

# TALON 2026

How we worked together during a crisis

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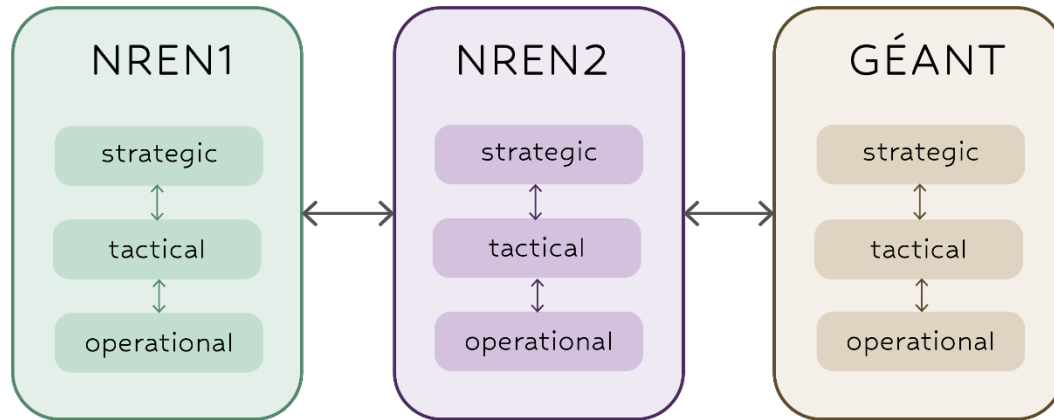
Jessica Schumacher, Switch

Helsinki  
June 2026

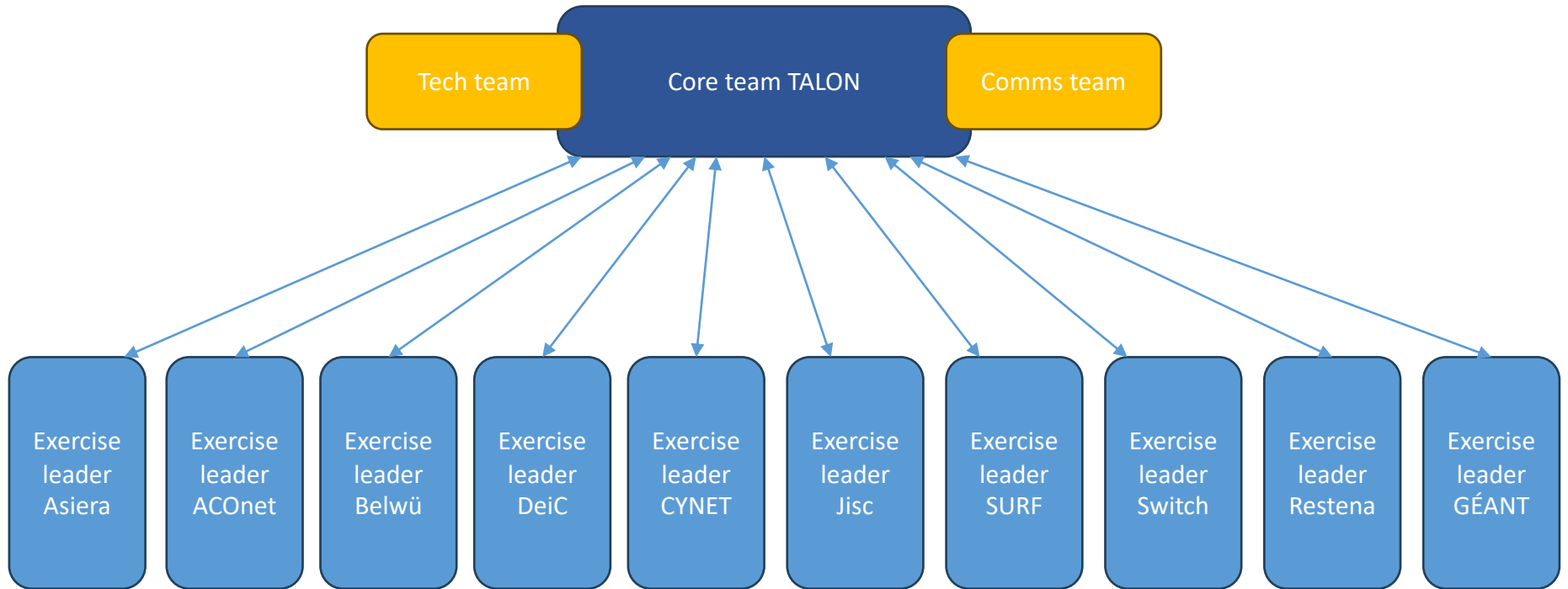


## TALON – what?

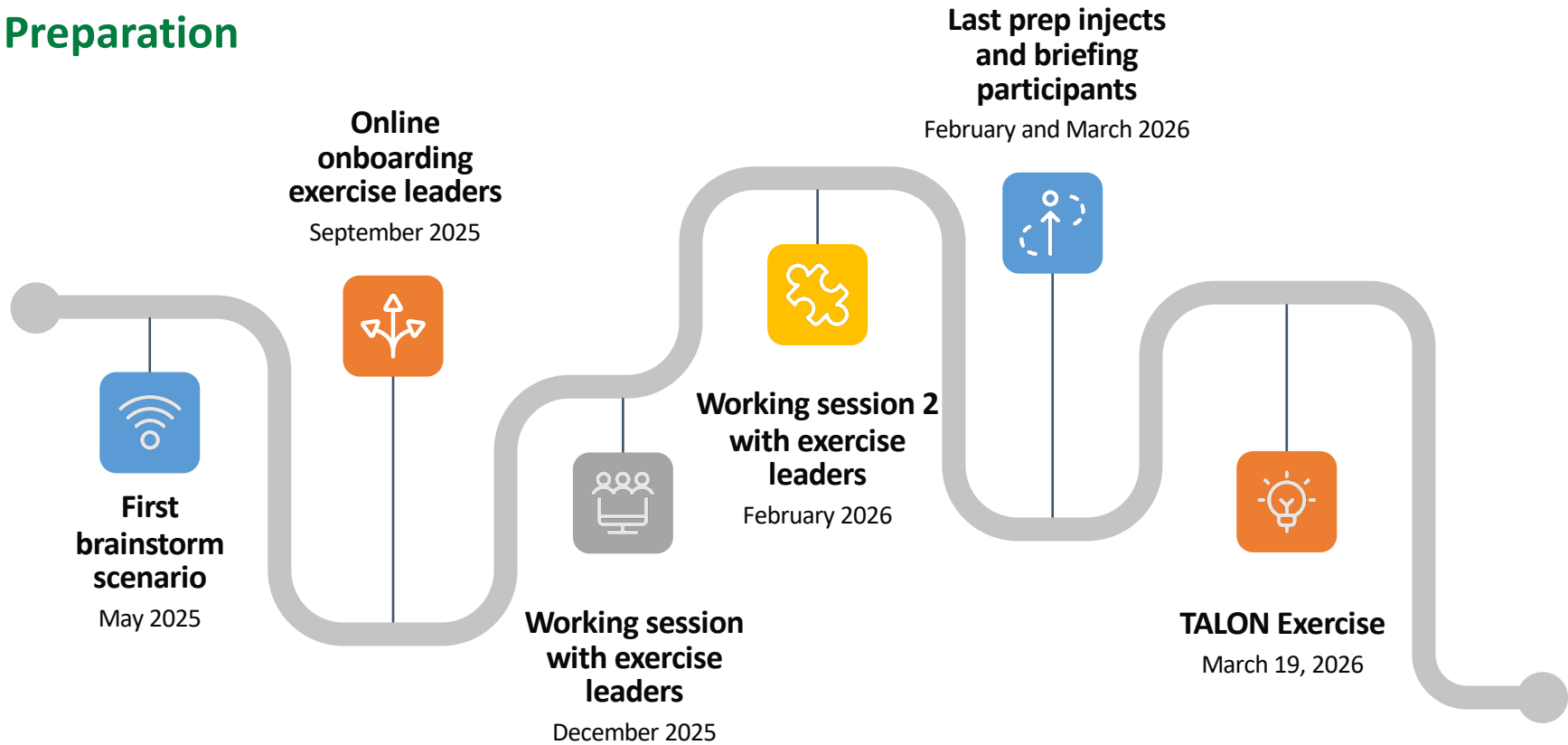
- 1-day international crisis exercise with 10 organisations - more than 150 individuals
- Every organisation exercises their own escalation and crisis process
- We exercise how we work together when a crisis hits us all



## Setup: core team and exercise leaders

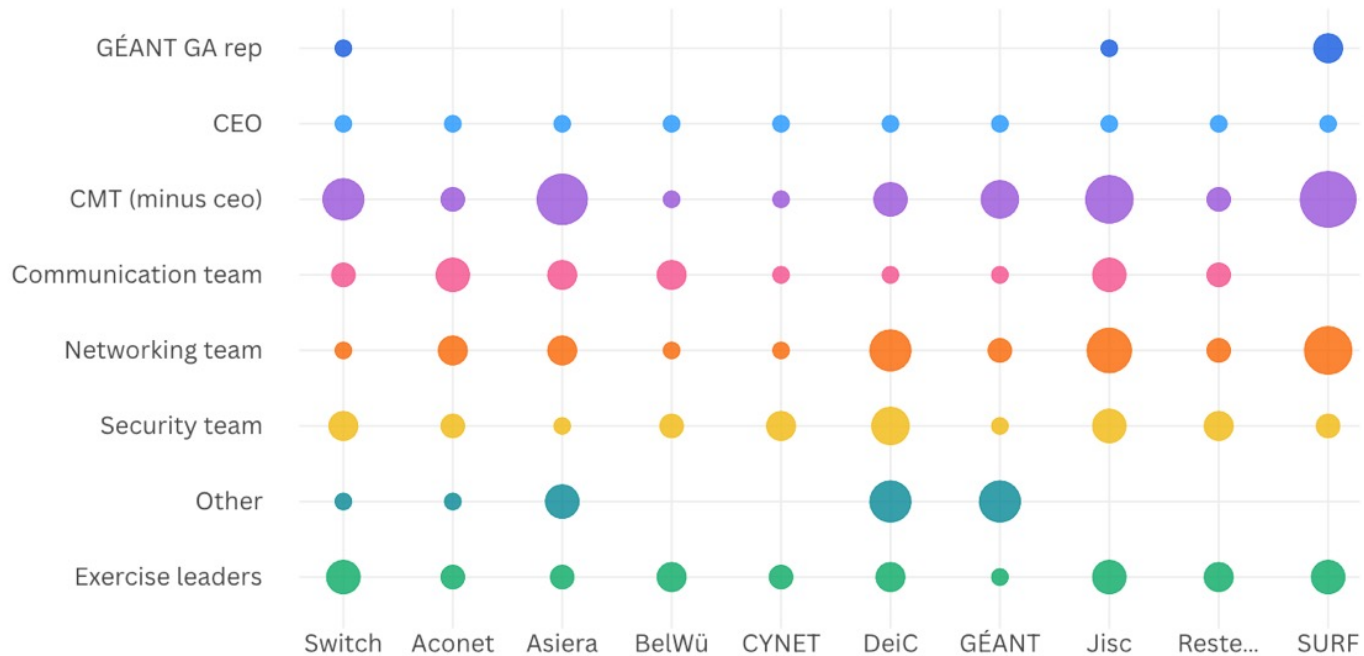


# Preparation



# Teams and roles participating in TALON

Circles represent the estimated number of people




# Tools



News Feed 20 of 70 Filter Control + New

**Asiera** 19/03/2026  
**Asiera Network Outage: Issue Resolved**  
The Asiera Technical team has identified a security issue and we have fully solved the Asiera network outage issue.  
“ “ 2

**Journal of Internet Infrastructure Security** 19/03/2026  
**Theoretical Misuse of BGP UPDATE Messages: Attack Vectors, Error Handling Weaknesses, and Defensive Considerations**  
The Border Gateway Protocol (BGP) forms the foundational routing fabric of the global Internet. While extensively studied from a correctness and availability perspective, the attack surface exposed by BGP UPDATE message processing — particularly under the error handling framework introduced in RFC 7606 — has received comparatively less scrutiny in adversarial contexts. This paper presents a theoretical analysis of how malformed or adversarially crafted BGP UPDATE messages could be weaponised against Internet infrastructure. We examine the mechanisms by which attribute parsing failures, reprocessing loops, and control-plane resource exhaustion may be induced, and consider the conditions under See More  
“ “ 1

**The Register** 19/03/2026  
**Jisc confirms cyber attack responsible for today's outages**  
Jisc, the UK NREN, have confirmed the root cause of the intermittent outages on the network as a vulnerability in the software used by certain routers. This vulnerability appears to have been exploited, which caused instability in how routing information was processed and led to intermittent performance issues for a number of organisations.  
  
“ “ 1

**BBC News** 19/03/2026  
**BREAKING: Gradual recovery underway after cyberattack disrupts European academic**



How did we work together?



# Technical level

On an operational level, teams focused on solving issues within their organization efficiently.

- Asking the **right questions** and **efficient troubleshooting**
- CSIRT teams were quick and effective in collaboration and information sharing
- Strong existing trust network in place between certain CSIRTs

Most operational teams tried first to solve the problem instead of **escalation**, which led to delayed information sharing.

- Two NRENs did not collaborate at all with other NRENs on a technical level
- A bit of «channel» switching – are predefined communication **channels** needed in case of an incident?



## Communicational level

On an individual level, NREs handled crisis communications very professionally, with several organisations standing out for their mature response.

- First statements on social media: **we know, we do, we care, we'll be back**
- Information pressure and (a lot of) noise
- Importance of responsive and trained spokesperson

No central coordination or alignment on key messaging or joint press releases.

- Inconsistent communication: was it a cyberattack or not?
- Referring to one another without any real alignment or coordination
- Is “one voice” needed during a cross-border crisis?



# Strategic level

## GÉANT as a key player for central coordination

- Individual NRENs reached out to GÉANT directly
- Around midday, GÉANT started to facilitate centralised communication (Slack)
- GÉANT CEO informed the Board

Strategic coordination structures across NRENs are currently far less mature than technical coordination structures.

- Not much inter-NREN communication on management level
- Slack channel only used by a few participants



Where are we  
today if a crisis  
hits?



## TALON showed that the community already has strong foundations

- Large-scale cross-community crisis collaboration had never been tested in practice
- Existing GÉANT crisis management initiatives have clearly contributed to a growing level of maturity across the NREN community
- Strong **trust and collaboration mindset** across participating organisations
- Key improvement areas were successfully identified



## At the same time, TALON highlighted the need for...

- **Clear escalation paths**
  - Establish clear escalation paths and responsibilities
- **Communication tools and alignment**
  - Use secure and trusted communication platforms across the community
  - Enable information sharing beyond directly affected NRENs
  - Develop shared approaches for external communication and key messaging
- **Strategic coordination**
  - Clarify whether / when strategic-level coordination is needed during a large-scale crisis
  - Define coordination roles during multi-NREN crises
  - Strengthen relationships between crisis management teams before incidents occur



## What's next?

- **Current status**

- An official deliverable for the EC will be published and shared with the wider community

- **Sharing lessons learned**

- The TALON core team is open to sharing its experience with organisations similar to GÉANT

- **Looking ahead**

- Discussions on a possible future edition of TALON are already on the radar for GN5-3

- **In the meantime**

- Join us for CLAW: 23–24 November 2026, Vienna



# Thank you

Any questions?

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