IACR Policy for the Ethics Committee

April 2015*

1 Purpose

The *Ethics Committee* establishes rules and provides guidance for ethical behavior in all matters that concern the IACR.

The Ethics Committee is responsible for providing recommendations to editors, program chairs, program-committee members, and reviewers concerning fairness and ethical aspects of all matters under the influence of the IACR, such as its operations, its events, and its publications. The Ethics Committee shall protect the reputation of the IACR by establishing consistent ethical principles regarding these matters.

One of the main activities of the IACR are its peer-reviewed scientific publications, consisting of the Journal of Cryptology and of conference and workshop proceedings. The selection of papers occurs according to their scientific merit and based on the highest scientific and ethical standards. In cases where conflicts may arise or have arisen about fairness and ethical behavior regarding operations of the IACR, the Ethics Committee may issue recommendations for resolving disputes but does not interfere with the authority of a program chair or an editor. Persons involved in operations of the IACR, in its publications, and in its conferences may bring a question or a dispute to the attention of the Ethics Committee. The Ethics Committee operates independently of the Board, but may inform or consult with the Board in special cases.

2 Tasks

The Ethics Committee issues recommendations on ethical aspects through the following documents:

- the Rules and Guidelines for Program Chairs;
- the Rules and Guidelines for General Chairs;
- the Guidelines for Reviewers;
- the Policy on Irregular Submissions.

*The most recent version of this document can be obtained from `http://www.iacr.org/docs/`.
Editors of this document: Christian Cachin (2011), Nigel P. Smart (2014).

The Ethics Committee will maintain a record of all its deliberations where it concluded that an ethical violation occured. No records will be kept of deliberations where an ethical violation was not considered to have happened. All records will only be available to the Ethics Committee and they will not be shared with other parts of the IACR (including the Board of Directors).

3 Composition

The Ethics Committee consists of the Vice President (currently Nigel Smart), the Program Chair Liaison Officer of the Board (currently Josh Beneloh) and one further member of the IACR. It is chaired by the Vice President.

The Board appoints the further member to the Ethics Committee at the beginning of every calendar year; this occurs usually at the first physical meeting meeting of the Board in a calendar year. If the board has no current Program Chair Liaison Officer, then the board will appoint one at the beginning of the calendar year.

4 Operation

Once an ethical issue is reported to the committee the members shall decide what additional information is required. A person who is accused of ethical violation will be allowed to give their side of the story. The committee will then come to a decision which will be one of the following:

- **No Violation:** In this case all records of the investigation will be deleted.
- **Undesirable Behaviour:** In this case, which is considered a breach of good behaviour but not ethics, a note is made of the event (which will be kept for three calendar years).
- **Ethical Violation:** In this case, a sanction will be imposed. This could include banning the party from sitting on program committees for a period, banning from submitting papers for a period, or even expulsion from the IACR.

Feedback on the decision will be given both to the person raising the issue and anyone else who was involved in providing evidence.

Case records (e.g. of the accusation and of deliberations) will only be kept where either undesirable behaviour or an ethical violation was considered to have happened. In all cases records will be deleted after three calendar years.

Case records (even innocent ones) can be used to clarify rules and regulations, after thorough anonymization (namely by extracting only those details that are relevant to serve as case study and possibly incorporating fantasy details to create a narrative).

The Program Chair Liaison Officer will use the information obtained as a member of the Ethics Committee for giving advice to Program Chairs about potential ethical issues and about the selection of committee members.