Introduction to penetration testing

With the onboarding of devices no the cyberspace comes the increase in complexities and attack vectors which has led to a rise in the importance of security. Security such that we are protecting devices which hold a magnitude of personal identifiable information. This information includes names of people, security numbers, passwords etc.Johnson (2020) defines penetration testing as an objectifiable testing activity that tries to validate an item against a checklist to ensure that it meets the defined criterias. Wilhelm (2010) identifies the thought process of penetration tests as attacking systems with penetration testing tools and goes further to identify there is more to the concept. Saqib and Moon (2023) details the problems facing network security which lead to data breach as a function of authentication and privacy issues and also give a classification for penetration testing which can be divided into

1. White box testing: this is penetration testing in which the organization's information is given to the tester . Also known as Overt security testing by NIST.
2. Black box; in this testing methodology the tester is completely left in the dark, also known as covert by NIST. its purpose is to replicate the impact an adversary might have on an organization in the most rudimentary way.
3. Gray-Box testing: this is a methodology in which the Tester has partial knowledge of organizations information

In this work we will consider penetration testing as a step by step objectified approach to validate a system against a checklist. The checklist employed is the National Institute of Standards and Technology special publication 800 115(NIST SP 800 115) although there are others like Open Source Security Testing Methodology Manual (OSSTMM) etc. This simulation will be considered a white box testing and we will not be following the guidelines strictly due to the nature of the assessment.

THE ENVIRONMENT

The scope/environment of this simulated network pentest is going to encompass a network consisting of 4 physical endpoint devices, 5 if the logical topology is considered. Among this devices we have

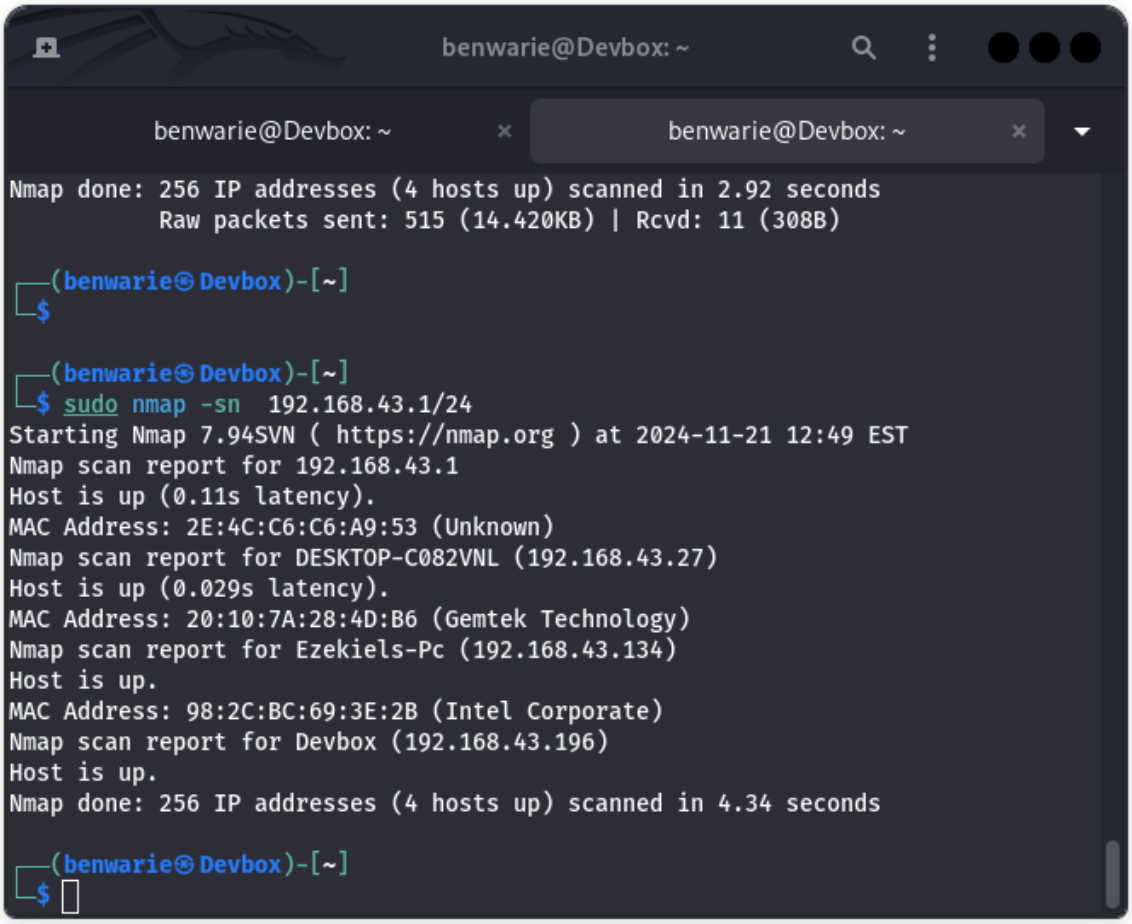
1. A mobile device doubling as the access point/router(galaxy s9)(192.168.43.1/24)
2. Desktop 1 (our server DESKTOP-C082VNL)(192.168.43.27/24)
3. Desktop 3 (hosting our Kali Linux our attacker, Devbox (192.168.43.196) and doubling as another server)

The topology below shows the physical and logical topology of our simulated network.

Using the Nist sp 800 115 we begin at network discovery. Our tool of choice to discover hosts on the network include nmap and netdiscover. Below is the output of our nmap scan. The available host in our network include:

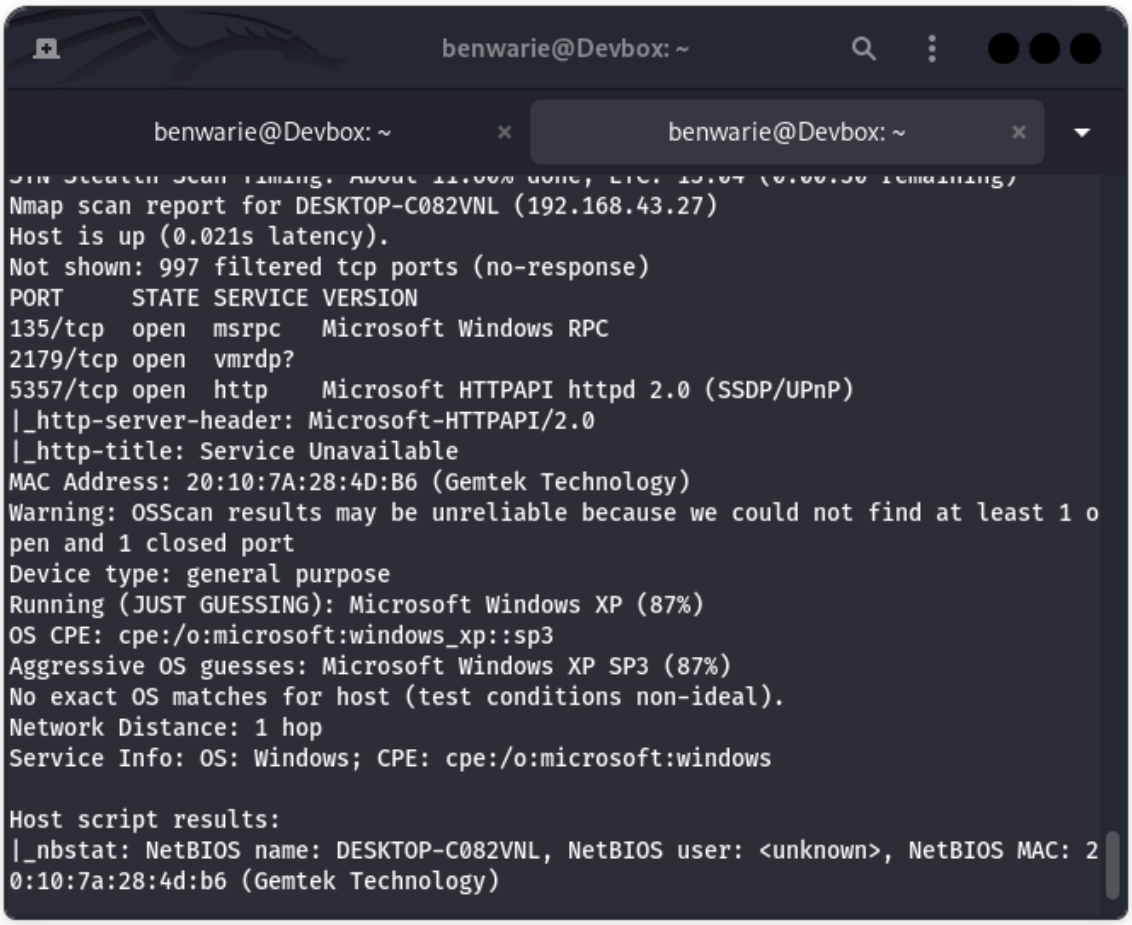
1. 192.168.43.27/24 DESKTOP-C082VNL (192.168.43.27)MAC Address: 20:10:7A:28:4D:B6 (Gemtek Technology)
2. 192.168.43.1/24 MAC Address: 2E:4C:C6:C6:A9:53 (Unknown)
3. 192.168.43.196/24 Devbox (192.168.43.196)
4. 192.168.43.134/24 Ezekiels-Pc (192.168.43.134) MAC Address: 98:2C:BC:69:3E:2B (Intel Corporate)

Below is a screen shot from nmap which shows our host.

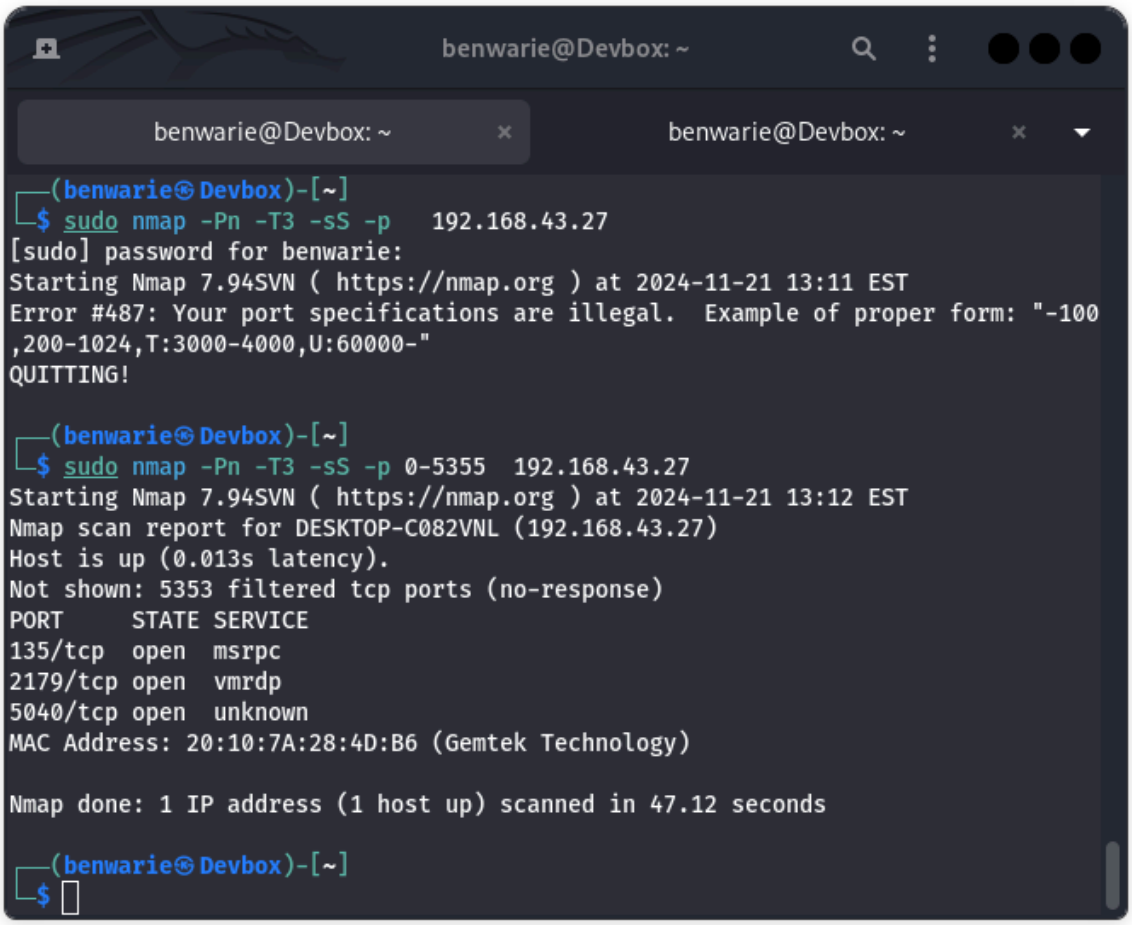


Network Port and Service Identification

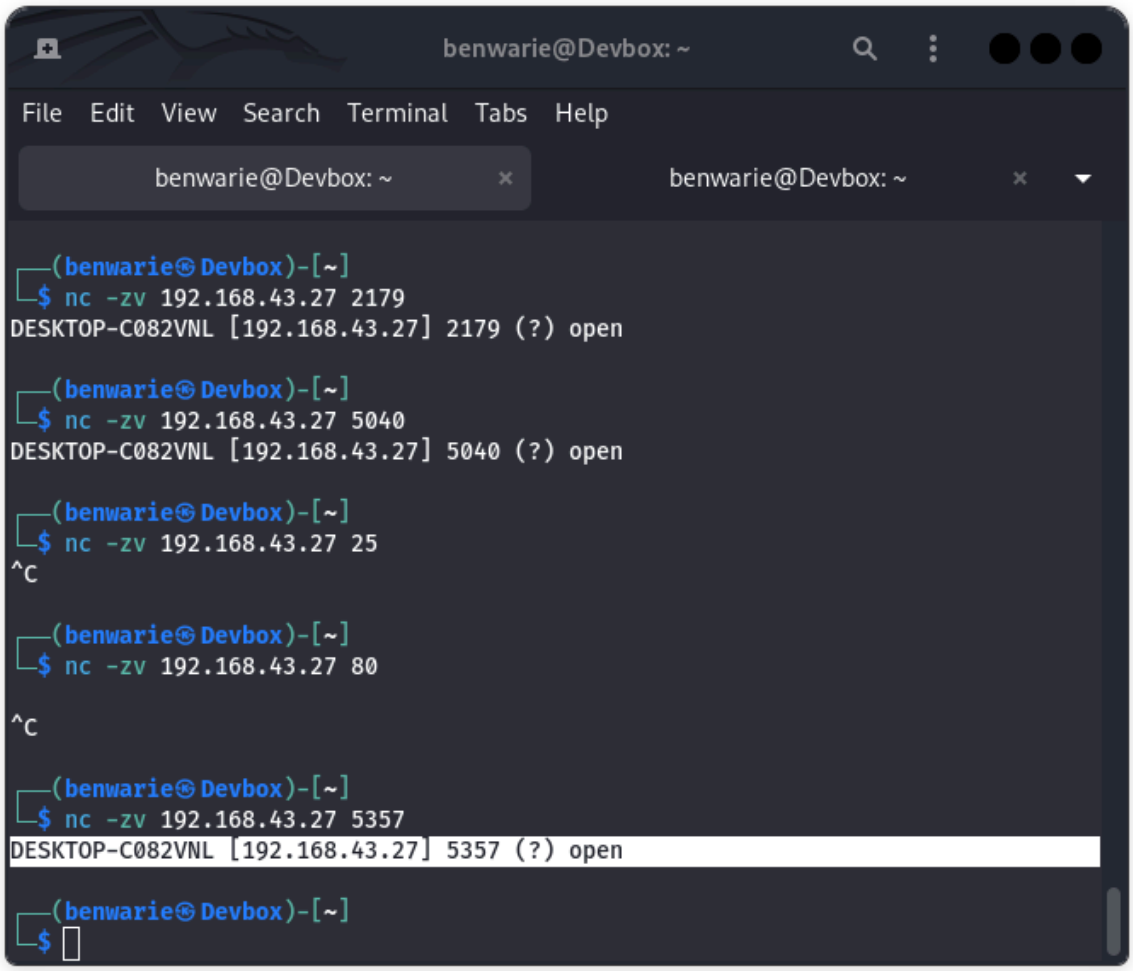
Overview of the Vulnerability Identified and tools used to identify it.
The scope of our pentest has been limited to 192.168.43.27/24 DESKTOP-C082VNL (192.168.43.27)MAC Address: 20:10:7A:28:4D:B6 (Gemtek Technology). We proceed to identify the open ports and services running on this machine. The tool we will achieve this with is nmap which is a very robust tool in penetration testing. Below is the nmap output for open ports, os and banner information.

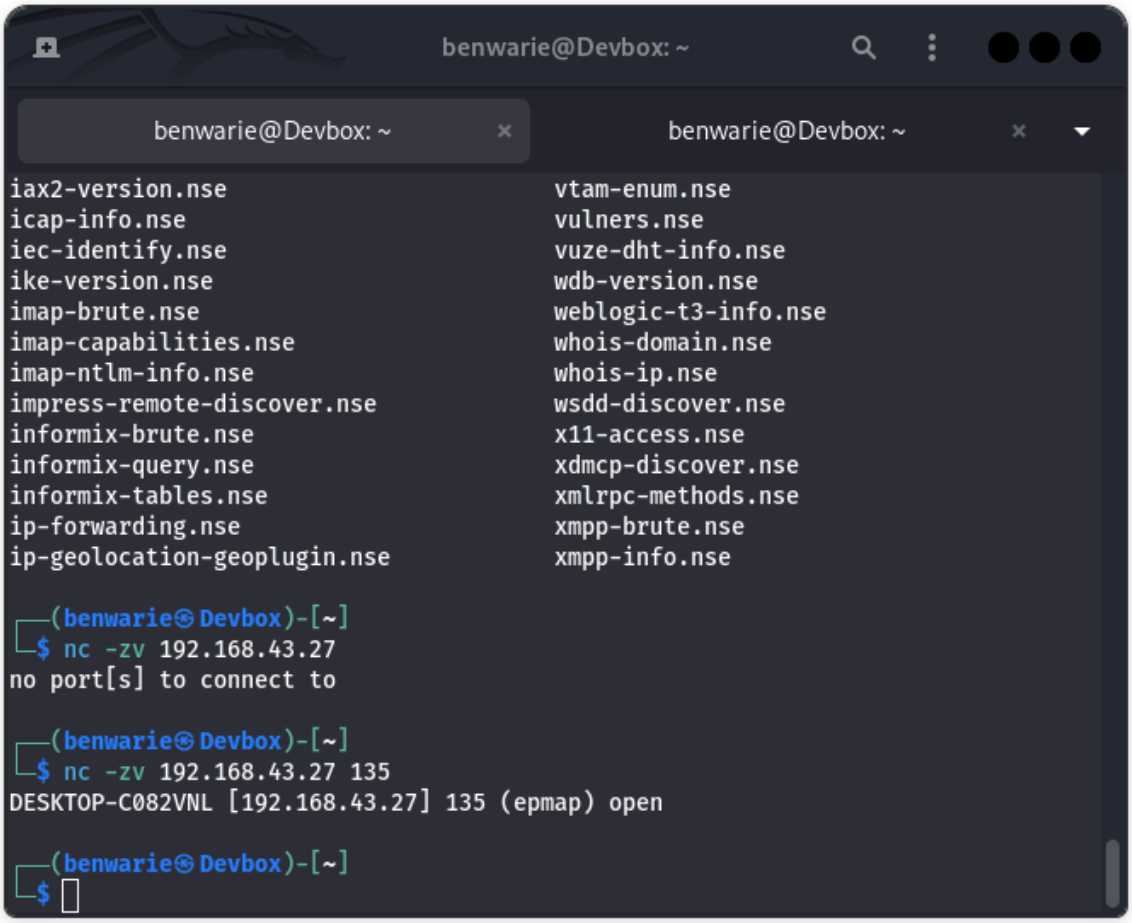


From this scan we discover our target has 3 ports open including port 135/tcp running msrpc, port 2179/tcp running vmrdp and port 5357/tcp running http and they are all open. We can also ascertain that the device is running the Windows operating system. Additionally port 5040? Tcp running an unknown service was discovered when a deeper search was conducted with nmap.



Futhter enumeration of individual open ports with netcat revealed no new information.

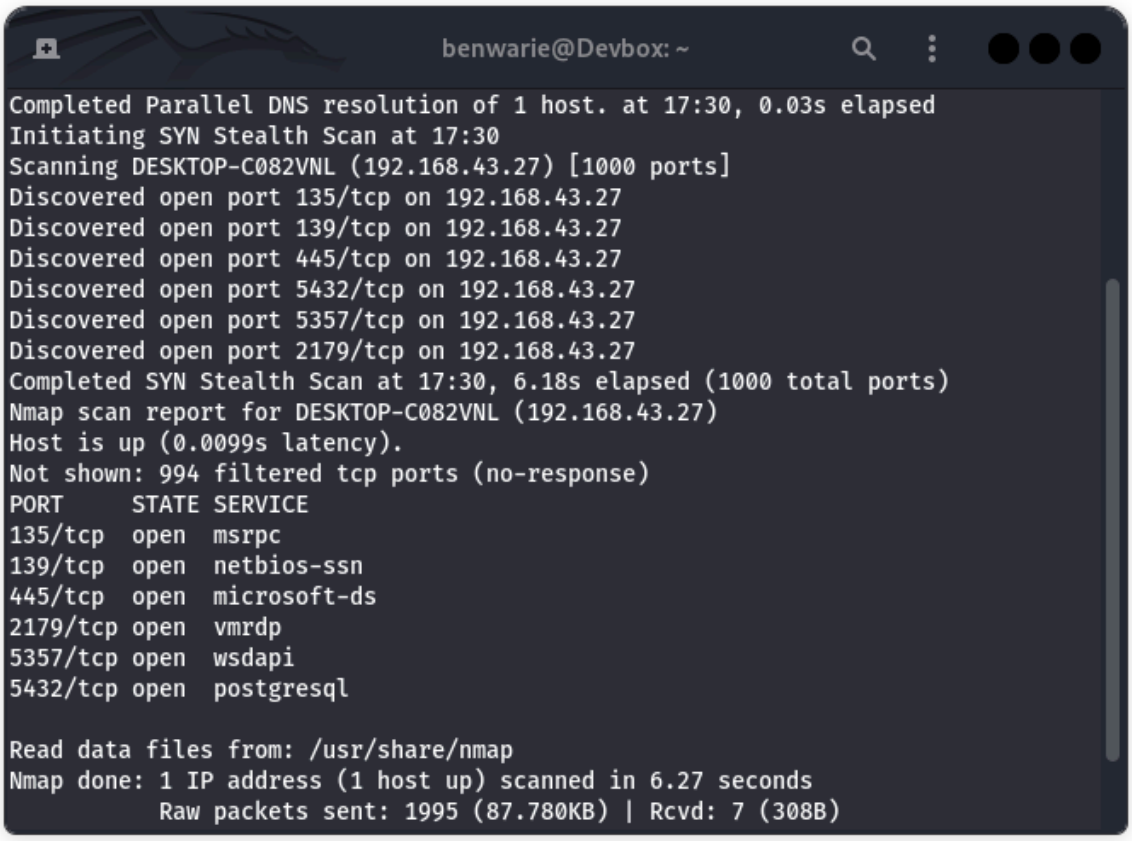

benwarie@Devbox: ~
File Edit View Search Terminal Tabs Help
benwarie@Devbox: ~
benwarie@Devbox: ~
┌──(benwarie㉿Devbox)-[~]
└─$ nc -zv 192.168.43.27 2179
DESKTOP-C082VNL [192.168.43.27] 2179 (?) open
┌──(benwarie㉿Devbox)-[~]
└─$ nc -zv 192.168.43.27 5040
DESKTOP-C082VNL [192.168.43.27] 5040 (?) open
┌──(benwarie㉿Devbox)-[~]
└─$ nc -zv 192.168.43.27 25
^C
┌──(benwarie㉿Devbox)-[~]
└─$ nc -zv 192.168.43.27 80
^C
┌──(benwarie㉿Devbox)-[~]
└─$ nc -zv 192.168.43.27 5357
DESKTOP-C082VNL [192.168.43.27] 5357 (?) open
┌──(benwarie㉿Devbox)-[~]
└─$



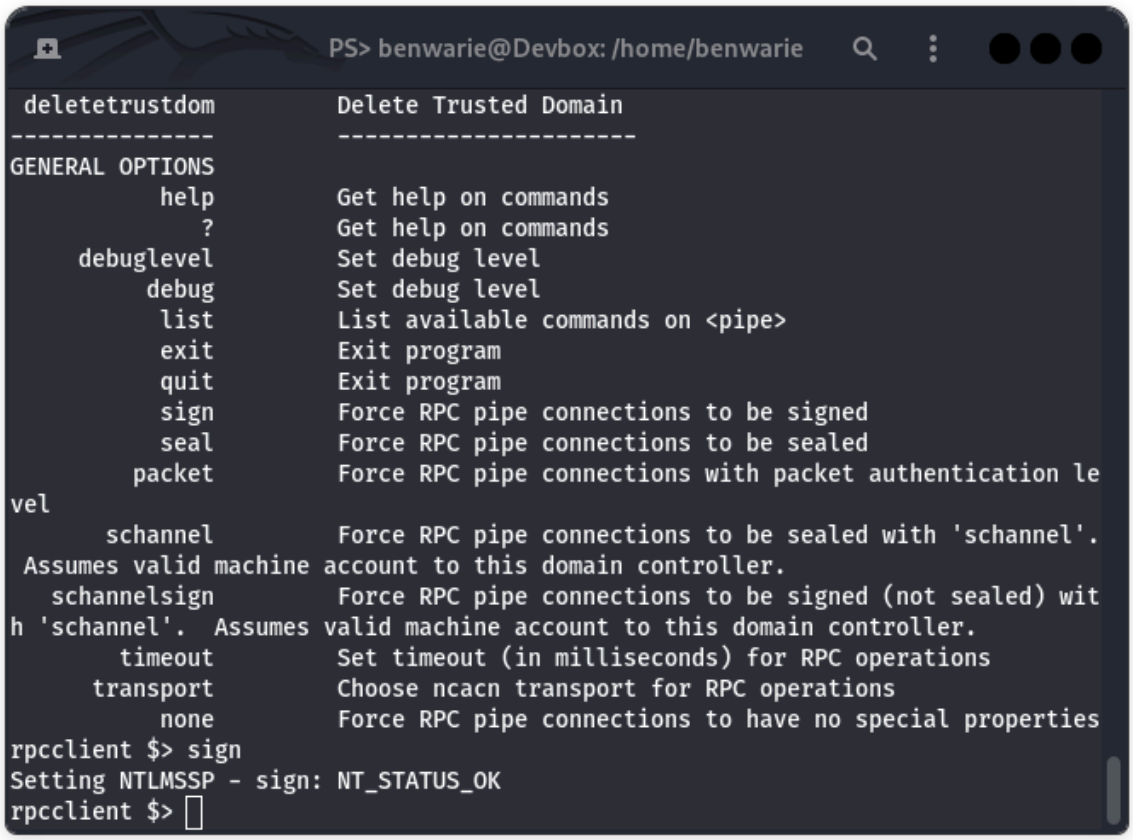
Below is reconnaissance output using netcat

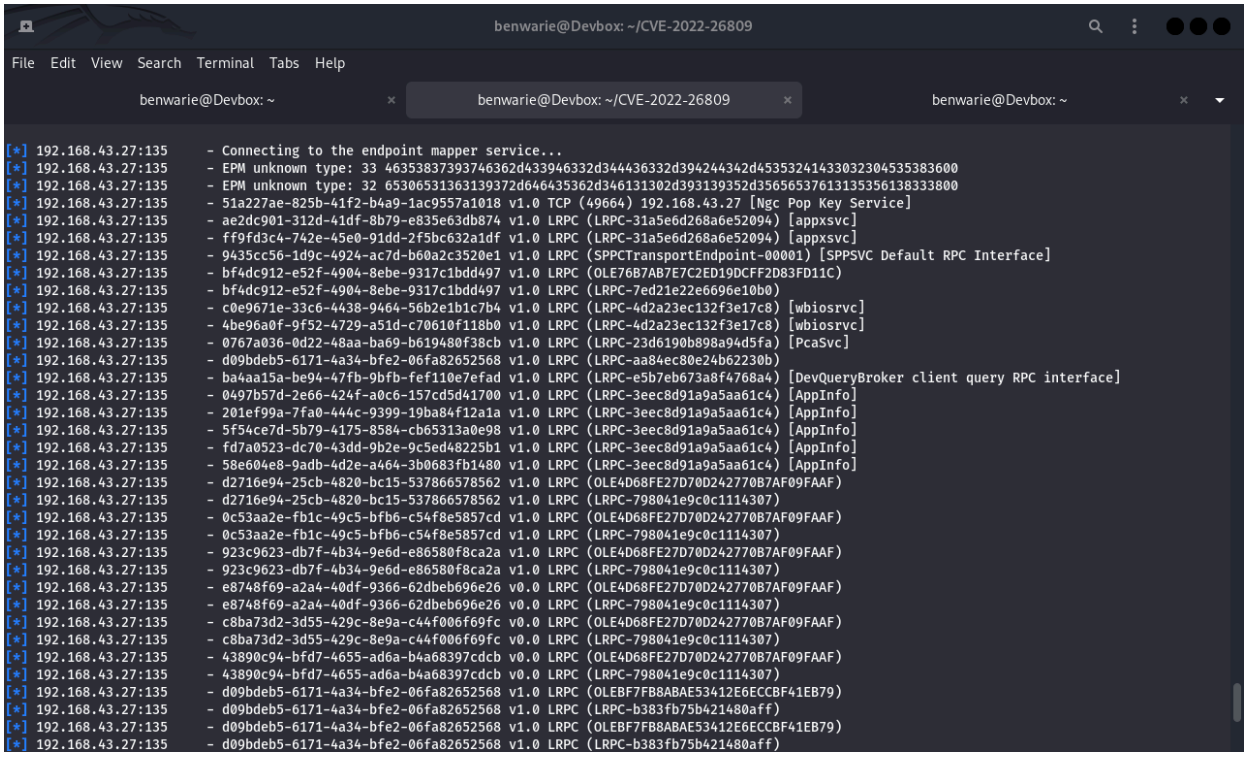
1. DESKTOP-C082VNL [192.168.43.27] 135 (epmap) open
2. DESKTOP-C082VNL [192.168.43.27] 5357 (?) open
3. DESKTOP-C082VNL [192.168.43.27] 5040 (?) open
4. DESKTOP-C082VNL [192.168.43.27] 2179 (?) open

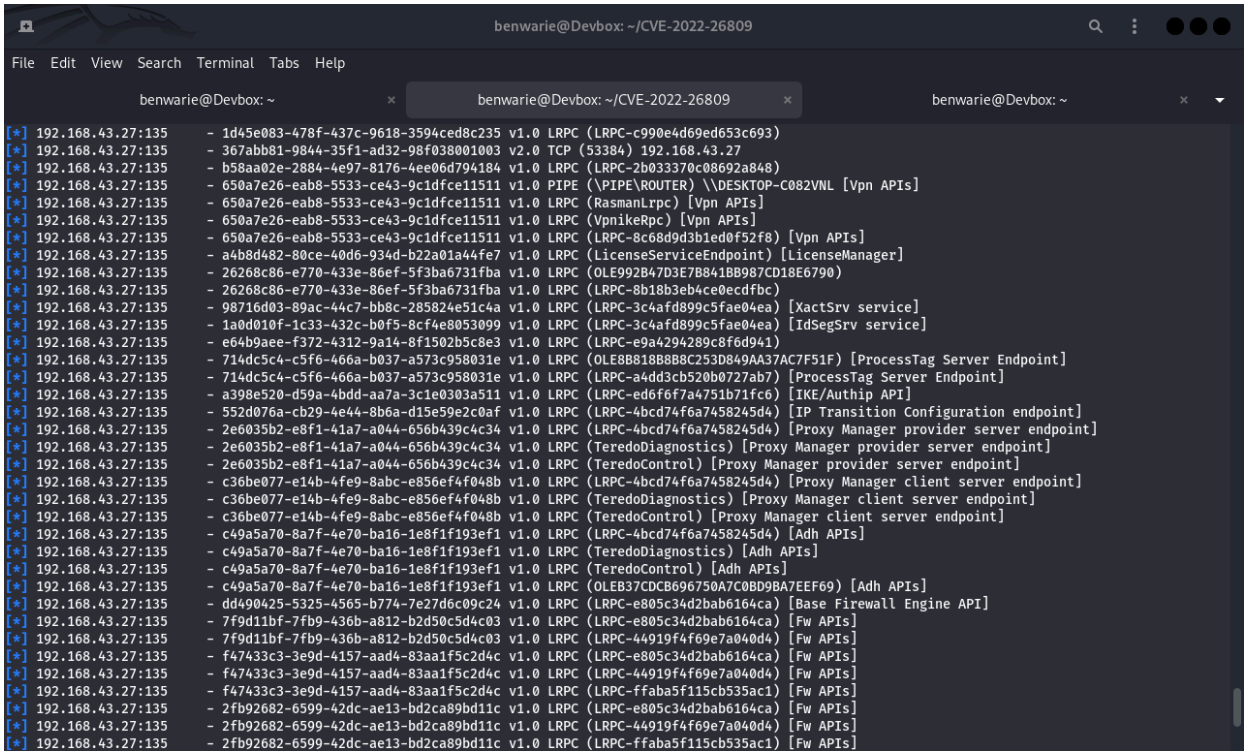
A later assessment with Nmap revealed we have a postgresql server running on the target machine listening on port 5432



Port 135 running Msrpc allowed for enumeration of rpc bindings wich we interacted with using rpcclient, although the vulnerability is of low severity as privileged actions could not be carried out

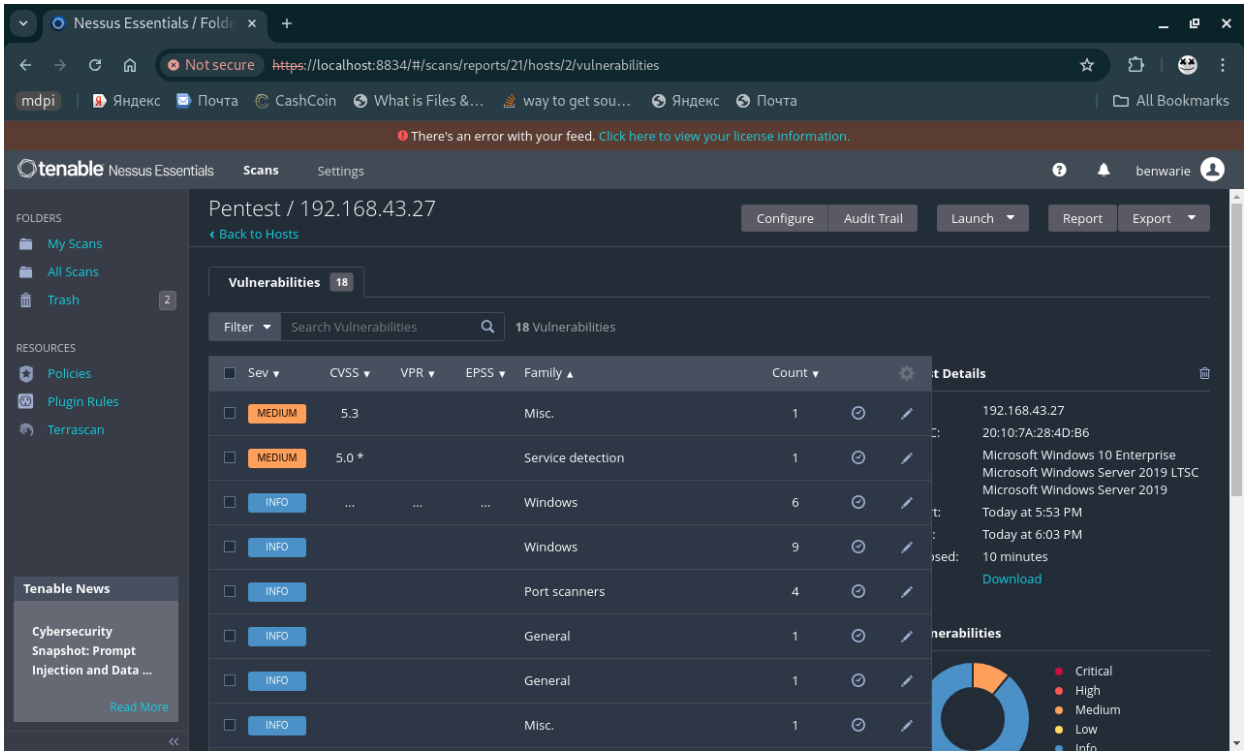

PS> benwarie@Devbox: /home/benwarie
deletetrustdom Delete Trusted Domain
GENERAL OPTIONS
help Get help on commands
? Get help on commands
debuglevel Set debug level
debug Set debug level
list List available commands on <pipe>
exit Exit program
quit Exit program
sign Force RPC pipe connections to be signed
seal Force RPC pipe connections to be sealed
packet Force RPC pipe connections with packet authentication level
schannel Force RPC pipe connections to be sealed with 'schannel'. Assumes valid machine account to this domain controller.
schannelsign Force RPC pipe connections to be signed (not sealed) with 'schannel'. Assumes valid machine account to this domain controller.
timeout Set timeout (in milliseconds) for RPC operations
transport Choose ncacn transport for RPC operations
none Force RPC pipe connections to have no special properties
rpcclient $> sign
Setting NTLMSSP - sign: NT_STATUS_OK
rpcclient $>

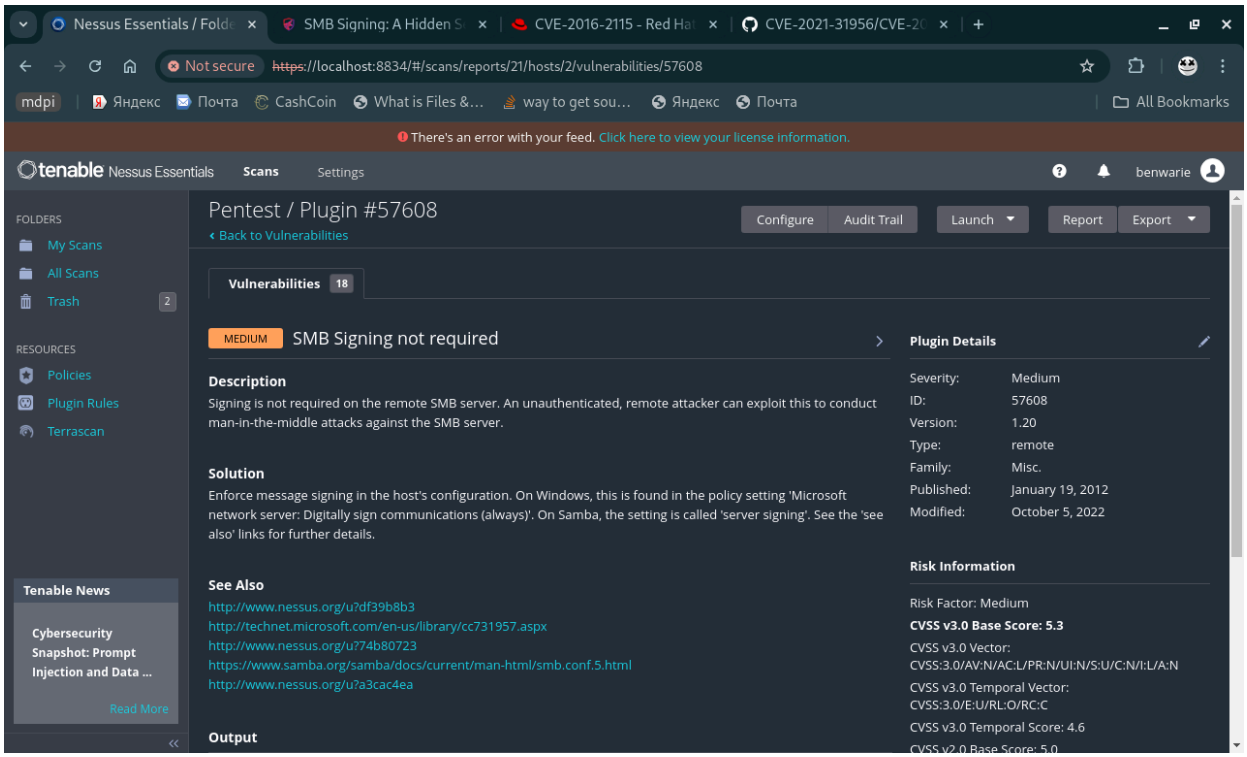

benwarie@Devbox: ~/CVE-2022-26809
File Edit View Search Terminal Tabs Help
benwarie@Devbox: ~
benwarie@Devbox: ~/CVE-2022-26809
benwarie@Devbox: ~
[*] 192.168.43.27:135 - Connecting to the endpoint mapper service...
[*] 192.168.43.27:135 - EPM unknown type: 33 46353837393746362d433946332d344436332d394244342d4535324143303230453538360 0
[*] 192.168.43.27:135 - EPM unknown type: 32 65306531363139372d646435362d346131302d393139352d3565653761313535613833380 0
[*] 192.168.43.27:135 - 51a227ae-825b-41f2-b4a9-1ac9557a1018 v1.0 TCP (49664) 192.168.43.27 [Ngc Pop Key Service]
[*] 192.168.43.27:135 - ae2dc901-312d-41df-8b79-e835e63db874 v1.0 LRPC (LRPC-31a5e6d268a6e52094) [appxsvc]
[*] 192.168.43.27:135 - ff9fd3c4-742e-45e0-91dd-2f5bc632a1df v1.0 LRPC (LRPC-31a5e6d268a6e52094) [appxsvc]
[*] 192.168.43.27:135 - 9435cc56-1d9c-4924-ac7d-b60a2c3520e1 v1.0 LRPC (SPPCTransportEndpoint-00001) [SPPSVC Default RPC Interface]
[*] 192.168.43.27:135 - bf4dc912-e52f-4904-8ebe-9317c1bdd497 v1.0 LRPC (OLE76B7AB7E7C2ED19DCFF2D83FD11C)
[*] 192.168.43.27:135 - bf4dc912-e52f-4904-8ebe-9317c1bdd497 v1.0 LRPC (LRPC-7ed21e22e6696e10b0)
[*] 192.168.43.27:135 - c0e9671e-33c6-4438-9464-56b2e1b1c7b4 v1.0 LRPC (LRPC-4d2a23ec132f3e17c8) [wbiosrvc]
[*] 192.168.43.27:135 - 4be96a0f-9f52-4729-a51d-c70610f118b0 v1.0 LRPC (LRPC-4d2a23ec132f3e17c8) [wbiosrvc]
[*] 192.168.43.27:135 - 0767a036-0d22-48aa-ba69-b619480f38cb v1.0 LRPC (LRPC-23d6190b898a94d5fa) [PcaSvc]
[*] 192.168.43.27:135 - d09bdeb5-6171-4a34-bfe2-06fa82652568 v1.0 LRPC (LRPC-aa84ec80e24b62230b)
[*] 192.168.43.27:135 - ba4aa15a-be94-47fb-9bfb-fef110e7efad v1.0 LRPC (LRPC-e5b7eb673a8f4768a4) [DevQueryBroker client query RPC interface]
[*] 192.168.43.27:135 - 0497b57d-2e66-424f-a0c6-157cd5d41700 v1.0 LRPC (LRPC-3eec8d91a9a5aa61c4) [AppInfo]
[*] 192.168.43.27:135 - 201ef99a-7fa0-444c-9399-19ba84f12a1a v1.0 LRPC (LRPC-3eec8d91a9a5aa61c4) [AppInfo]
[*] 192.168.43.27:135 - 5f54ce7d-5b79-4175-8584-cb65313a0e98 v1.0 LRPC (LRPC-3eec8d91a9a5aa61c4) [AppInfo]
[*] 192.168.43.27:135 - fd7a0523-dc70-43dd-9b2e-9c5ed48225b1 v1.0 LRPC (LRPC-3eec8d91a9a5aa61c4) [AppInfo]
[*] 192.168.43.27:135 - 58e604e8-9adb-4d2e-a464-3b0683fb1480 v1.0 LRPC (LRPC-3eec8d91a9a5aa61c4) [AppInfo]
[*] 192.168.43.27:135 - d2716e94-25cb-4820-bc15-537866578562 v1.0 LRPC (OLE4D68FE27D70D242770B7AF09FAAF)
[*] 192.168.43.27:135 - d2716e94-25cb-4820-bc15-537866578562 v1.0 LRPC (LRPC-798041e9c0c1114307)
[*] 192.168.43.27:135 - 0c53aa2e-fb1c-49c5-bfb6-c54f8e5857cd v1.0 LRPC (OLE4D68FE27D70D242770B7AF09FAAF)
[*] 192.168.43.27:135 - 0c53aa2e-fb1c-49c5-bfb6-c54f8e5857cd v1.0 LRPC (LRPC-798041e9c0c1114307)
[*] 192.168.43.27:135 - 923c9623-db7f-4b34-9e6d-e86580f8ca2a v1.0 LRPC (OLE4D68FE27D70D242770B7AF09FAAF)
[*] 192.168.43.27:135 - 923c9623-db7f-4b34-9e6d-e86580f8ca2a v1.0 LRPC (LRPC-798041e9c0c1114307)
[*] 192.168.43.27:135 - e8748f69-a2a4-40df-9366-62dbeb696e26 v0.0 LRPC (OLE4D68FE27D70D242770B7AF09FAAF)
[*] 192.168.43.27:135 - e8748f69-a2a4-40df-9366-62dbeb696e26 v0.0 LRPC (LRPC-798041e9c0c1114307)
[*] 192.168.43.27:135 - c8ba73d2-3d55-429c-8e9a-c44f006f69fc v0.0 LRPC (OLE4D68FE27D70D242770B7AF09FAAF)
[*] 192.168.43.27:135 - c8ba73d2-3d55-429c-8e9a-c44f006f69fc v0.0 LRPC (LRPC-798041e9c0c1114307)
[*] 192.168.43.27:135 - 43890c94-bfd7-4655-ad6a-b4a68397cdcb v0.0 LRPC (OLE4D68FE27D70D242770B7AF09FAAF)
[*] 192.168.43.27:135 - 43890c94-bfd7-4655-ad6a-b4a68397cdcb v0.0 LRPC (LRPC-798041e9c0c1114307)
[*] 192.168.43.27:135 - d09bdeb5-6171-4a34-bfe2-06fa82652568 v1.0 LRPC (OLEBF7FB8ABAE53412E6ECCBF41EB79)
[*] 192.168.43.27:135 - d09bdeb5-6171-4a34-bfe2-06fa82652568 v1.0 LRPC (LRPC-b383fb75b421480aff)
[*] 192.168.43.27:135 - d09bdeb5-6171-4a34-bfe2-06fa82652568 v1.0 LRPC (OLEBF7FB8ABAE53412E6ECCBF41EB79)
[*] 192.168.43.27:135 - d09bdeb5-6171-4a34-bfe2-06fa82652568 v1.0 LRPC (LRPC-b383fb75b421480aff)

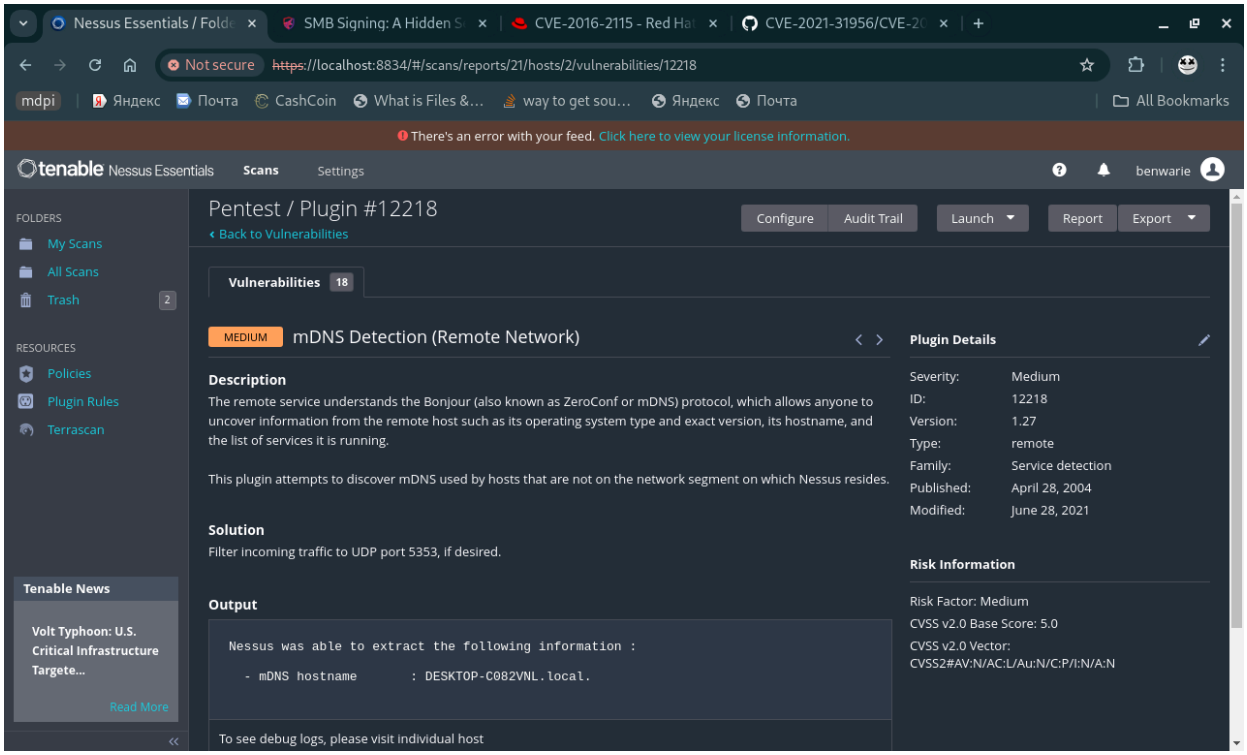


How the vulnerability was exploited, and the tools used to exploit it. Vulnerability Scanning

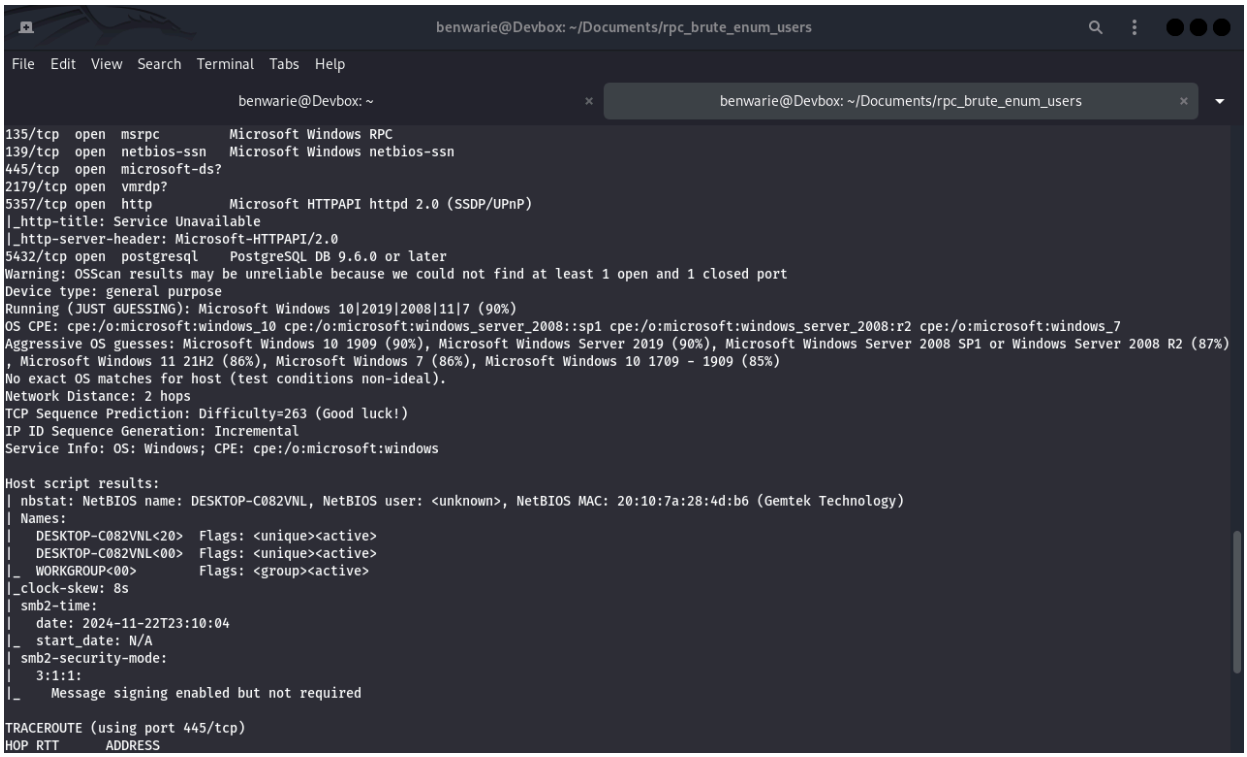
Enumeration of vulnerabilities is done on the target system using Tenable nessus and nmap to ascertain any vulnerability to gain entry into the system. We discovered Mdns which was revealing excess information such as Hostname, Domain name, Smb which did not enforce signing on its $IPC shares and several other informational.
Below is the result of the scan.


Nessus Essentials / Folde
Not secure https://localhost:8834/#/scans/reports/21/hosts/2/vulnerabilities
There's an error with your feed. Click here to view your license information.
tenable Nessus Essentials
Scans
Settings
benwarie
FOLDERS
My Scans
All Scans
Trash
RESOURCES
Policies
Plugin Rules
Terrascan
Tenable News
Cybersecurity Snapshot: Prompt Injection and Data ...
Read More
Pentest / 192.168.43.27
Back to Hosts
Configure
Audit Trail
Launch
Report
Export
Vulnerabilities 18
Filter
Search Vulnerabilities
18 Vulnerabilities
Sev
CVSS
VPR
EPSS
Family
Count
MEDIUM 5.3 Misc. 1
MEDIUM 5.0 * Service detection 1
INFO ... ... Windows 6
INFO Windows 9
INFO Port scanners 4
INFO General 1
INFO General 1
INFO Misc. 1
Details
192.168.43.27
20:10:7A:28:4D:B6
Microsoft Windows 10 Enterprise
Microsoft Windows Server 2019 LTSC
Microsoft Windows Server 2019
Today at 5:53 PM
Today at 6:03 PM
10 minutes
Download
Critical
High
Medium
Low


Nessus Essentials / Folde
SMB Signing: A Hidden S
CVE-2016-2115 - Red Hat
CVE-2021-31956/CVE-20
Not secure https://localhost:8834/#/scans/reports/21/hosts/2/vulnerabilities/57608
There's an error with your feed. Click here to view your license information.
tenable Nessus Essentials
Scans
Settings
benwarie
FOLDERS
My Scans
All Scans
Trash
RESOURCES
Policies
Plugin Rules
Terrascan
Tenable News
Cybersecurity Snapshot: Prompt Injection and Data ...
Read More
Pentest / Plugin #57608
Back to Vulnerabilities
Configure
Audit Trail
Launch
Report
Export
Vulnerabilities 18
MEDIUM SMB Signing not required
Description
Signing is not required on the remote SMB server. An unauthenticated, remote attacker can exploit this to conduct man-in-the-middle attacks against the SMB server.
Solution
Enforce message signing in the host's configuration. On Windows, this is found in the policy setting 'Microsoft network server: Digitally sign communications (always)'. On Samba, the setting is called 'server signing'. See the 'see also' links for further details.
See Also
http://www.nessus.org/u?df39b8b3
http://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/library/cc731957.aspx
http://www.nessus.org/u?74b80723
https://www.samba.org/samba/docs/current/man-html/smb.conf.5.html
http://www.nessus.org/u?a3cac4ea
Output
Plugin Details
Severity: Medium
ID: 57608
Version: 1.20
Type: remote
Family: Misc.
Published: January 19, 2012
Modified: October 5, 2022
Risk Information
Risk Factor: Medium
CVSS v3.0 Base Score: 5.3
CVSS v3.0 Vector:
CVSS:3.0/AV:N/AC:L/PR:N/UI:N/S:U/C:N/I:L/A:N
CVSS v3.0 Temporal Vector:
CVSS:3.0/E:U/RL:O/RC:C
CVSS v3.0 Temporal Score: 4.6



Further enumeration with nmap scripting engine did not reveal any flaw which was also solidified by using several POC test scripts for individual CVE



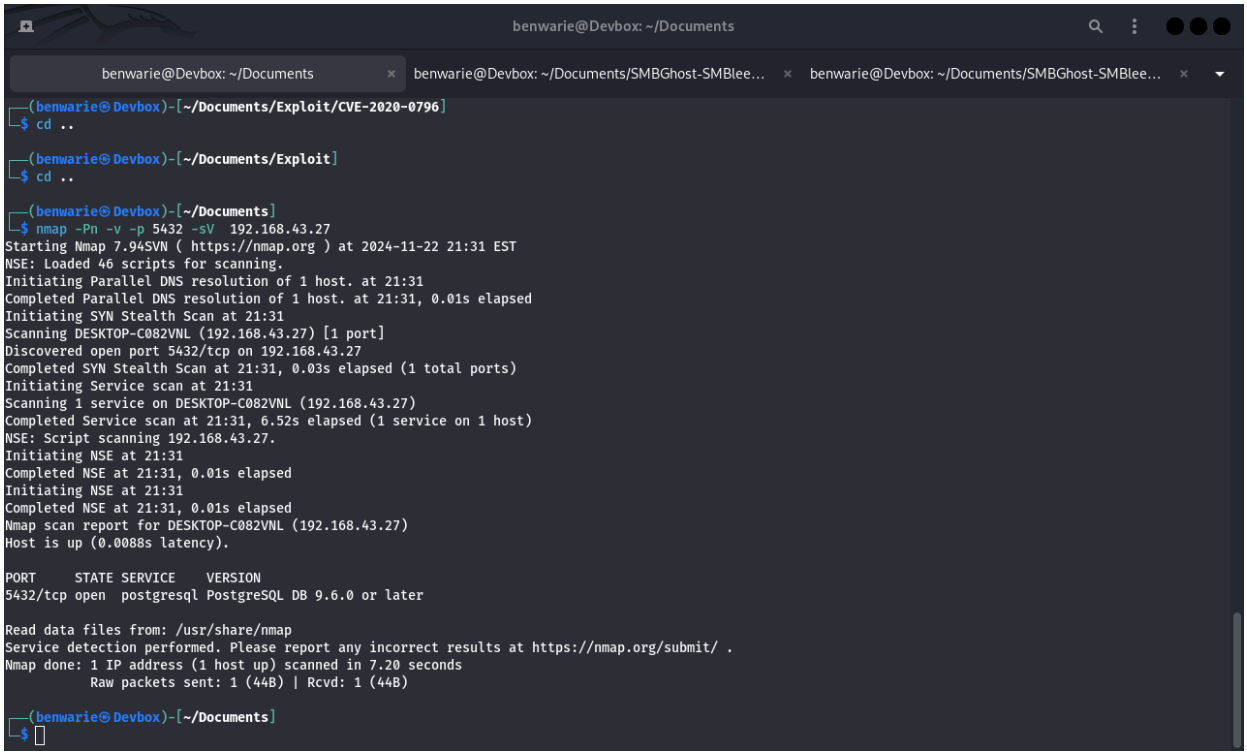
We were able to reveal the version of the smb using metasploit. Below is an extract of the auxiliary scanner,

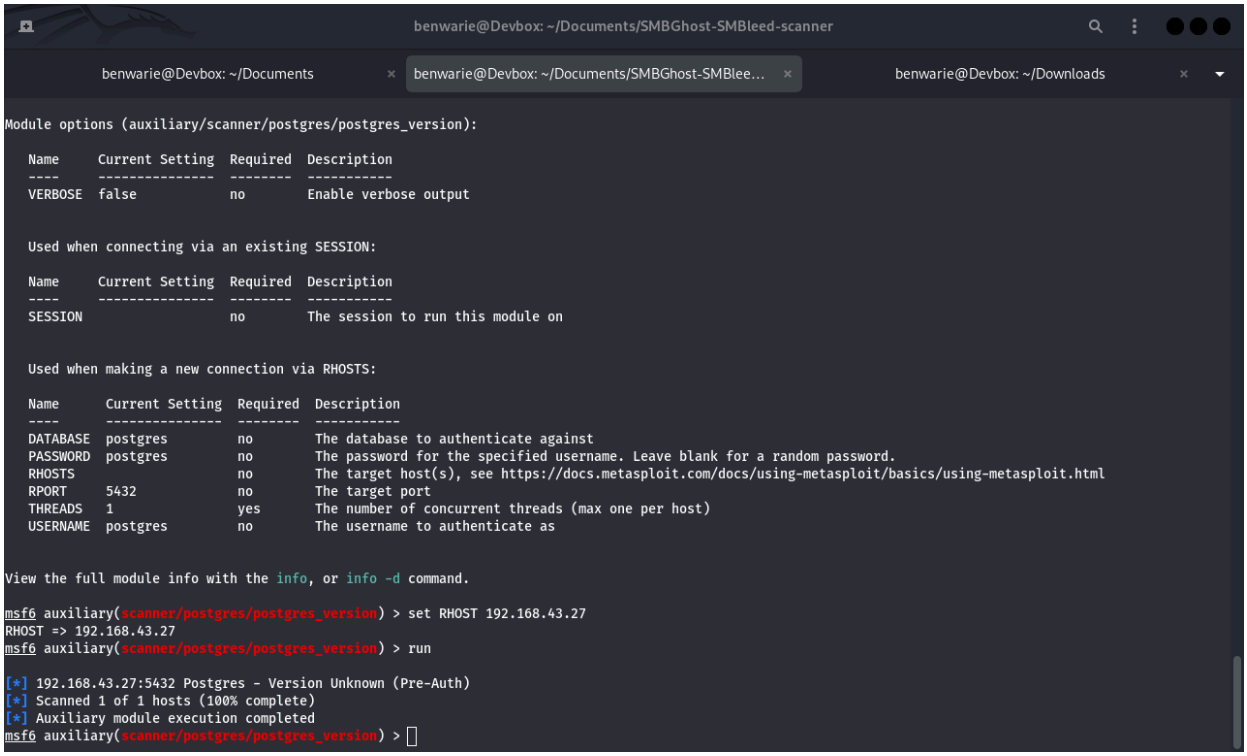
version information for smb
*] 192.168.43.27:445 - SMB Detected (versions:2, 3) (preferred dialect:SMB 3.1.1) (compression capabilities:LZNT1) (encryption capabilities:AES-128-GCM) (signatures:optional) (guid:{d4c466e6-6ec7-45ca-b021-7d95ca4817fb}) (authentication domain:DESKTOP-C082VNL)
[*] 192.168.43.27: - Scanned 1 of 1 hosts (100% complete)
[*] Auxiliary module execution completed

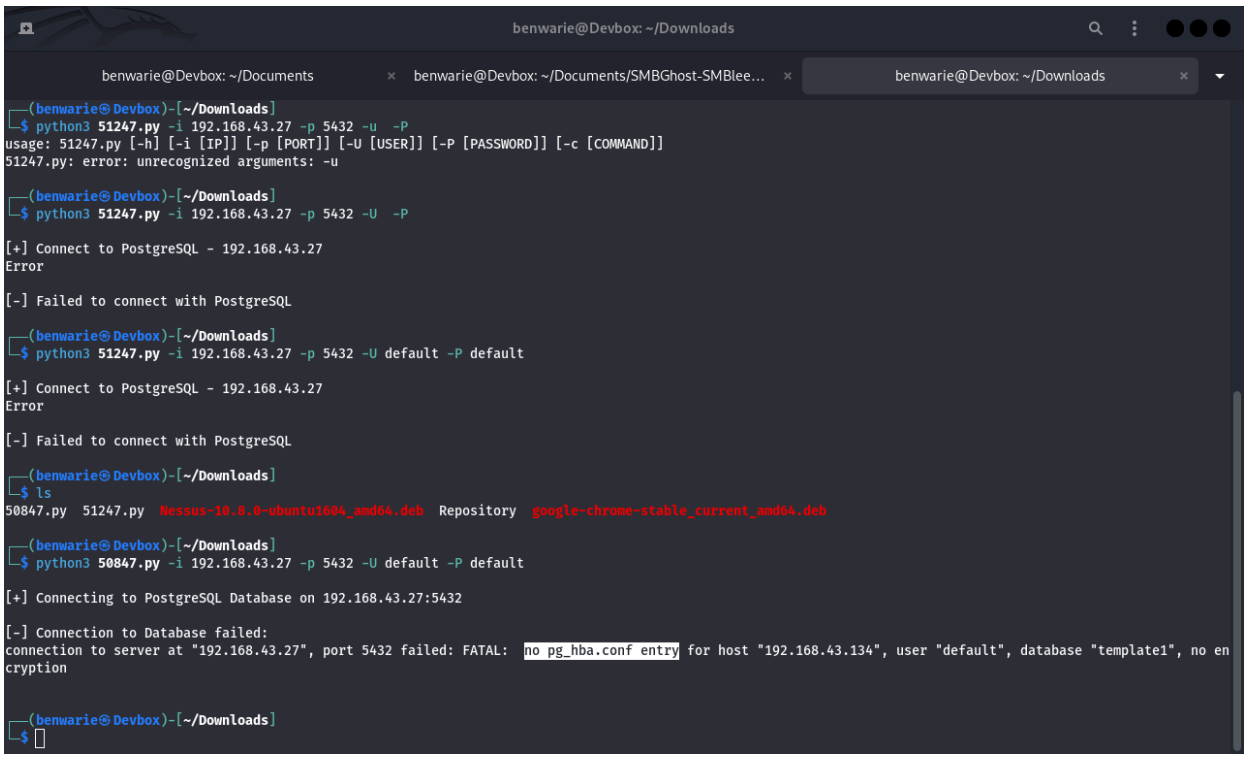
Below is a checklist used for CVE;

cve_2019_0708_bluekeep_rce
ms12_020_maxchannelids
ms12_020_check
cain_abel_4918_rdp
cve_2019_0708_bluekeep_rce
cve_2019_0708_bluekeep
CVE-2021-1675
CVE-2021-31956
CVE-2017-0144
PrintNightmare CVE-2021-34527
ZeroLogon CVE-2020-1472

We proceeded to enumerate the Postgresql server for possible vulnerabilities and discovered that it doesn't have encryption which is an impairment on confidentiality and integrity. However we didn't exploit this vulnerability to the end dues to the cost of computation in running large wordlists to find a match.


benwarie@Devbox: ~/Documents
benwarie@Devbox: ~/Documents
benwarie@Devbox: ~/Documents/SMBGhost-SMBlee...
benwarie@Devbox: ~/Documents/SMBGhost-SMBlee...
┌──(benwarie㉿Devbox)-[~/Documents/Exploit/CVE-2020-0796]
└─$ cd ..
┌──(benwarie㉿Devbox)-[~/Documents/Exploit]
└─$ cd ..
┌──(benwarie㉿Devbox)-[~/Documents]
└─$ nmap -Pn -v -p 5432 -sV 192.168.43.27
Starting Nmap 7.94SVN (https://nmap.org) at 2024-11-22 21:31 EST
NSE: Loaded 46 scripts for scanning.
Initiating Parallel DNS resolution of 1 host. at 21:31
Completed Parallel DNS resolution of 1 host. at 21:31, 0.01s elapsed
Initiating SYN Stealth Scan at 21:31
Scanning DESKTOP-C082VNL (192.168.43.27) [1 port]
Discovered open port 5432/tcp on 192.168.43.27
Completed SYN Stealth Scan at 21:31, 0.03s elapsed (1 total ports)
Initiating Service scan at 21:31
Scanning 1 service on DESKTOP-C082VNL (192.168.43.27)
Completed Service scan at 21:31, 6.52s elapsed (1 service on 1 host)
NSE: Script scanning 192.168.43.27.
Initiating NSE at 21:31
Completed NSE at 21:31, 0.01s elapsed
Initiating NSE at 21:31
Completed NSE at 21:31, 0.01s elapsed
Nmap scan report for DESKTOP-C082VNL (192.168.43.27)
Host is up (0.0088s latency).
PORT STATE SERVICE VERSION
5432/tcp open postgresql PostgreSQL DB 9.6.0 or later
Read data files from: /usr/share/nmap
Service detection performed. Please report any incorrect results at https://nmap.org/submit/ .
Nmap done: 1 IP address (1 host up) scanned in 7.20 seconds
Raw packets sent: 1 (44B) | Rcvd: 1 (44B)
┌──(benwarie㉿Devbox)-[~/Documents]
└─$


benwarie@Devbox: ~/Documents/SMBGhost-SMBleed-scanner
benwarie@Devbox: ~/Documents
benwarie@Devbox: ~/Documents/SMBGhost-SMBlee...
benwarie@Devbox: ~/Downloads
Module options (auxiliary/scanner/postgres/postgres_version):
Name Current Setting Required Description
VERBOSE false no Enable verbose output
Used when connecting via an existing SESSION:
Name Current Setting Required Description
SESSION no The session to run this module on
Used when making a new connection via RHOSTS:
Name Current Setting Required Description
DATABASE postgres no The database to authenticate against
PASSWORD postgres no The password for the specified username. Leave blank for a random password.
RHOSTS no The target host(s), see https://docs.metasploit.com/docs/using-metasploit/basics/using-metasploit.html
RPORT 5432 no The target port
THREADS 1 yes The number of concurrent threads (max one per host)
USERNAME postgres no The username to authenticate as
View the full module info with the info, or info -d command.
msf6 auxiliary(scanner/postgres/postgres_version) > set RHOST 192.168.43.27
RHOST => 192.168.43.27
msf6 auxiliary(scanner/postgres/postgres_version) > run
[*] 192.168.43.27:5432 Postgres - Version Unknown (Pre-Auth)
[*] Scanned 1 of 1 hosts (100% complete)
[*] Auxiliary module execution completed
msf6 auxiliary(scanner/postgres/postgres_version) >


benwarie@Devbox: ~/Downloads
benwarie@Devbox: ~/Documents
benwarie@Devbox: ~/Documents/SMBGhost-SMBlee...
benwarie@Devbox: ~/Downloads
┌──(benwarie㉿Devbox)-[~/Downloads]
└─$ python3 51247.py -i 192.168.43.27 -p 5432 -u -P
usage: 51247.py [-h] [-i [IP]] [-p [PORT]] [-U [USER]] [-P [PASSWORD]] [-c [COMMAND]]
51247.py: error: unrecognized arguments: -u
┌──(benwarie㉿Devbox)-[~/Downloads]
└─$ python3 51247.py -i 192.168.43.27 -p 5432 -U -P
[+] Connect to PostgreSQL - 192.168.43.27
Error
[-] Failed to connect with PostgreSQL
┌──(benwarie㉿Devbox)-[~/Downloads]
└─$ python3 51247.py -i 192.168.43.27 -p 5432 -U default -P default
[+] Connect to PostgreSQL - 192.168.43.27
Error
[-] Failed to connect with PostgreSQL
┌──(benwarie㉿Devbox)-[~/Downloads]
└─$ ls
50847.py 51247.py Nessus-10.8.0-ubuntu1604_amd64.deb Repository google-chrome-stable_current_amd64.deb
┌──(benwarie㉿Devbox)-[~/Downloads]
└─$ python3 50847.py -i 192.168.43.27 -p 5432 -U default -P default
[+] Connecting to PostgreSQL Database on 192.168.43.27:5432
[-] Connection to Database failed:
connection to server at "192.168.43.27", port 5432 failed: FATAL: no pg_hba.conf entry for host "192.168.43.134", user "default", database "template1", no encryption
┌──(benwarie㉿Devbox)-[~/Downloads]
└─$

Overview of the Vulnerability Identified and tools used to identify it.

The Vulnerability discovered on our target machine is “open ports” which we escalated to get

1. rpc sessions with the target device.
2. Encryption status of Postgres
3. Smb client status

Potential risks and Impact of exploiting this vulnerability on real-world IT Infrastructure

The potential risk of this vulnerability in real world iT infrastructure include:

1. Information disclosure with regards to confidentiality and integrity compromise of database
2. Dos/DDos
3. Remote code execution from disclosure of hostname and device service versions.

Recommendation on Prevention and Mitigation Strategies

Recommendations for mitigation include

1. Use of firewall to block ip-addresses and close open ports
2. Deploying IT infrastructure in different network segments to prevent access to critical assets
3. Encryption of Database
4. Implementation of Authentication and Authorization policies e.g network access controls
5. Implementation of Patch management to handle outdated software running on devices.
6. Implementation of network or host based Intrusion detection and intrusion prevention systems

Conclusion

In conclusion we have been able to demonstrate practical skill for network penetration testing to identify hosts on a network and target a specific machine to reveal open ports and enumerate them for services leading to access on these machines. This is an example of how attackers can gain access to devices and access personal information.

References

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