



Collaboration Between the CERT[®] Coordination Center and Computer Security Incident Response Teams Worldwide

The CERT[®] Coordination Center (CERT/CC) is part of the larger CERT Program at the Software Engineering Institute (SEI), a federally funded research and development center located at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA. As the world's first response team, the CERT/CC has served as a model for response teams around the world. With the growth of networks, their integration into the economy, and the diversity of the global communities, there is a growing demand for global support, cooperation, and collaboration among governments, industry, and academia to solve today's common Internet security issues.

The CERT/CC recognizes the unique issues facing computer security incident response teams (CSIRTs). The CERT/CC has provided education, training, and coordination support to many teams and continues to contribute to their growth.

"CERT" is a registered trademark owned by Carnegie Mellon University. Over the years, we have granted permission to many CSIRTs to use our mark in their names. We are now formalizing our authorization process to ensure that "CERT" continues to identify the high quality of services that the public expects. To become authorized to use "CERT" in their name, organizations must verify that they provide computer security incident response services that meet the standards of trust, integrity, and quality that are associated with our name.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why is CERT changing its process?

Since our inception in 1988, we have lent our name to many CSIRTs around the world that share our commitment to improving the security of networks connected to the Internet. To ensure that "CERT" continues to reflect the type of services that the public expects, we are formalizing our process for authorizing organizations to use it. Despite the change in process, it remains true that only organizations authorized by Carnegie Mellon University will be permitted to use "CERT" in their name.

2. Why should my organization consider applying for approval?

The CERT Program is recognized as a leader in Internet security, and people associate our name with quality and credibility. By becoming authorized to include "CERT" in your CSIRT's name, you will benefit from the name recognition. People will immediately know that your organization is committed to Internet security and provides relevant products and services.

3. What is the approval process for becoming CERT-authorized?

CSIRTs wishing to become CERT-authorized need to complete and submit a qualification form. If your organization's verification is accepted, we will send you a licensing agreement. After reviewing the agreement, sign and submit it for approval. If you are approved, you will be authorized to use "CERT" according to the terms of the agreement.

4. Can I obtain permission to register <my country name>-CERT?

Yes, if you are an authorized national CSIRT that provides services to government or critical infrastructure organizations such as electricity generation and distribution, telecommunications, water supply, agriculture, food production and distribution, heating (natural gas, fuel oil), public health, transportation systems (fuel supply, railway network, airports), financial services, security services (police, military), or other government-mandated constituencies. To prevent confusion, Carnegie Mellon University will permit only authorized national CSIRT to use names that take the form <Country>-CERT, CERT-<Country>, <ISO 3166-1 alpha-2 Country Code>-CERT, or CERT-<ISO 3166-1 alpha-2 Country Code>.

5. How can I get a qualification form?

To obtain a qualification form, email a request to permission@sei.cmu.edu.

6. Is there a fee to become authorized to use “CERT”?

No, there is no cost. However, you must submit a completed qualification form and then sign a licensing agreement to be considered for authorization.

7. How will people know that my organization has been authorized to use “CERT”?

Approved CSIRTs can begin to use “CERT” in their name according to the terms of the licensing agreement. We will also provide a graphic that you can incorporate on your web site and will maintain a list of authorized organizations on the CERT web site.

8. Where can I use the graphic that indicates that my organization is authorized to use “CERT”?

The graphic can be used only on your organization’s web site. It cannot be used for print and/or marketing materials.

9. Does this new process mean that CERT will only provide training, education, collaboration, and coordination activities to authorized organizations?

No. CERT will continue to support the international computer security community in its training, education, and coordination activities.

10. How will CERT enforce that only authorized organizations are using “CERT”?

Carnegie Mellon University and the Software Engineering Institute investigate all allegations of non-authorized use of its trademarks and tradenames and take action, as appropriate. If you believe that the “CERT” service mark is being used improperly, please notify permission@sei.cmu.edu to begin an investigation.

11. What does “CERT” stand for?

CERT is not an acronym. Both “CERT” and “CERT Coordination Center” have been registered by Carnegie Mellon University with the U.S. Patent and Trademark office and other authorities throughout the world.

