response community are many and broad: He was one of the initial TRANSITS trainers and thus shaped the careers of hundreds of incident responders. Andrew's ability to listen beyond the mere words that people speak, combined with his vast knowledge, allowed him over and over again to build bridges to other fields. One particular area of focus was the governance and legal frameworks related to Incident Response, where he helped policy makers recognize the importance of CSIRTs. Andrew was a member of ENISA's Permanent Stakeholder Group and sat on the boards of ORCID and the Internet Watch Foundation. He was a regular attendee and presenter at security conferences, and the Program Chair of the 2019 FIRST annual conference in his native Edinburgh.

The Hall of Fame Selection Committee for 2024:

Jeff Carpenter*, Chair | Désirée Sacher-Boldewin, Board Liaison

Baiba Kaskina, Shin Adachi, Ken van Wyk, Sherif Hashem, Klaus-Peter Kossakowski*, Don Stikvoort*, Ian Cook* and Robert McMillan.

For more information about the Hall of Fame, please visit the [HoF webpage \(https://www.first.org/hof/\)](https://www.first.org/hof/).

(* by the name indicates previous inductee to Hall of Fame)

Training & Education

One of FIRST's important missions is to help the incident response community to build up and enhance their cyber security capabilities. As part of this activity, FIRST actively provides training both at FIRST events as well as external events based on requests. Most of these training sessions are held in the margins of regional events, which allows us to reach out to a wide range of trainees. Since June 2023 up until May 2024, FIRST has delivered training at the following occasions including:

- ITU CyberDrill for Americas-Dominican Republic 2023 (Dominican Republic)
- Cyber Security Summer BootCamp 2023 (Spain) *For Latin American region
- FIRST Regional Symposium for the Pacific (Vanuatu)
- ITU Subregional CyberDrill for South America (Chile)
- Pacific Cyber Capacity Building and Coordination Conference (P4C) (Fiji)
- FIRST Regional Symposium Latin America & Caribbean (Brazil)
- ITU Interregional CyberDrill for Arab Region and CIS (Abu Dhabi)
- ITU Interregional CyberDrill for Europe and Asia-Pacific (Cyprus)
- Middle Eastern Cyber Diplomacy Initiative (Oman, Switzerland)
- Balkan Cybersecurity Days 2024 (Albania)
- West Africa Symposium on Sector Collaboration and Information Sharing (Ghana)
- International Information Technology University (Kazakhstan)

Training topics provided include:

- Cyber Threat Intelligence Pipelines and Exercise
- KPI for CSIRTs
- OSINT
- DFIR Investigation
- Ransomware
- Cyber Risk

These training efforts are supported by trainers in the FIRST community. FIRST appreciates and acknowledges the dedication by trainers to help develop the incident response capability in different regions.

We are always looking for trainers from the FIRST community. If you are interested in becoming a FIRST trainer and take part in this activity, please contact the Secretariat.

In addition, if you are interested in hosting a training event or organizing sessions run by a FIRST trainer in your event, please visit the [Training page \(https://www.first.org/education/trainings\)](https://www.first.org/education/trainings) on our website and reach out to training@first.org.



Community & Capacity Building

Since the establishment of FIRST, the community has engaged in a wide range of formal and informal capacity building activities. Building on this foundation, FIRST's Community and Capacity Building (CCB) Program was launched in 2022 to build long term, comprehensive initiatives for more meaningful impact on-the-ground.

FIRST CCB activities include a wide range of efforts including FIRST education and training; the Suguru Yamaguchi Fellowship Program; the sharing and development of standards and good practices; formal and informal mentorship activities; responsive programming; and through the provision of platforms, forums, networking, and events.

In the last year, the CCB program has focused on establishing its role within the global cyber capacity building community, building on key strategic relationships to deliver more impactful initiatives, and seeking alternative funding streams to supplement FIRST investment in CCB and amplify our impact. A selection of these activities has included:

- Onboarding of Eric Akumiah and Lawrence Muchilwa as our Africa Regional Liaisons as part of a comprehensive, three-year capacity building initiative supported by the UK Foreign, Commonwealth, & Development Office.
- Hosting of the FIRST Regional Symposium for the Pacific in Port Vila, Vanuatu in September 2023. The event was delivered in partnership with the Pacific Cyber Security Operational Network (PaCSO) and CERT Vanuatu, with event and fellowship funding thanks to the Government of Vanuatu, Office of the Government Chief Information Officer, CERT VU, the PaCSO Secretariat – a function of the Australian Cyber Security Centre (ACSC), U.S. State Department, and the APNIC Foundation.
- Tailored partnerships to deliver programming with the Organization of American States (OAS), Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance (DCAF), HD Centre, the Her Cyber Tracks program, and others.
- Planning for the launch of a FIRST CCB sponsorship mechanism and collaboration with the Non-Profit Cyber network and Common Good Cyber initiative to seek sustainable funding models to support those who secure the Internet for everyone.
- Contribution to the global capacity building community through the Global Forum on Cyber Expertise, the Geneva Dialogue, Internet Governance Forum (IGF) Best Practices Forums, Asia-Pacific Regional IGF (APrIGF), Global Conference on Cyber Capacity Building (GC3B), and more.



FIRST Events

The event's year kicked off with the global annual conference in Montreal, Canada. Despite heavy air pollution due to forest fires in the region, it was another successful FIRST event, packed with presentations, training sessions, SIG meetings and other well-known activities. The program committee, led by Ted Norminton, did an excellent job in putting together a varied and strong agenda, supported by all the speakers who stepped up on stage.

We saw an increase in both participation and interest in sponsoring our events from last year. In addition, we saw the first VulnCon being held in Raleigh (NC), US. This was a joint event with the CVE Program and organized by Pete Allor.

The team behind the CTI conference held no less than two events this reporting period, one in November and one in April. A special thanks goes to Thomas Shreck for being substantial in making this happen.

Below is a summary of the FIRST events held in 2023/24:

Annual conference in Montreal, Canada (hybrid)

- www.first.org/conference/2023/
- 795 in-person attendees
- 74 countries

Topic specific conferences

CTI conference 2023 in Berlin, Germany (hybrid)

- www.first.org/conference/berlin2023
- 310 in-person attendees
- 39 countries

CTI conference 2024 in Berlin, Germany (hybrid)

- www.first.org/conference/firstcti24/
- 324 in-person attendees
- 46 countries



FIRST Regional Symposium for the Pacific held in Port Vila, Vanuatu in September 2023

VulnCon 2024 in Raleigh(NC), US (hybrid)

- www.first.org/conference/vulncon2024/
- 358 in-person attendees
- 19 countries

Regional symposia (3)

FIRST regional symposium for the Pacific in Port Vila, Vanuatu

- www.first.org/events/symposium/pacific2023/
- 97 in-person attendees
- 21 countries

FIRST regional symposium for Latin America and the Caribbean in Fortaleza, Brazil (hybrid)

- www.first.org/events/symposium/fortaleza2023/
- 83 in-person attendees
- 16 countries

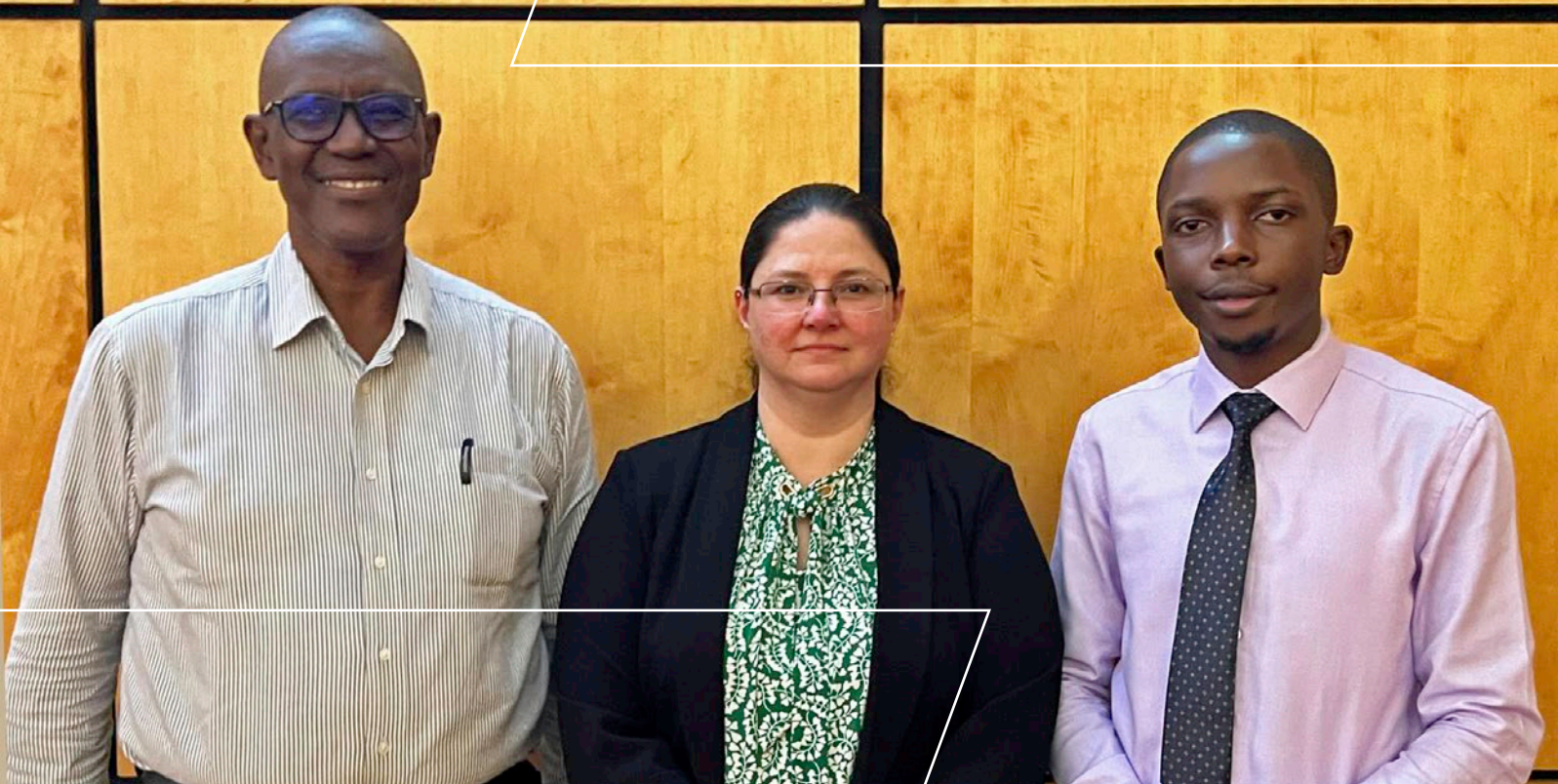
Regional Cybersecurity Summit and FIRST & ITU-ARCC Regional Symposium for Africa and Arab Regions in Abu Dhabi, AE

- rcssummit.com/

FIRST Technical Colloquium (6)

2023 PSIRT SIG Technical Colloquium (virtual)

- www.first.org/events/colloquia/psirt-virtual2023/
- 142 attendees
- 20 countries



FIRST Africa Regional Liaisons, Eric and Lawrence, join FIRST Board Chair Tracy Bills at the West African Symposium on Sector Collaboration and Information Sharing held in Accra, Ghana in April 2024

UNDP FIRST Valencia TC

- www.first.org/events/colloquia/valencia2023/

FIRST Vulnerability Forecasting Technical Colloquium

- www.first.org/events/colloquia/cardiff2023/
- 27 in-person attendees
- 8 countries

Oslo 2023 FIRST TC: Cold Incident Response

- www.coldincidentresponse.no

Amsterdam 2023 Technical Colloquium

- www.first.org/events/colloquia/amsterdam2024/

FIRST DCAF Technical Colloquium/Balkan cybersecurity days

- www.first.org/events/colloquia/bcd2024/



Diversity & Inclusion

Cyber Security Ventures reports that there are 3.5 million vacant cyber security positions globally (<https://cybersecurityventures.com/jobs/>). This is one of the reasons we need to recruit more people to our profession. We face extremely complex challenges and we need a diverse set of skills to conquer them.

To close our current workforce gaps we need to attract a variety of people, and help them find their place and thrive in the cyber security profession. We as a community have an important role to play here, and last year's Board statement on diversity and inclusion is a foundation to build on going forward.

The program chair for the 2023 Annual Conference Ted Norminton, and his program committee, made a strong effort to create an agenda that was the most diverse we've seen at a FIRST annual conference, considering topics, levels, regions, and gender. We even had a first-time all women panel!

This is something we will continue to build on, but we also need to give the future program committee and event organizers enough diversity to choose from. The FIRST board is therefore happy to report that this year we signed a partnership agreement with the Diana Initiative: "A diversity-driven conference committed to helping all underrepresented people in Information Security" (from dianainitiative.org).

We recognize that achieving true diversity and inclusion is an ongoing journey. FIRST is committed to listening, learning, and taking action to ensure that we create a truly equitable and inclusive organization. We welcome comments and suggestions at diversity@first.org.

Standards Committee Update

Trey Darley and Désirée Sacher-Boldewin hosted a Standards BoF in Montreal in June 2023. Following some months of calls within the FIRST community (folks who stepped forwards to help following the Montreal BoF) to define the charter, the FIRST Standards Committee charter and initial members were approved at the January 2024 board meeting.

The FIRST Standards Committee brings together people from around the world, all experienced with technical standards development, able to bridge between the FIRST community and exterior standards bodies. This committee provides a single point of contact for external standards bodies to be able to perform a reality check, to avoid the outcome that we as practitioners become liable for conforming to non-working, ineffective, conflicting, and/or outdated standards. This committee serves as a resource for the FIRST SIGs to help increase the quality, visibility, and uptake of FIRST standards.

This committee and the broader community surrounding it remain a work in progress, but nevertheless it is a major step forward for FIRST. Whereas before, standards were a best effort work stream for one person on the FIRST Board (when we as a community just happened to elect someone with the necessary background), now there is a solid group of people committed to helping advance FIRST standards, and to amplify the real world perspective of incident responders and security professionals within external standards bodies.

An in person meetup of the FIRST Standards Community will take place at the 2024 FIRST Conference in Fukuoka, Japan. Please come along if you are interested in getting involved!

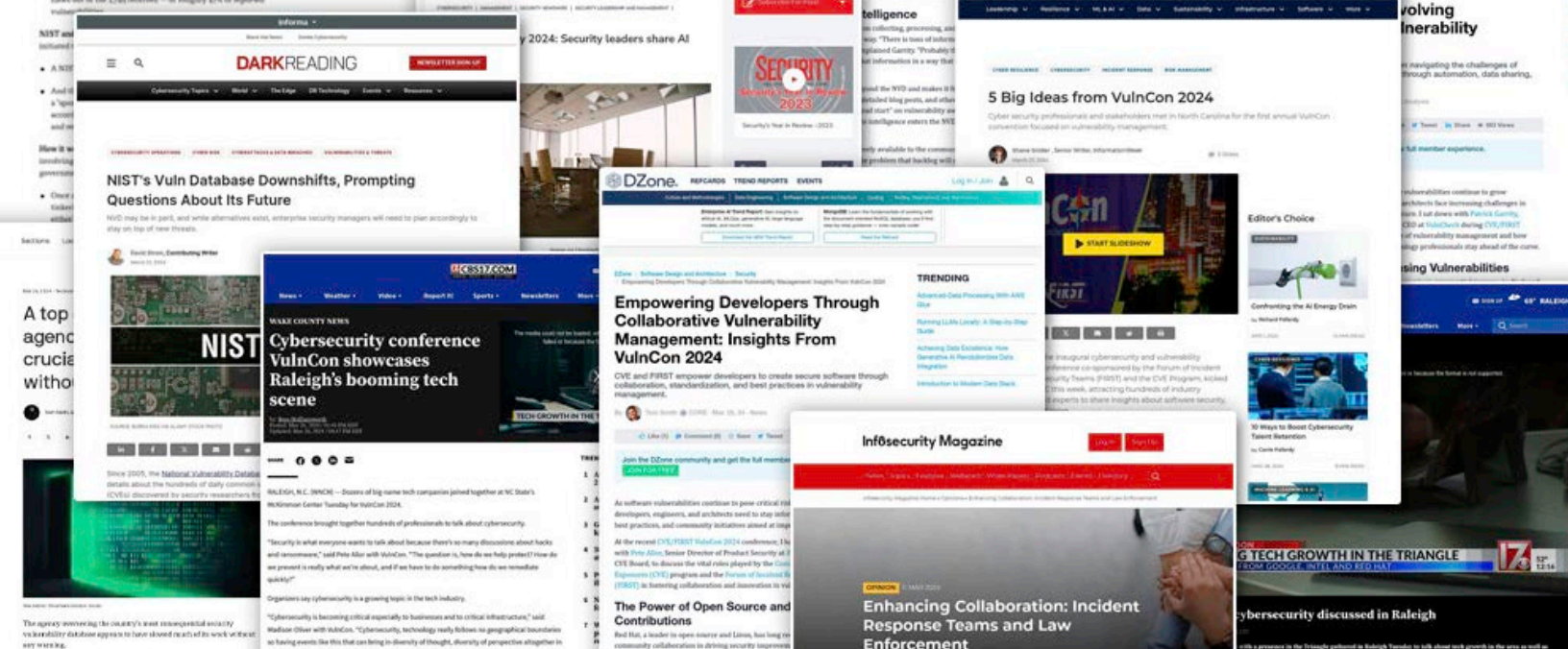
Additionally, any interested participants can apply to join the FIRST Standards Community at:
<https://portal.first.org/g/Standards%20Discuss>.

The FIRST Standards Committee has monthly meetings on a variety of standards-related topics for 2024, including:

- 2024-02-13: Dr. Vilius Benetis (NRD Cyber Security) gave us an overview of his standards work, predominantly on ISO 27035, Part 4, X.1060, NIST 800-61, and the FIRST CSIRT Services Framework.
- 2024-02-27: Jeff Mates (DC3) presented an overview of the draft STIX2 Incident Reporting data model.
- 2024-03-12: Laurie Tyzenhaus (CERT/CC) gave an overview concerning ISO standards, Tony Rutkowski (CIS) gave an introduction to ETSI.
- 2024-03-26: Roy Williams, Sarah Novotny (Microsoft), and Allan Friedman (CISA) presented on “SCITT, SBOM, and the future of software supply chain security”.
- 2024-04-23: Murugiah Souppaya and Karen Scarfone (NIST) presented on changes in NIST Special Publication (SP) 800-61r3 (Revision 3) “Incident Response Recommendations and Considerations for Cybersecurity Risk Management”.

Thank you to the entire standards committee: Carlos Alvarez (ICANN), Vinay Bansal (Cisco), Vilius Benetis (NRD CIRT), Alexandre Dulaunoy (CIRCL), Jean-Robert Hountomey (Liaison), Bret Jordan (Liaison), Merike Kaeo (Liaison), Aaron Kaplan (Liaison), Jason Keirstead (Liaison), Koichiro “Sparky” Komiyama (JPCERT/CC), Peter Lowe (Liaison), Art Manion (Liaison), Tom Millar (CISA), Damir “Gaus” Rajnovic (Panasonic CSIRT EU), Desirée Sacher-Boldewin (Liaison), Jonathan Spring (CISA), Thomas Schreck (Liaison), Laurie Tyzenhaus (CERT/CC), and Jeroen van der Ham (Liaison).

Special thanks to our committee co-chairs: Trey Darley (Accenture Security), Brian DeWyngaert (CISA), Jason Keirstead (Liaison), Warren Kumari (Google), and Shawn Richardson (NVIDIA).



Major announcements, Press, Public Relations

1. FIRST Public Relations & Marketing

FIRST proudly announced the appointment of Growth Stack Media as its agency of record for public relations. This strategic collaboration signals a significant advancement in FIRST's communication strategy. As the media landscape continues to shift, digital storytelling is more important than ever. Growth Stack Media remains dedicated to crafting and implementing solutions that will harness the collective knowledge within FIRST's community, to showcase the organization's expertise to the media.

2. FIRST 'POST' Quarterly Newsletter

The purpose of the Quarterly 'POST' Newsletter is to keep the members informed and highlight FIRST events and programs to the FIRST community and beyond. Our readership and list of contributors continue to grow.

All FIRST 'POST' newsletters can be found here: <https://www.first.org/newsroom/newsletters/>

3. FIRST Press Releases

Up to x press releases were published over the 2023-24 period. Among these, FIRST was proud to announce the official publication of CVSS version 4.0

All FIRST press releases can be found here: <https://www.first.org/newsroom/releases/>

4. FIRST Blog

There have many blog posts published over the 2023-2024 period. Highlights include The Vulnerability Forecast for 2024 and 'Is the LoA DoA for Routing?'

All FIRST blog posts can be found here: <https://www.first.org/blog/>

FIRST Partners and Collaboration

Cybersecurity is much more than Incident response. To find sustainable answers FIRST partners with other organizations broadening the scope of knowhow significantly.

DCAF is a Geneva based organization which focuses on good security governance. Since several years FIRST and DCAF have been active in the Western Balkan region building up a strong incident response community. Activities included training courses, including training of policy makers as well as workshops. For two years DCAF and FIRST have co-organised the Bakan Cybersecurity Days BCD, which are open to all relevant stakeholders. The success of these days is the result of several years of community and capacity building. In 2024 the BCD was maxed out within half a day. Right from the beginning the program aimed, among other things, at getting all national CSIRTs into FIRST.

One of the unique advantages FIRST can bring to the table are all the practitioners volunteering their time. This was essential in the program to convince people that the program was not merely a nice sounding theory.

Another Geneva based organization FIRST engages with is the Center for Humanitarian Dialogue. HDCentre focuses on mediation, i.e. working in difficult environments helping interlocutors finding common grounds. FIRST is engaged in several programs in the Middle East, South East Europe and Asia helping national CSIRTs and cyber diplomats to find ways to avoid escalation of cyber conflicts, mostly through information sharing. Again FIRST members have supported these efforts. For FIRST this is new territory but is in line with our mission of bringing teams together.

Partners and MoUs



Membership

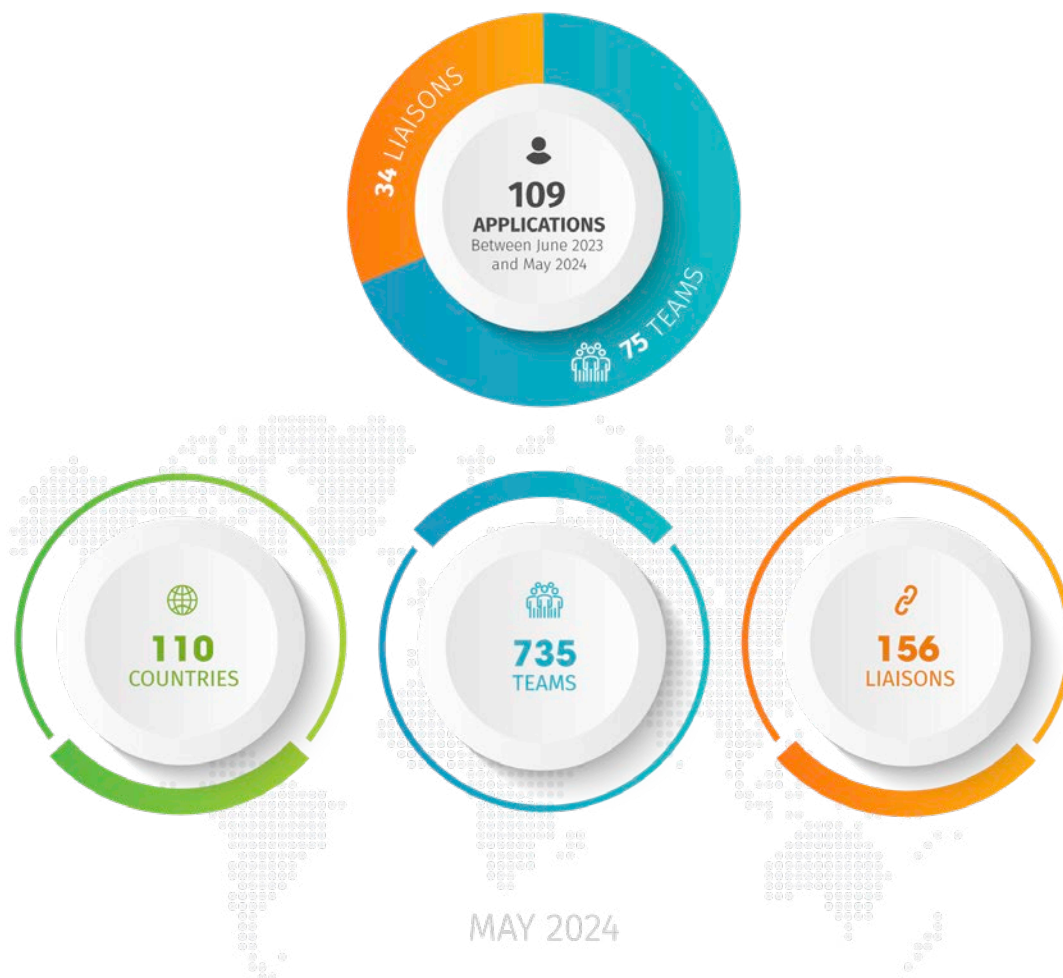
FIRST members are part of a network of computer security incident response and security teams that work together voluntarily to deal with computer security problems and their prevention. There are two types of members:

- Full Members represent organizations who assist an information technology community or other defined constituency in preventing and handling computer security-related incidents.
- Liaison Members are individuals or representatives of organizations other than incident response or security teams with a legitimate interest in and value in FIRST.

Applications received by the FIRST Secretariat are reviewed by the Membership Committee and sent to the FIRST Community for comment. If the applications have not been opposed in the process, the Board of Directors vote to approve the applying Teams or Liaisons to join the FIRST community.

Between June 2023 and May 2024, 109 applications were validated - 75 teams and 34 Liaisons.

Over the same period, some FIRST members left for various reasons - lack of dues payment, mergers, change in activities. Overall, membership to FIRST continues to grow and amount to 735 Teams and 156 Liaisons as of end of May 2024, with a coverage of 110 countries.





Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

Special Interest Groups (SIGs) are a key aspect of FIRST. SIGs band together to define new standards, to discuss, define, and refine best practices, to exchange ideas, to keep a view on current trends and emerging challenges, and to brainstorm on how to further the professionalization of the global Incident Response community.

During the 2023-2024 period, four new SIGs were formed:

- With discussions held at the FIRST Annual Conference Meeting in Montreal, the new AI-Security-SIG was initiated. It has the mission to advance the use and understanding of artificial intelligence (AI), with a particular emphasis on large language models (LLMs) for security and incident response. It is very active and meets every week with regular presentations and also many conversations about current topics happening on Slack.
- The Law Enforcement SIG with the mission to further co-operation between the CERT / CSIRT community and Law Enforcement through the development of better understanding of organizational missions and specific requirements, and producing practical trust and information-sharing protocols.
- The Digital Safety SIG with the mission to gather an informal movement of conversations in APJ into a focus working group. This group hopes to explore what it means to rethink our goals (protecting people), learn how other parts of civil society focus on people's safety (i.e. civil engineering), and what we can do as a community today to promote a "rethinking".
- The Security Operations Center (SOC)-SIG focuses on issues and challenges experienced by SOCs and SOC personnel and helps synthesizing existing materials for CSIRTs/PSIRTs and create new collateral for an easier to access focus area within FIRST for SOC-specific challenges and recommendations.

Other notable SIG-related activities:

- CVSS SIG (Common Vulnerability Scoring System) has published version 4 and the new version of the calculator and adoption has begun.
- DNS Abuse SIG has published the first version of their DNS Abuse Techniques Matrix and the results were presented at the 2023 Montreal annual conference. They have also created a Japanese translation of their document.
- EPSS SIG (Exploit Prediction Scoring System) has released a new machine learning model as well as an additional paper about the data model, performance metrics and the data collected. A paper about the examined data is currently being written.
- TLP SIG published version 2.0 of the standard at the 2022 Dublin. (Note that TLP v2.0 is recommended and TLP v1.0 is considered deprecated since August 2022). Apart from the English version, translations are already available in Brazilian Portuguese, Czech, French, Japanese, Norwegian. It has since gone on in creating posters and publishing specific Use Cases which help in illustrating the usage of TLP.

The Red Teaming SIG was rebooted and has since grown to a steady and regular meetup frequency with regular presentations during the sessions. The following SIGs met in person at the 2023 Montreal annual conference on site:

- Academic Security SIG, Automation SIG, CVSS SIG, Cyber Insurance SIG, DNS Abuse SIG, EPSS SIG, Information Sharing SIG, Metrics SIG, Security Lounge SIG, VRDX-SIG, Vulnerability Coordination SIG, and Women of FIRST SIG.

We prepared a change for the 2023 Montreal conference to offer more and better possibilities for SIGs wishing to facilitate hybrid meetings. For the first time, FIRST-owned equipment was procured and could be requested by SIG chairs to better support interactive online and hybrid meetings.

With sufficient membership interest, new SIGs can be launched and even funded by FIRST. If you are interested in joining an existing SIG or starting a new SIG, please visit <https://www.first.org/global/sigs/> for more details.

FIRST has continued to engage with the UN Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) as well as monitoring the work of the UN Ad Hoc Committee to elaborate on a Comprehensive International Convention on Countering the use of Information and Communications Technologies for Criminal Purposes.

We have applied to the OEWG for accredited stakeholder status that would allow us to attend formal meetings, to make oral statements during a dedicated stakeholder session, and to submit written inputs to be posted on the webpage.

Unfortunately, we have - so far - been refused this status. Undefeated, we continue working to achieve this.

Board members represented FIRST at several meetings organized by the OEWG. FIRST's position on the importance of ensuring that policy and governance must allow incident responders to continue to collaborate globally was reiterated.

Our CEO and Board of Director members participated in several other high-profile events, including:

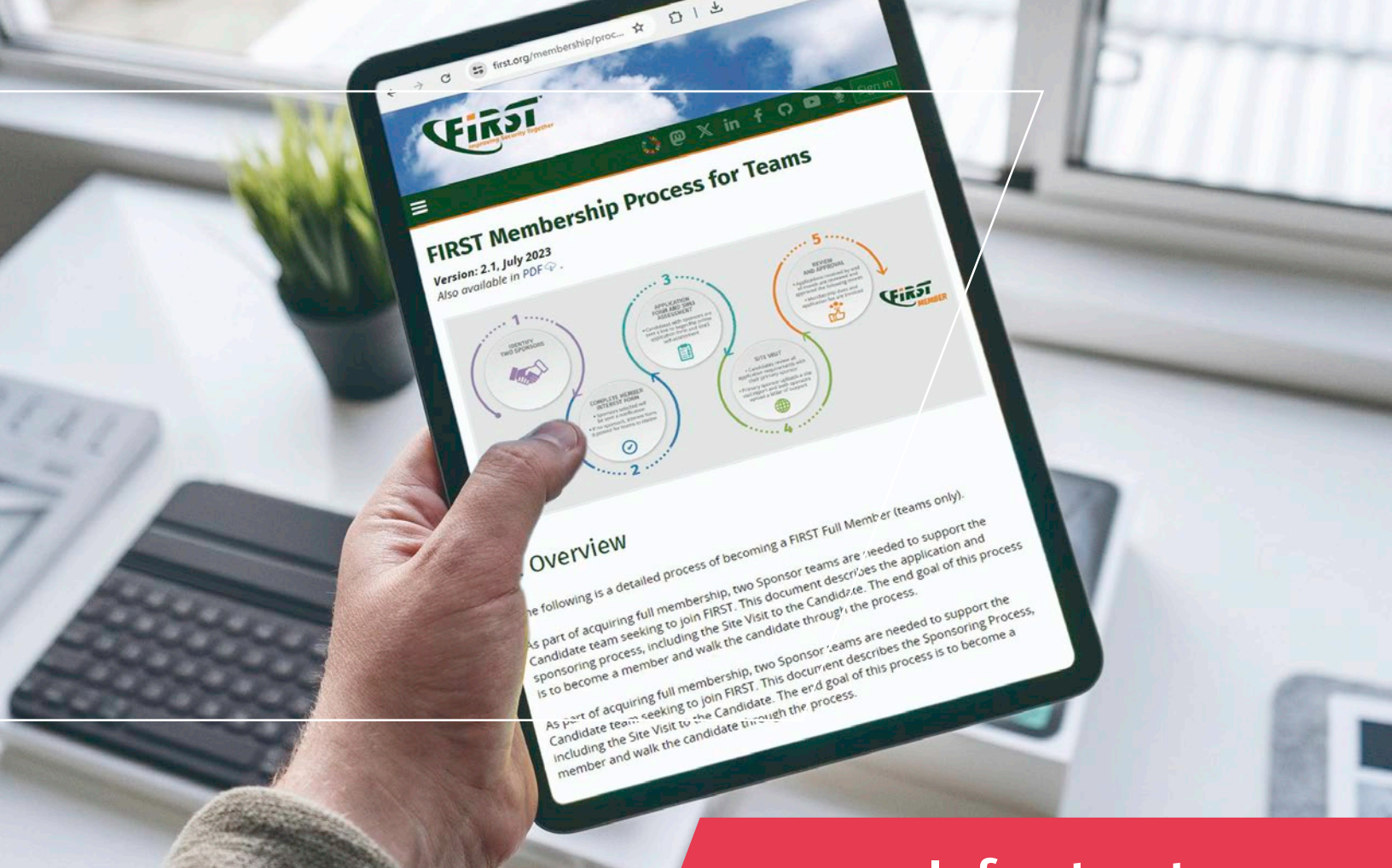
- 10th Sino-European dialogue, high-level diplomatic exchange between European and Chinese experts at the German ministry of foreign affairs.
- The Paris Peace Forum
- UN OEWG inter-sessional meetings
- Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT)
- Spanish public private partnership WG on Ransomware
- Jornadas STIC OAS/Spain's CCN-CERT



Financials

FIRST 2023 events were successful, but didn't reach the financial contribution that was planned. Action was taken to plan for breakeven events moving forward include adjustments in registration fees and additional sponsorship opportunities.

The financial year resulted in a change of net assets of -478,054 USD due to shortfalls in revenue from events and planned investment in organizational growth with hiring new staff. Membership continues to grow and dues revenue also underwent planned adjustments moving forward.



Infrastructure

Infrastructure Highlights for the Annual Report:

Over the past year, the infrastructure team has worked on several initiatives to optimize FIRST’s services and operations for its members, operations team, and volunteers. The following are some of the most visible accomplishments:

- The FIRST identity provider (IDP) migration completed in the fall of 2023, migrating 30 SSO-enabled apps to a new IDP. This provided an improved experience, including MFA (with WebAuthn supporting: passkeys, biometrics, and hardware tokens) as well as facilitating the new policy acknowledgement functionality.
- Launch of the new FIRST Support Portal (support.first.org)
- Release of ‘Priority Report’ service available to FIRST members
- Continued improvements to the membership app training@first.org application process have been implemented

Other important work that has been completed behind the scenes to improve and better secure FIRST’s infrastructure and services includes:

- Implementation of Zoho Social as FIRST’s new social media management platform, which supports the management of the FIRST Mastodon account
- Implementation of CTM360 Digital Risk Protection for FIRST.Org internal usage
- Enhanced protection of FIRST services has begun with services being moved behind Fastly with Signal Sciences WAF.



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