What is Security?

• Example 1: DOS
  - Single-user system with no access control
  - Is it secure?
    • ...if it has no data?
    • ...if it contains the payroll database?
    • ...if it is on a machine in the foyer?
    • ...if it is in a locked room?
    • ...if it is behind a firewall?

• Example 2: Banking store's weekly earnings:
  - Is it secure?
    • ...ask a random customer to do it?
    • ...ask many random customers to do it?
    • ...ask a staff member to do it?
    • ...ask several staff members to do it?
    • ...hire a security firm?
    • ...hire several security firms?
  - Depends? On what?

Secure Operating System

→ Provides for secure execution of applications
→ Must provide security policies that support the users' security requirements
→ Must enforce those security policies
→ Must be safe from tampering etc.

Overview

→ Operating systems security overview
→ Types of secure systems
→ Security policies
→ Security mechanisms
→ Trusted Computing
→ Design principles
→ OS security verification
→ OS design for security
Security Policies

- Security policy:
  - specifies allowed and disallowed states of a system
  - OS needs to ensure that no disallowed state is ever entered
  - perfect security is generally unachievable
  - need to be aware of threats
  - need to understand what data can be tolerated

Data Security

Three aspects:
- Confidentiality: prevent theft of data
  - concealing from unauthorized agents
  - need to know principle
- Integrity: prevent damage to data
  - trustworthy data: data correctness
  - trustworthiness of origin of data: authentication
- Availability: prevent denial of service
  - ensuring data is usable when needed

Threats

- A weakness is a potential for a security violation
- An attack is an attempt by an attacker to violate security
  - generally implies exploiting a weakness
- A threat is a potential for an attack
- There is never a shortage of attackers, hence in practice:
  - threat → attack
    - weakness → violation
  - Repudiation of origin
    - false denial of being source
  - Denial of receipt
    - false denial of receiving
  - Delay
    - temporarily inhibiting service
  - Denial of service
    - permanently inhibiting service
  - attack on availability

Security Policy

- Partitions system into allowed and disallowed states
- Ideally mathematical model
- In practice, natural language description
  - Example: Bank teller transfers over $10,000 require branch manager approval
  - Transferring $10,000 to own account does not violate this policy

Security Mechanisms

- Used to enforce security policy
  - computer access control (login authentication)
  - operating system file access control system
  - controls implemented in tools
- Example:
  - Policy: only accountant can access financial system
  - Mechanism: un-networked computer in locked room with only one key
- A secure system provides mechanisms that ensure that violations are prevented, detected, and recovered from
Idea based on notion of secure booting [Abauga et al. 97]:
- root of trust provided by hardware
- software components are certified as trusted
- TCB securely expanded by loading trusted components only
  - hardwares- and software mechanisms to prevent tampering
  - establish chain of trust from root of trust

Covert Channels (Side Channels)

- Information flow that is not controlled by a security mechanism
  - security requires absence of covert channels
- Side channels are leakages that can be exploited to gain insider info
  - difficult to detect, difficult to prevent

Trusted Computing Base

- TCB: The totality of protection mechanisms within a computer system —
  - including hardware, firmware and software — the combination of which is
  - responsible for enforcing a security policy

A TCB consists of one or more components that together enforce a unified
security policy over a product or system

The ability of the TCB to correctly enforce a security policy depends solely
on the mechanisms within the TCB and on the correct inputs by system
administrative personnel or parameters related to the security policy

Trusted Computing

- TCB is by definition trusted. That doesn’t make it trustworthy.
- Aim of trusted computing (TC): establish and maintain trustworthiness
  - with respect to certain security requirements
	- should really be called trustworthy computing
- TC ensures that system is operating in defined configuration
  - based on the assumption that certain components can be trusted
- Challenge: maintain system security during configuration changes

Systems always have trusted entities
- hardware, operating system, sysadmin
- Totality of trusted entities is the trusted computing base (TCB)
  - the part of the system that can circumvent security
- A trusted system can be used to process security-critical assets
  - go through some process (“assurance”) to establish its trustworthiness
  - should really be called trustworthy system
- Trusted computing:
  - provides mechanisms and procedures for trusted systems
  - in practice usually refers to TCG mechanisms for secure boot, encryption etc.

Trusted Computing (Side Channels)

- The security policy is unambiguous and consistent
- The mechanisms used to implement the policy are correctly designed
- The union of mechanisms implements the policy correctly
- The mechanisms are correctly implemented
- The mechanisms are correctly installed and administered

Potential Invalid Assumptions

- Security is always based on assumptions
  - eg. lock is secure, key holders are trustworthy
- Invalid assumptions exist!
- Problem: assumptions are often implicit and poorly understood
- Security assumptions must be:
  - clearly identified
  - evaluated for validity

Assumptions
**Covert Timing Channels**

- Created via shared resource whose behaviour can be monitored
  - network bandwidth
  - CPU load
  - response time
  - locks

- Requires access to a time source
  - real-time clock
  - anything else that allows unrelated processes to synchronise
  - preventable by perfect virtualisation?

- Critical issue is bandwidth
  - in practice, the damage is limited if the bandwidth is low
  - e.g. DPM doesn’t care about low-bandwidth channels
  - beware of amplification
  - e.g. leaking of passwords

**Establishing Trustworthiness**

- Process to show TCB is trustworthy
- Two approaches
  - assurance (systematic evaluation and testing)
  - formal verification (mathematical proof)
- Certification confirms process was successfully concluded

**Assurance**

- Process for bolstering (substantiating or specifying) trustworthiness
  - Specifications
    - unambiguous description of system behaviour
  - Design
    - justification that it meets specification
    - mathematical translation of specification or compelling argument
  - Implementation
    - justification that it is consistent with the design
    - mathematical proof or code inspection and rigorous testing
    - by implication must also satisfy specification
  - Operation and maintenance
    - justification that system is used as per assumption in specification
- Assurance does not guarantee correctness or security!

**Assurance: Orange Book**

- US Department of Defence “Orange Book” [DoD 84]:
  - Officially the Trusted Computing Systems Evaluation Criteria (TCSEC)
  - Defines security classes
    - D: minimal protection
    - C1-2: discretionary access control (DAC)
    - B1-B3: mandatory access control (MAC)
    - A1: verified design
  - Designed for military use
  - Systems can be certified to a certain class
    - very costly, hence only available for big companies
    - most systems only certified C2 (essentially Unix-style security)
  - Superseded by Common Criteria
    - orange book no longer has any official standing
    - however, still an excellent reference for security terminology and rationale

**Assurance: Common Criteria**

- ISO standard, developed out of Orange Book and other approaches
  - US, Canada, UK, Germany, France, Netherlands
  - for general use (not just military, not just operating systems)
- Unlike Orange Book, doesn’t prescribe specific security requirements
  - evaluates quality assurance used to ensure requirements are met
  - Target of evaluation (TOE) evaluated against security target (ST)
  - ST is statement of desired security properties
  - based on protection profiles (PPs) — generic sets of requirements
  - defined by “users” (typically governments)

- Seven evaluation assurance levels (EALs)
  - higher levels imply more thorough evaluation (and higher cost)
  - necessarily better security
  - Details later

**Formal Verification**

- Process of mathematical proof of security properties
- Based on a mathematical model of the system
- Two Parts:
  - Proof that: model satisfies security requirements
    - generally difficult, except for very simple models
  - Proof that: code implements model
    - proving theorems showing correspondence
    - even harder, feasible only for few 100 LOC
  - hardly ever done (few tiny special-purpose OS kernels only to date)
  - Note: model checking (static analysis) is not sufficient
    - shows presence or absence of certain properties of code
    - unmodified variables, array-bounds, null-pointer deref
    - may be sound (guaranteed to detect all violations) or unsound
    - Model checking does not prove implementation correct/
Summary

- Computer security is complex
- depends on many aspects of computer system
- Policy defines security, mechanisms enforce security
- Important to consider:
  - what are the assumptions about threats and trustworthiness?
  - incorrect assumptions ⇒ no security
- Security is never absolute
  - given enough resources, mechanisms can be defeated
  - important to understand limitations
- Inherent tradeoffs between security and usability
- Human factors are important
  - people make mistakes
  - people may not understand security impact of actions
  - people may be less trustworthy than thought

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Secure Systems Classification

- Based on Orange Book terminology
  - assumes military-style security problem
  - data of different security classifications
  - system must ensure that classification is enforced
- Focused on confidentiality
- Classifies systems based on the kind of data they can deal with
  - single-level secure (SLS) system
  - multiple single-level secure (MSL) system
  - multi-level secure (MLS) system
- Basis of multiple-independent levels of security (MLS) architecture

Single-Level Secure (SLS) System

- Suitable only for processing data of one particular security level
  - generally the lowest, i.e. unclassified

Multiple Single-Level (MSL) Secure System

- System suitable for processing data of several security levels
  - only one security level at a time, up to some limit
- Multiple instances used, each one as a SLS system

Multi-Level Secure (MLS) System

- Suitable for processing data of several security levels
  - concurrently, up to some limit
  - needs to ensure that classifications are honoured
  - does this by labeling all data
- Requires mandatory access control in OS
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Security Policies: Categories

- Discretionary (user-controlled) policies (DAC)
  - e.g. A can read B’s objects only with A’s permission
  - user decides about access (at their discretion)
  - classical example: Unix permissions
- Mandatory (system-controlled) policies (MAC)
  - e.g. certain users cannot ever access certain objects
  - no user can change these
  - focus on restricting information flow
  - inherent requirement for MLS systems, MILS
- Role-based policies (RBAC)
  - agents can take on specific pre-defined roles
  - well-defined set of roles for each agent
    - e.g. normal user, sysadmin, database admin
  - access rights depend on role

Models for Security Policies

- Represent a whole class of security policies
- Most system-wide policies focus on confidentiality
  - e.g. military-style multi-level security models
  - Classical example: Bell-LaPadula model (Bell & LaPadula 76)
  - example of a labeled security model
  - most others developed from this
  - Orange Book based on this model
- Chinese-wall policy focuses on conflict of interest
- Some newer models focus on integrity
  - Clark-Wilson model with separation of duty
  - maps to role-based access control

Bell-LaPadula Model

- Each object o has a security classification L(o)
- Each agent a has a security clearance L(a)
- Classifications
  - e.g. top secret > secret > confidential > unclassified
- Rule 1 (no read up):
  - a can read o only if L(o) ≥ L(a)
  - standard confidentiality
- Rule 2 (Property — no write down)
  - a can write o only if L(o) ≤ L(a)
  - prevents leakage (accidental or by conspiracy)
Bell-LaPadula Model with Categories

Expand notion of security level to include categories
Also called compartments
Enables implementation of "need to know"
Security level is (clearance, category set)
Examples
  (Top Secret, (NUC, EUR, AUS))
  (Confidential, (EUR, AUS))
  (Secret, (NUC, AUS))

Levels and Lattices

Security levels become partially ordered
Any pair of security levels may (or may not) be related by dom
*domination* serves the role of "greater than"

Definition of dom(
(A, C) dom (A', C') if A' ≤ A and C' ⊆ C

Examples
  (Top Secret, (NUC, EUR)) dom (Secret, (AUS))
  (Secret, (NUC, EUR)) dom (Confidential, (NUC, EUR))
  (Top Secret, (NUC)) = dom (Confidential, (EUR))

Let C be set of classifications, K set of categories. Set of security levels L = C x K, dom form a lattice

Example Lattice

Assume a single clearance level, and categories x, y, z
(dom defaults to subset relation in this example)

Diagram courtesy of KSmrq, wikipedia

Example Lattice

Assume a single clearance level, and categories x, y, z
(dom defaults to subset relation in this example)

Diagram courtesy of KSmrq, wikipedia

Reading Information

Information flows up, not down
"Reads up" disallowed, "reads down" allowed
Simple Security Condition
  Subject x can read object o if (x,i) dom (i,o) and x has permission to read o
Note: combines mandatory control (relationship of security levels) and discretionary control (the required category)
Sometimes called "no reads up" rule

Writing Information

Information flows up, not down
"Writes up" allowed, "writes down" disallowed
*Property
  Subject x can write object o if (i,x) dom (o,i) and x has permission to write o
Note: combines mandatory control (relationship of security levels) and discretionary control (the required category)
Sometimes called "no writes down" rule

Problem

Colonel has (Secret, (NUC, EUR)) clearance
Major has (Secret, (EUR)) clearance
Major can talk to colonel ("write up" or "read down")
Colonel cannot talk to major ("read up" or "write down")
Clearly absurd!
Solution

Define maximum, current levels for subjects
maxlevel(s) dom curlevel(s)

Example

Treat Major as an object (Colonel is writing to him/her)
Colonel has maxlevel (Secret, {NIC, EUR})
Colonel sets curlevel to (Secret, {EUR})
Now L(Major) dom curlevel(Colonel)
Colonel can write to Major without violating “no writes down”

Chinese Wall Policy

- Employed by investment banks to manage conflict of interest
  - Idea: Consultant cannot talk to clients’ competitors
    - single consultant can have multiple concurrent clients
  - Define conflict classes (groups of potentially competing clients)
    - eg banks, oil companies, insurance companies, OS vendors
  - Consultant dealing with client of class A cannot talk to others in A
    - but can continue talking to members of other classes
      - some data belongs to several conflict classes
  - Public information is not restricted
    - consultant can read and write public info at any time
      - but must observe property (cannot publish confidential info)
  - Example of a dynamic MAC policy
    - allowed information flow changes over time

Biba Model

- Dual to Bell-LaPadula for integrity
  - Each subject a, object o has an integrity level L
  - Rule 1 (no read down)
    - a can read o only if L(a) ≤ L(o)
  - Rule 2 (no write up)
    - a can write o only if L(a) ≥ L(o)
  - Obviously incompatible with Bell-LaPadula
  - If higher security requires higher integrity
    - must choose between confidentiality and integrity
  - Biba doesn’t model any practical system

Bell-LaPadula Model

- Mother of all military-style security models
  - Inherently requires implementation as MAC
    - all subjects must be bound to policy
  - If implemented inside a single system, requires MLS system
  - Major limitation: cannot deal with declassification
    - need to pass any information from high- to low-security domain
      - logging
      - command chain
      - documents where sensitive portions have been censored
      - encrypted data
  - Typically dealt with by special privileged functions
    - outside security policy
    - outside systematic reasoning
    - part of TCB
    - likely source of security holes

Clark-Wilson Model

- Security framework for ensuring integrity based on separation of duties
  - doesn’t provide specific state transformations, only constraints on them
    - helps in formalizing security policies
  - Distinguishes constrained (integrity-guaranteed) and unconstrained data
    - Operations on unconstrained data must be defined for all values and produce constrained data
  - Specifies requirements on the system and its operations
    - protect integrity-critical data, authentication, integrity of transformations, logging
    - operations certified to operate on certain data
  - Doesn’t actually specify what “separation of duties” means
  - “Allowed relations must meet the requirements of separation of duties”
Security Mechanisms

- Used to implement security policies
- Based on access control
  - Discretionary access control (DAC)
  - Mandatory access control (MAC)
  - Role-based access control (RBAC)
- Access rights
  - Simple rights
    - Read, write, execute/invite, send, receive
  - Meta rights (DAC only)
    - Copy
    - Propagate own rights to another agent
    - Own
    - Change rights of an object or agent

Access Control Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objects</th>
<th>Agents</th>
<th>S1</th>
<th>S2</th>
<th>S3</th>
<th>S4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S1</td>
<td>terminate</td>
<td>write</td>
<td>read</td>
<td>send</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S2</td>
<td>read, send</td>
<td>terminate</td>
<td>write</td>
<td>execute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S3</td>
<td>write, receive</td>
<td>execute</td>
<td>write</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S4</td>
<td>control</td>
<td>execute</td>
<td>write</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Defines each agent’s rights on any object
Note: agents are objects too

Properties of the Access Control Matrix

- Rows define agents’ protection domains (PDs)
- Columns define objects’ accessibility
- Dynamic data structure:
  - Frequent permanent changes (e.g. object creation, chmod)
- Very sparse with many repeated entries
- Impractical to store explicitly

Protection-Matrix Implementation: ACLs

- Represent column-wise: access control list (ACL):
  - ACL associated with object
  - Usually encoded via domain classes (UNIX, NT groups)
  - Full ACLs used by Multics, Apollo Domain, Andrew FS, NTPS
  - Can have negative rights to:
    - reduce window of vulnerability
    - simplify exclusion from groups
  - Sometimes implicit (Unix process hierarchy)
  - Implemented in almost all commercial systems
**Protection-Matrix Implementation: Capabilities**

- **Capability list** associated with agent
  - each capability confers a certain right to its holder

- Caps have been popular in research for a long time
  - Few successful commercial systems until recently:
    - main one is IBM System/38 / AS/400 / i-Series
    - increasingly appearing in commercial systems (usually add-on)

**Tagged Capabilities**

- **Tag bit(s) with every (group of) memory word(s)**
  - tag identifies capabilities
  - capabilities are used and copied like “normal” pointers
  - hardware checks permissions when dereferencing capability
  - modifications turn tags off (convert to plain data)
  - only privileged instructions/kernels can turn tags on
  - flexible
    - capability hardware tends to be slow (too complex)
    - hard (if not impossible) to control propagation of authority
    - revocation virtually impossible (requires memory scan)

- IBM System/38, AS/400, i-Series, many historical systems

**Sparse Capabilities**

- Sparse caps are user-level objects
  - can be passed like other data
    - similar to tagged caps, but without hardware support
    - validated at mapping time (explicit or implicit)
    - good match to user-level servers
    - no central authority, no kernel required on most ops
    - cannot reference-count objects

- Issues:
  - High amplification of leaked data
  - problem with convert channels

**Capabilities**

- Main advantage of capabilities is the fine-grained access control:
  - easy to provide specific agents access to individual objects

- Capability presents prima facie evidence of the right to access
  - capability rep (object identifier) implies naming
  - capability list (set of) access rights
    - any representation must contain object ID and access rights

- How are caps implemented and protected?
  - tagged — protected by hardware
    - popular in the past, rarely today (exception: IBM i:Series)
  - sparse (or user-modifies) — protected by sparsity
    - probabilistically secure, like encryption
    - propagation outside system control — hard to enforce security policies
  - partitioned (segregated) — protected by software (kernel)
    - main version of caps used in modern systems

**Segregated (Partitioned) Capabilities**

- System maintains capability list (Clist) with each agent (process)
  - User code uses indirect references to caps (cist list)
  - c.f Unix file descriptors
  - System validates permissions on access
    - syscall or page-fault time

- Many research systems
  - Hydra, Mach, EROS, and many others

- Increasingly commercial systems
  - KeyL(62), ONL4 (68), etc (69)
  - add-on to Linux, Solaris
Confinement

Problem 1: Executing untrusted code
- You downloaded a game from the internet.
- How can you be sure it doesn’t steal/encrypt your data?

Problem 2: Digital rights management (DRM)
- You own copyrighted material (e.g., entertainment media content).
- You want to let others use it (for a fee).
- How can you prevent them from making unauthorized copies?

You need to confine the program (game, viewer) so it cannot leak.

Cannot be done with most protection schemes:
- Not with Unix or most other ACL-based schemes.
- Not with most tagged or sparse capability schemes.
- Multi-level security has some inherent confinement (but can’t do DRM).

Some protection models can confine in principle:
- E.g., segregated capa system, can instruct system not to accept any.
- EROS has formal proof of confinement for system models [Shapiro & Weber 00]
- Similar for sel-4 (machine-checked proof).

In practice difficult to achieve due to covert channels.

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Trusted Computing: The TCG Approach

- Trusted Computing Group (TCG)
  - Industry consortium with many members.
  - Defines industry standards to enable trusted computing.
  - Term “trusted computing” now virtually synonymous with TCG model.
  - Although it only solves part of the problem.

- Defines Trusted Computing Module (TCM)
  - Hardware root of trust, aimed at PC/server platforms.
  - Minimal functionality to support TC.
  - Implemented either as separate chip or on board processor chip.

- Similarly Mobile Trusted Module (MTM) for mobile devices.
  - Puts more functionality into software.
  - Remaining hardware outside for on-chip integration.

- Also TCG Software Stack (TSS) for higher-level functionality.

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TPM-Enabled Functionality

- Authenticated booting:
  - Bring up system in well-defined configuration.
  - Executing only certified binaries.

- Remote attestation:
  - Allow remote party to confirm system configuration.

- Sealed storage:
  - Ensure data can only be read if system in particular configuration.

Enabled by a set of TPM-provided mechanisms:
- Random-number generation.
- Key generation.
- Key storage.
- Public-key encryption.
- Configuration storage.
- Certificate storage.

---

TPM Components

- Hardware implementations of security-relevant low-level functions.
  - Random numbers, SHA-1 hash, public-key generation, RSA encryption.
  - Store — meant for use before enough trusted software is booted.

- Endorsement key (EK)
  - Hard-wired private key, uniquely identifies physical device.
  - Public-EK certified and supplied by manufacturer.

- Non-volatile storage:
  - Small amount for EK, some symmetric keys, opt-in flags.
  - Storage root key (SRK), protected by SRK pass phrase.
  - To encrypt user stored outside TPM.

---

Integrity Measurement

- Idea: “measure” all components and securely store measurements.
- Measurement: SHA-1 hash of component.
  - Computed at component load time, before execution.
  - Normally computed by software (outside TPM), as SHA-1 is slow.

- Secure storage of measurements:
  - Store log of measurements outside TPM.
  - Inside TPMs PCR store condensed (“extended”) measurement.

- SHA-1, SHA-2 (BCR, I Sha-1 component).

- Suffix to verify configuration:
  - Compute condensed measurement from log and compare to PCR.
  - Does not guarantee that software hasn’t been modified after loading.

- SHA-1 engine • boot block (CRTM) is root of trust for measurement (RTM).
Remote Attestation (aka Integrity Reporting)

- Idea: Provide certified representation of machine state to challenger (e.g. service provider) who inspects on particular configuration
- Two parts reported
  - Measurement log kept by software
  - PCR value (accumulated measurements) signed by endorsement key
- Challenging can verify
  - Computed PCR value
  - Verify signature using
    - Knowledge of endorsement key, or
    - Previously exchanged A/K
- Endorsement key is root of trust for reporting (RTR)

Secure Storage Channel: Sealing

- Idea: Make certain data accessible only to correct machine state
  - Pass data securely from "sender" to "receiver" configuration
  - Time-travel IPC
- Uses secure encryption
  - Generate secret key (random number)
  - Use this to encrypt data with trusted (authenticated) program
  - Encrypt secret key using SPKI, can then be stored anywhere
- Sealing:
  - RSA engine can optionally include PCR configuration in encryption
  - When encrypting, include
    - Present ("sender") PCR state
    - Desired ("receiver") PCR state
  - Only decrypt if present PCR state matches "receiver" state
  - Return "sender" PCR state with decrypted key for confirmation
- Storage root key is root of trust for storage (RTS)

Authenticated Boot

- TPM ROM contains:
  - Boot block
  - Public key of OS manufacturer
- OS components signed by manufacturers keys
  - Only load components after verifying signatures
- Measure components prior to executing
- Boot block loads first OS component
  - Using TPM cryptography to authenticate
- First OS components contains
  - Software implementation of crypto
  - Potential further software vendor keys

Secure Boot

- Seal (rather than just sign) OS components
  - Makes it impossible to boot other than predetermined OS version
- Rather painful
  - Complete OS must be sealed separately
  - For individual target machine
  - Any software upgrade requires re-sealing
- Quite impractical for normal OS
  - But could be feasible for hypervisor or microkernel
- Based on secure bootstrap work [Arbaugh et al. 97]

Trusted Computing vs Secure OS

- TPM-based trusted-computing approach is based on
  - Hardware root of trust
  - Mechanism to provide a chain of trust
  - Not designed to protect against hardware attacks
  - Including simple stuff such as bus snooping
- Objective is to guarantee that system boots into a well-defined configuration
  - Guarantees that a particular OS image is running
  - What does this mean about security/trustworthiness?

- TPM-based trusted-computing approach is of limited use
  - As long as the OS isn't trustworthy
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Design Principles for Secure OS
- Least privilege (POLA)
- Economy of mechanisms
- Fail-safe defaults
- Complete mediation
- Open design
- Separation of privilege
- Least common mechanisms
- Psychological acceptability
[Saltzer & Schroeder 1975]

Least Privilege
- Also called the principle of least authority (POLA)
- Military "need to know" is an example
- Agent should only be given the minimal rights needed for task
  - minimal protection domain
  - PD determined by function, not identity
  - Unix model is evil
  - role-based access control (RBAC)
  - rights added as needed, removed when no longer needed
  - violated by mainstream O/Ses
- Example: executing web applet
  - should not have all of user's privileges, only minimal access
  - hard to do with ACL-based systems
  - main motivation for using caps

Least Privilege: Implications for OS
- OS kernel executes in privileged mode of hardware
  - kernel has unlimited privilege!
- POLA implies keeping kernel code to an absolute minimum
  - this means a secure OS must be based on a microkernel!
- Trusted computing base can bypass security
- POLA requires that TCB is minimal
  - microkernel plus minimal security manager

Economy of Mechanisms
- KISS principle of engineering
  - "keep it simple, stupid"
- Less code/features/stuff ⇒ less to get wrong
  - makes it easier to fix if something does go wrong
  - complexity is the natural enemy of security
- Also applies to interfaces, interactions, protocols, ...
- Specifically applies to TCB
- Reflected in CC EAL7 "design minimality" requirement
  - justified by need for manual inspection
  - trumped by formal methods

Fail-Safe Defaults
- Default action is no-access
  - if action fails, system remains secure
  - if security administrator forgets to add rule, system remains secure
  - eg, default firewall setting of OS should be "secure", not "open!
  - "better safe than sorry"
Complete Mediation

- Reference monitor checks every access
  - violated in Unix file access:
    - access rights checked at open(), then cached
    - access remains enabled until closed, even if attributes change
    - also implies that any rights propagation must be controlled
    - not done with tagged or sparse capability systems
  - In practice conflicts with performance!
    - caching of buffers, file descriptors etc
    - without caching unacceptable performance
    - Should at least limit window of opportunity
    - e.g guarantee caches are flushed after some fixed period
    - guarantee no cached access after revoking access

Open Design

- Security must not depend on secrecy of design or implementation
  - TCB must be open to scrutiny
  - Security by obscurity is poor security
    - Not all security/verification agencies seem to understand this
  - Note that this doesn’t rule out passwords or secret keys
    - ... but their creation requires careful cryptanalysis

Separation of Privilege

- Require a combination of conditions for granting access
  - e.g user is in group wheel and knows the root password
  - Take-grant model for capability-based protection:
    - sender needs grant right on capability
    - receiver needs inbox right to accept capability
  - In reality, the security benefit of a separate take right is minimal
    - practical cap implementations only provide grant as a privilege

Least Common Mechanisms

- Avoid sharing mechanisms
  - shared mechanism ⇒ shared channel
    - potential covert channel
  - Also, shared mechanisms lead to complex interdependencies
    - makes it harder to analyze system for correctness
    - more likely to hide security problems
    - many classical security breaches result from unforeseen interactions
- Inherent conflict with other design imperatives
  - simplicity ⇒ shared mechanisms
  - classical tradeoff...

Psychological Acceptability

- Security mechanisms should provide a simple mental model
  - users need to understand the consequences of their actions
- Mechanisms should not add to difficulty of use
  - hide complexity introduced by security mechanisms
  - ensure ease of installation, configurations, use
  - systems are used by humans!
  - Inherently problematic:
    - security inherently infects ease of use
    - idea is to minimize impact
  - Security-usability tradeoff is to a degree unavoidable

Overview

- Operating systems security overview
- Types of secure systems
- Security policies
- Security mechanisms
- Trusted Computing
- Design principles
- OS security verification
- OS design for security
Common-Criteria Protection Profiles for OS

- Controlled Access Protection Profile (CAPP)
  - standard OS security, derived from Orange Book C2
  - certified up to level EAL3
- Single-level Operating System Protection Profile
  - superset of CAPP
  - certified up to EAL4+
- Labeled Security Protection Profile (LSPP)
  - mandatory access control for COTS OSes
  - similar to Orange Book B1
- Role-based Access Control Protection Profile
  - multi-level Operating System Protection Profile
  - superset of CAPP, LSPP
  - certified up to EAL4+
  - Separation Kernel Protection Profile (SKPP)
  - strict partitioning
  - certifications aiming for EAL6-7

Common Criteria Assurance Levels

- EAL1: functionally tested
  - simple to do, can be done without help from developer
- EAL2: structurally tested
  - functional and interface spec
  - black- and white-box testing
  - vulnerability analysis
- EAL3: methodically tested and checked
  - improved test coverage
  - procedures to avoid tampering during development
  - highest assurance level achieved for Mac OS X

Note: EAL3 profile!

In reality a pointless exercise

EAL4: methodically designed, tested and reviewed

- design docs used for testing, avoid tampering during delivery
- independent vulnerability analysis
- highest level feasible on existing product (not developed for CC cert.)
- achieved by a number of main-stream OSes
  - SUSE Enterprise Linux: EAL4 in 2005
  - Solaris-10: EAL4+ in 2006
- controlled access protection profile (CAPP) — Note: EAL3 profile!
- role-based access control RP — example of non-CCAP RP
- RedHat Linux EAL4+ in 2007
- They still get broken!
  - certification is based on assumptions about environment, etc...
  - most use is outside those assumptions
  - certification means nothing in such a case
  - presumably there were no compromises where assumptions held

They still get broken!

Common Criteria Limitations

- Little (if any) use in commercial space outside national security
  - This was one of the intentions — by all indications, CC failed here
  - Very expensive
  - industry rule-of-thumb: EAL6+ costs $1M per LOC
  - dominated by documentation requirements
  - no "credit" for doing things better
  - eg. formal methods instead of excessive documentation
- Lower EALs of limited practical use
  - Windows is EAL4+ certified
  - marketing seems to be main driver behind EAL 3-4 certification
- Over-evaluation abuses system
  - eg. CAPP (EAL3 profile) certification to EAL4
  - in reality a pointless exercise

Note: Even EAL7 relies on testing!

EAL7 requires proof of correspondence between formal descriptions
However, no requirement of formalising LLD, implementation
Hence no requirement for formal proof of implementation correctness

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Formal Verification

- Based on mathematical model of the system
- Complete verification requires two parts:
  - proof that model satisfies requirements of security policies
    - typically prove generic properties that actual policies map to
      - required by CC EAL5–7
  - proof that implementation has same properties as model
    - proof of correspondence between model and implementation
    - not required by CC even at EAL7
      - done by some kernels with very limited functionality
    - never done for any general-purpose OS!
- Model-checking (static analysis) is incomplete formal verification
  - shows presence or absence of certain properties
    - e.g. uninitialised variables, array-bounds overflows
  - nevertheless useful for assurance

Common Criteria and seL4

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<tr>
<th>Evaluation Level</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th>Functional Specification</th>
<th>Top-Down Design</th>
<th>Implementation</th>
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OS Design for Security

- Minimize kernel code
  - kernel = code that executes in privileged mode
  - kernel can bypass any security
  - kernel is inherently part of TCB
  - kernel can only be verified as a whole (not in components)
    - it’s hard enough to verify a minimal kernel
- How?
  - generic mechanisms (economy of mechanisms)
  - no policies, only mechanisms
  - mechanisms as simple as possible
  - only code that must be privileged in order to support secure systems
  - free of covert channels:
    - no global names, absolute time
- Formally specify API

Example: NICTA’s seL4

- High-security version of L4 microkernel API
  - all authority granted by capabilities
    - full mediation, least privilege, separation of privilege, fail-safe defaults
  - only four system calls: read, write, create, derive
    - economy of mechanisms
  - semi-formal and formal models and design spaces
  - open design (once published)
  - kernel memory explicitly managed by user-level resource manager
  - least privilege, separation of privilege
  - 7,000–10,000 lines of kernel code
    - least privilege
- Details later...