AIL Project

How to Improve and Support Your Threat Intelligence Process



Alexandre Dulaunoy alexandre.dulaunoy@circl.lu

info@circl.lu

November 8, 2023

Background

- Over the past five years, we have developed the AIL project¹ to fulfill our needs at CIRCL in intelligence gathering and analysis.
- As AIL gained popularity, an increasing number of users began integrating it into their threat intelligence processes and workflows.
- In this presentation, we outline some of the processes where AIL
 can serve as a valuable tool, facilitating and enhancing the work
 of intelligence analysts.

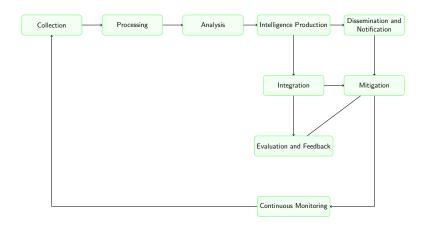
¹https://www.ail-project.org/

AIL overview

- The AIL Project is an open-source framework² comprising various modules designed for the collection, crawling, digging, and analysis of unstructured data.
- AIL features an extensible Python-based framework for the analysis of unstructured information, collected either through an advanced Crawler manager or from various feeders, including social networks and custom feeders.
- AlL also provides support for actively crawling Tor hidden services, as well as crawling protected websites and forums by utilizing pre-recorded session cookies.

²https://github.com/ail-project

Threat Intelligence Process at CIRCL



Common questions from constituents

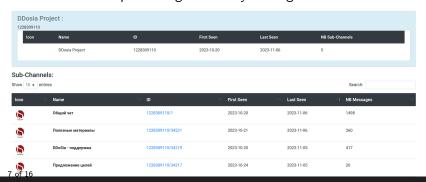
- Do you **know if we are a target** of this adversary group?
- We have observed a partnering company experiencing a ransomware incident, and we are concerned about the impact on our organization.
- Can you determine if our **sector is a target** of this threat actor?
- Have you come across phishing kits targeting our bank/service or any instances of our data being stolen on the "dark web"?

Challenges and opportunity

- Reducing repetitive tasks for the analysts.
- Preparing factual intelligence evidence for intelligence production, including human-readable reports and MISP structured intelligence.
- **Correlating information** from multiple sources, especially when different analysts are working with different sources on their end.
- Facilitating the integration of "intelligence requests" from our constituents.

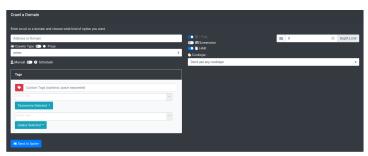
Collection - automate collection

- Collecting data from various chat sources can be a tedious task for analysts.
- AIL offers a set of feeders (e.g., Telegram, Discord, etc.) that can be used to subscribe to chat channels.
- All the **collected messages are then processed and analyzed** within the AlL's *processing* and *analysis* stages.



Collection - automate crawling

- Crawling can be a challenging task, for example, gathering all the blog posts from ransomware groups³, which can be demanding for an analyst.
- AIL offers a crawling feature that can initiate regular crawls using a standard spawned browser.



³https://www.ransomlook.io/

Processing - extracting selector/patterns

- Detecting specific search patterns in a large dataset, such as a significant ransomware leak, can be challenging for analysts.
- AIL includes a rich set of existing search patterns (e.g. IBAN) along with default YARA rules, and you have the ability to create custom ones.



Analysis - automatic detection from collection

- Processing automatically collected information can be a challenging task.
- AIL processes all the collected items for any hunting rules and utilizes MISP taxonomies to tag the matching information.



Analysis - evaluating vulnerability severity/risk

- What is the visibility, usage, mentions, or risk of a vulnerability observed in forums, channels, pastes, or websites?
- AIL can assist you in determining the severity/risk level or in reviewing the usage of a vulnerability (e.g., the number of PoCs).



Dissemination - distributing analysis

- AIL exports data using the MISP standard format and offers complete integration with MISP to facilitate the dissemination of data.
- All the context within AIL uses the MISP taxonomies and galaxy.
- The insights provided by AIL are often used as complementary information for threat intelligence reports and landscapes.



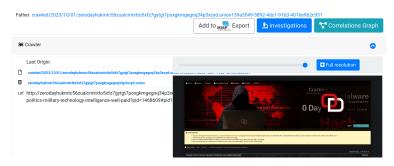
Evaluation/Integration - review search rules on real dataset

- Reviewing matching rules on a large dataset, such as extensive ransomware leaks, can be cumbersome.
- AIL provides a "retro-hunt" functionality to search and evaluate your YARA rules.



Production collecting evidences

- Analysts need to gather evidence, insights, and intelligence to produce intelligence reports.
- AIL can support the creation of reports by offering a straightforward method to organize discoveries for investigation.



Conclusion

- While AIL can be a valuable tool for organisations dealing with data leaks and information breaches, it's important to remember that it is primarily designed for information leak analysis and not for the entire threat intelligence process.
- Organizations should use AIL in conjunction with other threat intelligence solutions and processes to establish a comprehensive threat intelligence strategy.
- AIL is an open-source project, and if you discover modules that could assist in your processes, please let us know or contribute directly.

Links

- AIL project https://github.com/ail-project (all components including feeders and crawler infrastructure)
- AIL framework https://github.com/ail-project/ail-framework (analysis framework)
- Training materials and slide deck https://github.com/ail-project/ail-training

