

Cirriculum Vitae

FRANCIS ALWYN COOMANS

CYBERSECURITY SPECIALIST | OFFENSIVE SECURITY CONSULTANT | OSCP, CPTS, CWES | 25+ YRS IT & SECURITY

Contact Details

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Summary

Cybersecurity Specialist and Offensive Security Consultant with 25+ years of IT experience across systems, networking, and security. OSCP (2025), HTB CPTS and CWES certified, with hands-on expertise in penetration testing, red teaming, and adversary simulation. Ranked "Pro Hacker" on Hack The Box, with practical experience compromising numerous machines and publishing professional pentest-style reports in the Reports section of my website.

Previously led enterprise IT operations at ACTOM (Pty) Ltd, including Active Directory deployments for 500+ users, enterprise security audits, and group-wide infrastructure projects. This dual background in IT management and offensive security enables me to bridge the gap between defense and attack—identifying vulnerabilities while understanding their operational and business impact.

Now seeking local or remote international roles where I can apply both technical depth and practical business insight to help organisations strengthen their security posture.

Key Achievements

- Earned my **Bachelor of Commerce in Business Informatics (Cum Laude)** from the **University of South Africa**, studying part-time while working full-time.
- Achieved "Pro Hacker" rank on Hack The Box (top 1% globally), demonstrating real-world exploitation of numerous vulnerable systems.
- Ranked top 1% on HTB Academy, with mastery in penetration testing, red teaming, and adversary simulation labs.
- Earned CPTS and CWES certifications after completing the course tracks and the 10 day and 7 day practical exams respectively.
- Earned OSCP certification after completing 70+ labs and a 24-hour practical exam focused on real-world penetration testing.
- Transitioned from 25 years in enterprise IT to offensive security consulting, leveraging unique dual expertise in defense and attack.

Professional Experience

Cybersecurity Specialist | Self-Directed Training

June 2023 – Present

Focus on bridging the gap between IT Admin and Cybersecurity.

- Earned OSCP, CPTS, and CWES certifications through 70+ OffSec labs and advanced HackTheBox challenges.
- Compromised 42+ machines across AD, network, and web environments, simulating real-world penetration tests.
- Exploited vulnerabilities including SQL injection, XSS, Kerberoasting, command injection, and privilege escalation.
- Ranked Pro Hacker (top 1%) on HackTheBox and Top 1% on HTB Academy, validating hands-on expertise.
- Built reporting skills using SysReptor and delivered structured write-ups for CTFs and retired HTB machines.

Group IT Administrator | ACTOM (Pty) Ltd, Gauteng, South Africa

November 1997 – April 2023

ACTOM is a large corporate in the Energy Manufacturing sector.

- Cybersecurity Leadership: Trained 500+ staff on phishing awareness and mentored IT technicians across business units.
- Risk Reduction: Performed vulnerability assessments with Greenbone/OpenVAS, enforced RBAC/Least Privilege, and hardened AD against attacks (e.g., Kerberoasting).
- Network Security: Deployed firewalls, VPNs, and VLANs across 10+ sites; managed endpoint security and patch compliance.
- Systems Administration: Managed AD/GPOs for 500+ users; administered M365, Domino, and Linux environments; automated operations with PowerShell, Python, and Bash.
- Major Projects:
 - Head Office IT Infrastructure (2021–22): Planned, Configured and maintained servers, networks, VLANs, and firewalls.
 - Server Room Build (2022): Designed & secured a new server room facility.
 - Virtualisation (2016–22): Consolidated infrastructure via Hyper-V and XenServer, cutting hardware costs, simplifying administration, providing high availability and reliable backups (and DR planning and testing).
 - O365 Migration (2020): Migrated from IBM/HCL Domino with Barracuda integration.
- Audits & Compliance: Drove internal IT audits, asset/license reconciliation, and liaised with Microsoft/Autodesk during compliance checks.

Finance Clerk | REUMECH/REUTECH Head Office, South Africa

1997

REUMECH/REUTECH was a large Arms manufacturer, but the Holding company Reunert closed down the Head Office function in 1997 and merged all business units with sister companies.

- Compiled daily cash flow reports and prepared cheques.

Education

Bachelor of Commerce in Business Informatics (Cum Laude) | University of South Africa

2018 – 2021

- Graduated with 25 distinctions, demonstrating consistent academic excellence.
- Coursework included SQL databases, programming, networks, project management, and internal auditing.

Certifications

Offensive Security Certified Professional (OSCP) | Offensive Security

June 2025

Hands-on certification (24-hour exam) in advanced penetration testing, exploiting and securing AD, networks, and web apps. Completed 70+ labs.

Certified Penetration Testing Specialist (HTB CPTS) | Hack the Box

September 2024

10-day practical exam covering network and web exploitation, privilege escalation, pivoting and professional reporting.

Certified Web Exploitation Specialist (HTB CWES) | Hack the Box

November 2023

7-day practical exam in advanced web application exploitation and bug bounty methodologies.

CompTIA PenTest+ | CompTIA

May 2024

Validated skills in penetration testing, exploitation, and vulnerability management.

CompTIA Security+ | CompTIA

June 2023

Foundational certification in security principles, risk management, and network defense.

Additional Certifications

Red Hat Certified Engineer (RHCE), Linux Professional Institute Certified (LPIC-1), Mikrotik Certified Network Administrator (MTCNA).

Technical Skills

Hands-on expertise across offensive security, enterprise IT infrastructure, and automation — bridging the gap between attack and defense.

Offensive Security & Pentesting

- Tools: Kali Linux, Burp Suite, Metasploit, Nmap, Wireshark, Ligolo-ng, SysReptor, etc.
- Techniques: SQL Injection, XSS, Privilege Escalation, Kerberoasting, Pivoting, etc.

Cybersecurity & Risk Management

- Vulnerability Assessment, Red Teaming, Endpoint Protection, Patch Management, Compliance Audits (Microsoft, Autodesk)

Systems & Infrastructure

- Active Directory & Group Policies, Windows Server, Linux Administration, Microsoft 365
- Virtualisation: Hyper-V, Citrix XenServer

Networking & Security

- Switches, VLANs, Firewalls, VPNs, Network Security

Scripting & Automation

- Python, Bash, PowerShell

References

Available upon request.