Symmetric Hash-Chain-Encryption Protocol

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to demonstrate the effective use cases and theoretical security of Hash-Chain-Encryptions utilizing commonly known undecipherable encryptions such as Vernam Cipher. Apart from encryptions such as AES which is quantum secure and has many practical uses, Vernam cipher lacks practicality but enforces a theoretical unbreakable communication barrier. This proposed protocol does not replace standard protocols and encryptions as it has its limitations albeit far less than Vernam. The essential functionality of Hash-Chain-Encryption is building upon Vernam cipher with multiple reuses without ever breaking OTP. Then, discovering the possible use cases and enforcements in practical applications describing its processes, finally the possible vulnerabilities and issues utilizing the protocol if not taken into consideration.

Methodology

Hash-Chaining is the method of one-way functions hashing its values recursively producing a new and unique hash in its place. Hashing a function 3 times is represented as h3(func). There is no definitive way to undo a hash and decipher the original value, methods such as hash tables and rainbow tables are used when discovering a possible hash value in password stored databases. Salting is an extra technique used for passwords to decouple hashes and prevent an attacker from discovering multiple accounts with one hash. For security purposes and maintaining the integrity of hashes, Hash-Chain-Encryption will use SHA-512 to prevent hash collisions and birthday attacks, with the probability table SHA-512[REF] has an extremely low rate of collision of probability p=0.75 given an occurrence of 1.9×1077 hashes. This is a prerequisite for understanding that Hash-Chaining is a secure operation that cannot be broken unless the amount of hash attempts exceeds the probability count or if the hashed document is stored in a table, the latter may be prolonged indefinitely when proper salting and function hash parameter is longer than an arbitrary amount, such as greater than 8 characters password/key requirement. The longer the function parameter, the harder it is to store the hash in a table for a dictionary attack.

Hash-Chaining for the (HCE)Hash-Chain-Encryption will be like the defined Hash-Chaining mentioned except that the hashes will be appended to each other at the end. As an example:

Origin: Text

Hash1: h(Text)

Hash2: h(h(Text)) || h(Hash1)

Hash3: h(h(h(Text))) || h(Hash2)

Hash4: h(h(h(h(Text)))) || h(Hash3)

Result: Hash1 + Hash2 + Hash3 + Hash4

With regards to all other security mentioned to make sure that the hashes are not compromised. The original key origin will be kept always hidden, and a function generator will produce string h(origin) + h2(origin) + … + hn(origin) from the origin. The origin will be made up of 512 bits/128 characters (CSRNG or TRNG) and utilize hashing algorithm SHA-512 to prevent hashing collisions generating hashes of 512bits/128 characters on 64-bit machines. The produced string of data will serve as the secondary key and origin as primary a key. The number of hashes needed for the secondary key are arbitrary and do not add extra security as the algorithm explicitly states that the first 512bits/128 characters hashed will make up the subsequent 512bits/128 characters. The purpose of hashing 4 times of the origin key is to keep consistency when chaining the secondary key (4 hashes = 512character long key) and ease of use when block-chaining, smaller key length sizes such as 128 or 256 are acceptable. Storage of the primary key is necessary and will act as our private key as the secondary key can be built from the primary. Two separate modes exist where the secondary key does not need to be chained for smaller and simpler messages and block-chaining for larger files of any format type.

[Simple Control Mode]

**Primary:** **origin**

**Secondary: [hash1, hash2, hash3, hash4]**

**Message: If M < 512 chars. Append Salt until Message length = 512**

**ENCR: Message XOR Secondary**

[Block-Hash-Chaining Mode]

**Primary:** **origin**

**Secondary: [hash1, hash2, hash3, hash4]**

**Message: If M >= 512 chars. Append Salt until Message length % 512 = 0**

The secondary key will always be made up of sizes of 512 characters. The appended salt on the plaint text will contain [EXT:1234567890….57453] of pseudo random numbers [CSRNG/TRNG] until the size length reaches % 512 = 0. The original message will be padded instead of the secondary key to make sure the message length and key length are always the same. The secondary key and message XOR with each other producing a ciphertext that is theoretically unencryptable without the message or the key. When the receiver receives the incoming ciphertext alongside an HMAC of the modified plaintext, auditing the signature after decrypting with another XOR operation. Using the secondary key will notify if the ciphertext or HMAC has been altered mid transit, requesting the sender to send the Ciphertext and HMAC again until successful signatures have been verified. Repeated attacks altering the packet information of the Cipher Text or the HMAC can indefinitely delay communication until a different mode of transportation is secured. Although, attacks can be made against the methods of transportation, the message remain unencryptable regardless.

The architecting feature representing Vernam Cipher is the XOR operation. When performed correctly the XORed bits become impossible to recover without both operands. Considerations to this are the famous OTP rules stating:

1. The key cannot be used more than once.

2. The key length must be equal to the message length.

3. The key must be truly random.

4. The key must be kept in secret.

1. HCE strictly updates the key using either [CSRNG/TRNG] for generating a new key, it is the user’s choice whether to hold and collect keys (To view complete conversations) on their trusted computer systems or the suggested approach of allowing the new key to replace the old one. By this means prevents entire logs of communications from being breached on the system and continues a one-way asynchronous flow of data exchange to occur. Given the randomness of [CSRNG/TRNG] it is no easy number to guess and scoff at. The origin key is used once when sending the newly encrypted key, if during an interrupt or intercept the origin key may send the same newly generated key or generate another new one, there is no difference in security with either decision.

2. HCE secondary key always remains consistent of its length sizes, modification of the original message helps preserve attacks against the original message hash. On the last occurrence of the salt [EXT:1245..97367] upon decryption will remove from the plaintext leaving the original unformatted message. Thus, message length and secondary key are the equal lengths.

3. HCE allows any means of number generation although for true impenetrable encryption requires TRNG which can be generated through many other applications such as environmental factors. For practical uses CSRNG is sufficient against computational and humane guessing.

4. HCE keys are stored in the computer system, whether at Application level or Operating System level. Personal encrypted USB’s can store the key for more security if there is distrust in your system. Storage of key is based off personal preference, by default the protocol will store the key in the OS such as every other private key that is stored in a personal computer.

Problems:

The original issue as to why Vernam Cipher is not popularly used is that the key will most certainly require 2 individuals too physically meet up in person to begin the secret dialogue. The advantage against Vernam is that there is no longer a need to continuously meet up in person to exchange new keys and new secret messages. HCE is a once and done deal, other semi secure methods such as RSA can exchange the private key initially, but any attacks on RSA will leave the private key vulnerable. HCE recommended method is the physically exchange the keys in person through a secure USB, once that exchange starts through electronic communication there will be no need for the USB and onto the system or to keep the updated keys on the USB for further conversation.

Extremely large files can lead to a possibility of hash collision for SHA-512, to get a probable hash collision would be considered very improbable. If hashing collision did occur unintentionally this could lead portion of texts/images to ciphertext attacks as a pattern could be made out (Especially on blank images) and leaking parts of the text. If the possibility of a successful cipher text attack occurred because of a hash collision it is a very possible outcome that the pattern or previous hash would lead to the origin key breaking the protocol. Luckily HCE is made for communication exchange instead of data/storage exchange so it would be very improbable to impossible for a collision to occur. Storages can be encrypted and exchanged with HCE as terabytes of data are still too unlikely to cause a hash collision in practice but not thoroughly tested.

Addition of another party or removal, would also be very tricky and complicated. Sending other parties the private key is doable but HCE recommendations is to start a new conversation with new keys and exchange the key with whom the conversation will belong too in person.

**Algorithm: Simple Control Mode**

Hashes: Sha-512

Encrypt: XOR

Decrypt: XOR

Assume both parties securely have the same Private Key (Physical Exchange) Key1

**Sender Side:**

input = RAW TEXT

Message M1 = (input) size: (512 char. Length) (Last characters reserved for Salt).

Key1 priv. = Shared key, must be securely transferred. (512 char. Length).

Hash1 = Hash (Key1). (128 char. Length).

Hash2 = Hash (Hash1). (128 char. Length).

Hash3 = Hash (Hash2). (128 char. Length).

Hash4 = Hash (Hash3). (128 char. Length).

Key2 priv. = Hash1 + Hash2 + Hash3 + Hash4. (512 char. Length).

Authentication A1 = HashA1(M1). (128 char. Length).

Cipher Text CT = Key2 ⊕ M1. (512 char. Length).

Keynew = CSPRNG|TRNG. (514 char. Length).

Authentication A2 = Hash (Keynew). (512 char. Length).

KeySecret = Key1 ⊕ Keynew. (512 char. Length).

Discard Key1 and replace with Keynew. Only after Receiver has successfully received matching signatures or Save Key1 locally on a USB.

Key1 <- Keynew. Discard old with new.

SEND (CT, A1, KeySecret, A2).

**Receiver Side:**

RECEIVE (CT, A1, KeySecret, A2).

Decrypted Message MDecr = CT ⊕ Key2. (512 char. Length).

Authentication A3 = Hash (MDecr). (128 char. Length).

IF A3 == A1, Valid, else tampered update Key need to request for updated key again.

Original Text OT = Parse Salt from M1. (Input Length).

KeyUpdate = Key1 ⊕ KeySecret. (512 char. Length).

Authentication A4 = Hash (KeyUpadate). (128 char. Length).

IF A4 == A2, Valid, reject key and DO NOT UPDATE, need to re-establish private key again.

Key1 <- KeyUpdate Discard Key or store locally.

END.

Graphical user interface

Description automatically generated with low confidence

**Algorithm: Block-Hash-Chaining-Mode**

Hashes: Sha-512

Encrypt: XOR

Decrypt: XOR

Assume both parties securely have the same Private Key (Physical Exchange) Key1

**Sender Side:**

input = RAW TEXT

Message M1 = (input) size: (N char. Length)

M1 = M1 + Salt (Last characters reserved for Salt % 512 = 0).

ML = (Message Length N >= 512 and 512 % = 0)

Key1 priv. = Shared key, must be securely transferred. (512 char. Length).

Hash1 = Hash (Key1). (128 char. Length).

Hash2 = Hash (Hash1). (128 char. Length).

Hash3 = Hash (Hash2). (128 char. Length).

Hash4 = Hash (Hash3). (128 char. Length).

Key2 priv. = Hash1 + Hash2 + Hash3 + Hash4. (512 char. Length).

Key2 priv. ext:1 = Hash4 + Hash5 + Hash6 + Hash7. (512 char. Length).

…

Key2 priv. ext: ML/512 = HashML/512-3 + HashML/512-2 + HashML/512-1 + HashML/512. (512 char. Length).

Key2 priv. = Key2 priv + Key2 priv. ext:1 + … + Key2 priv. ext: ML/512

Authentication A1 = HashA1(M1). (128 char. Length).

Cipher Text CT = Key2 ⊕ M1. (512 char. Length).

Keynew = CSPRNG|TRNG. (514 char. Length).

Authentication A2 = Hash (Keynew). (512 char. Length).

KeySecret = Key1 ⊕ Keynew. (512 char. Length).

Discard Key1 and replace with Keynew. Only after Receiver has successfully received matching signatures or Save Key1 locally on a USB.

Key1 <- Keynew. Discard old with new.

SEND (CT, A1, KeySecret, A2).

**Receiver Side:**

RECEIVE (CT, A1, KeySecret, A2).

Decrypted Message MDecr = CT ⊕ Key2. (N char. Length, Length is % 512 = 0).

Authentication A3 = Hash (MDecr). (128 char. Length).

IF A3 == A1, Valid, else tampered update Key need to request for updated key again.

Original Text OT = Parse Salt from M1. (Input Length).

KeyUpdate = Key1 ⊕ KeySecret. (512 char. Length).

Authentication A4 = Hash (KeyUpadate). (128 char. Length).

IF A4 == A2, Valid, reject key and DO NOT UPDATE, need to re-establish private key again.

Key1 <- KeyUpdate Discard Key or store locally.

END.

Use Validation

HCE is a considerably fast encryption algorithm as it only utilizes 2 core principles, Hashing (SHA-512) which is very fast on x86 systems and the XOR operation which is one of the easiest fundamental operations in computer hardware that can be performed, faster than simple arithmetic. This protocol can be used in wide scaled messaging systems, but it will forfeit its security of transfer of the initial private key instantiated by the sole discretion of the provider hosting the system, also whether the conversation log would be kept retaining previous old keys in a cloud database which would be largely cumbersome to the cloud storage and be a primary target for attacks since attacking the encrypted files would be completely pointless. Its ideal use case would be the highest TOP SECRET and CONFIDENTIAL information that needs to be relayed multiple times to a single party securing data through transit whether it be a message or any type of file/image. For security minded individuals this could be overkill or exactly what is needed as transferring data will not be capable of being breached, ever. As with Vernam Cipher during very secretive missions during war time this form of communication was necessarily but difficult as meeting physically after every secret exchange was not always possible to make. HCE capitalizes on limited but high stake information, and generally does not have its place in common messaging systems.