Summary of Attacks Against BIOS and Secure Boot

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Intel Security
In The Beginning Was The Legacy BIOS..

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Security Settings</th>
<th>Install or Change the password.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor Password: Not Installed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>User Password: Not Installed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Change Supervisor Password
- Change User Password

Boot Sector Virus Protection: [Disabled]
Legacy BIOS

1. CPU Reset vector in BIOS ‘ROM’ (Boot Block) →
2. Basic CPU, chipset initialization →
3. Initialize Cache-as-RAM, load and run from cache →
4. Initialize DIMMs, create address map.. →
5. Enumerate PCIe devices.. →
6. Execute Option ROMs on expansion cards →
7. Load and execute MBR →
8. 2nd Stage Boot Loader → OS Loader → OS kernel

Also Technical Note: UEFI BIOS vs. Legacy BIOS, Advantech
Then World Moved to UEFI..
UEFI Boot

From Secure Boot, Network Boot, Verified Boot, oh my and almost every publication on UEFI
UEFI [Compliant] Firmware

CPU Reset

SEC
  S-CRTM; Init caches/MTRRs; Cache-as-RAM (NEM); Recovery; TPM Init

Pre-EFI Init (PEI)
  S-CRTM: Measure DXE/BDS
  Early CPU/PCH Init
  Memory (DIMMs, DRAM) Init, SMM Init

Driver Exec Env (DXE)
  Continue initialization of platform & devices
  Enum FV, dispatch drivers (network, I/O, service..)
  Produce Boot and Runtime Services

Boot Dev Select (BDS)
  ACPI, UEFI SystemTable, SMBIOS table
  ExitBootServices. Minimal UEFI services (Variable)

Boot Manager (Select Boot Device)
  EFI Shell/Apps; OS Boot Loader(s)

Runtime / OS

ExitBootServices. Minimal UEFI services (Variable)
Signed BIOS Update & OS Secure Boot

- OS Driver
- OS Kernel / Early Launch Anti-Malware (ELAM)
- UEFI OS Loaders (winload.efi, winresume.efi)
- UEFI OROM
- UEFI App
- DXE Driver
- UEFI Boot Loader (Bootx64.efi, Bootmgfw.efi)
- UEFI DXE Core / Dispatcher
- System Firmware (SEC/PEI)
- Hardware
  - I/O
  - Memory
  - Network
  - Graphics
Attacks Against Both Of These..
BIOS Attack Surface: SPI Flash Protection

System
FW/BIOS

- Firmware Handlers
- Option ROMs
- Firmware Volumes / PE exec.
- BIOS Settings (NVRAM, Variables)
- BIOS Update
- Secure Boot
- HW Config/Protection
- SPI Flash
SPI Flash Write Protection

- Often still not properly enabled on many systems
- SMM based write protection of entire BIOS region is often not used: BIOS_CONTROL[SMM_BWP]
- If SPI Protected Ranges (mode agnostic) are used (defined by PRO-PR4 in SPI MMIO), they often don’t cover entire BIOS & NVRAM
- Some platforms use SPI device specific WP protection but only for boot block/startup code or SPI Flash descriptor region
- Persistent BIOS Infection (used coreboot’s flashrom on legacy BIOS)
- Evil Maid Just Got Angrier: Why FDE with TPM is Not Secure on Many Systems
- BIOS Chronomancy: Fixing the Static Root of Trust for Measurement
- A Tale Of One Software Bypass Of Windows 8 Secure Boot

**Mitigation:** BIOS_CONTROL[SMM_BWP] = 1 and SPI PRx
- chipsec_main --module common.bios_wp
- Or Copernicus from MITRE
SPI Flash & BIOS Is Not Write Protected

[+] loaded exploits.bios.bh2013
[+] imported chipsec.modules.exploits.bios.bh2013
[*] BIOS Region: Base = 0x00200000, Limit = 0x007FFFFFFF

[*] Reading 0x80 bytes from BIOS region in ROM (address 0x20F000)...

[+] Checking protection of UEFI BIOS region in ROM...
[spi] UEFI BIOS write protection enabled but not locked. Disabling...
[!] UEFI BIOS write protection is disabled
[*] Writing payload to BIOS region (address 0x20F000)...

[*] Reading BIOS back (address 0x20F000)...

IN YOUR BIOS
DON’T WORRY!
YOUR OS BOOT HAS BEEN SECURED
BLACK HAT 2013
Checking Manually.

**Windows:**

**RWEverything**

**Linux:**

`setpci -s 00:1F.0 DC.B`
Better Way to Check If Your BIOS Is Write-Protected

# chipsec_main.py --module common.bios_wp

[*] running module: chipsec.modules.common.bios_wp

[x] Module: BIOS Region Write Protection

[*] BIOS Control = 0x02
    [05] SMM_BWP = 0 (SMM BIOS Write Protection)
    [04] TSS = 0 (Top Swap Status)
    [01] BLE = 1 (BIOS Lock Enable)
    [00] BIOSWE = 0 (BIOS Write Enable)

[!] Enhanced SMM BIOS region write protection has not been enabled (SMM_BWP is not used)

[*] BIOS Region: Base = 0x00500000, Limit = 0x007FFFFF
SPI Protected Ranges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRx (offset)</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Base</th>
<th>Limit</th>
<th>WP?</th>
<th>RP?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PR0 (74)</td>
<td>87FF0780</td>
<td>00780000</td>
<td>007FF000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PR1 (78)</td>
<td>00000000</td>
<td>00000000</td>
<td>00000000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PR2 (7C)</td>
<td>00000000</td>
<td>00000000</td>
<td>00000000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PR3 (80)</td>
<td>00000000</td>
<td>00000000</td>
<td>00000000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PR4 (84)</td>
<td>00000000</td>
<td>00000000</td>
<td>00000000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[!] SPI protected ranges write-protect parts of BIOS region (other parts of BIOS can be modified)

[!] BIOS should enable all available SMM based write protection mechanisms or configure
SPI protected ranges to protect the entire BIOS region

[-] FAILED: BIOS is NOT protected completely
Demo
(Insecure SPI Flash Protection)
Patch enables BIOS write protection (sets BIOS_CONTROL[BLE]). Picked up by Subzero. The fix is incomplete though 😞
SPI Flash Write Protection

SMI Suppression Attack Variants

- Some systems write-protect BIOS by disabling BIOS Write-Enable (BIOSWE) and setting BIOS Lock Enable (BLE) but don’t use SMM based write-protection BIOS_CONTROL[SMM_BWP]
- SMI event is generated when Update SW writes BIOSWE=1
- Possible attack against this configuration is to block SMI events
- E.g. disable all chipset sources of SMI: clear SMI_EN[GBL_SMI_EN] if BIOS didn’t lock SMI config: Setup for Failure: Defeating SecureBoot

- Another variant is to disable specific TCO SMI source used for BIOSWE/BLE (clear SMI_EN[TCO_EN] if BIOS didn’t lock TCO config.)

- Mitigation: BIOS_CONTROL[SMM_BWP] = 1 and lock SMI config
  - chipsec_main --module common.bios_smi
Some BIOS rely on SPI Protected Range (PR0-PR4 registers in SPI MMIO) to provide write protection of regions of SPI Flash.

- SPI Flash Controller configuration including PRx has to be locked down by BIOS via Flash Lockdown.
- If BIOS doesn’t lock SPI Controller configuration (by setting FLOCKDN bit in HSFSTS SPI MMIO register), malware can disable SPI protected ranges re-enabling write access to SPI Flash.

```
chipsec_main --module common.spi_lock
```
Is SPI Flash Configuration Locked?

[+] imported chipsec.modules.common.spi_lock
[×][ .........................................................]
[×][ Module: SPI Flash Controller Configuration Lock
[×][ .........................................................]
[∗] HSFSTS register = 0x0004E008
  FLOCKDN = 1
[+] PASSED: SPI Flash Controller configuration is locked
BIOS Attack Surface: BIOS Update

- Firmware Handlers
- SPI Flash
- HW Config/Protection
- Secure Boot
- Option ROMs
- Firmware Volumes / PE exec.
- BIOS Settings (NVRAM, Variables)
- BIOS Update

System FW/BIOS
Legacy BIOS Update and Secure Boot

Signed BIOS Updates Are Rare

- **Mebromi** malware includes BIOS infector & MBR bootkit components
- Patches BIOS ROM binary injecting malicious ISA Option ROM with legitimate BIOS image mod utility
- Triggers SW SMI 0x29/0x2F to erase SPI flash then write patched BIOS binary
  - chipsec_util smi 0x29 0x0

No Signature Checks of OS boot loaders (MBR)

- No concept of Secure or Verified Boot
- Wonder why TDL4 and likes flourished?
UEFI BIOS Update Problems

- Unsigned sections within BIOS update (e.g. boot splash logo BMP image)
- BIOS displayed the logo before SPI Flash write-protection was enabled
- EDK ConvertBmpToGopBlt() integer overflow followed by memory corruption during DXE while parsing BMP image
- Copy loop overwrote #PF handler and triggered #PF

- Attacking Intel BIOS
UEFI BIOS Update Problems

- Legacy BIOS with signed BIOS update
- OS schedules BIOS update placing new BIOS image in DRAM split into RBU packets
- Upon reboot, BIOS Update SMI Handler reconstructs BIOS image from RBU packets in SMRAM and verifies signature
- Buffer overflow (memcpy with controlled size/dest/src) when copying RBU packet to a buffer with reconstructed BIOS image

- BIOS Chronomancy: Fixing the Core Root of Trust for Measurement
- Defeating Signed BIOS Enforcement
Problems With HW Configuration/Protections

Unlocked Compatible/Legacy SMRAM

- **D_LCK** bit locks down Compatible SMM space (a.k.a. CSEG) configuration (SMRAMC)
- **SMRAMC[D_OPEN]=0** forces access to legacy SMM space decode to system bus rather than to DRAM where SMI handlers are when CPU is not in System Management Mode (SMM)

- When **D_LCK** is not set by BIOS, SMM space decode can be changed to open access to CSEG when CPU is not in SMM: [Using CPU SMM to Circumvent OS Security Functions](#)
- Also [Using SMM For Other Purposes](#)

- chipsec_main --module common.smm
Compatible SMM Space: Normal Decode

- \( \text{SMRAMC [D_LCK]} = 1 \)
- \( \text{SMRAMC [D.OPEN]} = 0 \)

SMM access to CSEG is decoded to DRAM, non-SMM access is sent to system bus.
Compatible SMM Space: Unlocked

SMRAMC[D_LCK] = 0
SMRAMC[D_OPEN] = 1

Non-SMM access to CSEG is decoded to DRAM where SMI handlers can be modified.

Compatible SMRAM (CSEG)

Non SMM access

0xBFFFF

0xA0000
Is Compatible SMRAM Locked?

[+]

imported chipsec.modules.common.smm

[x]

Module: SMM memory (SMRAM) Lock

[*]

SMRAM register = 0x1A ( D_LCK = 1, D_OPEN = 0 )

[+]

PASSED: SMRAM is locked
Problems With HW Configuration/Protections

**SMRAM “Cache Poisoning” Attacks**

- CPU executes from cache if memory type is cacheable
- Ring0 exploit can make SMRAM cacheable (variable MTRR)
- Ring0 exploit can then populate cache-lines at SMBASE with SMI exploit code (ex. modify SMBASE) and trigger SMI
- CPU upon entering SMM will execute SMI exploit from cache
- **Attacking SMM Memory via Intel Cache Poisoning**
- **Getting Into the SMRAM: SMM Reloaded**

- CPU System Management Range Registers (SMRR) forcing UC and blocking access to SMRAM when CPU is not in SMM
- BIOS has to enable SMRR
  - chipsec_main --module common.smrr
Is SMRAM Exposed To Cache Poisoning Attack?

[*] running module: chipsec.modules.common.smrr

[+] Module: CPU SMM Cache Poisoning / SMM Range Registers (SMRR)

[+] OK. SMRR are supported in IA32_MTRRCAP_MSR

[*] Checking SMRR Base programming..
[*] IA32_SMRR_BASE_MSR = 0x00000000BD000006
   BASE    = 0xBD000000
   MEMTYPE = 6
[+] SMRR Memtype is WB
[+] OK so far. SMRR Base is programmed

[*] Checking SMRR Mask programming..
[*] IA32_SMRR_MASK_MSR = 0x00000000FF800800
   MASK    = 0xFF800000
   VLD     = 1
[+] OK so far. SMRR are enabled in SMRR_MASK MSR

[*] Verifying that SMRR_BASE/MASK have the same values on all logical CPUs..
 [CPU0] SMRR_BASE = 00000000BD000006, SMRR_MASK = 00000000FF800800
 [CPU1] SMRR_BASE = 00000000BD000006, SMRR_MASK = 00000000FF800800
 [CPU2] SMRR_BASE = 00000000BD000006, SMRR_MASK = 00000000FF800800
 [CPU3] SMRR_BASE = 00000000BD000006, SMRR_MASK = 00000000FF800800
[+] OK so far. SMRR MSRs match on all CPUs

[+] PASSED: SMRR protection against cache attack seems properly configured
Problems With HW Configuration/Protections

SMRAM Memory Remapping/Reclaim Attack

- Remap Window is used to reclaim DRAM range below 4Gb “lost” for Low MMIO
- Defined by REMAPBASE/REMAPLIMIT registers in Memory Controller PCIe config. space
- MC remaps Reclaim Window access to DRAM below 4GB (above “Top Of Low DRAM”)
- If not locked, OS malware can reprogram target of reclaim to overlap with SMRAM
- [Preventing & Detecting Xen Hypervisor Subversions]

- BIOS has to lock down Memory Map registers including REMAP*, TOLUD/TOUUD
Memory Remapping: Normal Memory Map

Access is remapped from the DRAM range ‘lost’ to MMIO (memory reclaimed).
Memory Remapping: SMRAM Remapping Attack

Target range of memory reclaim changed to SMRAM

Access

REMAPBASE

TOLUD

REMAPLIMIT

4GB

SMRAM

Low MMIO Range

Memory Reclaim/Remap Range
Problems With HW Configuration/Protections

"Top Swap" feature allows fault-tolerant update of BIOS boot block
- Enabled by BUC[TS] in Root Complex MMIO range
- When enabled, chipset flips A16-A20 address bits (depending on the size of boot block) when CPU fetches reset vector on reboot
- Thus CPU executes from 0xFFFFEFFFF0 inside “backup” boot block rather than from 0xFFFFFFF0
- What if malware enables Top Swap?
  - BIOS Boot Hijacking and VMware Vulnerabilities Digging

- BIOS has to lock down Top Swap configuration (BIOS Interface Lock in General Control & Status register) & protect top swap range in SPI
  - chipsec_main --module common.bios_ts
Is BIOS Interface Locked?

[+] imported chipsec.modules.common.bios_ts

[x][ Module: BIOS Interface Lock and Top Swap Mode
[x][
[*] RCBA General Config base: 0xFED1F400
[*] GCS (General Control and Status) register = 0x00000021
  [10] BBS (BIOS Boot Straps) = 0x0
  [00] BILD (BIOS Interface Lock-Down) = 1
[*] BUC (Backed Up Control) register = 0x00000000
  [00] TS (Top Swap) = 0
[*] BC (BIOS Control) register = 0x2A
  [04] TSS (Top Swap Status) = 0
[*] BIOS Top Swap mode is disabled

[+] PASSED: BIOS Interface is locked (including Top Swap Mode)
BIOS Attack Surface: SMI Handlers

System FW/BIOS

- SMI Handlers
- SPI Flash
- HW Config/Protection
- Secure Boot
- BIOS Update
- BIOS Settings (NVRAM, Variables)
- Option ROMs
- Firmware Volumes / PE exec.
Legacy SMI Handlers Calling Out of SMRAM

Phys Memory

SMRAM
CALL F000:8070

Legacy BIOS Shadow (F/ E-segments)
PA = 0xF0000

1 MB
Legacy SMI Handlers Calling Out of SMRAM

Phys Memory

SMRAM
CALL F000:8070

1 MB

Legacy BIOS Shadow (F/ E-segments)
PA = 0xF0000

Code fetch in SMM
Legacy SMI Handlers Calling Out of SMRAM

Phys Memory

SMRAM
CALL F000:8070

1 MB

Legacy BIOS Shadow (F/ E-segments)
PA = 0xF0000

0F000:08070 = 0xF0000 PA
0xF8070: payload

Code fetch in SMM
Legacy SMI Handlers Calling Out of SMRAM

- OS level exploit stores payload in F-segment below 1MB (0xF8070 Physical Address)
- Exploit has to also reprogram PAM for F-segment
- Then triggers “SW SMI” via APMC port (I/O 0xB2)
- SMI handler does **CALL 0F000:08070** in SMM

- **Branch Outside of SMRAM**

- BIOS SMM Privilege Escalation Vulnerabilities (14 issues in just one SMI Handler)
- System Management Mode Design and Security Issues
Function Pointers Outside of SMRAM (DXE SMI)

1. Read function pointer from ACPI NVS memory (outside SMRAM)
2. Call function pointer (payload outside SMRAM)
BIOS Attack Surface: UEFI Secure Boot

System FW/BIOS

- SMI Handlers
- SPI Flash
- HW Config/Protection
- Secure Boot
- BIOS Settings (NVRAM, Variables)
- BIOS Update
- Option ROMs
- Firmware Volumes / PE exec.
Secure Boot Key Hierarchy

Platform Key (PK)
- Verifies KEKs
- Platform Vendor’s Cert

Key Exchange Keys (KEKs)
- Verify db and dbx
- Earlier rev’s: verifies image signatures

Authorized Database (db)

Forbidden Database (dbx)
- X509 certificates, SHA1/SHA256 hashes of allowed & revoked images
- Earlier revisions: RSA-2048 public keys, PKCS#7 signatures
Platform Key (Root Key) has to be Valid

PK variable exists in NVRAM?
Yes. Set `SetupMode` variable to `USER_MODE`
No. Set `SetupMode` variable to `SETUP_MODE`

SecureBootEnable variable exists in NVRAM?
Yes
- `SecureBootEnable` variable is `SECURE_BOOT_ENABLE` and `SetupMode` variable is `USER_MODE`? Set `SecureBoot` variable to `ENABLE`
- Else? Set `SecureBoot` variable to `DISABLE`
No
- `SetupMode` is `USER_MODE`? Set `SecureBoot` variable to `ENABLE`
- `SetupMode` is `SETUP_MODE`? Set `SecureBoot` variable to `DISABLE`
First Public Windows 8 Secure Boot Bypass

A Tale Of One Software Bypass Of Windows 8 Secure Boot
Platform Key in NVRAM Can Be Modified

Corrupt Platform Key EFI variable in NVRAM

- Name ("PK") or Vendor GUID \{8BE4DF61-93CA-11D2-AA0D-00E098032B8C\}

- Recall that `AuthenticatedVariableService` DXE driver enters Secure Boot `SETUP_MODE` when correct “PK” EFI variable cannot be located in EFI NVRAM

- Main volatile `SecureBoot` variable is then set to DISABLE

- DXE `ImageVerificationLib` then assumes Secure Boot is off and skips Secure Boot checks

- Generic exploit, independent of the platform/vendor

- 1 bit modification!
PK Mod: Before and After
Exploit Programs SPI Controller & Modifies SPI Flash

Signed BIOS Update

Modify Secure Boot FW or config in ROM

OS Driver

OS Exploit

OS Kernel

UEFI OS Loaders

DXE Driver

DXE Driver

UEFI Boot Loader

UEFI DXE Core / Dispatcher

System Firmware (SEC/PEI)

Hardware

I/O

Memory

Network

Graphics
Then Installs UEFI Bootkit on ESP

Signed BIOS Update

UEFI DXE Core / Dispatcher

System Firmware (SEC/PEI)

Hardware
- I/O
- Memory
- Network
- Graphics

OS Driver

OS Exploit

OS Kernel

UEFI OS Loaders

DXE Driver

DXE Driver

Install UEFI Bootkit
Modified FW Doesn’t Enforce Secure Boot

- Signed BIOS Update
- OS Driver
- OS Exploit
- OS Kernel
- UEFI OS Loaders
- UEFI Bootkit
- UEFI DXE Core / Dispatcher
- System Firmware (SEC/PEI)
- Hardware:
  - I/O
  - Memory
  - Network
  - Graphics
Demo

(Bypassing Secure Boot by Corrupting Platform Key in SPI)
Turn On/Off Secure Boot in BIOS Setup

Password Description

If ONLY the Administrator's password is set, this only access to Setup and is only asked for when entering Setup. If ONLY the User's password is set, this is a power on password and must be entered to boot to enter Setup. In Setup the User will have Administrator rights.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Password Type</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administrator Password</td>
<td>NOT INSTALLED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>User Password Status</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrator Password</td>
<td>NOT INSTALLED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>User Password</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I/O Interface Security

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>System Mode state</td>
<td>Setup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secure Boot state</td>
<td>Disabled</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Secure Boot Control

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Control</th>
<th>State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secure Boot Control</td>
<td>Enabled</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How to Disable Secure Boot?

SecureBootEnable UEFI Variable

- When turning ON/OFF Secure Boot, it should change

Hmm.. but there is no SecureBootEnable variable

- Where does the BIOS store Secure Boot Enable flag?

Should be NV ➔ somewhere in SPI Flash..

- Just dump SPI flash with Secure Boot ON and OFF
- Then compare two SPI flash images
Yeah.. Good Luck With That ;(
There's A Better Way..
Secure Boot Disable is Really in Setup!

chipsec_util.py spi dump spi.bin
chipsec_util.py uefi nvram spi.bin
chipsec_util.py decode spi.bin
Demo
(Attack Disabling Secure Boot)
Secure Boot: Image Verification Policies

DxeImageVerificationLib defines policies applied to different types of images and on security violation.

IMAGE_FROM_FV (*ALWAYS_EXECUTE*), IMAGE_FROM_FIXED_MEDIA,
IMAGE_FROM_REMOVABLE_MEDIA, IMAGE_FROM_OPTION_ROM

*ALWAYS_EXECUTE*, *NEVER_EXECUTE*,
ALLOW_EXECUTE_ON_SECURITY_VIOLATION
DEFER_EXECUTE_ON_SECURITY_VIOLATION
DENY_EXECUTE_ON_SECURITY_VIOLATION
QUERY_USER_ON_SECURITY_VIOLATION

SecurityPkg\Library\DxeImageVerificationLib
Secure Boot: Image Verification Policies

```c
// Check the image type and get policy setting.
switch (GetImageType(File)) {
    case IMAGE_FROM_FV:
        Policy = ALWAYS_EXECUTE;
        break;
    case IMAGE_FROM_OPTION_ROM:
        Policy = PcdGet32 (PcdOptionRomImageVerificationPolicy);
        break;
    case IMAGE_FROM_REMOVABLE_MEDIA:
        Policy = PcdGet32 (PcdRemovableMediaImageVerificationPolicy);
        break;
    case IMAGE_FROM_FIXED_MEDIA:
        Policy = PcdGet32 (PcdFixedMediaImageVerificationPolicy);
        break;
    default:
        Policy = DENY_EXECUTE_ON_SECURITY_VIOLATION;
        break;
}
// If policy is always/never execute, return directly.
if (Policy == ALWAYS_EXECUTE) {
    return EFI_SUCCESS;
} else if (Policy == NEVER_EXECUTE) {
    return EFI_ACCESS_DENIED;
}
```
Storing Image Verification Policies in Setup

- Read ‘Setup’ UEFI variable and look for sequences
  - 04 04 04, 00 04 04, 05 05 05, 00 05 05
- We looked near Secure Boot On/Off Byte!
- Modify bytes corresponding to policies to 00 \(\text{(ALWAYS\_EXECUTE)}\) then write modified ‘Setup’ variable
Modifying Image Verification Policies

[CHIPSEC] Reading EFI variable Name='Setup' GUID={EC87D643-EBA4-4BB5-A1E5-3F3E36B20DA9} from 'Setup_orig.bin' via Variable API..

EFI variable:
Name : Setup
GUID : EC87D643-EBA4-4BB5-A1E5-3F3E36B20DA9
Data :
...
01 01 01 00 00 00 01 01 01 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 |
00 00 00 00 00 00 01 01 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 |
[CHIPSEC] (uefi) time elapsed 0.000

[CHIPSEC] Writing EFI variable Name='Setup' GUID={EC87D643-EBA4-4BB5-A1E5-3F3E36B20DA9} from 'Setup_policy_exploit.bin' via Variable API..

Writing EFI variable:
Name : Setup
GUID : EC87D643-EBA4-4BB5-A1E5-3F3E36B20DA9
Data :
...
01 01 01 00 00 00 00 01 01 01 00 00 00 00 00 00 |
00 00 00 00 00 00 01 01 00 00 04 00 00 |
[CHIPSEC] (uefi) time elapsed 0.203

OptionRomPolicy
FixedMediaPolicy
RemovableMediaPolicy
Allows Bypassing Secure Boot

- The EFI variables are typically stored on the SPI Flash chip that also contains the platform firmware (UEFI code).

Issue was co-discovered with Corey Kallenberg, Xeno Kovah, John Butterworth and Sam Cornwell from MITRE

All Your Boot Are Belong To Us, Setup for Failure: Defeating SecureBoot
Demo

(Bypassing Secure Boot via Image Verification Policies)
How To Avoid These?

1. Do not store critical Secure Boot configuration in UEFI variables accessible to potentially compromised OS kernel or boot loader
   - Remove `RUNTIME_ACCESS` attribute (reduce access permissions)
   - Use authenticated variable where required by UEFI Spec
   - Disabling Secure Boot requires physically present user

2. Set Image Verification Policies to secure values
   - Use Platform Configuration Database (PCD) for the policies
   - Using `ALWAYS_EXECUTE, ALLOW_EXECUTE_*` is a bad idea
   - Especially check `PcdOptionRomImageVerificationPolicy`
   - Default should be `NEVER_EXECUTE` or `DENY_EXECUTE`
Recap on Image Verification Handler

SecureBoot EFI variable doesn’t exist or equals to SECURE_BOOT_MODE_DISABLE? **EFI_SUCCESS**

File is not valid PE/COFF image? **EFI_ACCESS_DENIED**

SecureBootEnable NV EFI variable doesn’t exist or equals to SECURE_BOOT_DISABLE? **EFI_SUCCESS**

SetupMode NV EFI variable doesn’t exist or equals to SETUP_MODE? **EFI_SUCCESS**
EFI Executables

- Any EFI executables other then PE/COFF?
- YES! – EFI Byte Code (EBC), Terse Executable (TE)
- But EBC image is a 32 bits PE/COFF image wrapping byte code. No luck 😞
- Terse Executable format:

  In an effort to reduce image size, a new executable image header (TE) was created that includes only those fields from the PE/COFF headers required for execution under the PI Architecture. Since this header contains the information required for execution of the image, it can replace the PE/COFF headers from the original image.

TE is not PE/COFF

- TE differs from PE/COFF only with header:

```c
///
/// Header format for TE images
///
typedef struct {
    UINT16  Signature;    // signature for TE format = "V2"
    UINT16  Machine;      // from the original file header
    UINT8   NumberOfSections; // from the original file header
    UINT8   Subsystem;    // from original optional header
    UINT16  StrippedSize; // how many bytes we removed from the header
    UINT32  AddressOfEntryPoint; // offset to entry point -- from original optional header
    UINT32  BaseOfCode;   // from original image -- required for ITP debug
    UINT64  ImageBase;    // from original file header
    EFI_IMAGE_DATA_DIRECTORY  DataDirectory[2]; // only base relocation and debug directory
} EFI_TE_IMAGE_HEADER;

#define EFI_TE_IMAGE_HEADER_SIGNATURE 0x5A56  // "V2"

//
// Data directory indexes in our TE image header
//
#define EFI_TE_IMAGE_DIRECTORY_ENTRY_BASERELOC  0
#define EFI_TE_IMAGE_DIRECTORY_ENTRY_DEBUG      1
```
PE/TE Header Handling by the BIOS

- Decoded UEFI BIOS image from SPI Flash
PE/TE Header Handling by the BIOS

CORE_DXE.efi:

```assembly
cmp byte ptr [r8], 4
mov eax, 1
mov [rsp+58h+var_28], rsi
movzx edi, sil
lea r9, [rsp+58h+arg_18]
lea r8, [rsp+58h+arg_10]
cmovzd edi, eax
mov rdx, rbx
mov [rsp+58h+var_38], rsi
mov cl, di
mov [rsp+58h+var_38], rsi
call IsValidPe
mov rax, 8000000000000000h
test rdx, rax
jz short continue
xor eax, eax
jmp short Exit
continue:
mov r9, [rsp+58h+arg_18]
mov r8, [rsp+58h+arg_10]
mov rdx, rbx
xor rdx, rdx
mov byte ptr [rsp+58h+var_38], di
call SecurityHandler
mov rdx, [rsp+58h+arg_10]
cmp rdx, rsi
mov rdx, rax
jz short Exit
ret
add r8, 58h
pop rdi
pop rsi
pop rbx
ret
ExecuteSecurityHandler endp
```

```
isValidPe proc near ; CODE XR
    cmp word ptr [rcx], 'Z8H'
    jnz short NotValid
    mov eax, [rcx+3Ch]
    add rdx, rax
    cmp dword ptr [rcx], 'EP'
    jnz short NotValid
    cmp word ptr [rcx+4], 209h
    jz short Valid
    cmp word ptr [rcx+4], 8664h
    jnz short NotValid

Valid:
    cmp word ptr [rcx+18h], 209h
    jnz short NotValid
    mov eax, 1
    ret

NotValid:
    ; CODE XR
    xor eax, eax
    IsValidPe
    retn
```

```assembly
ret_EFI_LOAD_ERROR:
```

```assembly
chkImage:
    mov rcx, [rdi]
    call IsValidPe
    test al, al
    jz short ret_EFI_LOAD_ERROR
```

```assembly
IsValidPe proc near ; CODE XR
    cmp word ptr [rcx], 'Z8H'
    jnz short NotValid
    mov eax, [rcx+3Ch]
    add rdx, rax
    cmp dword ptr [rcx], 'EP'
    jnz short NotValid
    cmp word ptr [rcx+4], 209h
    jz short Valid
    cmp word ptr [rcx+4], 8664h
    jnz short NotValid

Valid:
    cmp word ptr [rcx+18h], 209h
    jnz short NotValid
    mov eax, 1
    retn

NotValid:
    ; CODE XR
    xor eax, eax
    IsValidPe
    retn
```

```assembly
IsValidPe endp
```
PE/TE Header Confusion

- **ExecuteSecurityHandler** calls **GetFileBuffer** to read an executable file.

- **GetFileBuffer** reads the file and checks if it has a valid PE header. It returns **EFI_LOAD_ERROR** if the executable is not PE/COFF.

- **ExecuteSecurityHandler** returns **EFI_SUCCESS (0)** in case **GetFileBuffer** returns an error.

- **Signature Checks are Skipped!**
PE/TE Header Confusion

BIOS allows running TE images w/o signature check

- Malicious PE/COFF EFI executable (bootkit.efi)
- Convert executable to TE format by replacing PE/COFF header with TE header
- Replace OS boot loaders with resulting TE EFI executable
- Signature check is skipped for TE EFI executable
- Executable will load and patch original OS boot loader

```plaintext
[+] imported chipsec.modules.exploits.secureboot.te
[.] Module: 'TE Header' Secure Boot Bypass exploit
[.] Replacing bootloaders on EFI System Partition (ESP) z:\..
[*] Converting PE/COFF executable chipsec/modules/exploits/secureboot/bootkit.efi to TE format....
[*] Replacing z:\EFI\Boot\bootx64.efi with bootkit...
[*] Replacing z:\EFI\Microsoft\Boot\bootmgfw.efi with bootkit...
[*] Reboot now!
```
Demo

(Secure Boot Bypass via PE/TE Header Confusion)
Other Secure Boot Problems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CSM Enabled with Secure Boot</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• CSM Module Allows Legacy On UEFI Based Firmware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Allows Legacy OS Boot Through [Unsigned] MBR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Allows Loading Legacy [Unsigned] Option ROMs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Once CSM is ON, UEFI BIOS dispatches legacy OROMs then boots MBR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• CSM Cannot Be Turned On When Secure Boot is Enabled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• CSM can be turned On/Off in BIOS Setup Options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• But cannot select “CSM Enabled” when Secure Boot is On</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mitigations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Force CSM to Disabled if Secure Boot is Enabled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• But don’t do that only in Setup HII</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Implement isCSMEnabled() function always returning FALSE in Secure Boot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Never fall back to legacy boot through MBR if Secure Boot verification of UEFI executable fails</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“Clear Secure Boot keys” takes effect after reboot

Switch that triggers clearing of Secure Boot keys is in UEFI Variable (happens to be in ‘Setup’ variable)

But recall that Secure Boot is OFF without Platform Key

PK is cleared ➔ Secure Boot is Disabled
Default Secure Boot keys can be restored [When there’s no PK]
Switch that triggers restore of Secure Boot keys to their default values is in UEFI Variable (happens to be in ‘Setup’)
Nah.. Default keys are protected. They are in FV
But we just added 9 hashes to the DBX blacklist 😞
Did You Notice Secure Boot Config. Changed?

The system protects Secure Boot configuration from modification but has an implementation bug.

Firmware stores integrity of Secure Boot settings & checks on reboot. Upon integrity mismatch, beeps 3 times, waits timeout then...

Keeps booting with modified Secure Boot settings.
BIOS Attack Surface: Handling Sensitive Data

System FW/BIOS

- SMI Handlers
- SPI Flash
- HW Config/Protection
- Secure Boot
- BIOS Update
- Option ROMs
- Firmware Volumes / PE exec.
- BIOS Settings (NVRAM, Variables)
Handling Sensitive Data

Pre-Boot Passwords Exposure

- BIOS and Pre-OS applications store keystrokes in legacy BIOS keyboard buffer in BIOS data area (at PA = 0x41E)
- BIOS, HDD passwords, Full-Disk Encryption PINs etc.
- Some BIOS’es didn’t clear keyboard buffer
- **Bypassing Pre-Boot Authentication Passwords**

```bash
  chipsec_main -m common.bios_kbrd_buffer
```
Secrets in the Keyboard Buffer?

[∗] running module: chipsec.modules.common.bios_kbrd_buffer
[x][ Module: Pre-boot Passwords in the BIOS Keyboard Buffer
[x][ Module: Pre-boot Passwords in the BIOS Keyboard Buffer
[*] Keyboard buffer head pointer = 0x3A (at 0x41A), tail pointer = 0x3A (at 0x41C)
[*] Keyboard buffer contents (at 0x41E):
20 00 20 00 20 00 20 00 20 00 20 00 20 00 20 00 |
20 00 20 00 20 00 20 00 20 00 20 00 20 00 20 00 |
[-] Keyboard buffer tail points inside the buffer (= 0x3A)
    It may potentially expose lengths of pre-boot passwords. Was your password 15 characters long?
[*] Checking contents of the keyboard buffer..
[+] PASSED: Keyboard buffer looks empty. Pre-boot passwords don't seem to be exposed

* Better check from EFI shell as OS/pre-boot app might have cleared the keyboard buffer
BIOS Attack Surface: SMI Handlers

System FW/BIOS

Firmware Volumes / PE exec.
Option ROMs
BIOS Settings (NVRAM, Variables)
BIOS Update
Secure Boot
HW Config/Protection
SPI Flash
SMI Handlers
What? More Issues With SMI Handlers?

- Coordination Is Ongoing With Independent BIOS Vendors and Platform Manufacturers
To attack BIOS, exploit needs access to HW:

- PCIe config,
- I/O ports,
- physical memory,
- etc.

So, generally, yes. Kernel privileges are required.
Unless Suitable Kernel Driver Already Signed

Legitimate signed OS kernel driver which can do all this on behalf of a user mode app (as a confused deputy).

We found suitable driver signed for Windows 64bit versions (co-discovered with researchers from MITRE)
Ref: BIOS Security Guidelines / Best Practices

- CHIPSEC framework: https://github.com/chipsec/chipsec
- MITRE Copernicus tool
- NIST BIOS Protection Guidelines (SP 800-147 and SP 800-147B)
- IAD BIOS Update Protection Profile
- Windows Hardware Certification Requirements
- UEFI Forum sub-teams: USST (UEFI Security) and PSST (PI Security)
- UEFI Firmware Security Best Practices
  - BIOS Flash Regions
  - UEFI Variables in Flash (UEFI Variable Usage Technical Advisory)
  - Capsule Updates
  - SMRAM
  - Secure Boot
Ref: BIOS Security Research

- Security Issues Related to Pentium System Management Mode ([CSW 2006](#))
- Implementing and Detecting an ACPI BIOS Rootkit ([BlackHat EU 2006](#))
- Implementing and Detecting a PCI Rootkit ([BlackHat DC 2007](#))
- Programmed I/O accesses: a threat to Virtual Machine Monitors? ([PacSec 2007](#))
- Hacking the Extensible Firmware Interface ([BlackHat USA 2007](#))
- BIOS Boot Hijacking And VMware Vulnerabilities Digging ([PoC 2007](#))
- Bypassing pre-boot authentication passwords ([DEF CON 16](#))
- Using SMM for “Other Purposes“ ([Phrack65](#))
- Persistent BIOS Infection ([Phrack66](#))
- A New Breed of Malware: The SMM Rootkit ([BlackHat USA 2008](#))
- Preventing & Detecting Xen Hypervisor Subversions ([BlackHat USA 2008](#))
- A Real SMM Rootkit: Reversing and Hooking BIOS SMI Handlers ([Phrack66](#))
- Attacking Intel BIOS ([BlackHat USA 2009](#))
- Getting Into the SMRAM: SMM Reloaded ([CSW 2009, CSW 2009](#))
- Attacking SMM Memory via Intel Cache Poisoning ([ITL 2009](#))
- BIOS SMM Privilege Escalation Vulnerabilities ([bugtraq 2009](#))
- System Management Mode Design and Security Issues ([IT Defense 2010](#))
- Analysis of building blocks and attack vectors associated with UEFI ([SANS Institute](#))
- (U)EFI Bootkits ([BlackHat USA 2012](#), [SaferBytes 2012](#), [Andrea Allievi, HITB 2013](#))
- Evil Maid Just Got Angrier ([CSW 2013](#))
- A Tale of One Software Bypass of Windows 8 Secure Boot ([BlackHat USA 2013](#))
- BIOS Chronomancy ([NoSuchCon 2013](#), [BlackHat USA 2013](#), [Hack.lu 2013](#))
- Defeating Signed BIOS Enforcement ([PacSec 2013](#), [Ekoparty 2013](#))
- UEFI and PCI BootKit ([PacSec 2013](#))
- Meet ‘badBIOS‘ the mysterious Mac and PC malware that jumps airgaps ([#badBios](#))
- All Your Boot Are Belong To Us ([CanSecWest 2014](#), [Intel](#) and [MITRE](#))
- Setup for Failure: Defeating Secure Boot ([Syscan 2014](#))
- Setup for Failure: More Ways to Defeat Secure Boot ([HITB 2014 AMS](#))
- Analytics, and Scalability, and UEFI Exploitation ([ININFILTRATE 2014](#))
- PC Firmware Attacks, Copernicus and You ([AusCERT 2014](#))
- Extreme Privilege Escalation ([BlackHat USA 2014](#))
THANK YOU!
BACKUP: Platform Firmware / BIOS Forensics

With CHIPSEC framework (https://github.com/chipsec/chipsec)
Forensics Functionality

Live system firmware analysis *(BIOS malware can defeat SW acquisition)*

- `chipsec_util spi info`
- `chipsec_util spi dump rom.bin`
- `chipsec_util spi read 0x700000 0x100000 bios.bin`
- `chipsec_util uefi var-list`
- `chipsec_util uefi var-read db D719B2CB-3D3A-4596-A3BC-DAD00E67656F db.bin`

Offline system firmware analysis

- `chipsec_util uefi keys PK.bin`
- `chipsec_util uefi nvram vss bios.bin`
- `chipsec_util uefi decode rom.bin`
- `chipsec_util decode rom.bin`
chipsec_util msr 0x200
chipsec_util mem 0x0 0x41E 0x20
chipsec_util pci enumerate
chipsec_util pci 0x0 0x1F 0x0 0xDC byte
chipsec_util io 0x61 byte
chipsec_util mmcfg 0 0x1F 0 0xDC 1 0x1
chipsec_util mmio list
chipsec_util cmos dump
chipsec_util ucode id
chipsec_util smi 0x01 0xFF
chipsec_util idt 0
chipsec_util cpuid 1
chipsec_util spi read 0x700000 0x100000 bios.bin
chipsec_util decode spi.bin
chipsec_util uefi var-list
..

Manual Access to HW Resources