Transfer Data to Cloud Account in Same CSP (version 1.0)

**Cloud Service Label: IaaS, PaaS**

Description

An adversary may exfiltrate data by transferring the data, including backups or snapshots of cloud environments, to another cloud account they control on the same service to avoid typical file transfers/downloads and network-based exfiltration detection.

A defender who is monitoring for large transfers external to the cloud environment through normal file transfers or over command and control channels may not be watching for data transfers to another account within the same cloud provider or even to another VPC illicitly created within the same account. Such transfers may utilize existing cloud provider APIs and the internal address space of the cloud provider to blend into normal traffic or avoid data transfers over external network interfaces.

Incidents have been observed where adversaries have created backups of cloud instances and transferred them to separate accounts.

Examples

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Description** |
| Justice Department Indictment | This indictment outlines how adversaries created backups of a cloud-based system utilizing the cloud providers technology. Adversaries then used their own accounts on the same cloud service to move the backups to. This lead to them effectively stealing the data. |

Mitigations

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Mitigation** | | **Description** |
| Filter Network Traffic | | Cloud service providers support IP-based restrictions when accessing cloud resources. Consider using IP whitelisting along with user account management to ensure that data access is restricted not only to valid users, but only from expected IP ranges to mitigate the use of stolen credentials to access data. |
|  | AWS | An AWS environment can be configured with network ACLs (access control lists) to allow or deny inbound and outbound traffic. This can be accomplished by accessing Amazon VPC and navigating to either inbound or outbound rules depending on the rule the user wishes to add and they can be added, removed, or edited from that panel. Full details about ACLs and how to add rules in AWS can be found here: **https://docs.aws.amazon.com/vpc/latest/userguide/vpc-network-acls.html.** |
|  | Azure | In Azure storage resources can be tied exclusively to a particular virtual network reducing the chances that it can be accessed externally or from other cloud assets. This can be done multiple ways including the Azure Portal, Azure PowerShell, and Azure CLI (Command Line Interface). Depending on the method used to implement this the procedure can vary, but will include the need to create a security group, create a network security group, associate that network security group with a specific subnet and then create security rules that are associated to the inbound and outbound rules for that subnet. Full details on how to configure this utilizing the various methods can be found below:  Azure Portal: **https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/azure/virtual-network/tutorial-filter-network-traffic**  Azure PowerShell: **https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/azure/virtual-network/tutorial-filter-network-traffic-powershell**  Azure CLI: **https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/azure/virtual-network/tutorial-filter-network-traffic-cli** |
| Password Policies | | Consider rotating access keys within a certain number of days to reduce the effectiveness of stolen credentials. |
|  | AWS | Good password practices can be enforced in AWS via the console, AWS CLI, and AWS API. These configurations are for IAM accounts only and have a range of different characteristics that can be enforced. For instance minimum password length, require a range of characters (lowercase, uppercase, number, and non alphanumeric ), allow users to change their own password, password expiration, prevent password reuse, and require administrator reset after password expiration. All details on how to configure these enforcement policies with all three management systems can be found here: **https://docs.aws.amazon.com/IAM/latest/UserGuide/id\_credentials\_passwords\_account-policy.html.** |
|  | Azure | Good password practices can be enforced in Azure only with managed domains created using the resource manager deployment. By default these accounts have some policies enforced including amount of lockout duration, allowed number of logon attempts, Reset failed logon attempts count after 30 minutes, and lifetime of password. Other policies that can be changed are minimum password length and the ability to enforce the concept of ‘passwords must meet complexity requirements’. These configurations can be accomplished by accessing the Active Directory Administrative Center under administrative tools, then editing the rules under the settings for the Password Settings Container. Full details on how to accomplish this can be found here: **https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/azure/active-directory-domain-services/password-policy.** |
| Least Privilege | | All access given to users in the cloud environment should be assigned by the necessary privileges needed for team members to complete their job responsibilities. Ensure that temporary access tokens are issued rather than permanent credentials, especially when access is being granted to entities outside of the internal security boundary. |
|  | AWS | To implement least privilege in an AWS environment IAM policies will be used. This gives the ability to allow users to perform list, read, write, permissions management, or tagging actions. AWS suggests utilizing *last accessed information* and A*WS CloudTrail event history* to get a better understanding of privileges that might be needed or reduced based on a specific role. Full details can be found at **https://docs.aws.amazon.com/IAM/latest/UserGuide/best-practices.html#grant-least-privilege.** |
|  | Azure | To implement least privilege in an Azure environment Azure Active Directory roles will be used. Azure outlines different tasks and the least privileged role that are suggested to be associated with the task. Those details can be found at: **https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/azure/active-directory/users-groups-roles/roles-delegate-by-task.** To learn how to assign specific roles it can be done via the Azure Active Directory Portal. Instructions on how to assign roles can be found here: **https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/azure/active-directory/users-groups-roles/directory-manage-roles-portal.** |
|  | GCP | To implement least privilege in GCP it is recommended to use predefined roles (which allow for granular access permissions) instead of primitive roles (roles/owner, roles/editor, and roles/viewer). Full details on the difference between types of roles can be found here: **https://cloud.google.com/iam/docs/understanding-roles.** To assign these roles IAM service accounts are used and complete details can be found at: **https://cloud.google.com/iam/docs/using-iam-securely#least\_privilege.** |

Detection

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Detection** | **Description** |
| Create Log Metric Filters and Alarms for AWS | To create a metric filter and alarm:   1. Create a metric filter that checks for IAM policy changes and the *<cloudtrail\_log\_group\_name>* 2. Create an SNS topic 3. Create an SNS subscription to the above topic 4. Create an alarm associated with the filter and SNS topic created in steps 1 and 2 respectively |
| Monitor Activity in AWS Account | Various services in AWS offer logging features that allow for detection capabilities. These include CloudFront, CloudTrail, CloudWatch, Config, and S3. |
| Monitor for Suspicious Activity in Azure | Azure AD can generate anomaly reports than can be run on a daily basis. Azure AD Identity Protection show current risks in its dashboard and provides daily email summary notifications. Policies can also be configured to alert to specific issues. |
| Create Log Metric Filters and Alarms for CloudTrail | To create a metric filter and alarm:   1. Create a filter that checks for CloudTrail changes and the specific *<cloudtrail\_log\_group\_name>* 2. Create an SNS topic that the alarm will notify 3. Create an SNS subscription to the above topic 4. Create an alarm associated with the filter from step 1 and SNS topic in step 2 |
| Create Activity Log Alerts in Azure | To create log activity alerts for deletion in the Azure Console:   1. Navigate to *Monitor’ / ‘Alerts* 2. Select *Manage alert rules* 3. Click on the Alert *Name* where Condition contains *operationName equals Microsoft.Network/networkSecurityGroups/securityRules/delete* 4. Hover a mouse over *Condition* to ensure it is set to *Whenever the Administrative Activity Log “Delete Security Rule (networkSecurityGroups/securityRules)” has “any” level with “any” status and event is initiated by “any*” |
| Create, View, and Manage Activity Alerts in Azure Monitor | To create a log alert in the Azure portal:   1. Select **Monitor -> Alerts** 2. Select **New alert rule** of the **Alerts** window 3. Provide information in **Define alert condition** 4. Provide details in **Define alert details** 5. Specify action group for new alert rule under **Action group**, or create a new action group with + **New group** 6. Select **Yes** for the **Enable rule upon creation** option 7. Select **Create alert rule**   To view and manage alerts:   1. Select **Monitor -> Alerts -> Manage alert rules** 2. Select the rule you want to modify and double-click to edit the rule options 3. Click **Save** |
| Azure Resource Manager Templates | Azure Resource Manager templates in the format of JSON files that can be used to configure metric alerts in Azure Monitor. These templates can be used for simple static and dynamic threshold metric alerts, availability tests, and monitoring multiple resources. |
| Enable CloudTrail across all regions in AWS | To enable CloudTrail across all regions:   1. Sign into the AWS Management Console and open the CloudTrail console 2. Click on *Trails* 3. Set necessary Trails to All option in the I column 4. Click on a trail via the link *Name* column 5. Set *Logging* to *ON* 6. Set *Apply trail to all regions* to *Yes* |
| Configure log profile to capture activity logs for all regions in Azure | To set up activity logs for all regions:   1. Navigate to Azure console 2. Go to *Activity log* 3. Select *Export* 4. Select *Subscription* 5. Check *Select all* in *Regions* 6. Select *Save* |

References

1. https://www.justice.gov/file/1080281/download. Accessed July 3, 2020.