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BELNET expands services in computer security

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Thanks to the membership, the CERT has information faster and obtains more confidential information on security problems. This means BELNET can provide its customers with better services.It's not just the customers who are benefiting from the FIRST membership. The BELNET CERT is also enhancing the FIRST data with recommendations and publishes them several times a day on its website and in its weekly newsletter, which anyone can subscribe to. The CERT's technical information is mainly aimed at network and system managers.International consultationAs a member of FIRST, the CERT exchanges knowledge, experience, skills, methods, guidelines and procedures with 170 accredited teams that are active worldwide in the business, government, academic or military world in network and computer security.From now on BELNET will receive encoded and highly reliable reports about incidents, leaks, vulnerabilities, threats, targets, trends and patches that are often only obtained afterwards through other sources. This means that the CERT can anticipate and solve common problems faster, for example phishing (imitation sites that try to get hold of personal data), botnets (so-called zombie networks of infected computers that carry out attacks autonomously), viruses and worms. As a member of FIRST, the CERT also has access to the non-public part of the FIRST website.Besides informal and ad hoc consultations, there is a formal gathering with the other members four times a year. Each year a conference is held where they define a roadmap for the future. There are three technical meetings a year where the members discuss controversial issues relating to security.Up to two months gainedCandidate members have to demonstrate their added value before they are allowed to join the international collaboration. During the membership procedure for FIRST, the BELNET CERT successfully completed nine steps in a few months. Two members, the Dutch research network Surfnet and the Slovene CERT, nominated the BELNET CERT and vouched for it after the screening process. Among other things the audit included an investigation of the operation and the support that the security team enjoys from the management."This summer the CERT has been in existence for two years and right from the start we had our eyes on becoming a member of FIRST," says Pierre Bruyère, general manager of BELNET. "Security is becoming more and more important and in this world too time is critical for not being overtaken by events. Because of FIRST we know more and we achieve time savings of one to two months. That is often the difference between averting a catastrophe and clearing up the mess after the disaster has already happened."More information at http://cert.belnet.be and http://www.first.orgAbout BELNET - "The network of knowledge"The government agency BELNET provides broadband Internet access to Belgian educational institutions, research centres and government departments. More than 550,000 end users have access to bandwidths of up to 2.5 gigabits per second; this is around one thousand times faster than the Internet access available to most consumers. References include all Belgian universities and most non-university higher education institutions, the computer network of the Federal Government departments (FedMAN), all federal scientific institutes, the larger public research centres and various government administrations. BELNET provides high-quality, secure Internet access via CERT (Computer Emergency Response Team) and a direct

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connection with worldwide research networks, including the American Internet2 and the European Géant. A pioneer on the internet, BELNET was founded in 1993 on the initiative of the Federal Research Policy. The network continues to further the cause of research, training and scientific co-operation.For more information, please go to http://www.belnet.be and http://cert.belnet.beBELNETVeerle Custers, external communications managerWetenschapsstraat 4, B-1000 BrusselsT: +32 (0)2 790 33 33E: veerle.custers@belnet.beMedia Contact:Quadrant CommunicationsBart InslegersFranklin Rooseveltlaan 348, B-9000 GhentT: +32 (0)9 265 0258M: +32 (0)472 480 186E: bart@quadrantcommunications.beSee also http://www.quadrantcommunications.be/downloads/belnet