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OVAL Proposal Form

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The OVAL Proposal Form is used by members of the community to prepare proposals for migration into an official release of OVAL. The form will be critical in helping the members of the community understand, review, and vet proposals.

Once an OVAL Proposal Form is submitted to the oval-developer-list, the OVAL Moderator will review and verify the proposal for completeness at which point it will be ready for community review and discussion.

When a new proposal is introduced to the community, the OVAL Moderator will work with the OVAL Board to determine the impact of the proposal. If the proposal is deemed a high impact change, it must be developed in the OVAL Sandbox which will require the completion of this form as well as an OVAL Board vote before it is migrated into an official release. More information about the OVAL Board Voting Process can be found at [1]. If the proposal is deemed a low impact change, the proposed change can be made directly to an official OVAL release.

Please direct any questions or concerns to MITRE at [oval@mitre.org](mailto:oval@mitre.org).

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Steps to Take

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1) Review the OVAL Language Sandbox page [2] and the Requesting Changes to the OVAL Language page [3].

2) Complete the form provided below.

3) Email the completed form to the oval-developer-list at [oval-developer-list@lists.mitre.org](mailto:oval-developer-list@lists.mitre.org) with a subject of "FOR REVIEW: <Proposal Name> Proposal Form".

4) Revise the proposal, as needed, based on community discussion and feedback.

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Contact Information

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3) Phone Number (optional):

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Introduction to Proposal

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1) What is the new capability? The Windows license test is used to check information that is associated with the Windows license. This includes the ability to make assertions about things like the specific OS edition installed and other license relevant information. The Windows license contains authoritative information about the Windows version, which is leveraged by Microsoft WSUS/WUA, and exposed in Microsoft's public MS-WUSP (Windows Update) specification documentation.

2) Why is the new capability needed? Currently in OVAL, there is no simple way to query the information on the Windows license. The only way to make these assertions is to build complicated and difficult to understand content that requires intimate knowledge of a binary data format.

3) What is the version of the targeted official OVAL release? 5.11

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Benefits of Proposal

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1) How does the proposal relate to existing OVAL use cases [4]? The proposed test can be used to support the Configuration Management use case by allowing assertions about the Windows license to be made. Additionally, it could be used as part of the Software Inventory use case to provide additional details on the installed Windows OS edition.

2) What does this proposal enable that cannot currently be accomplished in the OVAL Language? The information found in this test cannot currently be easily extracted using the OVAL language alone. While it can be extracted using very complicated means, it is not simple.

3) What alternative approaches for supporting these use cases were considered and why is this one the best? The alternative to adopting this test in OVAL is to continue to force content authors who are interested in making assertions about the license state to parse the binary data format using existing OVAL language constructs that are not well-suited to this purpose. This should therefore be considered primarily a usability enhancement for content authors.

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Impacts of Proposal

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1) Which existing OVAL schemas are affected by this proposal? This proposal affects

* windows-definition-schema.xml
* windows-system-characteristics-schema.xml

2) Does the proposal break backward compatibility with previous versions? Please see OVAL Versioning Policy [5] for more information. No

2) How will the proposed changes impact OVAL content authors? Authors will now be able to write content using the new test. No legacy content must be changed, though some may be simplified.

3) How will the proposed changes impact OVAL content consumers? Consumers will need to be able to process the new test in order to execute content using the new test.

4) How will the proposed changes impact existing OVAL content? No effect on existing content will occur.

5) How will the proposed changes impact existing OVAL implementations? Existing implementations will need to be able to process the new test in order to support its use.

6) Are there any concerns regarding this proposal (e.g., undocumented APIs, etc.)? If so, are there any mitigating factors? Yes, this test requires either (1) parsing a binary data format that, although documented by third-parties, is not officially documented by Microsoft, or (2) leveraging an undocumented Microsoft API call. Both the associated format and API call have been around since at least 2008, and have remained unchanged since then.

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Technical Review

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1) Do the schema changes follow the accepted naming and design conventions? Yes

2) Do the schema changes satisfy the requirements specified in the Requesting Changes to the OVAL Language page [3]? Yes

3) Do the schema changes align with the targeted official release (e.g., changes that break backward compatibility should not target a minor release)? Please see the OVAL Versioning Policy [5] for more information. Yes

4) Have the new capabilities been successfully implemented and tested with sample content? Sample content exists, and a working open-source implementation is available as part of the jOVAL Open Source project on Github.

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Resource Information

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1) Provide URLs for relevant OVAL Sandbox Issues:

* There have been no Sandbox issues related to this test; just the pull requests:
  + <https://github.com/OVALProject/Sandbox/pull/65>
  + <https://github.com/OVALProject/Sandbox/commit/062ebee1bcecbfc0eb8cbb6791049f8051881ddc>

2) Provide URLs for OVAL Sandbox schemas that exemplify the proposed changes:

* Proposed changes: <https://github.com/OVALProject/Sandbox/blob/master/x-win-license.xsd>

3) Provide URLs for the location of sample OVAL Definitions, OVAL System Characteristics, and OVAL Results that exemplify the proposed changes:

* Sample content: <https://github.com/OVALProject/Sandbox/tree/master/resources/x-win-license/content>

4) Provide URLs for products or tools that implement the proposed changes:

* <http://github.com/joval/jOVAL>
* <http://www.joval.org>

5) Provide URLs to any other resources that may be relevant to reviewing and verifying the proposal:

* OVAL Mailing list post: <http://making-security-measurable.1364806.n2.nabble.com/Developer-Days-follow-up-License-and-System-Tests-td7581286.html>
* Library Information: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Microsoft\_Windows\_library\_files#NTDLL.DLL](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Microsoft_Windows_library_files)
* Data Format Information: <http://www.geoffchappell.com/studies/windows/km/ntoskrnl/api/ex/slmem/productpolicy.htm?tx=22>

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References

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[1] <http://oval.mitre.org/community/board/voting.html>

[2] <http://oval.mitre.org/language/sandbox.html>

[3] <http://oval.mitre.org/language/about/change_requests.html>

[4] <http://oval.mitre.org/adoption/usecasesguide.html>

[5] <http://oval.mitre.org/language/about/versioning.html>