

The 2006 ResNet Security Practices and Policies Survey continues efforts to understand and expand knowledge of security practices and policies used in connection with residential computer networks on college and university campuses. This survey of 101 institutions follows up on previous surveys conducted by the ResNet organization and the ResNet Applied Research Group focused on or encompassing security. This is a brief description of the methodology employed in constructing and analyzing data collected using the survey instrument employed in this research.

The survey was conducted online and the survey instrument constructed in January and February of 2006. The specific concerns addressed by and questions asked in the survey were determined in large part by results of and feedback from the 2005 ResNet Survey (Bullard, Futey, Gerenstein, Guidry, & Pee, 2005) and 2004 ResNet Vulnerability Survey (ResNet Steering Committee, 2004). The results of these surveys were supplemented by observations of current and recent concerns expressed by subscribers of the ResNet-L listserv and input solicited from members of the Internet2 SALSA-NetAuth Working Group and the Effective Practices Working Group within the EDUCAUSE/Internet2 Computer and Network Security Task Force. The survey was piloted in early February, 2006, with select members of the ResNet Applied Research Group, the ResNet Steering Committee, Effective Practices Working Group within the EDUCAUSE/Internet2 Computer and Network Security Task Force, Internet2 SALSA-NetAuth Working Group and , and content experts at various institutions. The survey was open from March 27, 2006, until April 7, 2006. Institutions were invited to participate via e-mails sent to several listservs:

- ResNet-L, a very active listserv with over 1700 subscribers dedicated to issues surrounding residential computer networks
- Association of Computing Machinery (ACM) Special Interest Group on University and College Computing Services (SIGUCCS)

- Association of College and University Housing Officer - International (ACUHO-I) IT (ACUHO-I-IT)
- EDUCAUSE CIO listserv members
- Effective Practices Working Group within the EDUCAUSE/Internet2 Computer and Network Security Task Force
- Internet2 SALSA-NetAuth Working Group

Although 101 institutions responded with complete or substantially complete surveys, the precise response rate can not be calculated as neither the number of members of the population nor the number of subscribers to each of the listservs are known. The researchers are confident in asserting that the results of this survey can not be easily generalized to the entire population as the characteristics of the population are unknown and thus it is impossible to determine how this group of respondents compares to or represents the population. Given the relatively small size of this group of respondents, it is likely that the respondents differ in one or more significant ways from the population.

Thirty of the thirty-five questions were multiple-choice. Many questions included an additional response option allowing respondents to supply responses not included in the predefined choices or were followed immediately afterwards by a question allowing respondents to add additional choices or supply additional information. Responses to those questions were analyzed using standard qualitative coding procedures (Creswell, 2002; Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995) and a constant comparative method to draw meaning from the data (Merriam, 1998). In brief, two researchers independently assigned each response to one or more progressively broader topics with the third researcher assisting in arbitrating differences and helping the researchers reach consensus and congruence in their coding. In some cases, those additional responses were added to the

predefined choices in post-survey analysis. In other cases, the responses were too few or too divergent to add to the predefined choices for the appropriate question and are simply enumerated or described in broad terms in the appropriate section of the survey report.

References

- Bullard, K., Futey, D., Gerenstein, J., Guidry, K., & Pee, C. (2005). *2005 ResNet Survey Results: A Baseline Analysis*. EDUCAUSE Center for Applied Research (ECAR) Research Bulletin Volume 2005, Issue 20.
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