



**Operational Framework.
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The objectives of AfricaCERT are to assist African countries in establishing and operating Computer Security and Incident Response Teams (CSIRTs) by providing expertise and advice in formulating initiatives, programs and projects related to the launch of CSIRTs in African countries and to encourage and support cooperation among teams in the Africa Internet Service Region.

1 Background

Few African Internet pioneers gathered in 1990 under the African Internet Group to discuss how to address specific issues facing the growth of the Internet in the African ecosystem including governance and capacity building. At the conference on Internet Governance under the theme “Administration of Internet Protocol Addresses and Domain Names and Strengthening African Emerging Institutions” in Cotonou, (Dec 15-17, 1998), African pioneers called for uniting the African Internet community through the establishment of several organizations to tackle specific issues.

Several organizations were launched then known as African Organization of Internet Governance (AF*), and among them AfricaCERT was facilitated by the African Network Operator Group (AfNOG), the Regional Internet Registry (AfriNIC), AAU (Association of African Universities), African Research and Education Network (AfREN) and Africa Asia Forum on Network Research and Engineering (AAF) with the support of Japan Computer Emergency Response Team Coordination Center (JPCERT/CC) and Asia Pacific Computer Emergency Response Team (APCERT).

(http://www.afriNIC.net/multimedia/download/af_brochure.pdf).

1.1 History of AfricaCERT

African Network operators started in 2000 holding one meeting a year and founded the African Network Operator Group (AfNOG). AfriNIC was recognized in 2005 as the fifth Regional Internet Registry. These two organizations, together with others mentioned above, created the channel for two yearly meetings within the African Internet ecosystem. The Af* fostered the creation of an environment to enable and support the rapid growth of

the Internet and its related technologies in Africa.

At the same time, with the development of African undersea cables, African economies are heavily dependent on the Internet and its related technologies for online services such as healthcare, banking and finances, education etc.

The increase in malicious activities in terms of scale and frequency, together with low level of preparedness at users' environment, led African organizations to take a collaborative approach and also motivated the creation of an African organization tasked to propose solution to issues related to Internet health: AfricaCERT.

Af* have organized several events during AfNOG and AfriNIC such as tutorials, CSIRT trainings and conferences that led to the creation of AfricaCERT.

<http://www.internetafricanews.com/internetsecurity.html>

In Kigali, Rwanda May 30, 2010, the Af* recommended the creation of a regional initiative. <http://africacert.org/home/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/pdf/7-kigali2010reco.pdf>

In Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania, June 5th, 2011; African delegates present in Dar Es Salaam have organized a BOF on the creation of a Computer Emergency Response Team for the African Continent.

In Serekunda, Gambia, May 14, 2012, AfricaCERT Interim Steering Committee decided to incorporate AfricaCERT as non for profit in Accra, Ghana.

AfricaCERT was incorporated under the Companies Act, 1963 (Art 169) in Accra Ghana on July 9, 2012.

2 Vision, Mission and Objectives

Vision: One Continent, One Vision, One Team United in Promoting Cybersecurity in Africa.

Mission: The African forum of Computer Incident Response Teams, aims to propose solutions to cyber security challenges in Af* Internet ecosystem.

Objectives:

The objectives of AfricaCERT include, but are not restricted to:

1. Coordinating cooperation and information exchange among CSIRTs, as well as supporting African cyber drills.
2. Assisting African countries in establishing and operating CSIRTs by providing expertise and advice in formulating initiatives, programs and projects.
3. Fostering and supporting education and outreach programs in ICT security among African countries. AfricaCERT is also expected to assist its members that do not have the necessary technical skills, knowledge and experience, to be able to conduct effective computer emergency response.
4. Strengthening the relationships among CSIRTs in Africa and with other stakeholders all over the world. This will be achieved through building cooperation, trust and confidence amongst members and also with other international stakeholders for the effective coordination and management of security incidents.
5. Encouraging information sharing in ICT security, which includes findings from reported incidents and case studies, so that vulnerabilities can be rapidly identified, and its risks mitigated. It is envisaged that AfricaCERT members will especially share experiences and jointly develop measures to deal with large-scale security incidents.
6. Promoting good practices and experiences and sharing among members to develop a comprehensive framework for cybersecurity, including better addressing legal and regulatory issues related to information security, and for the prevention of cybercrimes, while acting in strengthening multilateral and bilateral cooperation and initiatives on such matters.
7. Assisting African CSIRTs in improving cyber readiness and enhancing the resilience of ICT infrastructure and developing contingency plans.
8. Promoting collaborative technology research, development and innovation in the ICT security field.

3 Membership

The AfricaCERT is open to African CSIRTs, as well as to Organizations that promote cybersecurity, to Companies that provide information security services and solutions, and to security professionals in Africa.

AfricaCERT members agree to support the mission and objectives of AfricaCERT, adhere to its information sharing guidelines, respect confidentiality agreements and provide possible assistance to one another.

AfricaCERT has the following membership categories – “*Operational Member*”, “*Supporting Member*”, “*Individual Member*”, and “*Co-founders*”.

Operational Members are eligible to vote during AGM meetings, after one (1) year of membership. Supporting Members and Individual Members do not have any voting rights, but are able to provide feedback on AfricaCERT activities. Co-founders have voting right.

3.1 Operational Member

Operational Members are expected to be active participants in AfricaCERT. At a minimum this includes participating in the AGMs and contributes to the Annual Report.

Requirements to become an AfricaCERT Operational Member are:

1. To be located in an African country;
2. To be a leading or national CSIRT within its own economy, on a full or part time basis
3. To have established or seeking establishing good policies, practices and procedures for operating its CSIRT, relatively to state of the art in that trend
4. To agree to support the mission and objectives of AfricaCERT, and be readily available to make contributions to the African CSIRT community;
5. To be sponsored by two (2) AfricaCERT Operational Members;
6. To have the application approved by the AfricaCERT Board of Directors (BOD);

7. To respect the Code of Conduct, promulgated by AfricaCERT; and
8. To advise the AfricaCERT BOD, within a reasonable time period, if at any time it cannot meet the above criteria.

Operational Members have the right to vote on AfricaCERT operational matters and to stand for Board of Directors (BOD) election, after one (1) year of membership. Each Operational Member has one (1) vote.

3.2 Supporting Member

AfricaCERT Supporting Members are required:

1. To be an entity with activities related to cyber security regardless of the region and organizational structure, who want to contribute to AfricaCERT, such as; NGOs or Academia, or an entities working in the ICT security field.
2. To be sponsored by two (2) existing AfricaCERT Operational Members
3. To have the application approved by AfricaCERT BOD
4. To respect the Code of Conduct, promulgated by AfricaCERT; and
5. to advise the AfricaCERT BOD within a reasonable time period, if at any time it cannot meet the above criteria.

Notes:

- Supporting Members are expected to be active participants in AfricaCERT. At a minimum this includes participating in at least one (1) AfricaCERT event per year.
- This membership has Observer status and cannot vote or stand for elections.
- Commercial Members such as Banks, Telecom Operators are expected to make a financial contribution at their discretion.

3.3 Individual Member

Individuals can apply for Individual membership. Each application needs to be sponsored by two (2) AfricaCERT Operational Members. This membership status has no voting right.

- **Potential candidates.**

- Recognized African leaders in ICT security and members of the African ICT community who have contributed to the establishment and development of AfricaCERT.
- In general, any individual who has contributed to the establishment of AfricaCERT, including Non Africans, and also from other forums such as FIRST, APCERT, OIC-CERT, TF-CSIRT, etc...

- **Membership Fees**

- A fee of \$25 is required.

3.4 Co-Founders.

The founders of AfricaCERT may apply for individual membership and their application does not require any sponsorship by AfricaCERT Members.

Co-Founders have voting right and their application is free.

3.5 Review or Revocation of Membership or Change of Membership

Category

The AfricaCERT BOD may audit at any time a member and review the continued eligibility and suitability of Members. If the AfricaCERT BOD finds that a member no longer meets the membership eligibility requirements or does not respect the code of conduct, it may decide revocation or change of the membership.

The decision to change or revoke the membership is subject to the approval of two-thirds quorum of the AfricaCERT Operational Members with voting rights during the Annual General Meeting (AGM);

4 Membership application process

- Complete the application form, available on the Web site, and submit it by email to the Secretariat, signed with the PGP key of the applicant, and with CC to the sponsor(s).
- Upon receiving the application form, the Secretariat will check it contains all the requested details, and help in its completion.
- The application form, once complete, will be forwarded for review and evaluation by the members of the AfricaCERT Board of Directors, which will decide on its acceptance or refusal.

The applicant and its sponsor(s) will be informed about the acceptance or refusal of their application, at maximum 3 months, from submission of the application.

In case of refusal the BOD chair will provide the reasons of that refusal, and in case of acceptance, the applicant will be considered as member from that date, with notification to the rest of members by email and recording on the web site.

5 Organization

The AfricaCERT is expected to maintain a flat administrative organization and activity, consisting of the following core components:

1. Council of Elders (CE) – CE members are selected members of the African ICT community who have contributed to the establishment and development of AfricaCERT.

The CE can include non-African people who have contributed to the establishment of AfricaCERT (they can also be from other organizations such as APCERT, FIRST, OIC-CERT, TF-CSIRT, etc....).

Members of the CE are nominated by the Executive Director, the Board of Directors or any operational member, and appointed by the Board of Directors.

The CE shall help ruling on the proper conduct in disputed cases. In case of strong disagreements that cannot be resolved by the BOD, it shall investigate, rule and decide in the best interest of AfricaCERT.

The Chair of the CE is a representative from the CE, elected by majority of votes of the CE members, during a meeting of its members, previously to the AGM, which include a vote about the amendment of the BOD members.

The Chair shall be appointed for a term of 3 years. The chair shall be responsible for the coordination of the CE activities, and shall have a vote during the AGM. He shall chair the elections of the BOD members, during the AGM.

In addition to the designated members here above mentioned, AfricaCERT Executive Directors and AfricaCERT founders shall be ex officio life members of the CE, at the end of their activity inside AfricaCERT. .

2. General Meeting (GM) – consisting of all AfricaCERT Members. The GM shall be convened by the Executive Secretariat with the approval of the Board of Directors (BOD) and attended by representatives of AfricaCERT members, with voting right. Other members can be invited as observers.

At a minimum, the GM shall be convened annually, known as the Annual General Meeting (AGM).

The Board of Directors and Chair members of AfricaCERT sub committees shall be elected at an AGM. The AGM will also be used to discuss and approve or reject decisions and reports from the Board of Directors.

3. Board of Directors (BOD) -

BOD consists of a maximum of seven (7) representatives with five (5) elected by more than half of a quorum of AfricaCERT Operational Members with voting rights, plus the chair of the CE, as six and the Executive Director as the seventh member.

BOD Members are appointed for three-year terms renewable once and are responsible for the orientation of AfricaCERT activities, and deciding about strategic and membership concerns.

The Board of Directors shall:

- Support the Executive Team and Review their Performance;
- Ensure Effective Organizational Planning;
- Ensure Adequate Resources;
- Determine and Monitor the Organization's Programs and Services;
- Enhance the Organization's Public Image; and
- Decide about membership applications and sub committees' constitution
- The BOD once elected can identify other specific working areas.

The Board of Directors shall meet regularly, usually via teleconference or signed email and will meet in person at least once a year, and when required by the chair or the executive director.

BOD meetings will only be convened if four of seventh BOD members are present.

4. Chair – A BOD member elected by the BOD to chair the Committee.

The Chair will be appointed for a term of Three (3) years and will be responsible for the coordination of the BOD. A member may only serve as Chair for a maximum of Two (2) consecutive terms.

5. Vice Chair – A BOD member elected as Vice Chair of the Committee.

The Vice Chair will share the responsibilities of the Chair, including deputizing for the Chair and providing assistance as required. The term is for Three () years. A member may only serve as the Vice Chair for a maximum of Two (3) consecutive terms.

6. The Board of Directors shall appoint an Executive Director (General Secretary) by majority of vote, on terms and conditions they shall determine.

The Executive Director is subject to applicable labor laws.

The Executive Director shall:

- Manage the day to day operations of AfricaCERT;
- Have the authority to amend the compensation and other conditions of employment of all employees, and propose them to the BOD for approval, to

be effective;

- Appoint his executive staff members and report directly to the Board.

The Executive Director is an AfricaCERT Board Member

7. Board Committees

AfricaCERT BOD shall establish different committees (working groups) to undertake major issues, projects and activities for short and/or long terms.

- a. Committees make recommendation for approval by the entire board.
- b. Committees may meet every three months, physically or via tele or video conference;

Minutes should be made accessible to all members.

8. The General Meeting (GM).

A General Meeting (GM) shall be convened and attended by at least a minimum quorum of all operational members of the AfricaCERT plus the Chair of the BOD.

- During the GM, overall policies of AfricaCERT will be defined; and approval of reports from the BOD including any other related policy issues will be addressed.
- The GM shall be held at least once every year.
- GM quorum shall be considered valid if at least half of AfricaCERT operational members, plus the Chair (or vice Chair) are physically present.
- In the event of deadlock between members on any issue, the Chair of the BOD shall try to resolve the dispute, and if no solution is found, after intervention of the CE, members will cast votes on that issue so as to resolve such deadlock.

9. The Secretariat.

- Responsibilities:
 - A primary and general contact point for the AfricaCERT
 - Coordinates activities of the AfricaCERT.

- Store and Maintain the AfricaCERT documentation
- Provide general guidance for prospective members and other interested parties.
- Serve as an administrative point for AfricaCERT.
- The Secretariat tasks will be approved by the BOD, under proposal of the Executive Director

6 Point of Contact (POC) Arrangements

The AfricaCERT POC Arrangements provide a framework for sharing information about serious and time critical cyber threats, vulnerabilities or incidents by AfricaCERT members within the region.

Where there is more than one (1) Operational Member from an economy, that economy will propose one (1) of those members to be the POC for that economy.

POC members should give priority to requests for assistance made under the AfricaCERT POC Arrangements.

It is mandatory for all POC teams to ensure that their contact details are maintained up-to-date. The POCs are listed at the AfricaCERT's secure members side of its website. Changes to the POCs details should be submitted to the Secretariat at the earliest convenience.

7 Travel Funding.

AfricaCERT may provide travel for members belonging to modest economies to participate to meetings in case organizations expressly inform AfricaCERT's Executive Director about their inability to cover such fees.

8 Mailing Lists

AfricaCERT operates a range of mailing lists. Members should not publicly disclose the existence of lists, restricted to members, and their contents. Few lists require

Executive Team approval for subscription. Other email aliases may be established from time to time to manage specific short-term projects or issues. Members are encouraged to use the generic contact email address of other members when communicating directly with them.

Signed: AfricaCERT General Assembly

Signed by Members on 10/01/2015.

Key ID: 0xBF721380 / Signed on: 10/1/15

Key fingerprint: 053A 35A3 6A77 EC88 3175 C4DA E7A4 A3AB BF72 1380