Claudia Diaz and Apu Kapadia

Editors' Introduction

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It is our great pleasure to introduce the third issue of the second volume of PoPETs, an open access journal that publishes articles accepted to the annual Privacy Enhancing Technologies Symposium (PETS). Articles submitted to this issue were reviewed by 77 members of the Editorial Board, all of whom are internationally recognized researchers in the field of computer security and privacy.

Starting with PETS 2015, the PET Board, which oversees PETS, decided to follow a hybrid conference-journal model following in the footsteps of PVLDB.[1] A hybrid model brings journal-style reviewing to conferences to improve the quality of published articles as well as to provide more predictable, but rigorously peer-reviewed, paths to acceptance for authors. PoPETs publishes four issues per year, accepting submissions every three months. Reviews are conducted similarly to conferences, including bidding, individual reviews, author rebuttals, discussion among reviewers, and consensus recommendation. Decisions are provided to authors two months after submission. Recognizing the need to increase the availability of the publication, PoPETs is now published under the open-access Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs license.

To avoid conflicts of interest, the editorial board membership was published before submissions were opened and authors were asked to identify members who should not review their article. In addition, editorial board members were asked to identify any conflicts of interest the authors did not list, and the editorial board chairs also checked for any missed conflicts. Editorial board members were welcome to submit articles, but the chairs were not.

There were 62 submissions to this issue of PoPETs, most of which were assigned for review to four members of the editorial board (in a few cases, articles received three or more than four reviews). External experts were recruited to review certain articles where necessary. Eight of the submissions for this issue had already been submitted to a previous PoPETs issue, and been invited to resubmit after major revisions. These eight submissions were re-assigned the same reviewers. Additionally, two articles that had been submitted and rejected from a previous issue of the journal, were resubmitted to this issue. These revised versions were assigned the same reviewers that had evaluated it in a previous round whenever possible. Authors of resubmitted articles (either rejected or invited to do major revisions) were asked to provide a summary of changes between the prior and current version that explained how review concerns had been addressed.

Following a first phase of double-blind individual reviews, the reviews were sent to authors, who were given the opportunity to submit a rebuttal. After the rebuttal period there was a discussion among the reviewers, other members of the editorial board and the chairs, before a consensus decision on the paper was reached. One of the reviewers was then selected to write a meta-review that summarized the conclusion of the discussion and the justification for the decision. Of the 62 submissions, three were accepted with minor changes and nine were conditionally accepted subject to minor revisions. An editorial board member was assigned as a shepherd for the articles that required minor revisions, and asked to ensure that the important points from the meta-review were addressed in the camera-ready version. The twelve articles were ultimately accepted and are published in this issue. We owe special thanks to all the shepherds for the effort they've put into ensuring that these important changes were made.

The authors of 17 other articles were invited to resubmit to a future issue of PoPETs after having made major revisions that address the issues identified in the meta-review. Provided these articles are submitted to the next PoPETs two submission deadlines, they will be reviewed by the same editorial board members (whenever possible) and judged against how well the authors have addressed the points raised in the meta-review.

The remaining 32 articles were rejected due to them not being considered sufficiently close to the topics listed in the call for papers, or due to issues deeper than what could be addressed within the four months allowed for a resubmission with major revisions. In this case the meta-review endeavored to provide constructive com-

Claudia Diaz: KU Leuven, E-mail: claudia.diaz@esat.kuleuven.be
Apu Kapadia: Indiana University Bloomington, E-mail: kapadia@indiana.edu

1 http://www.vldb.org/pvldb/index.html

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ments to the authors to allow them to improve their article. Authors are still permitted to resubmit to future issues of PoPETs but the articles would be treated as new submissions.

The ten accepted articles for Issue 3 of this 2016 volume will join the submissions accepted in the first two issues, and the remaining issue of the volume to form the program for PETS 2016, which will be held from July 19–22, 2016 in Darmstadt, Germany.

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Sincerely,

Claudia Diaz and Apu Kapadia

Program Co-Chairs of PETS 2016 and Co-Editors-in-Chief of PoPETs volume 2016.