

Welcome to

1. Basics of Incident Response

Introduction to Incident Response Elective, KEA

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Slides are available as PDF, kramse@Codeberg <https://codeberg.org/kramse/1-Basics-of-Incident-Response.tex> in the repo security-courses

Goals for today



- Define Incident Response
- Find some information – gather data
- Get started trying some tools

Photo by Thomas Galler on Unsplash

Plan for today

- Basics of Intelligence
- Basics of Incident Response
- Get started doing some exercises
- Incident Response Life cycle

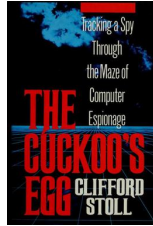
Exercise theme:

- IP Address Research
- Mitre ATT&CK Framework introduction
- Demo: buffer overflow and kernel information
- Nginx logging – web server common log format
- Packetbeat example logging system

Intelligence-Driven Incident Response (IDIR),
Scott Roberts, Rebekah Brown, ISBN: 9781098120689 **2nd edition 2023** - short IDIR

Current status – try to go through these chapters:

- Foreword and Preface
- Chapter 1: Introduction
- Chapter 2: Basics of Intelligence
- Chapter 3: Basics of Incident Response



Threat intelligence was vital to intrusions over 20 years ago, starting with the story told in **the Cuckoo's Egg**, written by **Cliff Stoll**, and has been ever since. But somehow, most organizations are **still learning** to adopt the same principles. ... Lucky for us, this book now exists and steps the reader through **proper threat-intelligence concepts, strategy, and capabilities** that an organization can adopt to evolve their security practice. After reading this book, your operations can grow to become an intelligence-driven operation that is much more efficient than ever in **detecting and reducing the possible impact of breaches that will occur**.

Source: *Intelligence-Driven Incident Response* (IDIR)

Scott Roberts. Rebekah Brown

Note mentions!

Resource and books like these mention a lot of interesting things:

- Authors – obviously but perhaps check other writing by them
- Organizations: DoD, NSA, SANS <https://www.sans.org/>
- Persons: Clifford Stoll and the Cuckoo's Egg (book/security breach incident)
- Company names: Mandiant
- Tools: Nmap, Tcpdump, Metasploit
- Web sites
- Incidents, attacker groups, tactics
- Term: Cyber Threat Intelligence (CTI)
- ...

All of these will enhance your knowledge in this field, so take mental notes along the way.

A related resource is the MITRE ATT&CK framework <https://attack.mitre.org/>

The purpose of this book is to **demonstrate how intelligence fits into the incident-response process**, helping responders understand their adversaries in order to **reduce the time it takes to detect, respond to, and remediate intrusions**. Cyber threat intelligence and incident response have long been **closely related**, and in fact are **inextricably linked**. Not only does threat intelligence support and augment incident response, but incident response generates threat intelligence that can be utilized by incident responders. The goal of this book is to help readers **understand, implement, and benefit** from this relationship.

Source: *Intelligence-Driven Incident Response* (IDIR)

Scott Roberts. Rebekah Brown

- Why, Who and how the book is organized

Intelligence as Part of Incident Response

As long as there has been conflict, there have been those who studied, analyzed, and strove to understand the enemy. Wars have been won and lost based on an ability to understand the way the enemy thinks and operates, to comprehend their motivations and identify their tactics ...

Source: *Intelligence-Driven Incident Response* (IDIR)

Scott Roberts. Rebekah Brown

- We will call it incident response for this course, this is our focus first
- Later you may pick up the book again and pay more attention to the intelligence gathering and use

What do we mean by Intelligence

Intelligence is often defined as information that has been refined and analyzed to make it actionable. Intelligence, therefore, requires information. In intelligence-driven incident response, there are multiple ways to gather information that will be analyzed and used to support incident response.

Source: *Intelligence-Driven Incident Response* (IDIR)

Scott Roberts. Rebekah Brown

Chapter 2: Basics of Intelligence

“Joint Publication 2-0,” the US military’s primary joint intelligence doctrine, is one of the foundational intelligence documents used today. In its introduction, it states, “Information on its own may be of utility to the commander, but when related to other information about the operational environment and considered in the light of past experience, it gives rise to a new understanding of the information, which may be termed intelligence.”

Source: *Intelligence-Driven Incident Response (IDIR)*

Scott Roberts. Rebekah Brown

- *Data* is a piece of information, a fact, or a statistic. Data is something that describes something that *is*.
- *Intelligence* is **derived from a process** of collecting, processing, and analyzing data. Once it has been analyzed, it must be disseminated in order to be useful.

There was a time when many people considered indicators of compromise, or IOCs, to be synonymous with threat intelligence. IOCs, which we will reference a lot and cover in depth later in the book, are **things to look for** on a system or in **network logs** that may **indicate that a compromise has taken place**. This includes IP addresses and domains associated with command-and-control servers or malware downloads, hashes of malicious files, and other network- or host-based artifacts that may indicate an intrusion.

Source: *Intelligence-Driven Incident Response* (IDIR)

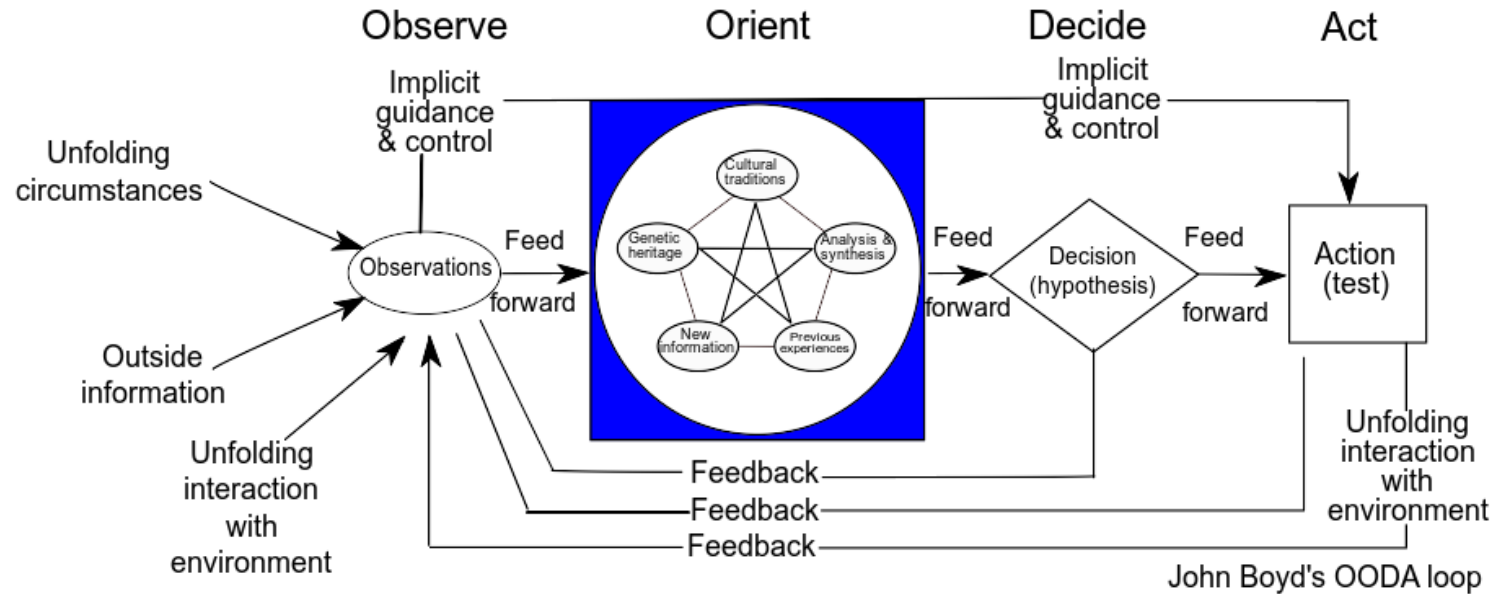
Scott Roberts. Rebekah Brown

An IOC is any piece of information that can be used to objectively describe a network intrusion, expressed in a platform-independent manner. This could include a simple indicator such as the IP address of a command and control (C2) server or a complex set of behaviors that indicate that a mail server is being used as a malicious SMTP relay.

When an IOC is taken and used in a platform-specific language or format, such as a Snort Rule or a Zeek-formatted file, it becomes part of a signature. A signature can contain one or more IOCs.

Source: Applied Network Security Monitoring Collection, Detection, and Analysis, 2014 Chris Sanders

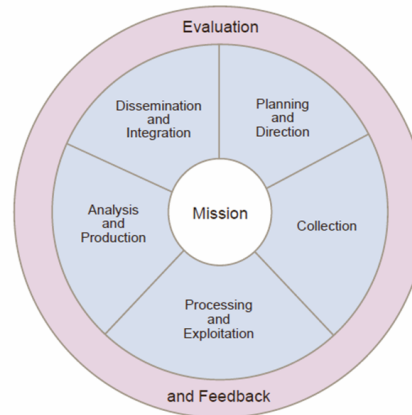
OODA Loop by John Boyd



Source: Patrick Edwin Moran - Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OODA_loop

Intelligence Cycle or Intelligence Process

The Intelligence Process



Source: Joint Intelligence / Joint Publication 2-0 (Joint Chiefs of Staff)

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intelligence_cycle

- I decided to take the more original Intelligence Process picture, which has a bit more details

Let's look at some processing

- Processing includes normalizing collected data into uniform formats for analysis
- Indexing – Large volumes of data need to be made searchable
- Translation – for our course we might get multiple input formats but need JSON or XML
- Enrichment – Providing additional metadata for a piece of information is important. For example, domain addresses need to be resolved to IP addresses, and **WHOIS registration data fetched**
- Filtering – Not all data provides equal value, and analysts can be overwhelmed when presented with endless streams of irrelevant data
- Prioritization – The data that has been collected may need to be ranked so that analysts can allocate resources to the most important items
Note: this relates to a *baseline*, what errors are normal in your environment
- Visualization – Data visualization has advanced significantly and the human eye and brain can often see patterns

Metadata	Metacategory: Data
The DNS lookup occurred at a certain time.	Timestamp: 278621182
The internal host sent a DNS PTR request.	Network protocol: DNS PTR
The internal host had a hostname.	Location: Desktop subnet
	Source IP Address: 1.1.1.2
	Hostname: windowspc22.company.com
The internal host resolved an external host.	Location: External
	Destination IP Address: 255.123.215.3
	Hostname: dgf7adfnkjhh.com
The external host was hosted by a dynamic DNS provider.	Network: Shady DDnS Provider Inc.
	ASN: SHADY232
	Reputation: Historically risky network
The remote hostname appeared randomly generated.	Hostname: dgf7adfnkjhh.com
	Category: Unusual, nonlinguistic

Source: picture from Crafting the InfoSec Playbook, CIP

Metadata + Context



Now lets do the exercise

⚠ IP address research 30 min

which is number **8** in the exercise PDF.



Now lets do the exercise

i Zui desktop app 20 min

which is number **9** in the exercise PDF.

Chapter 3: Basics of Incident Response

Incident response encompasses the entire process of **identifying intrusions** (whether against a single system or an entire network), developing the information necessary to **fully understand them**, and then **developing and executing the plans** to **remove the intruders**.

Source: *Intelligence-Driven Incident Response* (IDIR)

Scott Roberts. Rebekah Brown

- An important part of this is *when* to activate the incident response team, what qualifies? Triage of incidents

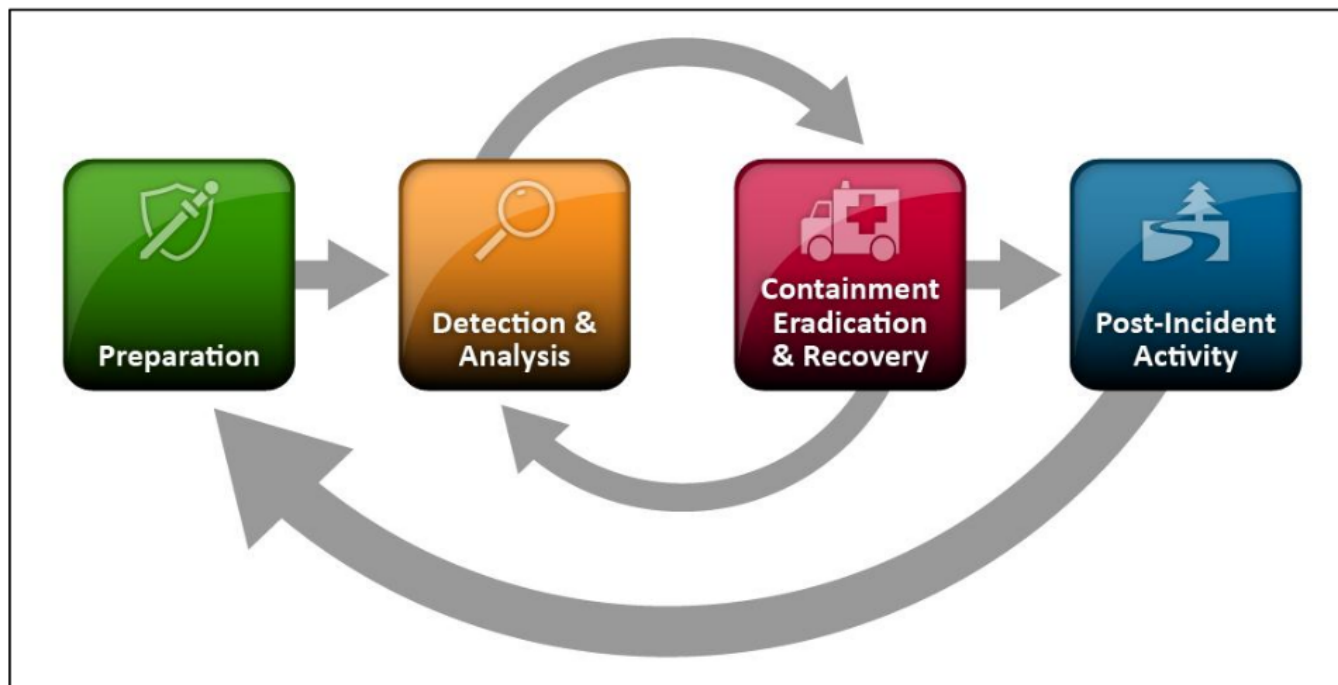


Figure 3-1. Incident Response Life Cycle

Source: *Computer Security Incident Handling Guide*, NIST SP 800-61 Rev. 2

For a defender, the first stage of an incident comes before the attack begins: the Preparation phase. Preparation is the defender's chance to get ahead of the attacker by deploying new detection systems, creating and updating signatures, and understanding baseline system and network activity.

- Telemetry – You can't find what you can't see
- Hardening – The only thing better than identifying an intrusion quickly is it never happening in the first place
- Process and documentation – On the nontechnical side, process is the first line of defense that can be prepared ahead of time
You may see the term Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) used in literature
- Practice – The last thing preparation allows is the chance to practice your plans. This will speed up future incidents and identify issues that can be corrected

The Identification phase is the moment where the defender identifies the presence of an attacker impacting their environment. This can occur through a variety of methods:

- Identifying the attacker entering the network, such as a server attack or an incoming phishing email
- Noticing command-and-control traffic from a compromised host
- Seeing the massive traffic spike when the attacker begins exfiltrating data
- Getting a visit from a special agent at your local FBI field office
- And last, but all too often, showing up in an article by Brian Krebs

Security incidents happen, but what happens. One of the actions to reduce impact of incidents are done in preparing for incidents.

Preparation for an attack, establish procedures and mechanisms for detecting and responding to attacks

Preparation will enable easy **identification** of affected systems, better **containment** which systems are likely to be infected, **eradication** what happened – how to do the **eradication** and **recovery**.

Although we could spend an entire book creating an exhaustive list of skills needed to be a good security data scientist, this chapter covers the following skills/domains that a data scientist will benefit from knowing within information security:

- Domain expertise—Setting and maintaining a purpose to the analysis
- Data management—Being able to prepare, store, and maintain data
- Programming—The glue that connects data to analysis
- Statistics—To learn from the data
- Visualization—Communicating the results effectively

It might be easy to label any one of these skills as the most important, but in reality, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Each of these contributes a significant and important piece to the workings of security data science.

Source: *Data-Driven Security: Analysis, Visualization and Dashboards* Jay Jacobs, Bob Rudis
ISBN: 978-1-118-79372-5 February 2014 <https://datadrivensecurity.info/> - short DDS

The Zeek Network Security Monitor

Why Choose Zeek? Zeek is a powerful network analysis framework that is much different from the typical IDS you may know.

Adaptable

Zeek's domain-specific scripting language enables site-specific monitoring policies.

Efficient

Zeek targets high-performance networks and is used operationally at a variety of large sites.

Flexible

Zeek is not restricted to any particular detection approach and does not rely on traditional signatures.

Forensics

Zeek comprehensively logs what it sees and provides a high-level archive of a network's activity.

In-depth Analysis

Zeek comes with analyzers for many protocols, enabling high-level semantic analysis at the application layer.

Highly Stateful

Zeek keeps extensive application-layer state about the network it monitors.

Open Interfaces

Zeek interfaces with other applications for real-time exchange of information.

Open Source

Zeek comes with a BSD license, allowing for free use with virtually no restrictions.

The Zeek Network Security Monitor is not a single tool, more of a powerful network analysis framework

Zeek is the tool formerly known as Bro, changed name in 2018. <https://www.zeek.org/>



The Zeek Network Security Monitor

While focusing on network security monitoring, Zeek provides a comprehensive platform for more general network traffic analysis as well. Well grounded in more than 15 years of research, Zeek has successfully bridged the traditional gap between academia and operations since its inception.

<https://www.Zeek.org/>



Suricata is a high performance Network IDS, IPS and Network Security Monitoring engine.

<http://suricata-ids.org/> <http://openinfosecfoundation.org>

In this course we will expect our organisation to have already deployed similar capabilities.

You can find a whole workshop in:

<https://github.com/kramse/security-courses/tree/master/courses/networking/suricatazeek-workshop>

Common containment options are as follows:

- Disabling the network switch port to which a particular system is connected
- Blocking access to malicious network resources such as IPs (at the firewall) and domains or specific URLs (via a network proxy)
- Temporarily locking a user account under the control of an intruder
- Disabling system services or software an adversary is exploiting

Eradication consists of the longer-term mitigation efforts meant to keep an attacker out for good (unlike the temporary measures in the Containment phase). These actions should be well thought out and may take a considerable amount of time and resources to deploy. They are focused on completely obviating as many parts of the adversary's plan from ever working in the future.

Common eradication actions are as follows:

- Removing all malware and tools installed by the adversary (see the sidebar “Wiping and Reloading Versus Removal” on page 32)
- Resetting and remediating all impacted user and service accounts
- Re-creating secrets that could have been accessed by the attacker, such as shared passwords, certificates, and tokens

Containment and eradication often require **drastic action**. Recovery is the process of going back to a nonincident state. In some regards, recovery is less from the attack itself, but more from the actions taken by the incident responders.

For example, if a compromised system is taken from a user for forensic analysis, the Recovery phase involves returning or replacing the user's system so that user can return to previous tasks. If an entire network is compromised, the Recovery phase involves undoing any actions taken by the attacker across the entire network, and can be a **lengthy and involved process**.

Lessons Learned – Follow-Up

Ultimately, the key to Lessons Learned is having the understanding that although early lessons learned will be painful, they will improve—and that's the point. Early Lessons Learned exercises will call out **flaws, missing technology, missing team members, bad processes, and bad assumptions**. Growing pains with this process are common, but take the time and gut through them. **Few things** will improve an IR team and IR capability as **quickly** as some **tough lessons learned**.

- Goal is to mature your team, methods, procedures, identification, ...
- More efficient is cheaper, faster, better

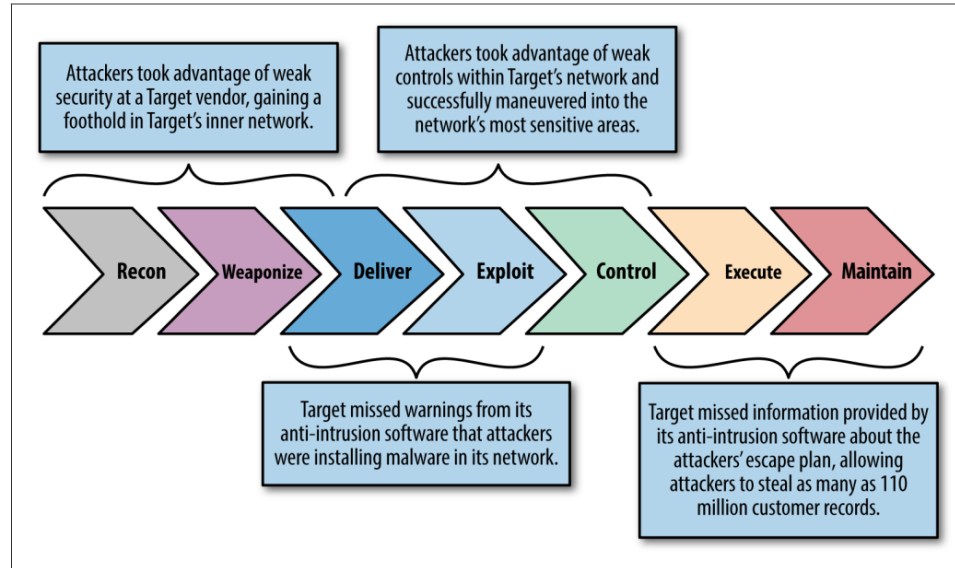


Figure 7-1. The kill chain

- See also *Intelligence-Driven Computer Network Defense Informed by Analysis of Adversary Campaigns and Intrusion Kill Chains*, Eric M. Hutchins , Michael J. Cloppert, Rohan M. Amin, Ph.D. Lockheed Martin Corporation

<https://www.lockheedmartin.com/content/dam/lockheed-martin/rms/documents/cyber/LM-White-Paper-Intel-Driven-Defense.pdf>



Now lets do the exercise

⚠ Mitre ATT&CK Framework 10 min

which is number 7 in the exercise PDF.



Now lets do the exercise

i Demo: Buffer Overflow 101 30-40min

which is number **10** in the exercise PDF.

Python and REST

```
#!/usr/bin/env python  
import requests  
r = requests.get('https://api.github.com/events')  
print (r.json());
```

- Lets try to use some Python to access a REST service.
- We will use the JSONPlaceholder which is a free online REST API: <https://jsonplaceholder.typicode.com/>
- Start at the site: <https://jsonplaceholder.typicode.com/guide.html> and try running a few of the examples with your browser
- Then try using the same URLs in the Requests HTTP library from Python, <https://requests.readthedocs.io/en/master/>

Note about frameworks and libraries

```
import xml.etree.ElementTree as ET
tree = ET.parse('testfile.xml')
root = tree.getroot()

print(root.tag)
print('Nmap version: \t\t{:s} '.format(root.attrib['version']))
print('Nmap started: \t\t{:s} '.format(root.attrib['startstr']))
print('Nmap command line: \t{:s} '.format(root.attrib['args']))

hosts = tree.findall('./host')
for host in hosts:
    print(host.tag)
    print(host.attrib)
    for hostvalues in host:
        print(hostvalues.tag)
        print(hostvalues.attrib)
```

- Dont import JSON or XML using home made programs
- Example uses xml.etree.ElementTree from Python <https://docs.python.org/3.7/library/xml.etree.elementtree.html>

Convert XML to JSON

```
import xml.etree.ElementTree as ET
import json
def etree_to_dict(t):
    d = {t.tag : map(etree_to_dict, t.getchildren())}
    d.update({'@' + k, v} for k, v in t.attrib.items())
    d['text'] = t.text
    return d

tree = ET.parse('testfile.xml')
root = tree.getroot()
mydict = etree_to_dict(root)
print(type(tree))
print(type(root))
print(type(mydict))

print(mydict)

with open('testfile.json', 'w') as json_file:
    json.dump(mydict, json_file)
```

Converting using Python is easy

Side note: Zeek Security Monitor handles formats differently

Zeek has files formatted with a header:

```
#fields ts      uid      id.orig_h      id.orig_p      id.resp_h      id.resp_p      proto  trans_id
      rtt      query    qclass  qclass_name    qtype    qtype_name    rcode  rcode_name    AA
      TC      RD      RA      Z      answers  TTLs      rejected

1538982372.416180 CD12Dc1SpQm42QW4G3 10.xxx.0.145 57476 10.x.y.141 53 udp 20383
0.045021 www.dr.dk 1 C_INTERNET 1 A 0 NOERROR F F T T 0
www.dr.dk-v1.edgekey.net,e16198.b.akamaiedge.net,2.17.212.93 60.000000,20409.000000,20.000000 F
```

Note: this show ALL the fields captured and dissected by Zeek, there is a nice utility program zeek-cut which can select specific fields:

```
root@NMS-VM:/var/spool/bro/bro# cat dns.log | zeek-cut -d ts query answers | grep dr.dk
2018-10-08T09:06:12+0200 www.dr.dk www.dr.dk-v1.edgekey.net,e16198.b.akamaiedge.net,2.17.212.93
```

Can also just use JSON now via Filebeat



Now lets do the exercise

! Nginx logging 20 min

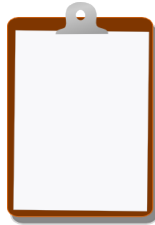
which is number **11** in the exercise PDF.



Now lets do the exercise

Packetbeat monitoring 15 min

which is number 12 in the exercise PDF.



Think about the subjects from this time, write down questions

Check the plan for chapters to read in the books

Visit web sites and download papers if needed

Retry the exercises to get more confident using the tools

Buy the books! Create your VMs