



# Zero Trust Network Architecture Tenets

ACE Solutions Architecture Team

# What is Zero-Trust?

The zero-trust framework operates on the principle of "Never Trust, Always Verify." OR "Don't Trust Anyone."

- It assumes that threats can exist inside and outside the network, requiring continuous verification of trust in users, devices, and applications.

Zero Trust is a security framework. It is a mindset.

- NOT a product.
- An approach enterprises should adopt when building secure networks for mission-critical applications.

Aviatrix Zero Trust approach is based on NIST SP 800-207 Publication

- <https://www.nist.gov/publications/zero-trust-architecture>

## Other References

- <https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/security/zero-trust/zero-trust-overview>
- <https://aws.amazon.com/security/zero-trust/>

# Zero-Trust (ZT) Evolution

- In the past, Zero Trust (ZT) discussions focused on
  - Firewall-based defense or identity-based protection.
  - Perimeter security OR centralized security model
- Cloud is distributed
- Need to re-define ZT tenets for Cloud
- Tenets are derived from NIST ZTA publication and customer requirements

Aviatrix Zero Trust Architecture (ZTA) approach complements other partner offerings, cloud-native services, and 3<sup>rd</sup> party tools to protect workloads in the cloud or hybrid cloud.

# Zero-Trust Architecture Tenets

- **Aviatrix has been empowering cloud security solutions since 2016.**
- The following are 7 tenets to implement Zero-Trust Security with Resiliency
  1. Resource Identification, Inventory and Grouping
  2. Security close to the Applications and Services
  3. Global, Dynamic, and Centralized Policy
  4. Secure Network Communication
  5. Operational and Security Visibility
  6. Audit and Reporting
  7. Least Privileged Access

# 1- Cloud Resource Identification, Inventory and Grouping

## Tenet from NIST Publication 800-207 - Zero Trust Architecture (ZTA)

**The enterprise collects as much information as possible about the current state of assets, network infrastructure and communications and uses it to improve its security posture.** An enterprise should collect data about asset security posture, network traffic and access requests, process that data, and use any insight gained to improve policy creation and enforcement. This data can also be used to provide context for access requests from subjects (see Section 3.3.1).

- The ability to leverage location/IP independent identity
- Services, VM, EC2, etc., should properly identify and apply the security rules and policies.
- Identity for the user is done with IDP solutions such as
  - Active Directory or
  - SAML - based solutions like Okta
- Workloads and services don't often have a meaningful IDP.
- A workload's identity should align with components like "App Name ," "Data Classification," or "Lifecycle/Environment."

## 2- Distributed and Embedded Security

### Tenet from NIST Publication 800-207 - Zero Trust Architecture (ZTA)

**Assets and workflows moving between enterprise and nonenterprise infrastructure should have a consistent security policy and posture.** Assets and workloads should retain their security posture when moving to or from enterprise-owned infrastructure. This includes devices that move from enterprise networks to nonenterprise networks (i.e. remote users). This also includes workloads migrating from on-premises data centers to nonenterprise cloud instances.

- This can only be achieved if the security is applied close to the workloads and applications
  - A network packet or flow must be secure when it leaves the application.
- There is a need for a Distributed Cloud Firewall to achieve this.
- Cost savings with the distributed model
- Avoid latency issues with the centralized Firewall Designs.
- Follow a layered security approach as per NIST guidelines

## 3- Global, Dynamic and Centralized Policy

### Tenet from NIST Publication 800-207 - Zero Trust Architecture (ZTA)

**Access to resources is determined by dynamic policy—including the observable state of client identity, application/service, and the requesting asset—and may include other behavioral and environmental attributes. An organization protects resources by**

- Policy should cover single cloud, multi cloud and hybrid cloud use cases
- Should be dynamic without human intervention
- Should be managed by a centralized location across all landscapes
- Smart Grouping should be consumed by the centralized policy

## 4- Secure Network Communication with E2E IPsec Encryption

### Tenet from NIST Publication 800-207 - Zero Trust Architecture (ZTA)

**All communication is secured regardless of network location.** Network location alone does not imply trust. Access requests from assets located on enterprise-owned network infrastructure (e.g., inside a legacy network perimeter) must meet the same security requirements as access requests and communication from any other nonenterprise-owned network. In other words, trust should not be automatically granted based on the device being on enterprise network infrastructure. All communication should be done in the most secure manner available, protect confidentiality and integrity, and provide source authentication.

- **Trust no one – including application (TLS)**
- Native encryption performance limitation
- MACSec encryption is NOT end-to-end encryption
- **The data plane must be IPsec encrypted**



## 5- Operational and Security Visibility

### Tenet from NIST Publication 800-207 - Zero Trust Architecture (ZTA)

As mentioned in Section 3.4.1, all traffic is inspected and logged on the network and analyzed to identify and react to potential attacks against the enterprise. However, as also mentioned, some (possibly the majority) of the traffic on the enterprise network may be opaque to layer 3 network

- You cannot protect what you cannot see
- Consistent design with consistent operational visibility
- End-to-End observability
- Noise-free and single plane of glass

## 6- Audit, Logs, Reporting and Alerts

### Tenet from NIST Publication 800-207 - Zero Trust Architecture (ZTA)

accounts may have blanket permission to access all enterprise resources. ZTA should allow developers and administrators to have sufficient flexibility to satisfy their business requirements while using logs and audit actions to identify access behavior patterns. ZTA deployments may require administrators to satisfy a more stringent confidence level or criteria as outlined in NIST SP 800-63A, Section 5 [SP800-63A].

- Ability to replay topology
- Audit trail
- Alters based on performance, network behavior, etc.
- Out-of-the-box and custom reports

# 7- Least Privilege Access

## Tenet from NIST Publication 800-207 - Zero Trust Architecture (ZTA)

**Access to individual enterprise resources is granted on a per-session basis. Trust in the requester is evaluated before the access is granted. Access should also be granted with the least privileges needed to complete the task. This could mean only “sometime**

- Trust no one, not even internal services, resources, and actors
- Parameter security solutions not sufficient (lateral movement)
- Policy-driven framework with the knowledge of applications (Tags) and users
- NGFW Service Insertion (if required)
- RBAC
- Client or User VPN



**Next: Tenet-1: Resource Identification,  
Inventory and Grouping**