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C++ static code analysis: Using weak hashing algorithms is security-sensitive

2-3 minutes

Cryptographic hash algorithms such as `MD2`, `MD4`, `MD5`, `MD6`, `HAVAL-128`, `HMAC-MD5`, `DSA` (which uses `SHA-1`), `RIPEMD`, `RIPEMD-128`, `RIPEMD-160`, `HMACRIPEMD160` and `SHA-1` are no longer considered secure, because it is possible to have `collisions` (little computational effort is enough to find two or more different inputs that produce the same hash).

Ask Yourself Whether

The hashed value is used in a security context like:

- User-password storage.
- Security token generation (used to confirm e-mail when registering on a website, reset password, etc …).
- To compute some message integrity.

There is a risk if you answered yes to any of those questions.

Recommended Secure Coding Practices

Safer alternatives, such as `SHA-256`, `SHA-512`, `SHA-3`

are recommended, and for password hashing, it’s even better to use algorithms that do not compute too "quickly", like `bcrypt`, `scrypt`, `argon2` or `pbkdf2` because it slows down `brute force attacks`.

Sensitive Code Example

```
#include <botan/hash.h>
// ...
Botan::secure_vector<uint8_t> f(std::string input){
    std::unique_ptr<Botan::HashFunction>
hash(Botan::HashFunction::create("MD5")); // Sensitive
    return hash->process(input);
}
```

Compliant Solution

```
#include <botan/hash.h>
// ...
Botan::secure_vector<uint8_t> f(std::string input){
    std::unique_ptr<Botan::HashFunction>
hash(Botan::HashFunction::create("SHA-512")); //
Compliant
    return hash->process(input);
}
```

See

- OWASP Top 10 2021 Category A2 - Cryptographic

Failures

- OWASP Top 10 2017 Category A3 - Sensitive Data Exposure
- OWASP Top 10 2017 Category A6 - Security Misconfiguration
- Mobile AppSec Verification Standard - Cryptography Requirements
- OWASP Mobile Top 10 2016 Category M5 - Insufficient Cryptography
- MITRE, CWE-1240 - Use of a Risky Cryptographic Primitive
- SANS Top 25 - Porous Defenses

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