



Anti-Malware Testing Standards Organization

## AMTSO Analysis of Review Process

### Introduction

The charter of the Anti-Malware Testing Standards Organization (“**AMTSO**”) states that one of the organization’s aims is to provide “...analysis and review of current and future testing of anti-malware and related products.” This document describes the terms of engagement for the *Board (Board)*, which is tasked with implementing a mechanism to meet this aim. It also defines the process for submitting requests for such analyses, and the process by which analyses will be produced. Such analyses will take the form of a timely evaluation of a review by AMTSO based on how successfully it meets the criteria for an effective review as defined by AMTSO.

Unless otherwise defined herein, all terms included in this document are used with their common meaning. The following document should be read in conjunction with AMTSO’s [Fundamental Principles of Testing](#), [AMTSO Best Practices for Dynamic Testing](#), and other information, including the AMTSO Charter, available on [www.amtso.org](http://www.amtso.org).

### Special Note Regarding the AMTSO Member Vote

The Review Analysis (*Analysis*) process is new to AMTSO, and, as a result, the following process and procedures represent a starting point to completion of this analysis. It is fully expected that these processes and procedures will be modified as the *Board* completes its first set of reviews, to ensure that the review process is consistent, fair and transparent.

### Procedures

This section defines the scope and responsibilities of the *Board*.

1. **Scope:** AMTSO shall provide for its members and the public at large the opportunity to request an analysis (an “**Analysis Request**”) of any review, article or analysis or other published work (collectively, a “**Subject Review**”) that meets all of the following criteria:
  - a. The Subject Review must be primarily focused on an anti-malware product or service or, in the case of Subject Reviews of solutions which encompass multiple products or technologies, the Subject Review must give significant consideration to anti-malware functionality,
  - b. The Subject Review must either be due for imminent publication or else must be already publicly available, either free of charge or by subscription: in the latter case the requester must have provided AMTSO with right of access to the document and proof of entitlement, and

- c. The AMTSO Guidelines and Principles must be of relevance and applicable to the Subject Review for which analysis is requested.
2. **Target:** the fundamental purpose of such a requested analysis will be to publish an *Analysis* which compares the Subject Review to AMTSO Guidelines and Principles as currently in effect. The *Board* shall impartially review and accept or decline each Analysis Request.
3. **Appointment of Board:** The AMTSO Board of Directors shall, on an annual basis, appoint between seven (7) and nine (9) members of a *Board*, in which no more than two (2) such individuals shall also be members of the Board of Directors. No member of the Board of Directors shall be entitled to vote on the appointment of an individual representative from that Director's member company.
4. The *Board* will establish a **Review Committee** (*Committee*): consisting of members of the *Board* and/or volunteer AMTSO members for each *Analysis*.
5. The names of the *Board* and *Committee* members shall be publicly disclosed. Independent testers who may be part of the *Board* or a *Committee* shall recuse themselves from participating in a *Analysis* of their own tests or Subject Reviews that address partial or complete works from the same tester.
6. Each *Analysis* will be commenced as soon as practicable by the *Committee*, with a primary goal of completion no more than three weeks from the date of acceptance of the Analysis Request.
7. Once the *Analysis* is underway, the *Committee* shall review all data associated with the Subject Review that is publicly available to assess conformance to AMTSO Guidelines and Principles.
8. Where the *Analysis* has not been requested by the Reviewer, the *Committee* shall be fully authorized on behalf of AMTSO to contact the Reviewer from an official AMTSO mailbox to communicate that the Subject Review has been selected for analysis by the *Board* and disclose the members and affiliations of each of the members of the *Board* and *Committee*. The *Committee* may also request additional support from any member to obtain as much information as possible to ensure the results of the *Analysis* are fair and impartial.
9. Each *Analysis* undertaken by the *Committee* shall be deemed to be the independent activity of AMTSO, and there shall be no attribution to any member of AMTSO, aside from the Analysis Request.
10. There shall be no fee associated with the Analysis Request, *Analysis* or process associated therewith.
11. No one member shall be entitled to any special benefit under these procedures.
12. The procedures, including the member request, documentation and review process shall not be confidential, and all records regarding the review process and request shall be available to any member in good standing who makes a request to review such documentation. In the interest of clarity, there shall be no direct or implied presumption of confidentiality with any portion of the Analysis Request or *Analysis*.

13. The AMTSO Analysis makes no judgments or endorsements of the Reviewer or Product(s) under review. The Analysis only makes representations as to compliance or noncompliance to specific AMTSO Principles and Guidelines. AMTSO members, Reviewers, Analysis Filers, organizations, or individuals must not misrepresent these findings with statements such as “AMTSO says XYZ product is the best”, “ABC Testlab is AMTSO-approved”.
14. All activities of AMTSO, including within this review process, shall be done in full compliance with all relevant federal and local laws and regulations.

## **REVIEW PROCESS**

This section defines (1) the process for filing an Analysis Request (2) request acceptance criteria (3) the process for producing a *Analysis* when the *Board* agrees to such a request.

1. Any individual, entity or AMTSO member (the “**Filer**”) may file an Analysis Request, if each of the following criteria are met:
  - a. The Filer must make the Analysis Request in writing to **reviews@amtso.org**, providing the information (as applicable) included in Number 2 below; and
  - b. The Filer must receive the written support, evidenced by signature, of at least three (3) AMTSO individual members or representatives of a member organization, each in good standing as of the date the Analysis Request is made. If the Filer is or formally represents an AMTSO member in good standing, the Filer will be accepted as one of the three required signatories.
2. Each Filer must fully complete the AMTSO Analysis Request Form, which includes the following information:
  - a. The full name and contact information of the Filer;
    - Valid signatures of the Filer and members’ representatives within AMTSO supporting the Filer’s request certifying that the request is being made on behalf of such Filer’s affiliated company, if applicable, rather than any one individual filer;
  - b. A copy of the Subject Review in English;
    - If the original review is not in English in the original publication, the translation to English must be provided by the Filer through an independent third party professional translator.
  - c. A description of any non-protected or non-confidential communication requests and responses from the reviewer or publication responsible for the Subject Review (the “Reviewer”);
  - d. A specific description of why the Filer believes that the Subject Review should be reviewed under AMTSO Guidelines and Principles, including supporting documentation

- e. A copy of or access to any non-protected or non-confidential further information relevant to the Subject Review necessary to allow the *Committee* (defined above) to complete a fair and impartial review.
3. Each Analysis Request will be considered by the *Board*, and a decision regarding the Analysis Request will be provided to the Filer as soon as practicable after the Analysis Request is received.
4. If the *Board* decides not to accept an Analysis Request, the Filer will be provided with an explanation of the decision of the *Board*, and be provided with an opportunity to present further information to the *Board* supporting their request.
5. If the *Board* decides to accept an Analysis Request, a public notification of such decision may be made by posting to the AMTSO website, or other appropriate means, regarding the projected *Analysis*. Such publication will be made as soon as reasonably practicable after the Analysis Request is accepted, with the goal of having such public notification in no more than three (3) business days after such decision is made. In addition, once an Analysis Request is accepted, the *Board* will facilitate the creation of a public forum, generally from the AMTSO domain, for moderated public commentary on the Subject Review or analysis process.
6. The *Board* shall solicit from AMTSO Members a list of such Members willing to participate in any given *Analysis* (the “Volunteers”) and form the *Committee*.
7. During the process of the *Analysis*, the *Committee* shall provide an opportunity for the Reviewer to provide relevant information regarding the Subject Review and the concerns raised by either the *Committee* or the Filer of the Analysis Request. If the Reviewer is unresponsive to requests from the *Committee* or otherwise determines not to cooperate with completion of the *Analysis*, the *Committee* shall have no obligation to persuade the Reviewer to comply, but shall publicly note the response, if any, provided by the Reviewer.
8. The actual analysis process flow will be as follows:
  - a. The first stage of the Analysis should be done independently by each *Committee* member. It should involve checking each principle and recording at least one example from the Subject Review that demonstrates the Subject Review’s compliance or non-compliance with that principle.
  - b. The individual results from all *Committee* members will be merged into a single document. The consolidated document shall be reviewed by the *Board*.
  - c. The *Board* shall agree upon the final *Analysis* and its conclusions before being submitted to the Board of Directors for ratification. Any unresolved disagreements will be taken to the Board of Directors for resolution.
  - d. The report must be objective without any evaluating or judgmental statements. For example: Principle 1 was followed or not followed due to following considerations (excerpt1, excerpt 2, excerpt3, etc. from the Subject Review or information disclosed by the Filer or Reviewer)

9. The Board of Directors will have the option to ratify the *Analysis*. Said ratification will only take into consideration whether the “AMTSO *Analysis* Process and Procedures” have been followed by the *Board*, not on the content and decisions of the *Analysis* itself.
10. No less than one week prior to public release, any news release and *Analysis* will be provided to the Reviewer and circulated to AMTSO members. If no comments are received in this period of time which the *Board* concludes would justify delaying publication of the *Analysis*, any such news release and *Analysis* may be posted to the AMTSO website or otherwise made public. If the *Board* decides to delay publication to incorporate feedback from AMTSO members or the original Reviewer, the final *Analysis* shall be re-circulated and an additional two business day period for further consideration will be allowed prior to public disclosure.
11. The final result of each *Analysis* will be posted publicly. The *Board* will clearly and publicly post any amendments or additions to the *Analysis*.

### **APPEAL PROCESS**

Filers, Reviewers or any AMTSO member may apply to the AMTSO Board of Directors for an Appeal Process to be undertaken with regard to a specific *Analysis*. In such a case the Appeal Process Filer shall provide to the Board of Directors explicit documentation and/or argumentation, which clearly demonstrates the invalidity of the *Analysis*. The appeal is at the full discretion of the Board of Directors.

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This document was approved by AMTSO Membership on May 7, 2009

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