SG 17 Focus Group "Security Baseline for Network Operators"
Updated terms of reference (December 2006)

1 Scope

The objective of the FG is to develop a security baseline for network operators to help advance the work of the ITU-T SG 17 and to encourage the participation in this activity of members of other standards organizations, including experts and individuals who may not be members of ITU.

2 Terms of Reference

To define a security baseline which network operators may use to assess the status of their network and information security in terms of what security standards are available, which of these standards may be used to meet particular requirements, when they may be used, and how they may be applied. An operator's implementation of these recommended practices may be a factor that other operators, users and law enforcement authorities take into account in determining a network operator's readiness and ability to provide secure network services.

3 Leadership

Chairman: Arkadiy Kremer (Russian Association for Networks and Services)

Vice-Chairman: Luis Cardoso (Portugal Telecom)

4 Participation

The FG may include experts from the ITU members and other non-member organizations (such as administrations, network operators, manufacturers, industry trade organizations, user groups, insurance companies, lawyers, and law enforcement organizations).

A list of participants is to be maintained and reported to SG 17.

5 Financing

The FG will be self-funded by its members.

Meetings will be funded by volunteer hosting organizations.

6 Administrative support

The TSB Secretariat will provide basic administrative support from ITU-T headquarters.

7 Meeting Logistics

The frequency and location of meetings will be determined by the FG.

Electronic document handling will be used as much as possible.

8 Working language

The working languages will be determined by agreement of the FG participants.

9 Technical contributions

Any FG member may submit a technical contribution. Electronic submissions are strongly encouraged.

10   Patent policy

The FG will follow the ITU-T practice.

11   Deliverables

The FG is expected to develop proposals for ITU-T Recommendations for consideration by WP 2/17.

From a range of security recommendations, selection will be made of only those that meet the following criteria:

- already adhered to by most of network operators or recognized by them as essential,
- suitable even to small operators (their implementation will not cause financial hardship),
- will positively affect the security of other operators and network as a whole.

The objective is to deliver proposals for ITU-T Recommendation on "Security Baseline for Network Operators" X.sbno to ITU-T SG 17, WP 2/17 meeting in April 2007.

12   Approval of deliverables

The FG will follow a consensus process.

13   Distribution of documentation

The FG will distribute its documentation electronically via Email and the ITU-T web site.

14   Working methods

The FG will be contribution-driven. It will work electronically and by face-to-face meetings. Meetings will be held as determined by the FG and will be announced in accordance with ITU-T procedures.

15   Progress reports

As required by ITU-T procedures, the FG will report in writing to each SG 17 meeting.

16   Announcement of Focus Group formation

The formation of the FG will be announced in cooperation with the SG 17 and TSAG via ITU publications and other means, including communication with other organizations and/or experts, technical journals and the World Wide Web.

17   Methodology

The FG will generate an output document on recommended best security practices for operators to consider. An operator's implementation of these recommended practices may be a factor that other operators, users and law enforcement authorities take into account in determining the readiness and ability of operators to provide secure network services. In developing an output document, the FG should consider the need to balance between:

- costs and value,
- national legislations and self-regulatory practices,
- interests of consumers, operators and regulators,
- bring to the creation of evidence base and ad hoc law enforcement.

In developing an output document, the FG should, as far as possible, take into account the technological peculiarities of different operators. Some recommendations are universally applicable to all operators; however others will need to address specific technical environments.

In developing an output document, the FG should rank all measures according to their potential impact and their estimated implementation cost. All of the measures included in an output document must be verifiable. Measures that cannot be verified, that involve extensive resources, or that require access to confidential information, should not be included in an output document of the FG.

In developing an output document the usability of the recommendations implementation should be taken into account.

The approach represented by the security baseline is an interface between a network operator's business model and its ability and readiness to collaborate with the other entities for counteracting security threats.

It's important that the security baseline address the expected outcomes of the recommendations rather than means of their implementation.

18   Action plan (to be completed by September 2007)

- To publish on the ITU-T web-site the FG on "Security Baseline for Network Operators" proposals for a new ITU-T Recommendation X.sbno.

- To add a new point concerning the permission of an operator to use the comments on proposals without naming of respondent in the final FG report on responses analysis.

- To appoint a deadline for comments on 30th of March.

- Receive and analyze not less than 20 responses. It's very welcome if SG 17 and SG 2 members will use their resources to prepare responses or/and ask about this their partners.

- Prepare and conduct two FG meetings in conjunction with the international telecommunication events:

    7th International Security Conference, to be held 5-6 April 2007 in Moscow, Russia,

    8th International Conference «IP-technologies and IP-services», to be held 11-13 September 2007 in Moscow, Russia,

- To develop proposals for identification of risks and evaluation of risks and vulnerabilities by the network provider that could lead to the violation of the security baseline.

- To develop proposals for security policies elaboration corresponding to the security baseline requirements.

- To develop proposals for the creation and implementation of the proposed security baseline procedures.

- To develop proposals for a new ITU-T Recommendation X.sbno for consideration at the SG 17, WP 2/17 meeting in April 2007 in Geneva.

19   Collaboration

The objective of the security baseline is to facilitate the ability and readiness of the operators to work together for their own and network security. It is hoped that these recommendations on best

practices will improve the interface between a network operator's business model and its collaboration with other entities for counteracting security threats.

To design such a set of recommendations, a strong collaboration is required between administrations, network operators, manufactures, industry trade organizations, user groups, insurance companies, lawyers, and law enforcement organizations.

Collaboration is necessary with ITU-T SG 2 and other SGs of ITU-T. Collaboration is also necessary with relevant SDOs and Consortia/Forums.