

PV204: Disk encryption lab

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Introduction

Encryption can provide confidentiality of user data. It can be implemented on different layers, including application, file system or storage device.

Application layer encryption examples are PGP or ZIP compression with password.

Encryption of files (inside filesystem or through independent layer like Linux eCryptfs) provides more generic solution. Yet some parts (like filesystem metadata) are still unencrypted. However this solution provides encrypted data with private key per user. (Every user can have own directory encrypted by own key.)

Encryption of the low-level storage (disk) is called *Full Disk Encryption* (FDE). It is completely transparent to the user (no need to choose what to encrypt – the whole disk is encrypted). The encrypted disk behaves as the same as a disk without encryption.

The major disadvantage is that everyone who knows the password can read the whole disk. Often we combine FDE with another encryption layer. The primary use of FDE is to *provide data confidentiality in power-down mode* (stolen laptop does not leak user data).

Once the disk is unlocked, the main encryption key remains in system, usually directly in system RAM. Exercise II will show how easy is to get this key from memory image of system.

Another disadvantage of FDE is that it usually cannot guarantee integrity of data. Encryption is fully transparent and length-preserving, the ciphertext and plaintext device are of the same size. There is no space to store any integrity information. This allows attacks by direct modification of ciphertext.

The FDE works on the sector level, as the same as the block device. Atomic I/O access units for encrypted devices are sectors. Sectors are encrypted independently by a symmetric cipher. Cipher block size is (in most cases) smaller than the size of a sector. It means that inside sector we need to use an encryption mode (suitable for storage encryption).

It is crucial that the same data in different sectors must produce different ciphertext pattern. This is achieved by a per-sector tweak (IV, Initialization Vector) that is usually derived from logical sector offset (sector number). Combination of properly used IV and encryption mode is critical for the security of the FDE system. *Figure 1* shows an example of wrongly used mode for encryption (here ECB, Electronic Codebook). Another problems could appear with CBC mode [CBC] and predictable IV. Then attacker can use predictability of IV and create watermarks and detect them directly from ciphertext. We will show this flaw on legacy TrueCrypt device in Exercise III.

Today, the most used encryption mode for disks is XTS [XTS]. This mode is constructed such way, that it can safely use predictable sector number directly as an IV. Schema of CBC and XTS encryption mode is for reference in Appendix.

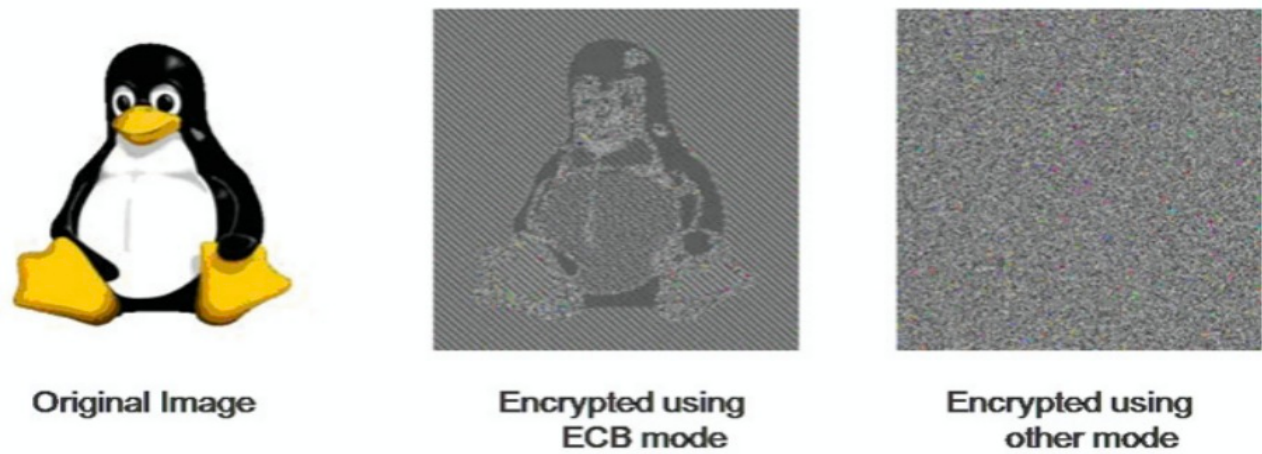


Figure 1. An image encrypted in ECB mode (without tweaked-sector encryption).

FDE can be implemented on hardware layer (self-encrypted disk, encryption inside controller chipset) or in software [FDE].

Software implementation is for example Bitlocker for Windows systems, dm-crypt in Linux, FileVault on MacOS or (abandoned) TrueCrypt. There are many other tools implementing this functionality [COMP].

In the following exercises we will use two software FDE tools. The first one is LUKS/dm-crypt [LUKS] which is primary solution for Linux based systems and VeraCrypt/TrueCrypt [TC].

Both tools can create a virtual encrypted block device within a partition or a regular file.

This virtual disk can be formatted as if it was a physical device and mounted.

TrueCrypt also supports trivial steganography and allows to create a hidden virtual volume within another volume.

References

[FDE] Disk encryption

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Disk_encryption

[COMP] Comparison of disk encryption software

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comparison_of_disk_encryption_software

[CBC] Cipher Block Chaining mode

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Block_cipher_mode_of_operation

[XTS] Recommendation for Block Cipher Modes of Operation: the XTS-AES Mode for Confidentiality on Storage Devices

<https://csrc.nist.gov/publications/detail/sp/800-38e/final>

[LUKS] Linux Unified Key Setup / cryptsetup

<https://gitlab.com/cryptsetup/cryptsetup/>

[TC] VeraCrypt (former TrueCrypt), Free open-source disk encryption software

<https://www.veracrypt.fr>

Exercises

We will use prepared Virtual Machine PV204 (slightly modified Debian Linux).
VM can be run in Oracle VirtualBox.

The virtual machine has preinstalled LUKS disk encryption of the whole system, **cryptsetup** 2.x (it can open TrueCrypt and VeraCrypt devices as well), **TrueCrypt** 7.1a and **VeraCrypt** 1.23.

User name: pv204

Password (also unlocking password for disk): **pv204**

Note: User pv204 can run superuser commands via sudo without need of entering password, e.g. `sudo ls /root`.

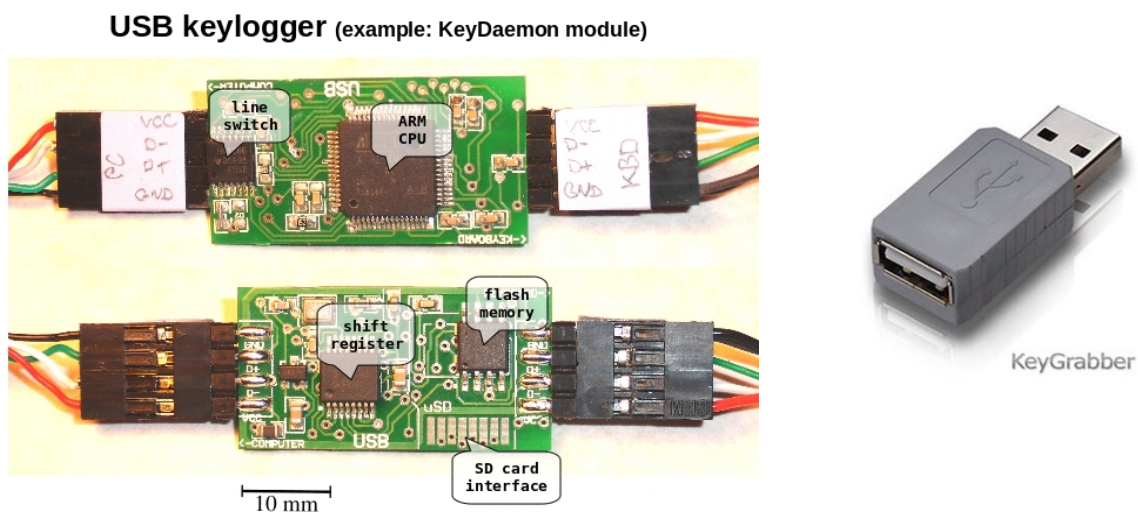
Exercise I: Hardware keylogger use

"If you let your machine out of your sight, it's no longer your machine."

In a context of disk encryption specialized hw device can be used to attack entered passphrase (BIOS password, disk encryption unlocking passphrase).

Hardware keylogger is a device which intercepts data entered through keyboard and store it internally for later analysis. The device can also transmit data using wireless network or another hidden channel. If properly masked (e.g. in keyboard controller) it is very hard to reveal it by user because device is completely transparent to BIOS and operating system (and power consumption is minimal).

Figure 2. Example keylogger module



We will use simple example of commercially available USB keylogger module (2010/2014) intended for built-in applications. Used version has only 4MB internal memory for log but extended version provides SD card for log store (enough storage for almost the whole physical life of the keyboard).

Log retrieval is activated by an activation shortcut, which switches keylogger into USB drive emulation mode and provides direct access to log storage (file).

Simple USB hw keylogger

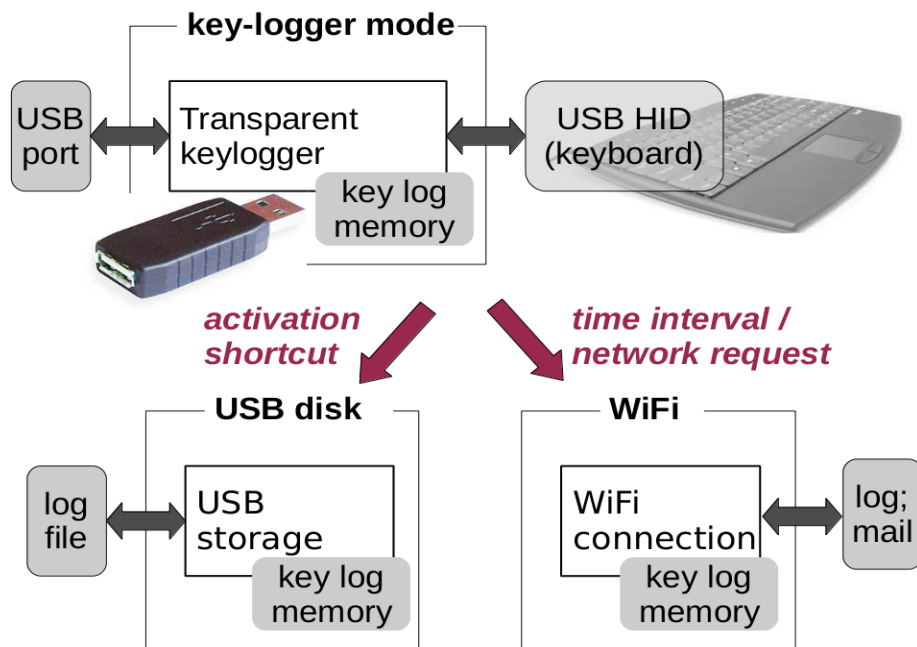


Figure 3. Log retrieval from the module

Your task

1. Connect provided USB keyboard through cable with USB keylogger module.
2. Check that system recognizes keyboard (as the same as it is connected directly).
3. Simulate some work where you need enter sensitive data, e.g. create new TrueCrypt encrypted device, boot testing virtual machine and log in or try to enter some password in browser.
4. Switch to host system file explorer and press activation shortcut :
'K' + 'B' + 'S' key together.
The keyboard should detach and you should see new virtual USB flash disk.
5. Investigate "LOG.txt" file on the disk and compare it with your work in step 3.
6. Please delete the "LOG.txt" so your colleagues will not see your "sensitive" data :-)

Exercise II: Obtaining encryption key from VM memory image

For most of the software-based disk encryption applications the encryption run on the CPU, usually inside OS context (optionally with HW acceleration like AES-NI instructions).

In this operating mode the encryption key is present in RAM during the operation. An attacker can obtain image of physical memory and try to search for the encryption key. This image can be either obtained through software (we will use VirtualBox debugger function) or through hardware (Cold boot attack, i.e. recover memory content after force reboot/short powerdown or use FireWire hw debug functions). The obtained key can be directly used for storage decryption (without password).

Next problem is to identify candidate keys in memory image. This can be done by recognizing internal OS structures in memory or by a more generic approach, like reconstructing AES keys by identifying specific round keys [COLD].

Your Task

1. Copy provided image and prepare Virtual Machine with some active and mounted encrypted devices and understand the storage stack inside.

You should have two encrypted and active mappings for this exercise in VM. One is system encryption itself (LUKS/dm-crypt) and second will be VeraCrypt device created from disk image **testdisk.img**.

- a) Start and login to VM.
- b) Run VeraCrypt GUI (on desktop) and create new image **testdisk.img** (please use AES only for encryption algorithm).
- c) Mount image through VeraCrypt GUI and investigate used parameters (Volume Properties). Keep it mounted to investigate key in memory later.
- d) Investigate and understand storage stack, dump parameters about encrypted virtual devices. Use **lsblk** command to get the whole picture:

```
root@pv204:/home/pv204# lsblk
NAME                                MAJ:MIN RM  SIZE RO TYPE  MOUNTPOINT
loop0                                7:0      0   32M  0 loop
└─veracrypt1                         254:3    0 31.8M  0 dm    /media/veracrypt1
sda                                   8:0      0   16G  0 disk
├─sda1                               8:1      0  243M  0 part  /boot
├─sda2                               8:2      0    1K  0 part
├─sda5                               8:5      0 15.8G  0 part
│   └─sda5_crypt                     254:0    0 15.8G  0 crypt
│       └─pv204--vg-root              254:1    0 15.1G  0 lvm   /
│           └─pv204--vg-swap_1        254:2    0   708M  0 lvm   [SWAP]
```

In this example, **sda5** is your system encrypted partition, **loop0** is the VeraCrypt (or TrueCrypt) device mapped to **testimage.img**.

Check VeraCrypt device - note the header is encrypted so you cannot get information using **blkid**. Use cryptsetup TrueCrypt/VeraCrypt extension to get more info about device on-disk header:

```
$ sudo blkid testdisk.img
```

```
$ sudo cryptsetup tcryptDump testdisk.img --veracrypt --dump-master-key
```

```
Enter passphrase for testdisk.img:
TCRYPT header information for testdisk.img
Cipher chain:  aes
Cipher mode:   xts-plain64
Payload offset: 256
MK bits:      512
MK dump:      a8 8e 10 08 2d a1 a1 c3 b3 bf f0 4d 61 ab 16 1b
              80 3d 4a 17 ce 56 eb 02 a5 df 72 41 55 b5 4b 9c
              bb d0 19 94 01 be 3b 97 11 6f e7 04 29 ba bb c4
              _19 17 8f 2e 7b 30 f9 f3 8c 10 41 35 6a 89 0d 91
```

Note: always add --veracrypt option to cryptsetup optiond (otherwise cryptsetup will not recognize VeraCrypt format).

Now, try to display encrypted keys directly from kernel (superuser can display full device-mapper dm-crypt mapping table for active devices).

```
pv204@pv204:~$ sudo dmsetup table --showkeys veracrypt1
0 65024 crypt aes-xts-plain64 a88e10082da1a1c3b3bff04d61ab161b803d4a17ce56eb02a5df724155b54b9cbbd0199
401be3b97116fe70429babbc419178f2e7b30f9f38c1041356a890d91 256 7:0 256
```

- e) Repeat the same exercise for LUKS device (**/dev/sda5** mapped to **sda5_crypt**), just use **LuksDump** command. Note LUKS has visible header on-disk.
2. While the VM is still running, obtain snapshot of memory core image. You can use **Vbox_save_memcore.bat** script which uses internal VirtualBox debugger to dump VM memory core (it is in fact ELF format dump, but it is enough for our use).
 3. Analyze the memory core image with the provided aeskeyfind [AESKEYFIND] program. Note this program search for specific AES structures. (In reality you have key in memory more times but in different format, just think about screen buffer with text dumps executed in step 1.)
 4. Compare possible encryption keys with information you obtained in step 1. See XTS encryption mode definition [XTS] and think why you see two separate AES keys for one device.

References

[COLD] *Lest We Remember: Cold Boot Attacks on Encryption Keys*
<https://citp.princeton.edu/research/memory/>

[AESKEYFIND] Fixed and extended AESkeyfind source code (gcc optimization bug patch)
<https://github.com/mbroz/aeskeyfind>

Optional/Advanced Exercise III: Revealing TrueCrypt hidden disk existence (CBC mode)

The goal of this exercise is to show that old CBC mode in TrueCrypt is vulnerable to watermarking attack and that such attack could be used to reveal hidden disk existence just from ciphertext analysis.

Theory

The TrueCrypt (in version before 4.1) used CBC mode with Initialization Vector calculated from the sector number and xored with secret key K_{IV} . Also there is additional whitening which is calculated using several CRC32 operations over secret key K_w xored with sector number. Final whitening value is then applied to the whole plaintext sector with plain xor function. Unfortunately, both operations are not secure (IV is still partially predictable because for consecutive sectors we know which bits will change, and the whitening is just linear transformation, CRC32 is not cryptographically secure). The figure shows simplified attack with P (plaintext block) and C (ciphertext block). For more info see [TC4].

CBC mode – hidden disk watermark

- for sector S_n divisible by 4: $S_n \text{ xor } S_{n+1} = S_{n+2} \text{ xor } S_{n+3}$
 - whitening W : $W(K_w, A \text{ xor } B) = W(K_w, A) \text{ xor } W(K_w, B)$
 - let's change the first plaintext blocks of sectors $n \dots n+3$
 P_n and $P_{n+2} = 0$
 P_{n+1} and $P_{n+3} = S_n \text{ xor } S_{n+1}$
- $$C_n = E(K_E, P_n \text{ xor } IV_n) \text{ xor } W_n = E(K, K_{iv} \text{ xor } S_n) \text{ xor } W_n$$
- $$C_{n+1} = E(K_E, P_{n+1} \text{ xor } IV_{n+1}) \text{ xor } W_{n+1} = \dots = E(K, K_{iv} \text{ xor } S_n) \text{ xor } W_{n+1}$$
- this allows to eliminate encryption and we can show that
- $$C_n \text{ xor } C_{n+1} = C_{n+2} \text{ xor } C_{n+3}$$

**Watermark detection
only from ciphertext!**

This attack allows construct a special plaintext, which if aligned to proper sectors can propagate special pattern (watermark) into ciphertext. Because filesystem aligns start of files to sector offset, we can just use specially formatted file in hidden disk and then search for the watermark on ciphertext device. As the exercise will show, this special file can be text file, so forcing user to store such file in the hidden disk is not too complicated (imagine mail or picture in browser cache).

Your Task

For the task use TrueCrypt installed in Virtual Machine (VeraCrypt no longer supports CBC mode). The exercise files are already copied to /home/task3 inside VM.

1. Use the provided TrueCrypt container in **/home/task3/tc_hidden_cbc.tc** and try to open it in TrueCrypt.
The password to outer (decoy) volume is "password", password to hidden volume is "hidden".
2. Using the provided program **/home/task3/create_file <name>** (which implements attack above) generate special file and copy it to hidden TrueCrypt disk.
3. Dismount the TrueCrypt device and run **/home/task3/detect_file** over the TrueCrypt container image. It should find the pattern in special file and print the offset of this pattern.
4. See the create_file and detect_file source code (/home/task3/src) to better understand internal operation.

References

[TC4] sci-crypt mailinglist, *TrueCrypt 4.0 Out*
[https://groups.google.com/forum/#!topic/sci.crypt/3DxOChZ0lrQ\[1-25-false\]](https://groups.google.com/forum/#!topic/sci.crypt/3DxOChZ0lrQ[1-25-false])