Tanzu Kubernetes Grid Workload Isolation using NSX-T Micro Segmentation

Authored by Riaz Mohamed & Raghu Pemmaraju

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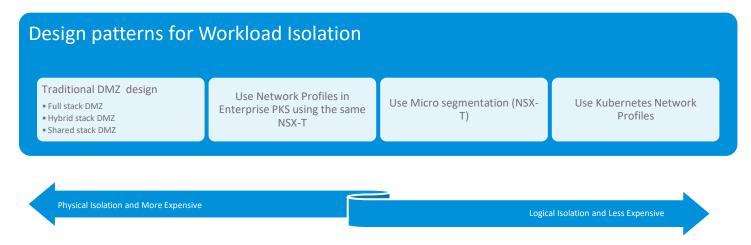


Introduction

Containers provide a great deal of benefits to your development pipeline and support resource isolation but they're not designed with strong network security boundaries or workload isolation. By default, pods are non-isolated; they accept traffic from any source.

Tanzu Kubernetes Grid Integrated (TKGI previously knowns as Enterprise PKS) coupled with VMware NSX-T Data Center (NSX-T), and VMware vSphere provides an agile, software defined platform to deliver cloud-native applications. NSX-T primarily focuses on networking and security for these applications and the features support implementing stronger workload isolation.

In TKGI, workload isolation can be performed by physically isolating workload at the vSphere cluster (group of physical hosts) level or by logically isolating workloads within the TKGI deployed clusters (at cluster or namespace isolation). The following design patterns can be considered for workload isolation.



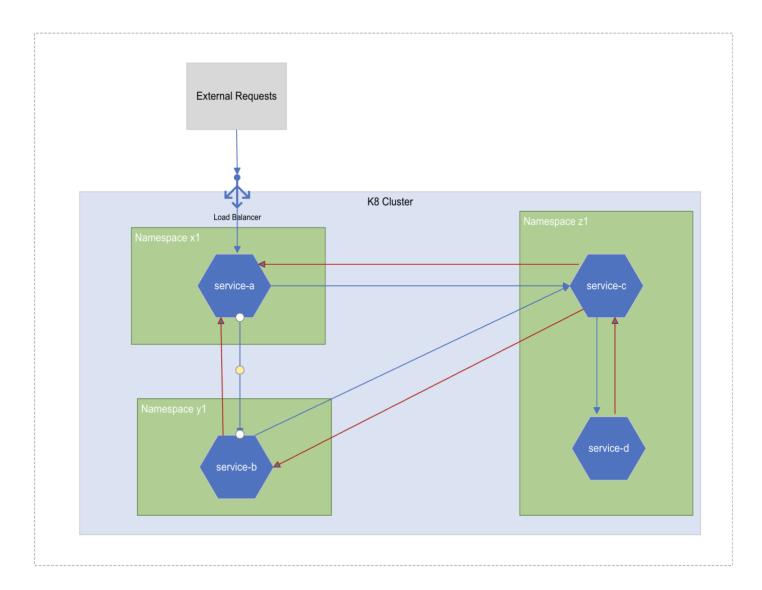
In this document, we focus on how to leverage the micro-segmentation feature within NSX-T to provide workload isolation. NSX-T comes with a distributed firewall that can provide complete control of both North-South Traffic but also East-West Traffic and can isolate workloads, even if they are next to each other. For example, traditional firewalls only isolate network traffic between network VLANs or segments but not within a network segment. But with NSX-T distributed firewall, you can create rules to isolate workload on the same segment and with Kubernetes tags, you can isolate even Kubernetes pod-to-pod communication.

In this document, we take a simple application that has several components or services. These services are required to communicate with each other in a very defined manner. For example, service-a needs to communicate with service-c and service-b but not with any other service. Similarly, service-c needs to communicate with service-d but not with service-a or service-b.



In such a scenario, we look at how to isolate the workload using NSX-T, and also show how this is done dynamically as pods are created and destroyed.

For this guide, consider the following application with few loosely coupled services. Assume that all ingress traffic from outside the cluster comes into service-a. service-a is running in namespace x1 and typically will use ingress controller like Nginx or Contour. service-a routes to service-b or service-c, and service-c might need to talk to service-d. This diagram shows which workload is allowed and not allowed between the services.





Use-case

The k8s cluster has three namespaces (namespace x1, y1 and z1). All ingress into the cluster must be restricted to namespace x1 and pod service-a.

Namespace y1 runs a pod service-b and namespace z1 runs pods service-c and service-d.

Traffic flows

All ingress traffic into the cluster can only be serviced by service-a on namespace x1 which means the following traffic flow rules must be enforced:

Service-b allows traffic from service-a Service-b denies traffic from service-c Service-c allows traffic from service-a and service-b Service-d allows traffic from only service-c Service-c denies traffic from service-d

Assumptions

K8s cluster managed by TKGI (PKS) exists with NSX-T as the networking layer

K8s Resources

In this section, the K8S resources associated with the sample application and services is described.

Pod Definition

The sample application will have a pod definition with 2 containers:

- nginx (to service web requests)
- busybox with curl (container to test service-to-service traffic)

Deployments and Services

service-a, service-b, service-c and service-d are identical and run the above pod definition on their respective namespaces. They run two replicas and are exposed as services svc-service-a, svc-service-b, svc-service-c, and svc-service-d.



K8s Resource Deployments

This section goes through the steps to set up the K8 environment with the deployments in their respective namespaces. At the end of the setup, a test will be performed to verify that the traffic flows between the services.

K8 Deployments

1. Login to k8s cluster

```
pks login -a <pks-api> -u <pksuser> -p <pks-password> -k
e.g.
pks login -a pks.corp.local -u pksadmin -p VMware1! -k
```

2. Get Kubeconfig

```
pks get-kubeconfig <cluster-name> -a <pks-api> -u <pksuser> -p <pks-password> -k e.g.

pks get-kubeconfig ci-cluster -a pks.corp.local -u pksadmin -p VMware1! -k
```

3. Change context

kubectl config use-context ci-cluster

4. Create Namespace x1, y1, z1

```
kubectl create ns x1
kubectl create ns y1
kubectl create ns z1
```



NSX-T & K8s Micro Segmentation

ubuntu@cli-vm:~/dmz\$ namespace/x1 created	kubectl	create	ns	x1
ubuntu@cli-vm:~/dmz\$ ubuntu@cli-vm:~/dmz\$ namespace/y1 created	kubectl	create	ns	y1
ubuntu@cli-vm:~/dmz\$ ubuntu@cli-vm:~/dmz\$	kubectl	create	ns	21
namespace/z1 created				



5. Check if namespace is created

kubectl ge ns

ubuntu@cli-vm:~/d	mz\$ kubed	tl get ns
NAME	STATUS	AGE
default	Active	12d
jenkinso	Active	11d
kube-node-lease	Active	12d
kube-public	Active	12d
kube-system	Active	12d
pks-system	Active	11d
x1	Active	13s
y1	Active	13s
z1	Active	13s

6. Create Deployments & Services

Download the yaml file or copy contents to a local file e.g. micro.yaml. This file declares the K8 resources required. Create the necessary resources in their respective namespaces

https://github.com/riazvm/nsxtk8smicrosegmentation/blob/master/yaml/micro.yaml

kubectl apply -f micro.yaml

```
ubuntu@cli-vm:~/dmz$ vi micro.yaml
ubuntu@cli-vm:~/dmz$ kubectl apply -f micro.yaml
deployment.apps/service-a created
service/svc-service-a created
deployment.apps/service-b created
service/svc-service-b created
deployment.apps/service-c created
service/svc-service-c created
service/svc-service-d created
deployment.apps/service-d created
service/svc-service-d created
service/svc-service-d created
```



7. Check services and pods created in each namespace

kubectl get all -n x1

NAME		REA	ADY STATUS		RESTART	S AGE		
pod/service-a-84965f57d	c-nhbrx	2/2	2 Runnino	7	0	105s		
pod/service-a-84965f57c	c-q72fh	2/2	Running	3	0	105s		
NAME	TYPE		CLUSTER-IP		EXTER	NAL-IP	PORT (S)	AGE
service/svc-service-a	Cluster	IP	10.100.200.	143	<none:< td=""><td>></td><td>80/TCP</td><td>105s</td></none:<>	>	80/TCP	105s
NAME	REA	DY	UP-TO-DATE	A	VAILABLE	AGE		
deployment.apps/service	e-a 2/2	2	2	2		105s		
NAME			DESIRED	CT	URRENT	READY	AGE	
replicaset.apps/service	-a-84965	f57c	2	2		2	105s	

kubectl get all -n y1

```
ubuntu@cli-vm:~/dmz$ kubectl get all -n y1

NAME READY STATUS RESTARTS AGE

pod/service-b-86d8c888c7-6r9kp 2/2 Running 0 2m39s

pod/service-b-86d8c888c7-jpwf9 2/2 Running 0 2m39s

NAME TYPE CLUSTER-IP EXTERNAL-IP PORT(S) AGE

service/svc-service-b ClusterIP 10.100.200.12 <none> 80/TCP 2m39s

NAME READY UP-TO-DATE AVAILABLE AGE
deployment.apps/service-b 2/2 2 2 2m39s

NAME DESIRED CURRENT READY AGE
replicaset.apps/service-b-86d8c888c7 2 2 2 2m39s
```



kubectl get all -n z1

ubuntu@cli-vm:~/dmz\$ ku	bectl get	all -n	z1					
NAME		READY	STATUS	RI	STARTS	AGE		
pod/service-c-5c5fc5c85	7-d9sqm	2/2	Running	0		2m52	3	
pod/service-c-5c5fc5c85	7-jxqbh	2/2	Running	0		2m52	3	
pod/service-d-69f59f4ch	9-f94rs	2/2	Running	0		2m52	3	
pod/service-d-69f59f4cb	9-pkplt	2/2	Running	0		2m52	3	
NAME	TYPE	CLUS	STER-IP		EXTERN	NAL-IP	PORT (S)	AGE
service/svc-service-c	ClusterII	P 10.1	100.200.1	17	<none></none>	>	80/TCP	2m52s
service/svc-service-d	ClusterI	P 10.1	100.200.2	11	<none></none>	>	80/TCP	2m52s
NAME	READ	Y UP-1	TO-DATE	AVA	LABLE	AGE		
deployment.apps/service	-c 2/2	2		2		2m52s		
deployment.apps/service	-d 2/2	2		2		2m52s	1	
NAME		I	DESIRED	CURI	RENT	READY	AGE	
replicaset.apps/service	-c-5c5fc5	c857 2	2	2		2	2m52s	
replicaset.apps/service	-d-69f59f	4cb9 2	2	2		2	2m52s	

8. Expose service-a as a load-balancer service

kubectl expose deployment service-a \
--name=service-a-lb --port=80 --target-port=8080 --type=LoadBalancer --namespace=x1

```
ubuntu@cli-vm:~/dmz$ kubectl expose deployment service-a \
> --name=service-a-lb --port=80 --target-port=8080 --type=LoadBalancer --namespace=x1
service/service-a-lb exposed
```

9. Check the external URL/IP address assigned to the service (make note of the first IP addres under External-IP).

kubectl get svc -n x1

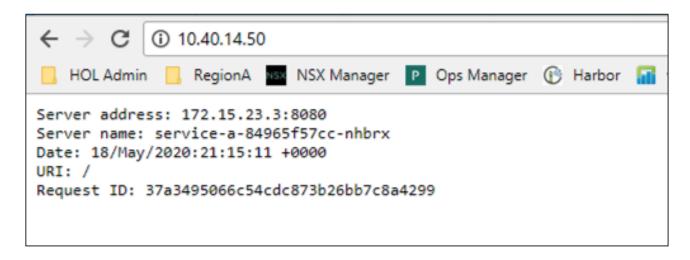
ubuntu@cli-vm:~	/dmz\$ kubectl	get svc -n x1			
NAME	TYPE	CLUSTER-IP	EXTERNAL-IP	PORT (S)	AGE
service-a-lb	LoadBalancer	10.100.200.49	10.40.14.50	80:32650/TCP	12s
svc-service-a	ClusterIP	10.100.200.143	<none></none>	80/TCP	15m



Current Traffic Flow

Traffic flow from external network to k8 cluster.

Open a browser and browse to the external ip from the previous step



service-a can be reached from the external network through the load balancer which is created in NSX-T

service-b, service-c and service-d are not exposed and hence are not reachable from the external network.

Traffic flow between pods

We will be using the busy-box container within service-a pod and use curl to check for responses between service.

Source Service – service-a (namespace x1) Target Service – service-b (namespace y1)

1. Get pods running on namespace x1

kubectl get po -n x1



ubuntu@cli-vm:~/dmz\$ kubectl	get po	-n x1		
NAME	READY	STATUS	RESTARTS	AGE
service-a-84965f57cc-nhbrx	2/2	Running	0	31m
service-a-84965f57cc-q72fh	2/2	Running	0	31m
ubuntu@cli-vm:~/dmz\$				

2. Get service name for service-b running on namespace y1

kubectl get svc -n y1

ubuntu@cli-vm:~	/dmz\$ kubect	l get svc -n y1			
NAME	TYPE	CLUSTER-IP	EXTERNAL-IP	PORT (S)	AGE
svc-service-b	ClusterIP	10.100.200.12	<none></none>	80/TCP	38m

3. Exec into the busybox container running on a service-a pod

```
kubectl exec -n <namespace> <podname> -it -c busybox -- /bin/sh Eg
```

kubectl exec -n x1 service-a-84965f57cc-nhbrx -it -c busybox -- /bin/sh

4. Use curl to reach service-b in namespace y1

```
curl http://svc-service-b.y1
```

NOTE: the service name is prepended by svc in this case, this is defined in the yaml we used to create the K8 resources. The service name is also appended by the namespace.

5. This results in a successful response

```
ubuntu@cli-vm:~/dmz$ kubectl exec -n x1 service-a-84965f57cc-nhbrx -it -c busybox -- /bin/sh /home # curl http://svc-service-b.y1
Server address: 172.15.13.3:8080
Server name: service-b-86d8c888c7-jpwf9
Date: 18/May/2020:21:38:00 +0000
URI: /
Request ID: cfe8d330cac2894b204a1b57082e10cc
```

6. Use the curl command to check the service response of service-d in namespace z1



curl http://svc-service-d.z1

This should be successful as well

```
ubuntu@cli-vm:~/dmz$ kubectl exec -n x1 service-a-84965f57cc-nhbrx -it -c busybox -- /bin/sh
/home # curl http://svc-service-b.y1
Server address: 172.15.13.3:8080
Server name: service-b-86d8c888c7-jpwf9
Date: 18/May/2020:21:38:00 +0000
URI: /
Request ID: cfe8d330cac2894b204a1b57082e10cc
/home # curl http://svc-service-d.z1
Server address: 172.15.9.4:8080
Server name: service-d-69f59f4cb9-f94rs
Date: 18/May/2020:21:40:51 +0000
URI: /
Request ID: 9acb24c07338cadfa53b59c99f042c47
```

At this point all services should be able to communicate to each other. The only traffic allowed from outside the cluster is to service-a via the loadbalancer.

Configure Micro Segmentation with NSX-T

This section goes through the configuration of NSX-T DFW rules that are required to allow, restrict or drop pod to pod traffic.

1. Check labels on the pods



kubectl get pod --show-labels -n x1

Check the labels on the pods in namespace y1 and z1 as well. All tags are defined as app={service name}. e.g.: app=service-a

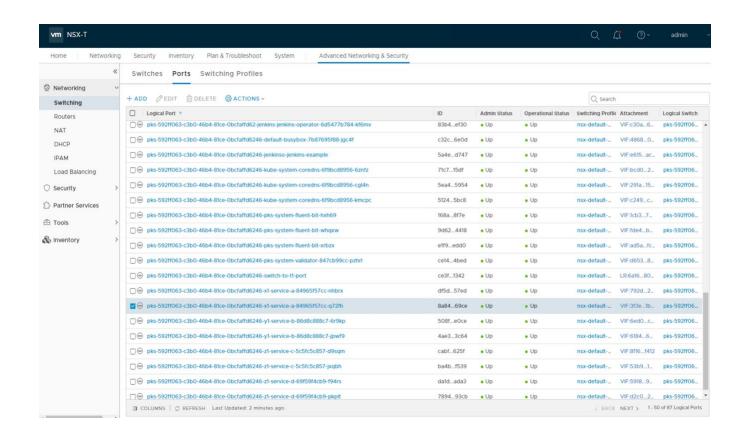
. e.g app-sei vice-a					
ubuntu@cli-vm:~/dmz\$ kubectl	get pod	show-la	bels -n x1		
NAME	READY	STATUS	RESTARTS	AGE	LABELS
service-a-84965f57cc-nhbrx	2/2	Running	0	80m	app=service-a,pod-template-hash=84965f57cc
service-a-84965f57cc-q72fh	2/2	Running	0	80m	app=service-a,pod-template-hash=84965f57cc
ubuntu@cli-vm:~/dmz\$ kubectl	get pod	show-la	bels -n yi		
No resources found.					
ubuntu@cli-vm:~/dmz\$ kubectl	get pod	show-la	bels -n y1		
NAME	READY	STATUS	RESTARTS	AGE	LABELS
service-b-86d8c888c7-6r9kp	2/2	Running	0	81m	app=service-b,pod-template-hash=86d8c888c7
service-b-86d8c888c7-jpwf9	2/2	Running	0	81m	app=service-b,pod-template-hash=86d8c888c7
ubuntu@cli-vm:~/dmz\$ kubectl	get pod	show-la	bels -n z1		
NAME	READY	STATUS	RESTARTS	AGE	LABELS
service-c-5c5fc5c857-d9sqm	2/2	Running	0	81m	app=service-c,pod-template-hash=5c5fc5c857
service-c-5c5fc5c857-jxqbh	2/2	Running	0	81m	app=service-c,pod-template-hash=5c5fc5c857
service-d-69f59f4cb9-f94rs	2/2	Running	0	81m	app=service-d,pod-template-hash=69f59f4cb9
service-d-69f59f4cb9-pkplt	2/2	Running	0	81m	app=service-d,pod-template-hash=69f59f4cb9

2. Check tags for pods in NSX-T

Login to NSX-T Manager and navigate to Advanced Networking & Security > Switching > Ports The pods service-a, service-b, service-c and service-d would have a logical port assigned to them.



NSX-T & K8s Micro Segmentation

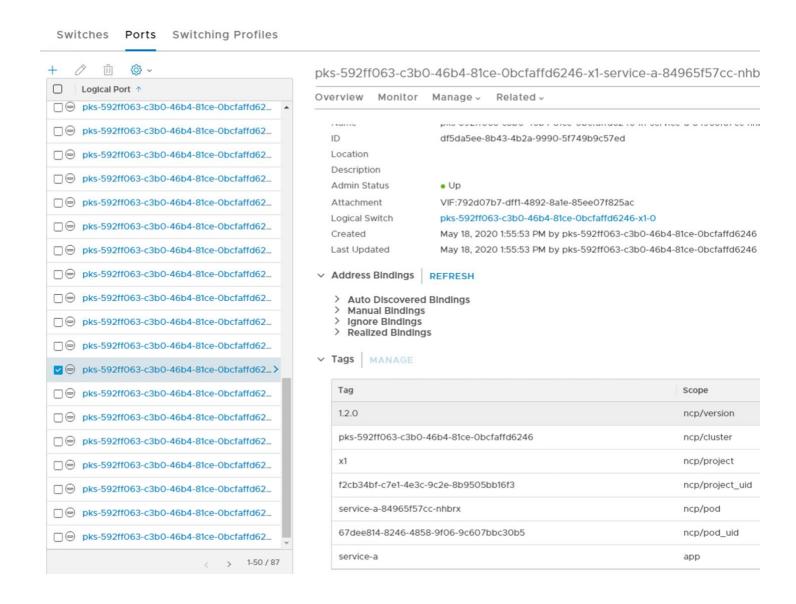




Switches Ports Switching Profiles
+ ADD Ø EDIT □ DELETE ② ACTIONS ~
□ Logical Port ↑
☐ pks-592ff063-c3b0-46b4-81ce-0bcfaffd6246-default-busybox-7b87695f88-jgc4f
pks-592ff063-c3b0-46b4-81ce-0bcfaffd6246-jenkinso-jenkins-example
pks-592ff063-c3b0-46b4-81ce-0bcfaffd6246-kube-system-coredns-6f9bcd8956-6znfz
pks-592ff063-c3b0-46b4-81ce-0bcfaffd6246-kube-system-coredns-6f9bcd8956-cgl4n
pks-592ff063-c3b0-46b4-81ce-0bcfaffd6246-kube-system-coredns-6f9bcd8956-kmcpc
pks-592ff063-c3b0-46b4-81ce-0bcfaffd6246-pks-system-fluent-bit-hxh69
pks-592ff063-c3b0-46b4-81ce-0bcfaffd6246-pks-system-fluent-bit-whqxw
pks-592ff063-c3b0-46b4-81ce-Obcfaffd6246-pks-system-fluent-bit-xrbzx
pks-592ff063-c3b0-46b4-81ce-0bcfaffd6246-pks-system-validator-847cb99cc-pzhrl
pks-592ff063-c3b0-46b4-81ce-0bcfaffd6246-switch-to-t1-port
□
☐
□
pks-592ff063-c3b0-46b4-81ce-0bcfaffd6246-y1-service-b-86d8c888c7-jpwf9
□
□
pks-592ff063-c3b0-46b4-81ce-0bcfaffd6246-z1-service-d-69f59f4cb9-pkplt
□ □ □ pk3-33211003-c350-4054-01ce-05c1a11d0240-21-3etvice-d-0313314cb3-pkpit

From the Logica Ports list, click on one of the logical ports associated with the services we are working with and notice that the tags on NSX-T is the labels defined for the pods in K8s.

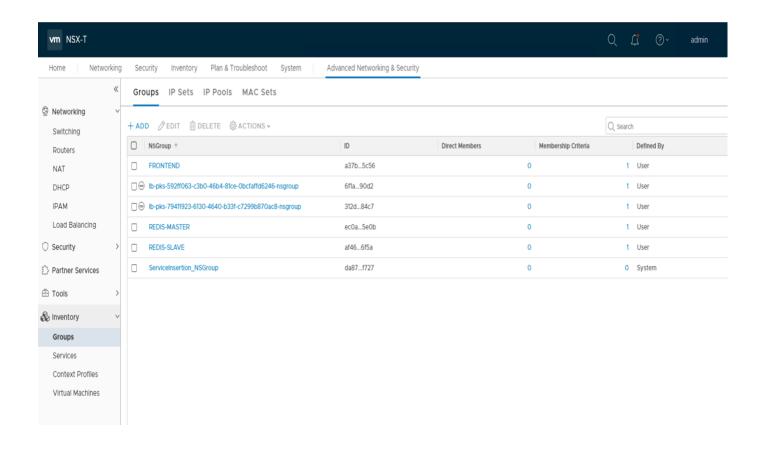




3. Create NSX-T NSGroup (NSX-T Security Group)

Login to NSX-T and Navigate to Advanced Networking & Security à Inventory à Groups

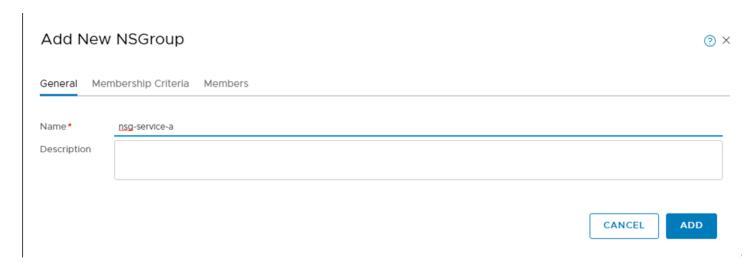




Create a new NSGroup by clicking on ADD

Create an NSGroup for service-a

NSGroup name - nsg-service-a





Click on Membership Critera

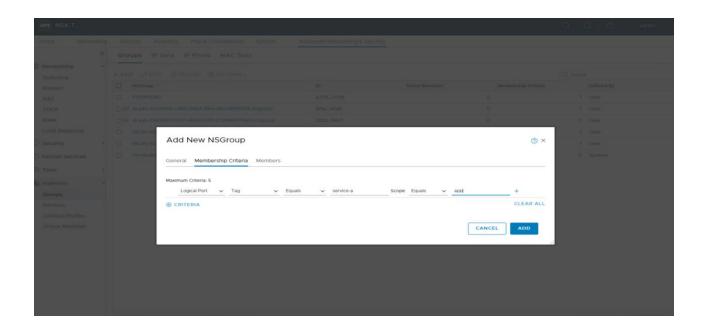
And add the following criteria Logical Port > Tag > Equals > service-a > Scope > equals > app

Note these are the values of the tag retrieved in step 2.

For example, if you defined a Kubernetes tag of "app=service-a" then "service-a" should be used for "Tag" value for the Logical Port and "app" should be used for the "scope".

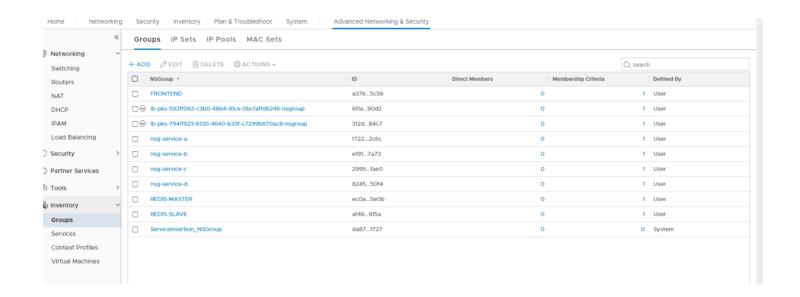
If you want to further refine the membership criteria to include only pods in a namespace, you can use the namespace name as the tag and scope should be defined as "ncp/project". So for this service, the tag will be "x1" and scope "ncp/project".

You can use multiple tags to define your membership criteria.



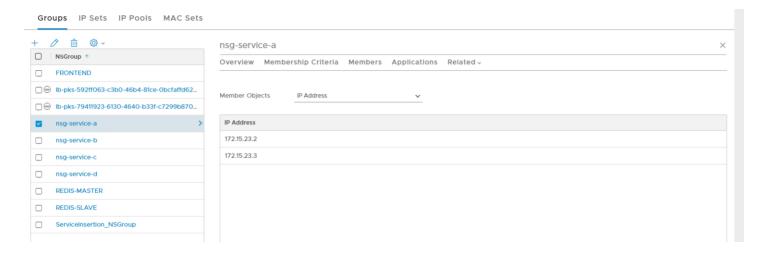
Repeat the same to create NSGroups for service-b, service-c and service-d





4. Check for pool members

Click on the newly created groups and select Members, check IP addresses



Run the following kubectl command from the terminal to verify that the ip-address match the pods ip addresses



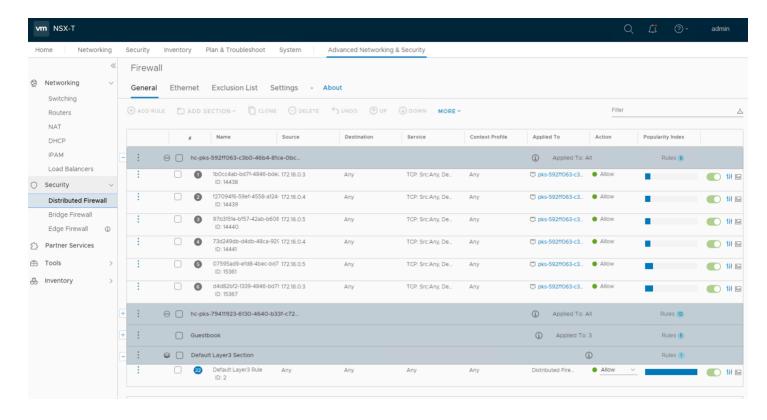
kubectl get po -n x1 -o wide

ubuntu@cli-vm:~/dmz\$ kubectl get po -n x1 -o wide									
NAME	READY	STATUS	RESTARTS	AGE	IP	NODE	NOMINATED NODE	READINESS GATES	
service-a-84965f57cc-nhbrx	2/2	Running	0	127m	172.15.23.3	a60cfb28-f6d8-4022-8dcb-c202aa9335c3	<none></none>	<none></none>	
service-a-84965f57cc-q72fh	2/2	Running	0	127m	172.15.23.2	f9be16c4-7396-41c6-9c97-7b5280f165f0	<none></none>	<none></none>	

Repeat the same for the other NSGroups created

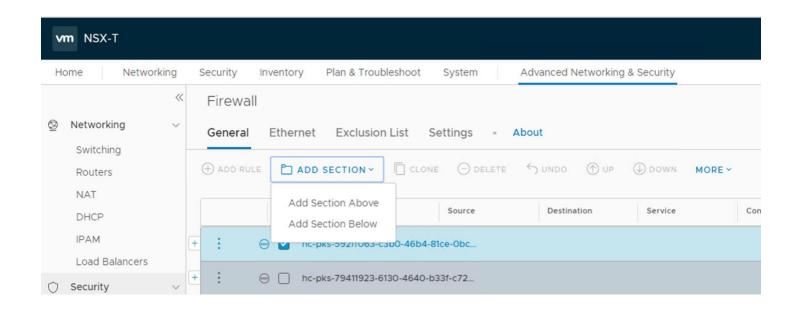
5. Create DFW rules

Login to NSXT and navigate to Advanced Networking & Security > Distributed Firewall



Select the first section listed and navigate to ADD SECTION à Add Section Above





Section Name – PtoPDFW-MicroSegmentation Object Type – NSGroup Select – nsg-service-b, nsg-service-c and nsg-service-d



New Section				×
Add a new section to organize firev departments in separate sections.	vall rules. For exa	mple, yo	ou might want to have rules t	for sales and engineering
Section Name				
Section Properties	Enable TCP			
Applied To	Enable State	eless Fir	ewall (j)	
Section level 'Applied To' ent entities of the same section.	ities mentioned h	ere, will	take precedence over rule	level 'Applied To'
Object Type: NSGroup	~			
Available Objects Q Filter			Selected Objects	
Name			Name	Object Type
(a) nsg-service-a	^		☐ ⑥ nsg-service-b	NSGroup
☐ ⑥ nsg-service-b		\Rightarrow	☐ ⑥ nsg-service-c	NSGroup
nsg-service-c		Θ	☐ ⑥ nsg-service-d	NSGroup
nsg-service-d	_			
	1 - 9 of 9 Objects		Max limit: 128	3 Objects
CREATE NEW NSGROUP				
				OK CANCEL



Select the newly created PtoPDFW-MicroSegmentation segment and click on Add rule

Rule 5: Denies all Traffic to nsg-service-a, nsg-service-b, nsg-service-c and nsg-service-d

ID : DenyAll Source : Any Destination: Any Service: Any

ContextProfile: Any Action : Reject

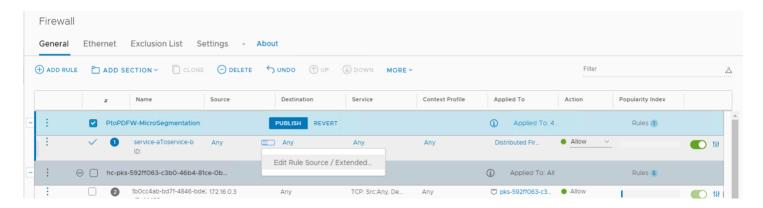
Rule 4: Allow service-a to service-b traffic

ID: service-aToservice-b Source: nsg-service-a Destination: nsg-service-b

Service: Any

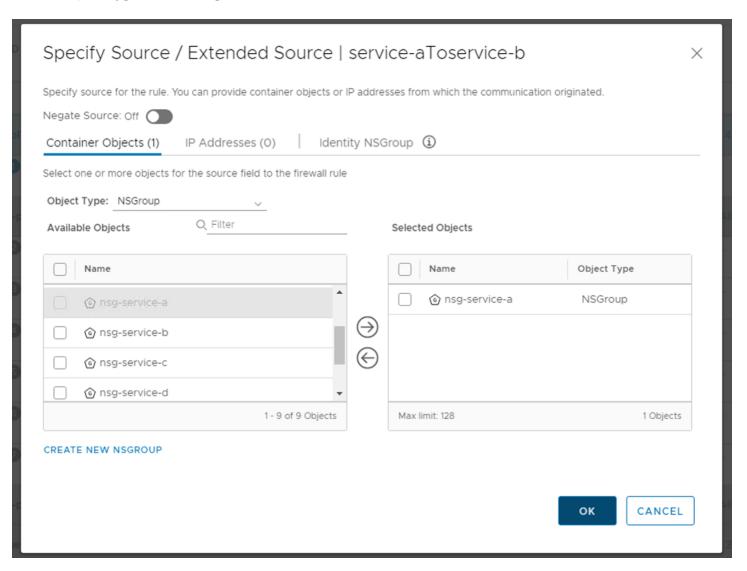
ContextProfile: Any Action : Allow

To select the Source click on the icon next to the source filed and click on Edit Rule Source



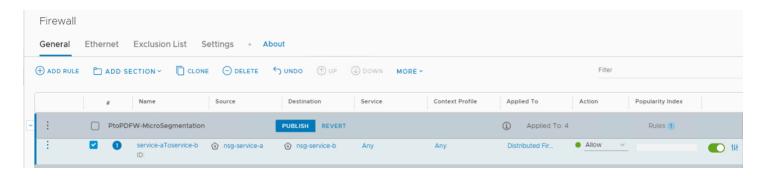


Select Object Type as NSGroup





Similarly select nsg-service-b for destination.



Rule 3: Allow service-a to service-c traffic

ID: service-aToservice-c Source: nsg-service-a Destination: nsg-service-c

Service: Any

ContextProfile: Any Action : Allow

Rule 2: Allow service-b to service-c traffic

ID: service-bToservice-c Source: nsg-service-b Destination: nsg-service-c

Service: Any

ContextProfile: Any

Action: Allow

Rule 1: Allow service-c to service-d traffic

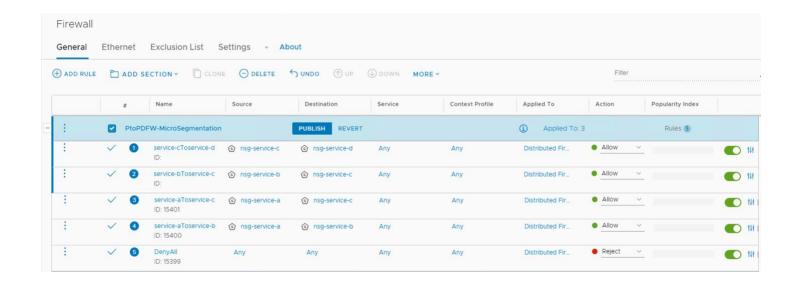
ID: service-cToservice-d Source: nsg-service-c Destination: nsg-service-d

Service: Any

ContextProfile: Any

Action : Allow

mware[®]



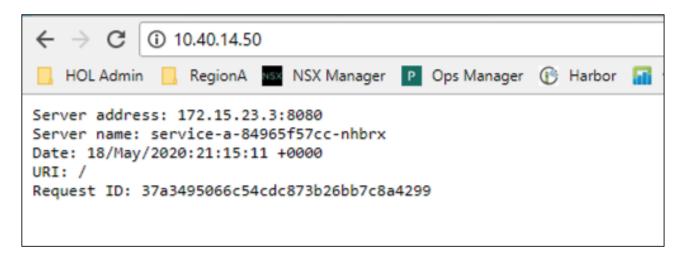
Select PtoPDFW-Microsegmentation and click on Publish

Test Traffic Flow

Traffic flow from external network to k8 cluster.

Open a browser and browse to the external ip from the previous step





service-a can be reached from the external network through the load balancer which is created in NSX-T

service-b, service-c and service-d are not exposed and hence are not reachable from the external network.

Traffic flow between pods

We will be using the busy-box container within service-a pod and use curl to check for responses between service.

Source Pod	Destination Pod	Result
service-a	service-b	Success
service-a	service-c	Success
service-a	service-d	Fail
service-b	service-c	Success
service-b	service-d	Fail

service-c	service-d	Success
service-c	service-b	Fail
service-d	service-c	Fail
service-d	service-b	Fail
service-c	service-a	Fail
service-b	service-a	Fail



1. Get pods running on namespace x1

kubectl get po -n x1

ubuntu@cli-vm:~/dmz\$ kubectl	get po	-n x1		
NAME	READY	STATUS	RESTARTS	AGE
service-a-84965f57cc-nhbrx	2/2	Running	0	31m
service-a-84965f57cc-q72fh	2/2	Running	0	31m
ubuntu@cli-vm:~/dmz\$				

2. Get service name for service-b running on namespace y1

kubectl get svc -n y1

ubuntu@cli-vm:~	/dmz\$ kubect]	l get svc -n y1			
NAME	TYPE	CLUSTER-IP	EXTERNAL-IP	PORT (S)	AGE
svc-service-b	ClusterIP	10.100.200.12	<none></none>	80/TCP	38m

3. Exec into the busybox container running on a service-a pod

kubectl exec -n <namespace> <podname> -it -c busybox -- /bin/sh Eg

kubectl exec -n x1 service-a-84965f57cc-nhbrx -it -c busybox -- /bin/sh

```
ubuntu@cli-vm:~/dmz$ kubectl exec -n x1 service-a-84965f57cc-nhbrx -it -c busybox -- /bin/sh /home # //
```

Use curl to reach service-b in namespace y1

curl http://svc-service-b.y1

NOTE: the service name is prepended by svc in this case, this is defined in the yaml we used to create the K8 resources. The service name is also appended by the namespace.



4. This results in a successful response

```
ubuntu@cli-vm:~/dmz$ kubectl exec -n x1 service-a-84965f57cc-nhbrx -it -c busybox -- /bin/sh /home # curl http://svc-service-b.y1
Server address: 172.15.13.3:8080
Server name: service-b-86d8c888c7-jpwf9
Date: 18/May/2020:21:38:00 +0000
URI: /
Request ID: cfe8d330cac2894b204a1b57082e10cc
```

5. Use the curl command to check the service response of service-c in namespace z1

```
curl http://svc-service-c.z1
```

This should be successful as well

6. Use the curl command to check the service response of service-d in namespace z1

```
curl http://svc-service-d.z1
```

This would fail

```
/home # curl http://svc-service-d.zl
curl: (7) Failed connect to svc-service-d.zl:80; Connection refused
```

Exec into each pod and check connectivity between pods.





