



Knowledge | Community | Solutions

Systems, Software, and CERT Department Meeting

Meeting Brief

Date: 4th April 2025

Chairperson: Brenda Namuli

Secretary: Isaac Newton Wobomba

Venue: RENU Boardroom, Level 5, Rashida Towers

Start Time: 09:10 am EAT

End Time: 01:50 pm EAT

Attendance

The meeting was attended by the following;

1. Brenda Namuli
2. Charles Kasasira
3. Daniel Kawuma
4. Derrick Ayesigye
5. Derrick Ssemanda
6. Fredrick Tamale
7. Hellen Nakawungu
8. Isaac Ainamaani
9. Isaac Newton Wobomba
10. Josh Erias Lubuulwa
11. Kiiza Christian
12. Samuel Wekobosya
13. Trevor Baron Omudu

Absent with apology

Absent without apology

1. William Kibirango
2. Claire Sharitah Nakakeeto
3. Benon Mugumbya



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Agenda

Agenda Item	Details
Min. SSC/25/04/01	Opening Prayer
Min. SSC/25/04/02	Welcoming remarks from the chairperson
Min. SSC/25/04/03	Review of the previous meeting minutes
Min. SSC/25/04/04	Presentation from RENU-CERT
Min. SSC/25/04/05	Presentation on Redstor from RENU-CERT
Min. SSC/25/04/06	Presentation from the Systems team
Min. SSC/25/04/07	Presentation on eduroam from the Systems team
Min. SSC/25/04/08	Presentation from the Software team
Min. SSC/25/04/09	Remarks from the line supervisor
Min. SSC/25/04/10	Discuss the date for the next meeting
Min. SSC/25/04/11	Any Other Business (AOB)
Min. SSC/25/04/12	Closing Prayer



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Proceedings

Agenda Item	Proceedings	Agreed Action points	Person Responsible	Deadline
Min. SSC/25/04/01	Opening Prayer		Trevor Baron Omudu	
Min. SSC/25/04/02	<p>Welcome remarks from the chairperson. The chair thanked the team for attending the culture transformation session.</p> <p>Reactions There were no reactions to the chairperson's opening remarks.</p>		Brenda Namuli	
Min. SSC/25/04/03	<p>Review of the previous meeting minutes.</p> <p>Previous Meeting Minutes Action Points Trevor was to share with the business development team on the possibility of introducing a charge on institutions that take snapshots in OpenStack as opposed to backup as a service</p> <p>Brenda is to share eduroam statistics with the communications team to present quarterly top eduroam performers continuously.</p> <p>The team agreed to implement the firewall initially in the Proxmox testing environment (PVE) and present results from the tests to the rest of the team and the networks team</p> <p>Recent development is to monitor the RIF services through keycloak which means the authentication flow of these services is to be reconfigured to have all authentication requests go through keycloak. Keycloak logs are currently being visualized through logs. Derrick shared that this is still ongoing</p>		<p>Trevor Baron Omudu</p> <p>Brenda Namuli</p> <p>Isaac Newton Wobomba</p>	



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	<p>RIF Usage Statistics: Implementation of service-specific monitoring for RIF usage is in progress. The Systems team shared that the implementation for other critical services is still ongoing.</p> <p>Service Uptime Monitoring: The team is currently recording uptime for the cloud service being computed through average uptime of clusters. Derrick stated that the team aims to have full monitoring in place before the next meeting.</p> <p>Simultaneous Account Usage: Documentation was reviewed by Derrick, who flagged the complexity of modifying the number of devices per user. The implementation requires changes in both system files and the database. The team is exploring the use of Simultaneous-Use for limiting the user sessions and implementation is ongoing. New documentation has been drafted for review. Derrick shared that this is currently being tested on the OTG devices. Fred was to test on Gulu university since they had initially expressed interest.</p> <p>William to confirm whether RiskRecon was approved for purchase by Hellen</p> <p>Christian agreed to have a demo on the OpenProject application with the CERT team to determine whether it could serve as an alternative over Clickup</p> <p>Hellen is to do price reviews for institutions to cater for backup as a service and improve its up-take among institutions.</p>	<p>Implementation for other critical services is still ongoing.</p> <p>William is to confirm the approval of RiskRecon</p> <p>Christian is to setup a demo on the OpenProject application with the CERT team</p>	<p>Brenda Namuli and Benon Mugumbya</p> <p>Benon Mugumbya</p> <p>Fredrick Tamale</p> <p>William Kibirango</p> <p>Christian Kiiza</p> <p>Nakawungu, Daniel Kawuma and</p>	<p>3rd April 2025</p>
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	<p>The Systems team was to assess the commercialization of the eVA system and finalise on the integration of eVA with email and share an update</p> <p>The Systems team was to document the baseline attribute sharing for services and also include services that have unique requirements in the documentation</p> <p>Derrick proposed that Hellen review the UNCST MoU.</p> <p>Jobson shared his proposal for the two lithium batteries however the costs were more than what was budgeted for. Derrick shared that the team was to meet and deliberate such that this is handled before the 2nd May 2025 deadline shared with the team.</p> <p>Hellen was to assist in the procurement of laptops, racks and servers to speed up the process.</p> <p>Derrick to provide an update on the procurement of the UPS from Jobson.</p> <p>Hellen to follow up on section managers in regards to sharing BSCs with their members i.e CERT and Systems team</p>	<p>The Systems team was to assess the commercialization of the eVA system and finalise on the integration of eVA with email and share an update</p> <p>The Systems team was to document the baseline attribute sharing for services and also include services that have unique requirements in the documentation</p> <p>Derrick is to share an update on the purchase of the lithium batteries</p> <p>Derrick to provide an update on the procurement of the UPS from Jobson.</p>	<p>Derrick Ssemanda</p> <p>Derrick Ssemanda</p> <p>Derrick Ssemanda</p> <p>Hellen Nakawungu</p> <p>Derrick Ssemanda</p> <p>Derrick Ssemanda</p>	<p>15th April 2025</p> <p>15th April 2025</p> <p>2nd May 2025</p> <p>7th April 2025</p>
Min. SSC/25/04/04	<p>Presentation from RENU-CERT</p> <p>Reactions and Discussions</p>		Trevor Baron Omudu	



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	<p>Fredrick inquired on how the CERT team is able to determine the criticality of incidents detected or reported to the team</p> <p>Charles inquired on how the UCC team is able to detect issues of an SSH key being added to a machine. Daniel provided more clarity on how they monitor through the IDS to detect failed authentication attempts and leveraging the honeypot that UCC set up.</p> <p>Hellen asked whether the team takes action on incidents reported by the UCC team in which an individual claims they are working fine without the team inspecting or performing confirmatory checks on the host. Trevor explained that their response is limited, as the affected servers belong to member institutions. He noted that some of these institutions insist their firewalls or servers are functioning properly, even though Threat Intelligence platforms continue to flag them as sources of attacks. Hellen stressed that the team is ultimately responsible for the integrity of the RENU network. If institutions fail to act or support remediation, she said, their IPs should be blocked. She added that this stance is consistent with a prior agreement to block malicious IPs from member institutions that remain unresponsive.</p> <p>Charles asked how the attack on the downtime system occurred. Derrick explained that the entry point was the website, which was using the "root" account. He described a common attack pattern where, once a system is compromised, the attacker uses the affected user account to create cron jobs, allowing their daemon to persist on the system. While the exact method of initial access remains unclear, remediation steps included changing file ownership, adjusting</p>			
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	<p>file permissions, and updating authentication credentials.</p> <p>Derrick asked about the status of DPPA compliance, noting that there had been no recent progress. Trevor responded that compliance scores are expected to improve as the data protection audit advances. The CERT team committed to following up with a response. Hellen added that, according to feedback from the auditor, some of the required documents can also be approved internally.</p> <p>Hellen shared that the CERT team should give an introduction about some of the terminologies or tools that they talk about in their presentations such that the rest of the team knows or has an idea about what is being discussed.</p> <p>Hellen noted that the CERT team had added the BitSight ratings in their slides, which initially showed no change but have now reflected an update. She questioned the reliability of the data provided by the platform. Trevor responded that while BitSight does not distinguish between the Secretariat and the RENU ASN, it still offers a general view of the organization's network posture. Hellen then asked if subscribing to RiskRecon would provide better visibility and mentioned that she had approved its acquisition. William was assigned to provide an update on the matter.</p> <p>Hellen inquired on when the CERT team will share something tangible with the rest of the team considering the fact that the team had been sharing updates for a while without anything vividly being shared to the rest of the team. The CERT team shared that the tests for the OpenAI project were complete and that the team is currently addressing the feedback shared by the randomly selected individuals. The team</p>	<p>CERT was to share feedback about the status of the DDPA compliance.</p> <p>William to share an update on whether a requisition for Risk Recon was shared to Hellen and if at all it was approved.</p> <p>William to share an update on the requisition of the devices for the OpenAI project</p>	<p>William Kibirango</p> <p>William Kibirango</p> <p>William Kibirango</p>	
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	<p>shared that the software would be ready before the end of this month. Hellen then inquired when the devices will be ready. The team was to share an update on this in the next department meeting.</p> <p>Trevor asked the team whether Zeenode should be disconnected, given that they were not making payments and had a unique admin setup for their account that allowed them to add unlimited nodes that exist either on the RENU cloud or external clouds. Daniel proposed disabling their ability to add new machines while allowing existing ones to continue backing up. Brenda recommended deactivating the Zeenode account, moving it to the R-member group, and notifying them if any of their machines stop backing up. Hellen added that access should be revoked and the original agreement amended so that any new hosts added by Zeenode would incur additional costs.</p> <p>Daniel asked whether the UNCST team had been approached with a proposal to migrate from ISP Config to cPanel with Immunity360. The proposal involved setting up a virtual machine, installing cPanel, and passing the associated costs to UNCST. He noted this was prompted by repeated instances of their website being compromised.</p> <p>Daniel asked whether any machines at the Secretariat were running Debian OS, as Prey was not functioning on them and currently supports only Windows and Ubuntu. Newton confirmed that there is only one Debian machine at the Secretariat, which belongs to Joshua Erias.</p> <p>Newton asked Daniel whether they had considered setting up a reverse proxy in front of the cPanel server to help mask it. Daniel</p>	<p>Trevor to work on revoking access to the Zeenode account and sharing a communication with the finance team in regards to pricing incase Zeenode onboarded new external cloud machines.</p> <p>Trevor is to reach out to the UNCST team to propose this idea to them.</p>	<p>Trevor Baron Omudu</p>	
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	responded that he would provide more details on this option outside the meeting.			
Min. SSC/25/04/05	<p>Presentation on Redstor from the RENU CERT.</p> <p>Trevor shared that there was nothing new on Redstor</p> <p>Reactions and Discussions</p>		Trevor Baron Omudu	



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Min.
SSC/25/04/06

Presentation from Systems Team.

Reactions and Discussions

Daniel inquired about the switch Samuel had mentioned, which was replaced by a Juniper EX40100, and asked why RENU should replace the Nexus switch for UCU. Fred explained that the UCU servers initially had their own switch, resulting in two switches: the UCU switch and the colocation switch. Both were replaced with a single Juniper switch. Hellen asked about the number of U's, and Fredrick responded that it was only one U.

Daniel inquired about JCRC, which had conducted an audit, and asked whether the audit was in response to the disk failure issues. Fredrick clarified that the audit was not focused on the disk failure. Instead, the JCRC team visited to assess the status of their server, including how it is powered and how redundancy is maintained. He added that the audit was targeting JCRC's internal IT team, not RENU, and that RENU was only involved because we host their server.

Daniel followed up on Samuel's earlier point that other departments had procured laptops based on information shared with them. He questioned why we share knowledge with departments that end up procuring laptops before us. Fredrick responded that those departments were purchasing Dell Vostros, which are cheaper and more readily available.

Daniel asked whether there was an ongoing solution to the disk failure on the Pn-1 node and what its impact was. Derrick responded that they had reached out to providers for an emergency quotation on replacement disks. He

Samuel
Wekobosya

Ref: RENU-MIN-SS-25-4

Issue No.01

Rev.No.00

Revision Date: N/A



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	<p>mentioned that Banyan had already submitted a quotation, and they were waiting for Mantra's quotation to compare prices before submitting a requisition. He also noted that the service is still up, and this requisition will be handled separately—it will not be merged with others.</p> <p>Hellen asked whether the disk was still under warranty. Daniel explained that warranties typically last for three years, and in this case, the warranty had expired.</p> <p>Hellen encouraged the team to act more quickly in emergency situations, especially when a trusted service provider has a viable solution.</p> <p>Derrick Ayesigye shared that the image on the email hosting slide was not conveying the right meaning in regards to the content shared on the slide.</p> <p>Charles inquired about the own-cloud redesign and what is happening around that task. Derrick Ssemenda shared that the goal is to move to next-cloud while still maintaining the existing data and implementing Multi-Factor Authentication</p> <p>Hellen asked what the Faras team had not understood during their initial meeting with the RENU team. Brenda contradicted that perception and responded that a follow-up meeting had been scheduled to further clarify expectations. She also mentioned that the Faras team indicated it would be difficult to arrange a meeting at the start of the month due to tight schedules.</p>	<p>Systems team is to share an update on the migration of data from own-cloud to next-cloud</p> <p>Brenda was to share feedback on this and also respond to Michel</p>	<p>Fredrick Tamale</p> <p>Brenda Namuli</p>	
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	<p>Hellen shared that Michel from GEANT had responded regarding RIF, but there had been no reply to her email. She asked for feedback from our side and the proposed way forward. Brenda explained that the next step was for the GEANT team to integrate us into the service, as the IdPs had already been tested. Hellen also requested that the team reach out to SafeBoda through Salwa and that the contact person should share feedback to her before her next meeting which was on Tuesday 8th April, 2025.</p> <p>Hellen also inquired about the email issue that the team experienced this week. Derrick shared that given the issue on emails that happened this week, the team did not want to report about it. He shared that the recent issue only happened because the subscription to the outlook relay had elapsed hence blocking all outgoing mails; however the temporary solution was to route the mails through the existing gateway within the institution. Hellen requested Newton to reach out to William to reach out to the Tellistic team to follow up on the NGO subscription offer.</p>	<p>William was to provide an update on this and how the resolution was done.</p>	<p>William Kibirango</p>	
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	<p>users of this biometric feature from facing the same issue, given that the same API is being used.</p> <p>Brenda asked about the website defacement issues the software team had encountered and the possible entry point used by the attacker. Daniel emphasized the importance of identifying the exact path the attacker took to prevent future bypasses or defacements of the same host. He also noted that the issue should be marked as closed rather than resolved, since no concrete action had been taken to address it.</p> <p>Newton asked about the progress of the OTG firmware. Charles reported that the team had reviewed the entire firmware to enable monitoring via SNMP and to track resource usage, as there are many running packages. He confirmed that the firmware has been tested and is working. Charles added that they plan to hold a presentation for the team and will invite all relevant members to the meeting.</p>			
Min. SSC/25/04/09	<p>Remarks from the Line Supervisor</p> <p>Hellen reiterated that she was still waiting for the BSCs from the teams. Derrick Ssemenda responded that both he and William had already shared their input with her and were now waiting for her feedback.</p> <p>Hellen emphasized that the team should close out their action points promptly to avoid spending too much time on the same issues.</p>		Hellen Nakawungu	
Min. SSC/25/04/10	<p>Discuss the date for the next meeting</p> <p>This was not done but the next chair was to share an available date for the next meeting with the team.</p>			
Min. SSC/25/04/11	Any Other Business (AOB)			



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Min. SSC/25/04/12	Closing Prayer		Fredrick Tamale	
	The Chairperson closed the meeting at 1:50pm EAT.			