Message from the VehicleSec ’26 Program Co-Chairs

On behalf of the VehicleSec ’26 Organizing and Steering Committees, we welcome you to the 4th USENIX Symposium on Vehicle Security and Privacy.

This year, continuing the success of VehicleSec ’25, VehicleSec ’26 is co-located with the USENIX Security Symposium. The event will span two days. It has been a distinct honor to serve as general and program co-chairs for the symposium, and a privilege to continue collaborating with the exceptional organizing committee and USENIX team.

VehicleSec aims to bring together an audience of university researchers, scientists, industry professionals, and government representatives to contribute new theories, technologies, and systems on security/privacy issues related to vehicles (e.g., ground, aerial, in/on water, space), their sub-systems (e.g., in-vehicle networks, autonomy, connectivity, human-machine interfaces), supporting infrastructures (e.g., transportation infrastructure, charging station, ground control station), and related fundamental technologies (e.g., sensing, control, AI/ML/DNN/LLM, wireless communication, real-time computing, edge computing, location service, simulation, digital twin, multi-agent protocol/system design, and human-machine interaction).

For the current iteration of the symposium, a total of 67 submissions were received, marking a new record for full research papers submitted. These submissions were categorized as 55 full papers, 6 Work-in-Progress (WIP), and 6 short papers. In addition, the symposium received 6 poster submissions, 12 demo submissions, and 1 tutorial submission.

There are 80 Program Committee members representing 67 distinct institutions, and the Poster/Demo Program Committee consists of 11 members from 11 different institutions. All submitted papers for the symposium underwent a rigorous review process, with each paper being evaluated by a minimum of two reviewers. In parallel, every poster and demo submission received two reviews.

Continuing with the success of the past year, we provide the authors of particularly relevant papers that necessitate minor revision to enter the shepherding process. A shepherd was assigned to ensure the changes were adequately addressed before the camera-ready deadline.

From 67 paper submissions, 18 full papers, 3 WIP papers, and 5 short papers were accepted. From 6 posters and 12 demo submissions, 4 posters and 12 demos were accepted. From these, we are pleased to announce that the symposium will feature Best Paper and Best Demo awards.

This year, the symposium continues its lightning talk session, providing a platform for interested attendees to present concise, 5-minute in-person talks on various topics relevant to the VehicleSec community. These topics include, but are not limited to, emerging hot topics, preliminary research findings, practical challenges, lessons learned, introductions to tutorials, and educational materials related to vehicles. This session serves as an opportunity for participants to broadcast their ongoing efforts or new ideas and seek feedback at a community level. After careful review, three lightning talks were accepted for their interesting and impactful content.

A new addition to the 2026 symposium is the introduction of the artifact evaluation process to emphasize the importance of research artifacts, the benefits to the authors and the community as a whole, and to promote the availability and reproducibility of experimental results. Authors of accepted papers were encouraged to submit their artifacts for availability, functionality, and reproducibility assessments. We established a new Artifact Evaluation Committee (AEC) that reviewed each submitted artifact against the following badges: “Available,” “Functional,” and “Reproduced.” The committee is composed of 25 members from 19 institutions and is supervised by two Artifact Evaluation Chairs.

Seventeen of the accepted papers submitted their artifacts. Among those, five received the “Available” badge, two received the “Available” and “Functional” badges, one received the “Available” and “Reproduced” badges, and nine papers received all three badges. From these, we announce that the symposium will grant the Distinguished Artifact Award.

Beyond the technical program, demo and poster session, and lightning talks, VehicleSec ’26 will feature two keynote presentations. The keynote speakers include André Weimerskirch, COO of Block Harbor Cybersecurity, who will present “The Trajectory of Automotive Cybersecurity and the Role of AI.” The second keynote is by Professor Stefan Savage from University of California, San Diego, titled “Research only? Understanding the Scope of Automotive Cyberattacks in the Wild.”

In addition, we introduced two new special sessions. The first is the Government and Industry Panel, where representatives from federal agencies and industry discuss the current advancement and funding landscape. The panel aims to bring researchers together to discuss upcoming funding priorities, industry perspectives, and proposal strategies. The second session consists of three invited talks selected from the ESCAR USA Conference. This session is part of VehicleSec’s effort to bring private industry professionals, researchers, and engineers from the automotive community to discuss emerging challenges in vehicle security and privacy.

This year, we are pleased to acknowledge the generous support of our sponsors: The School of Information and Computer Sciences at UC Irvine, DENSO, Indiana University, Zoox, and philanthropic supporter Craig Newmark Philanthropies.

The successful organization of VehicleSec '26 is the result of the collaborative efforts of numerous individuals and entities.

First, we extend our sincere gratitude to all authors for their valuable submissions to the symposium. Their research forms the core of this event and drives the advancement of the field.

Second, we express our appreciation to all the program committee members for their diligent efforts in reviewing submissions, providing constructive feedback to authors, and actively participating in online discussions. Their expertise and commitment are vital to maintaining the high quality of the symposium's technical program. Here, we also extend a special thanks to the VehicleSec Steering Committee, whose guidance was instrumental in the program improvement. Their dedication ensures the symposium's seamless execution.

Furthermore, our sincere thanks go to all the sponsors for their generous financial support, which has been crucial in enabling travel grants, the community reception, and the poster and demo organization.

Lastly, we are deeply grateful to the USENIX team, with whom VehicleSec is co-located this year alongside USENIX Security. Their guidance, invaluable help, and endless patience throughout all phases of the organization have been truly exceptional.

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