**Repairing VSS Writers**

**Topic**

This article discusses how to attempt to repair failed VSS writers on a protected machine that is running Windows 8 and higher, Windows Server 2012, or higher.

**Environment**

* Windows 8 and higher
* Windows Server 2012 and higher

**Description**

Datto appliances use the Volume Shadow Copy Service, also known as VSS Writers, to run backups. When VSS writers on Windows 8 or Windows Server 2012 fail, it could cause backups to fail. The process to repair VSS Writers usually involves using the VShadow utility, but this tool is not available for the above two operating systems. This article describes an alternative method.

**VSS Writers, Services and Processes**

Below is a chart including the various VSS writers along with the associated process and service.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **VSS Writer** | **Process (.exe)** | **Service** |
| ASR Writer | VSS | Volume Shadow Copy |
| BITS Writer | BITS | Background Intelligent Transfer Service |
| COM+ REGDB Writer | VSS | Volume Shadow Copy |
| DFS Replication Service Writer | DFSR | DFS Replication |
| DHCP Jet Writer | DHCPServer | DHCP Server |
| FRS Writer | NtFrs | File Replication |
| FRSM Writer | srmsvc | File Server Resource Manager |
| IIS Config Writer | AppHostSvc | Application Host Helper Service |
| IIS Metabase Writer | IISADMIN | IIS Admin Service |
| Microsoft Exchange Replica Writer | MSExchangeRepl | Microsoft Exchange Replication Service |
| Microsoft Exchange Writer | MSExchangeIS | Microsoft Exchange Information Store |
| Microsoft Hyper-V VSS Writer | vmms | Hyper-V Virtual Machine Management |
| MSMQ Writer | MSMQ | Message Queuing |
| MSSearch Service Writer | WSearch | Windows Search |
| NTDS | NTDS | Active Directory Domain Services |
| O\_Search VSS Writer | OSearch | Office SharePoint Server Search |
| O\_Search 14 VSS Writer | OSearch14 | SharePoint Server Search 14 |
| Registry Writer | VSS | Volume Shadow Copy |
| Shadow Copy Optimization Writer | VSS | Volume Shadow Copy |
| SMS Writer | SMSSITEVSSWRITER | SMS\_SITE\_VSS\_WRITER |
| SPSearch VSS Writer | SPSearch | Windows SharePoint Services Search |
| SPSearch4 VSS Writer | SPSearch4 | SharePoint Foundation Search V4 |
| SqlServerWriter | SQLWriter | SQL Server VSS Writer |
| System Writer | CryptSvc | Cryptographic Services |
| TermServLicensing | TermServLicensing | Remote Desktop Licensing |
| WIDWriter | WIDWriter | Windows Internal Database VSS Writer |
| WINS Jet Writer | WINS | Windows Internet Name Service (WINS) |
| WMI Writer | Winmgmt | Windows Management Instrumentation |

**Repairing VSS Writers**

The following steps are basic troubleshooting workflows for repairing VSS writers.

1. On the target machine, open an elevated command prompt with administrator privileges.
2. Run the command vssadmin list writers, and make a note of any writers in a *Failed* state.
3. Open services.msc on the machine. Reference the above table, and stop the services for the VSS writers that have failed.
4. Open task manager and hard kill the processes for the related failed VSS writers.
5. Return to services.msc and restart the related services.
6. Run vssadmin list writers again to make sure the VSS writers are now showing as stable.

It is imperative that all VSS writers be in a stable state on the protected machine. If any writers have failed, they can cause backups to fail.

**NOTE:**If following these steps does not repair the writers, even after a full reboot of the production machine, you will need to contact Microsoft, or review their articles in the [Troubleshooting VSS Applications](https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/desktop/vss/event-and-error-handling-under-vss)*(external link)* section of their Knowledge Base. Datto is unable to provide extended support for VSS writers, as they are a proprietary Windows application.

Title

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