Richard D. Pethia Inducted into FIRST's Incident Response Hall of Fame

Pioneer behind the first CERT honored for launching a global movement in cybersecurity

COPENHAGEN, JUNE 25, 2025 - [The Forum of Incident Response and Security Teams](#) (FIRST) announced the induction of Richard (Rich) D. Pethia into its prestigious Incident Response Hall of Fame during [FIRSTCON25](#), the premier global cybersecurity conference for 37 years. Pethia is being recognized for his foundational contributions to the field of cyber incident response – most notably, creating the world's first Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT/CC) and helping ignite a global movement to build resilience through coordinated response.

As the founding director of the CERT® Coordination Center (CERT/CC), now part of the CERT Division of the Carnegie Mellon University Software Engineering Institute (CMU SEI), Pethia's vision and leadership helped shape the modern practice of cybersecurity incident response. Under his tenure, CERT evolved from a single response team into a world-renowned hub for technical research, workforce development, and global capacity building.

"Rich's vision is woven into the DNA of FIRST," said Chris Gibson, CEO of FIRST. "His belief in collaboration, transparency, and capacity building helped turn a technical response team into a global movement. The network of CSIRTs we see today is a direct result of the path he carved."

CERT/CC was among the founding members of FIRST in 1990 and hosted the organization's earliest meetings. Pethia was one of the authors of the original FIRST Operational Framework and was elected by the founding members to be the organization's Steering Committee Chair. Under Pethia's direction, the team created the first training courses and the widely adopted Handbook for CSIRTs, laying the groundwork for how incident response is practiced today. CERT/CC played a vital role in establishing teams around the world, including US-CERT (now part of DHS CISA), AusCERT, JPCERT, Q-CERT, and many others.

Beyond incident response, Pethia expanded CERT/CC's work into areas such as malware analysis, insider threat, risk and resilience management, and vulnerability research. His influence helped embed core principles into the FIRST CSIRT Services Framework, a lasting contribution that continues to guide teams globally.

"Countless people and organizations, including myself, have benefited from Rich Pethia's leadership, technical acumen, and strategic vision," said Brigadier General (Ret.) Greg Touhill, current CERT Division Director and former U.S. Federal CISO. "He did not just create the world's

first CERT, he arguably launched the entire cyber incident response discipline. Few people have had such a profound positive effect on making the world a safer place."

Pethia joins a distinguished group of [Hall of Fame inductees](#) including Cristine Hoepers, Andrew Cormack, Jeffrey Carpenter, Dan Kaminsky, Ian Cook, Don Stikvoort, and Klaus-Peter Kossakowski.

"I am deeply honored to be recognized by FIRST and included among so many respected incident response leaders," said Pethia. "Creating the CERT Coordination Center was never about building a single team, it was about sparking a global community. Seeing how far that community has come is the greatest reward of all."

This year's FIRSTCON, located in Copenhagen, Denmark brings hundreds of incident response and security professionals from the public, private, and academic sectors across 100+ nations. FIRST aims to foster cooperation and coordination in incident prevention, to stimulate rapid reaction to incidents, and to promote information sharing between members and the community at large.

Special shoutout to [sponsors](#) including Local Host Centre for Cyber Security, Platinum sponsor Amazon, Gold sponsor VMRay, Silver sponsors Integriti and Stairwell.

Issued on behalf of FIRST. For further information, please contact [FIRST Press](#).

About FIRST

FIRST aspires to bring together incident response and security teams from every country across the world to ensure a safe internet for all. Founded in 1990, the Forum of Incident Response and Security Teams (FIRST) consists of internet emergency response teams from more than 800 corporations, government bodies, universities and other institutions across 110 countries in the Americas, Asia, Europe, Africa, and Oceania. For more information and to see the full calendar of events, visit: [FIRST.Org](#).

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