Lecture 12
October 20, 2025

ECS 235A, Computer and Information Security

Administrative Stuff

- No class on Friday, October 24
- Office hour change: Thursday's office hours are now 12:10pm–1:00pm in 2203 Watershed Sciences
  - They were 11:00am–11:50am

AWS Problem

- Did you try to download the slides this morning?
- Didn't work due to "an ongoing AWS incident"

- What lessons can we draw from this about security?

Adding Security to Email

- Goal: provide privacy (confidentiality), authentication of origin, and integrity checking for email
- Two systems
  - Privacy-Enhanced Electronic Mail (PEM)
  - PGP, GPG, OpenPGP — all basically the same
- Ideas underlying both protocols are the same
  - PEM is older and simpler; not used much today
  - PGP/GPG/OpenPGP newer, used widely
- Here, discuss PEM and show differences between it and OpenPGP

Design Principles

- Do not change related existing protocols
  - Cannot alter SMTP
- Do not change existing software
  - Need compatibility with existing software
- Make use of PEM optional
  - Available if desired, but email still works without them
  - Some recipients may use it, others not
- Enable communication without prearrangement
  - Out-of-bands authentication, key exchange problematic

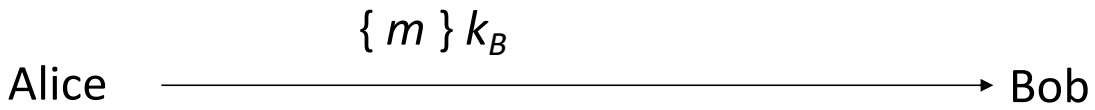
Basic Design: Keys

- Two keys
  - *Interchange keys* tied to sender, recipients and is static (for some set of messages)
    - Like a public/private key pair (indeed, may be a public/private key pair)
    - Must be available *before* messages sent
  - *Data exchange keys* generated for each message
    - Like a session key, session being the message

Basic Design: Confidentiality

Confidentiality:

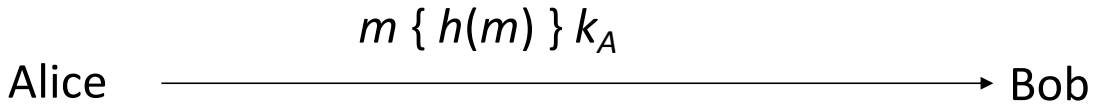
- m message
- k_B Bob's interchange key (his public key, in a public key system)



Basic Design: Integrity

Integrity and authentication:

- m message
- $h(m)$ hash of message m —Message Integrity Check (MIC)
- k_A Alice's interchange key (her private key, in a public key system)

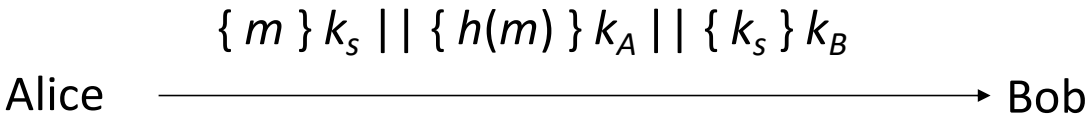


Non-repudiation: if k_A is Alice's private key, this establishes that Alice's private key was used to sign the message

Basic Design: Everything

Confidentiality, integrity, authentication:

- Notations as in previous slides
- If k_A is Alice's private key, get non-repudiation too



Practical Considerations

- Limits of SMTP
  - Only ASCII characters, limited length lines
- Use encoding procedure
  1. Map local char representation into canonical format
     - Format meets SMTP requirements
  2. Compute and encipher MIC over the canonical format; encipher message if needed
  3. Map each 6 bits of result into a character; insert newline after every 64th character
  4. Add delimiters around this ASCII message

Problem

- Recipient without PEM-compliant software cannot read it
  - If only integrity and authentication used, should be able to read it
- Mode MIC-CLEAR allows this
  - Skip step 3 in encoding procedure
  - Problem: some MTAs add blank lines, delete trailing white space, or change end of line character
  - Result: PEM-compliant software reports integrity failure

PEM vs. OpenPGP

- Use different ciphers
  - PGP allows several ciphers
    - Public key: RSA, El Gamal, DSA, Diffie-Hellman, Elliptic curve
    - Symmetric key: IDEA, Triple DES, CAST5, Blowfish, AES-128, AES-192, AES-256, Twofish-256
    - Hash algorithms: MD5, SHA-1, RIPE-MD/160, SHA256, SHA384, SHA512, SHA224
  - PEM allows RSA as public key algorithm, DES in CBC mode to encipher messages, MD2, MD5 as hash functions

PEM vs. OpenPGP

- Use different key distribution models
  - PGP uses general “web of trust”
  - PEM uses hierarchical structure
- Handle end of line differently
  - PGP remaps end of line if message tagged “text”, but leaves them alone if message tagged “binary”
  - PEM always remaps end of line

Access Control Mechanisms

- Access control lists
- Capability lists
- Ring-based access control
- Lock and key

Access Control Lists

- Columns of access control matrix

	file1	*file2*	*file3*
Andy	rx	r	rwo
Betty	rwxo	r	
Charlie	rx	rwo	w

ACLs:

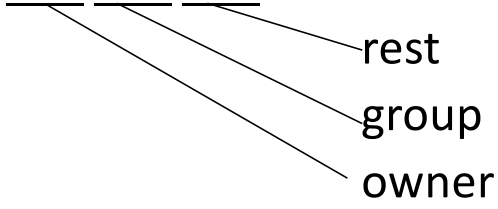
- file1: { (Andy, rx) (Betty, rwxo) (Charlie, rx) }
- file2: { (Andy, r) (Betty, r) (Charlie, rwo) }
- file3: { (Andy, rwo) (Charlie, w) }

Default Permissions

- Normal: if not named, *no* rights over file
  - Principle of Fail-Safe Defaults
- If many subjects, may use groups or wildcards in ACL
  - UNICOS: entries are (*user*, *group*, *rights*)
    - If *user* is in *group*, has rights over file
    - '*' is wildcard for *user*, *group*
      - (holly, *, r): holly can read file regardless of her group
      - (*, gleep, w): anyone in group gleep can write file

Abbreviations

- ACLs can be long … so combine users
  - UNIX: 3 classes of users: owner, group, rest
  - rwx rwx rwx



  - Ownership assigned based on creating process
    - Most UNIX-like systems: if directory has setgid permission, file group owned by group of directory (Solaris, Linux)

ACLs + Abbreviations

- Augment abbreviated lists with ACLs
  - Intent is to shorten ACL
- ACLs override abbreviations
  - Exact method varies
- Example: Extended permissions (Linux, FreeBSD, others)
  - Minimal ACLs are abbreviations, extended ACLs give specific users, groups permissions
  - Extended ACL entries give rights provided those rights are in mask

Minimal and Extended ACL

user *heidi*, group *family* owns file with permissions:

```
user::rw-
user:skyler:rwx
group::rw-
group:child:r--
mask::rw-
other::r--
```

- *heidi* can read, write file (first line)
- *matt*, not in group *child*, can read file (last line)
- *skyler* can read, write file (second line masked by fifth line)
- *sage*, in group *family*, can read, write the file (third line masked by fifth line)
- *steven*, in group *child*, can read file (fourth line masked by fifth line)

ACL Modification

- Who can do this?
  - Creator is given *own* right that allows this
  - System R provides a *grant* modifier (like a copy flag) allowing a right to be transferred, so ownership not needed
    - Transferring right to another modifies ACL

Privileged Users

- Do ACLs apply to privileged users (*root*)?
  - Solaris: abbreviated lists do not, but full-blown ACL entries do
  - Other vendors: varies

Groups and Wildcards

- Classic form: no; in practice, usually
- UNICOS:
  - `holly : gleep : r`
    user *holly* in group *gleep* can read file
  - `holly : * : r`
    user *holly* in any group can read file
  - `* : gleep : r`
    any user in group *gleep* can read file

Conflicts

- Deny access if any entry would deny access
  - AIX: if any entry denies access, *regardless or rights given so far*, access is denied
- Apply first entry matching subject
  - Cisco routers: run packet through access control rules (ACL entries) in order; on a match, stop, and forward the packet; if no matches, deny
    - Note default is deny so honors principle of fail-safe defaults

Handling Default Permissions

- Apply ACL entry, and if none use defaults
  - Cisco router: apply matching access control rule, if any; otherwise, use default rule (deny)
- Augment defaults with those in the appropriate ACL entry
  - AIX: extended permissions augment base permissions

Revocation Question

- How do you remove subject's rights to a file?
  - Owner deletes subject's entries from ACL, or rights from subject's entry in ACL
- What if ownership not involved?
  - Depends on system
  - System R: restore protection state to what it was before right was given
    - May mean deleting descendent rights too …

Capability Lists

- Columns of access control matrix

	file1	*file2*	*file3*
Andy	rx	r	rwo
Betty	rwxo	r	
Charlie	rx	rwo	w

C-Lists:

- Andy: { (file1, rx) (file2, r) (file3, rwo) }
- Betty: { (file1, rwxo) (file2, r) }
- Charlie: { (file1, rx) (file2, rwo) (file3, w) }

Semantics

- Like a bus ticket
  - Mere possession indicates rights that subject has over object
  - Object identified by capability (as part of the token)
    - Name may be a reference, location, or something else
  - Architectural construct in capability-based addressing; this just focuses on protection aspects
- Must prevent process from altering capabilities
  - Otherwise subject could change rights encoded in capability or object to which they refer

Implementation

- Tagged architecture
  - Bits protect individual words
    - B5700: tag was 3 bits and indicated how word was to be treated (pointer, type, descriptor, *etc*.)
- Paging/segmentation protections
  - Like tags, but put capabilities in a read-only segment or page
    - EROS does this
  - Programs must refer to them by pointers
    - Otherwise, program could use a copy of the capability—which it could modify

Implementation (*con't*)

- Cryptography
  - Associate with each capability a cryptographic checksum enciphered using a key known to OS
  - When process presents capability, OS validates checksum
  - Example: Amoeba, a distributed capability-based system
    - Capability is (*name*, *creating_server*, *rights*, *check_field*) and is given to owner of object
    - *check_field* is 48-bit random number; also stored in table corresponding to *creating_server*
    - To validate, system compares *check_field* of capability with that stored in *creating_server* table
    - ***Vulnerable if capability disclosed to another process***

Amplifying

- Allows *temporary* increase of privileges
- Needed for modular programming
  - Module pushes, pops data onto stack

    ```
    module stack … endmodule.
    ```

  - Variable *x* declared of type stack

    ```
    var x: module;
    ```

  - *Only* stack module can alter, read *x*
    - So process doesn't get capability, but needs it when *x* is referenced — a problem!
  - Solution: give process the required capabilities while it is in module

Examples

- HYDRA: templates
  - Associated with each procedure, function in module
  - Adds rights to process capability *while the procedure or function is being executed*
  - Rights deleted on exit
- Intel iAPX 432: access descriptors for objects
  - These are really capabilities
  - 1 bit in this controls amplification
  - When ADT constructed, permission bits of type control object set to what procedure needs
  - On call, if amplification bit in this permission is set, the above bits or'ed with rights in access descriptor of object being passed