

# COINS Steering Committee

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*Meeting 2014-01-15*

*Minutes: Hanno Langweg*

Time: 2014-01-15T1430 – 2014-01-15T1600

Place: Skype

Participants:

- Steering Committee (SC) members: Einar Snekkenes (Scientific Director COINS), Tor Helleseth (University of Bergen), Hanno Langweg (Gjøvik University College), Stig Frode Mjølsnes (NTNU), Vladimir Oleshchuk (University of Agder), Pankaj Pandey (Student), Ragnar Soleng (University of Tromsø), Ctirad Sousedik (Student)



## Agenda

1. Meeting minutes 2013-11-18
2. Status
  - a. Action items from previous meetings
  - b. Admission of students
  - c. coinsrs.no
3. Review of Ph.D. student seminar
4. Suggestions from FRISC Industrial Advisory Board
5. SC members, students, supervisors – how to integrate supervisors better in COINS?
6. Tromsø Ph.D. seminar/winter school 2014 prior to NordSec, Metochi summer school 2015
7. Plans for 2014
  - a. Student Researcher Grant
  - b. COINS at Finse winter school
  - c. Common course description for COINS activities, ECTS for COINS
  - d. Overview and discussion of existing Ph.D. courses
  - e. Sharing of teaching material
  - f. Discussion of teaching methods in information security
  - g. Ph.D. student seminar
  - h. Academic Advisory Board 2014 in Finse (Mon) or Tromsø with NordSec (Wed)
8. Budget
9. Reporting to RCN 2014-10-01
10. Miscellaneous

Student representatives Pankaj Pandey and Ctirad Sousedik were welcomed to their first SC meeting.

## Meeting minutes 2013-11-18

No change requests to latest meeting's minutes were put forward.

## Status

### Action items from previous meetings

1. Backlinks to coinsrs.no from uia.no and uis.no have not been documented. This issue is still not completed after almost a year.
2. Reporting of own contribution (in terms of time, equipment, space, cash) is documented from HiG, NTNU, UiT. UiA will provide a report shortly, UiB will check status internally. No updates from UiO and UiS.

### Admission of students

Currently, 36 students are members of COINS, 2 have graduated and are COINS alumni.

### coinsrs.no

The website <http://www.coinsrs.no> now offers faster statistics, a registration option for candidates interested in future scholarships, publishes weekly portraits of registered Ph.D. students. It is a main communication channel to people outside of COINS. Backlinks to coinsrs.no exist from uio.no, uit.no, hig.no, they still need to be added from ntnu.no, uia.no, uib.no, uis.no.

## Review of Ph.D. student seminar

The Ph.D. student seminar took place at Stavanger Forum and at UiS on two half days in November last year. 13 COINS students participated, as well as 3 supervisors, a master student, and an international researcher. Students presented their Ph.D. projects to each other, interviewed supervisors on a panel, and discussed their experience with pursuing a Ph.D. degree in information security in Norway. Students from most COINS consortium members were present. It is planned to host another seminar prior to the NordSec conference which is going to take place in Tromsø in October this year.

Feedback from participants pointed out the good preparation of the seminar, facilities and food, and the social activities that enabled students to get together in an informal setting. Improvements for the next seminar should focus on allocating more time for presentations and discussions, and to increase participation of supervisors for at least part of the seminar.

## Suggestions from FRISC Industrial Advisory Board

The FRISC Industrial Advisory Board met in November last year. They were introduced to COINS and its activities and formulated two recommendations to COINS from a national industrial perspective.

The proposed COINS Student Researcher Grant that encourages companies to sponsor the visit of a promising Ph.D. candidate and to potentially develop applications for Industrial Ph.D. funding, was welcomed and it was suggested to actively promote the grant scheme to FRISC company members.

Some jobs in information security positions in Norway require the ability to obtain a security clearance to stay employed. This holds especially for positions related to cryptography, the police force, and suppliers in the defence sector. Ph.D. candidates with passports from countries whose citizens typically experience difficulties in obtaining clearance should be informed about restrictions to employment early in the process so that a deliberate choice can be made whether to pursue a Ph.D. in information security in Norway.

### **SC members, students, supervisors – how to integrate supervisors better in COINS?**

There are ca. 25 supervisors for less than 40 active COINS students. 8 supervisors are active in the SC, others have not yet shown significant interest in contributing to COINS. Reasons to include more supervisors in activities comprise drawing on additional experience in supervision, extension of contact networks of young researchers, joint publications, expert/job search, and distribution of duties related to COINS activities.

Approaches that were discussed included invitation of supervisors to physical meeting places like the Finse winter school, Metochi summer school, the Ph.D. student seminar. It seems to be easier to move students around or to find a nice location to attract supervisors. A web forum was discussed, but also sceptical voices were raised as regards intensity of use. The most probable outcome will likely be marketing of the Finse winter school to supervisors, including e.g. an evening session on Ph.D. training, and having part of the next Ph.D. student seminar together with supervisors, e.g. immediately prior to NordSec.

### **Tromsø Ph.D. seminar/winter school 2014 prior to NordSec, Metochi summer school 2015**

There will be no Metochi summer school in 2014 to avoid having too many COINS events competing for participation. Instead, the Ph.D. seminar will be co-located with NordSec in Tromsø, and the first Metochi summer school will be held in 2015.

**Action item: Vladimir Oleshchuk (UiA) will investigate the availability of the Metochi study centre between middle of May 2015 and October 2015 and propose dates that do not conflict with major information security conferences/events.**

An organising committee should include representatives from all consortium members (not necessarily those serving on the SC), and should provide a liaison to the SC.

## Plans for 2014

### Student Researcher Grant

The COINS Student Researcher Grant scheme has been communicated to McAfee in Norway and Europe. Feedback is pending. SC members recommend to raise awareness about this funding and recruitment scheme among supervisors. Accepting a grant for only a short period might be considered risky by potential candidates, and combining a sponsored stay with e.g. completing a master's thesis could be a more attractive option for some.

### COINS at Finse winter school

The Finse winter school will be organised by FRISC in 2014 and 2015 before hosting the event under the COINS label starting in 2016. 32 rooms have reserved from 4 May to 9 May. In case of increased interest, double occupancy is available for most of the rooms to increase capacity. Invitations will be sent in January, even though the list of guest lecturers is not confirmed as complete. The participation fee will be kr. 4 500 for a full week, as last year, and COINS will cover the participation fee and travel costs for its active students.

### Common course description for COINS activities, ECTS for COINS

The draft discussed last time needs to be updated and will then be checked again by HiG's studienemnda.

**Action item: Hanno Langweg (HiG) will update the course description.**

### Overview and discussion of existing Ph.D. courses

A survey of existing Ph.D. courses relevant to information security students in Norway discovered ca. 40 courses with 5-10 ECTS each. It might be more efficient to move students around to reduce the effort spent on teaching these courses and to have a higher number of students per class.

**Action item: Discussion of Ph.D. courses should be an item on the agenda of the next SC meeting.**

### Sharing of teaching material

**Action item: Sharing of teaching material should be an item on the agenda of the next SC meeting.**

### Discussion of teaching methods in information security

**Action item: Discussion of teaching methods should be an item on the agenda of the next SC meeting.**

### Ph.D. student seminar

Ragnar Soleng (UiT) volunteers to become the local organising chair for the next Ph.D. student seminar in Tromsø, potentially together with Jan Roksvold (UiT). Student

representatives on the SC will find out which additional students are going to support the preparation.

Academic Advisory Board 2014 in Finse (Mon) or Tromsø with NordSec (Wed)

The next Academic Advisory Board meeting will be held on 15 October in Tromsø.

### **Budget**

Not all consortium members have reported their own contribution to COINS in terms of time, equipment, space, cash for 2013. The budget agreed upon with Forskningsrådet requires all COINS consortium members to contribute to trigger matching funding from Forskningsrådet. Consortium members are strongly encouraged to review their contribution related to their pledges, the number of Ph.D. students and supervisors in COINS, and to report as-yet unreported contributions for 2013.

No changes for 2014 compared to last SC meeting.

### **Reporting to RCN 2014-10-01**

This item serves as a reminder that the next report to Forskningsrådet needs to be sent by the end of September 2014.

### **Miscellaneous**

Yi-Ching Liao and Berglind Smaradottir will attend the Security Divas conference for women in information security on 16/17 January in Gjøvik. The conference is hosted by NorSIS. COINS sponsors travel, accommodation, and participation.