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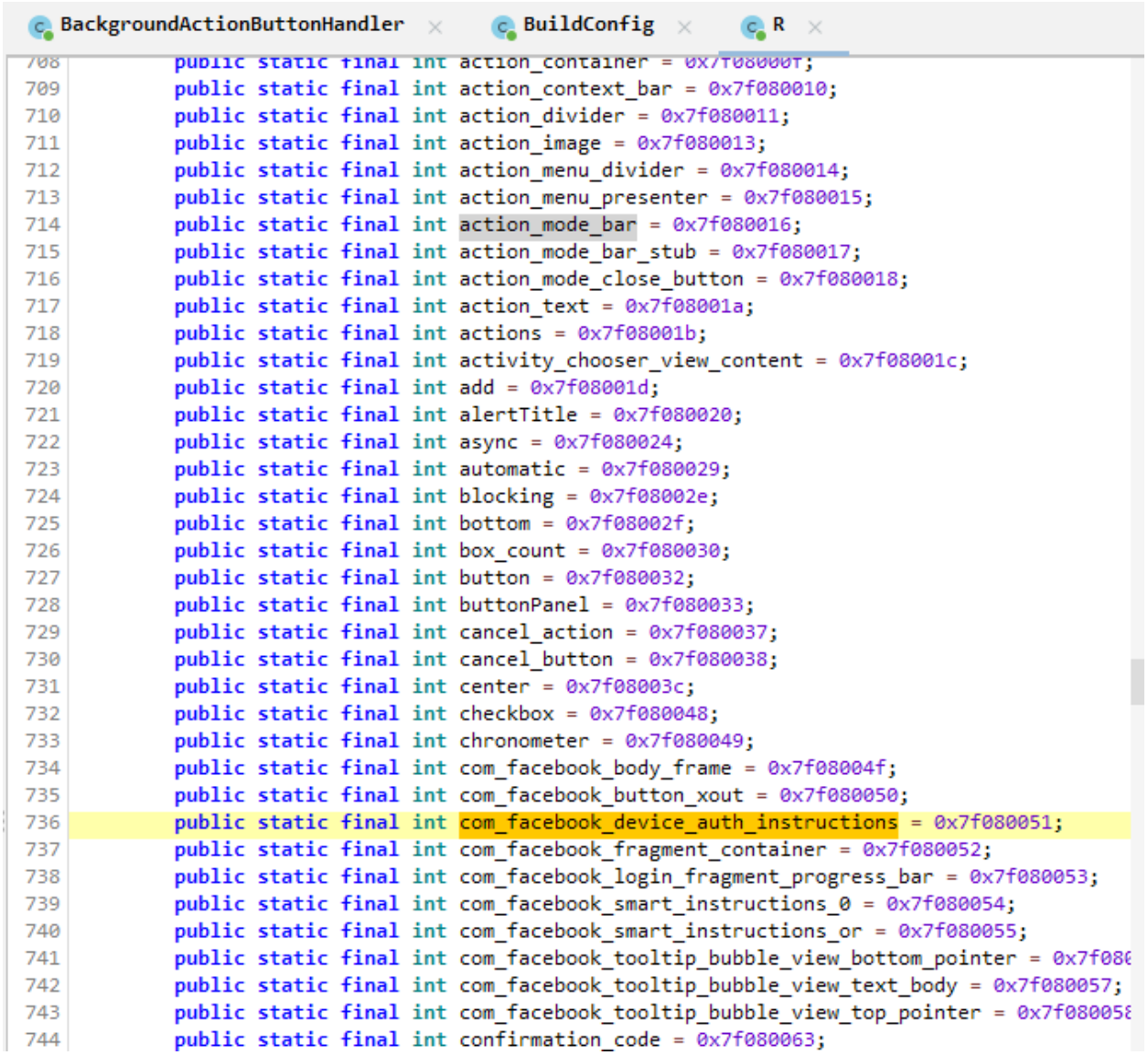
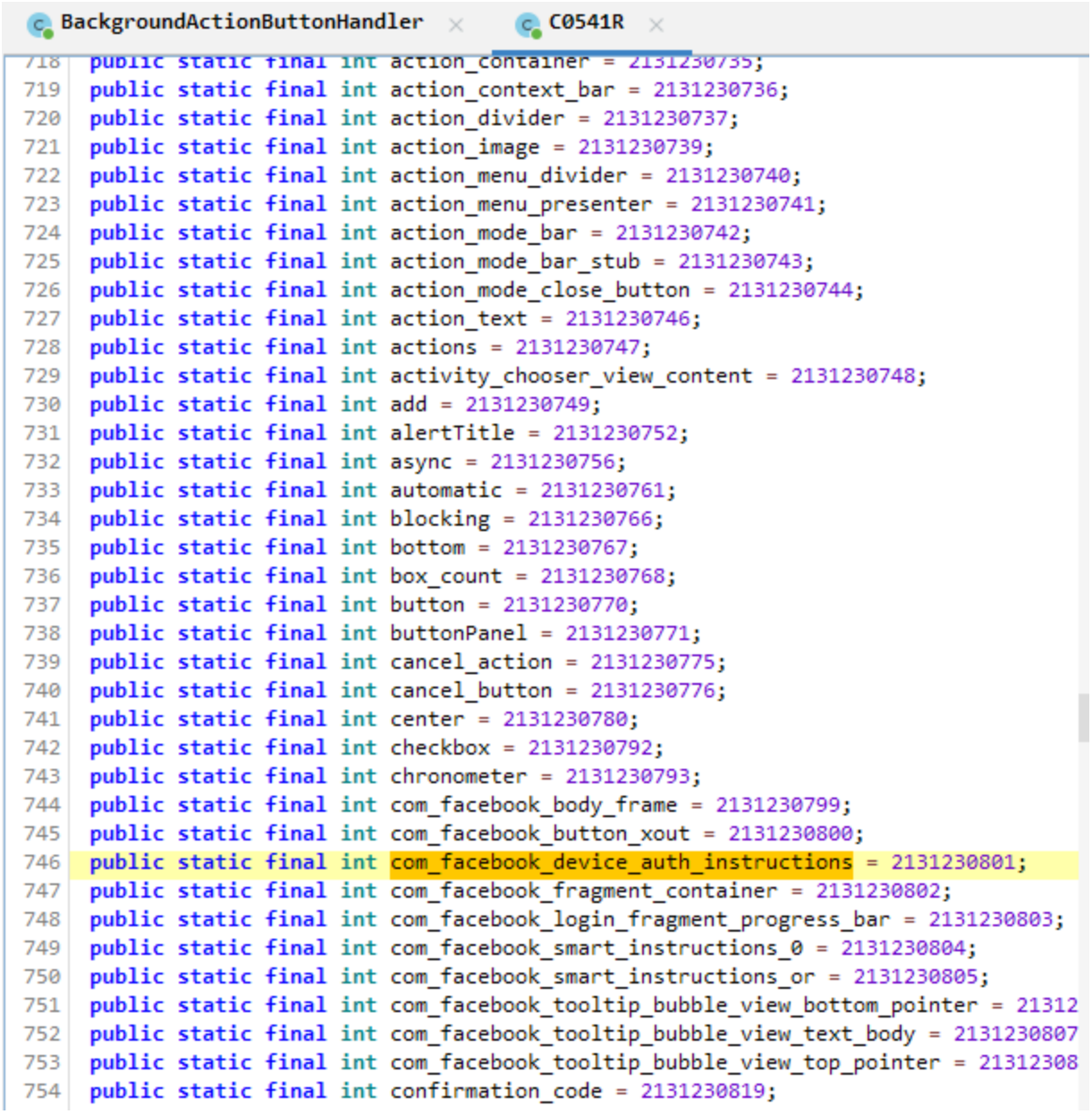
CS 453

Module 9 Assignment

Obfuscation

The Meallogger Android application that I am investigating had several instances of code obfuscation. By using jadx, I was able to identify these occurrences by comparing the original and de-obfuscated versions of the source code. Recorded below are important/significant occurrences of such obfuscation:





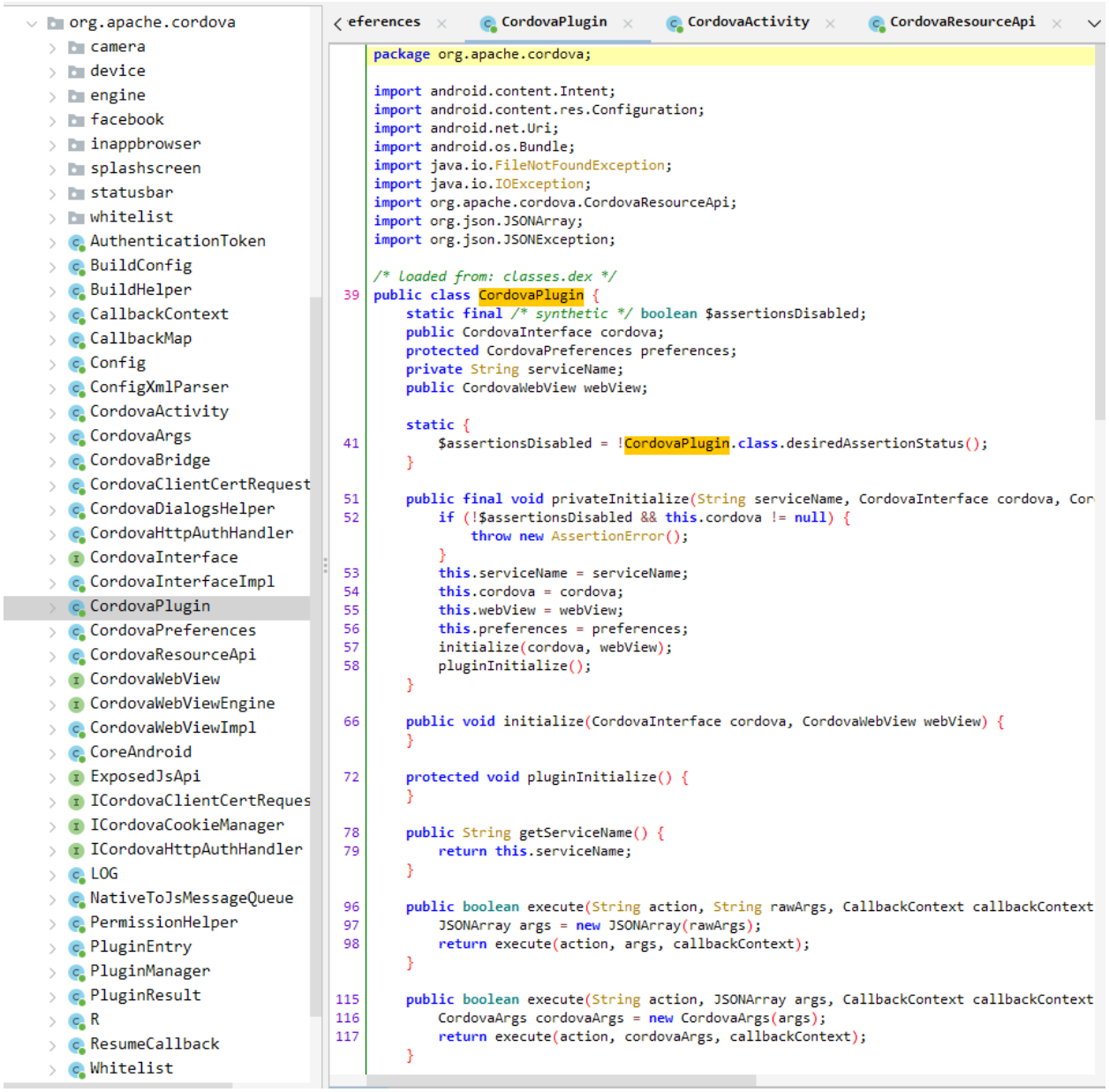
We can see that in the first screenshot, all of the values for each class variable are written in hexadecimal, indicating some amount of encryption. In the second screenshot, after de-obfuscating in jadx, we can see that the previously encrypted values are now shown with their actual values. There are several instances of this found among different “R” files containing the resource IDs for various Android assets. However, outside of this, there are no other obvious instances of obfuscation, such as string renaming or unreadable class names.

Looking more closely at the related MSTG Resilience requirements:

- **MSTG-RESILIENCE-9:** While obfuscation is applied in some capacity to parts of the source code, it is by no means consistent or effective, shown by jadx's ability to easily de-obfuscate these instances.
- **MSTG-RESILIENCE-11:** Similarly, the application's source code is encrypted to an extent, but by no means to a satisfactory degree. While many of the resource IDs are encrypted, many instances of important/sensitive code are easily viewable and accessible by the user, which will be demonstrated later in the document.
- **MSTG-RESILIENCE-12:** Although an obfuscation scheme was present, manual and automated de-obfuscation methods were highly effective against the application's decompiled source code. Overall, the obfuscation can be seen as relatively ineffective.

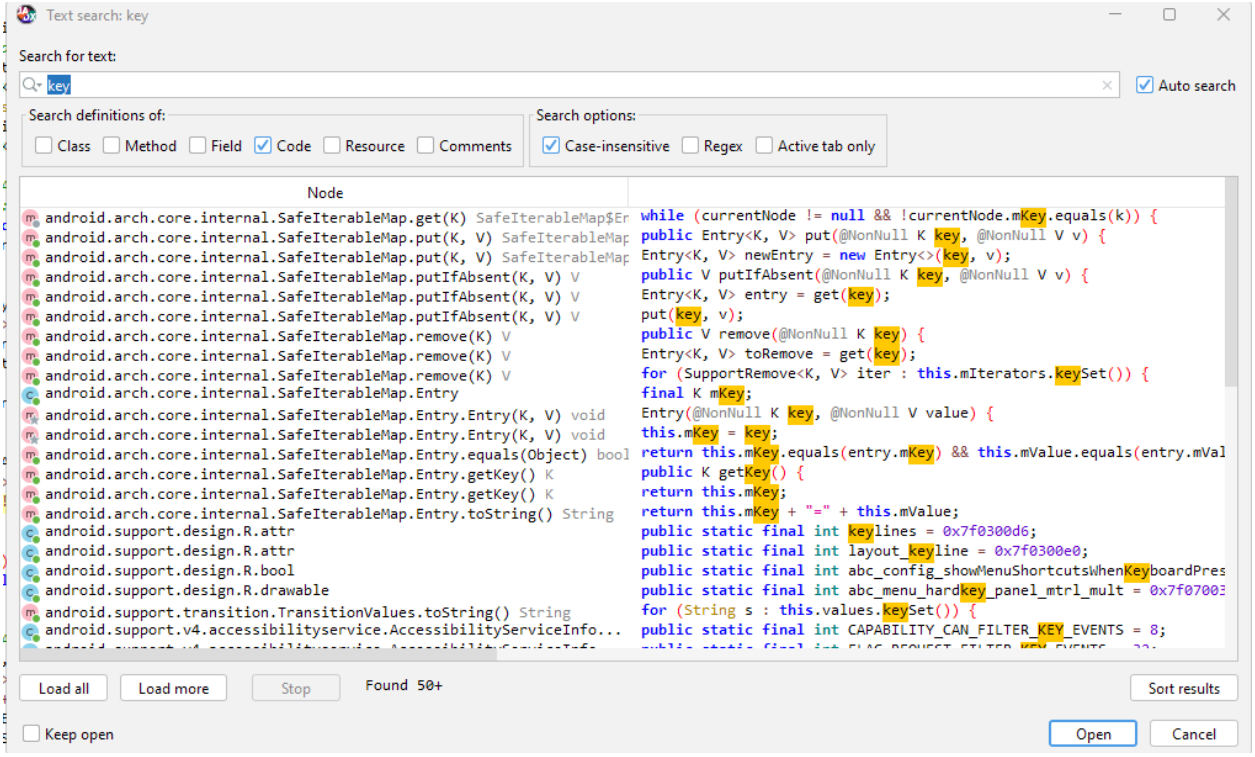
Type of App

By searching for keywords (such as apache, kotlin, js, javascript, etc.) in jadx, I was able to find that the Meallogger application uses apache, specifically cordova. Besides this, however, there were no other clues of a hybrid or third party app. Below is the screenshot showing the code relating to the apache (cordova) third party plugin:



Strings of Interest

By searching for a variety of keywords in jadx, I was able to find several instances of strings of interest, especially relating to permissions and secrets. Below are screenshots of the results with their corresponding search keyword:



"key": There were no significant results for this keyword, as most references related to inner function calls as opposed to the hardcoding of any specific key. However, there were significant results for searching "api key," which is shown below.

```
/* JADX INFO: Access modifiers changed from: private */
public void setUpIntercom() {
    try {
        Context context = this.cordova.getActivity().getApplicationContext();
        CordovaHeaderInterceptor.setCordovaVersion(context, "3.2.2");
        switch (IntercomPushManager.getInstalledModuleType()) {
            case GCM:
                String senderId = this.preferences.getString("intercom-android-sender-id", null);
                if (senderId != null) {
                    IntercomPushManager.cacheSenderId(context, senderId);
                    break;
                }
                break;
        }
        ApplicationInfo app = context.getPackageManager().getApplicationInfo(context.getPackageName(), 128);
        Bundle bundle = app.metaData;
        String apiKey = this.preferences.getString("intercom-android-api-key", bundle.getString("intercom_api_key"));
        String appId = this.preferences.getString("intercom-app-id", bundle.getString("intercom_app_id"));
        Intercom.initialize(this.cordova.getActivity().getApplication(), apiKey, appId);
    } catch (Exception e) {
        Log.e("Intercom-Cordova", "ERROR: Something went wrong when initializing Intercom. Have you set your APP_ID and ANDROID_API_KEY?");
    }
}
```

“api key”: Here, we can see that there is a hardcoded reference to an intercom api key. Although the key itself is not present, it is generally bad practice to have the api key be easily accessible within a public class.

```
private boolean verifySecret(String action, int bridgeSecret) throws IllegalAccessException {
    if (!this.jsMessageQueue.isBridgeEnabled()) {
        if (bridgeSecret == -1) {
            LOG.m16d(LOG_TAG, action + " call made before bridge was enabled.");
        } else {
            LOG.m16d(LOG_TAG, "Ignoring " + action + " from previous page load.");
        }
        return false;
    } else if (this.expectedBridgeSecret < 0 || bridgeSecret != this.expectedBridgeSecret) {
        LOG.m13e(LOG_TAG, "Bridge access attempt with wrong secret token, possibly from malicious code. Disabling exec() bridge!");
        clearBridgeSecret();
        throw new IllegalAccessException();
    } else {
        return true;
    }
}

void clearBridgeSecret() {
    this.expectedBridgeSecret = -1;
}

public boolean isSecretEstablished() {
    return this.expectedBridgeSecret != -1;
}

int generateBridgeSecret() {
    SecureRandom randGen = new SecureRandom();
    this.expectedBridgeSecret = randGen.nextInt(Integer.MAX_VALUE);
    return this.expectedBridgeSecret;
}

public void reset() {
    this.jsMessageQueue.reset();
    clearBridgeSecret();
}
```

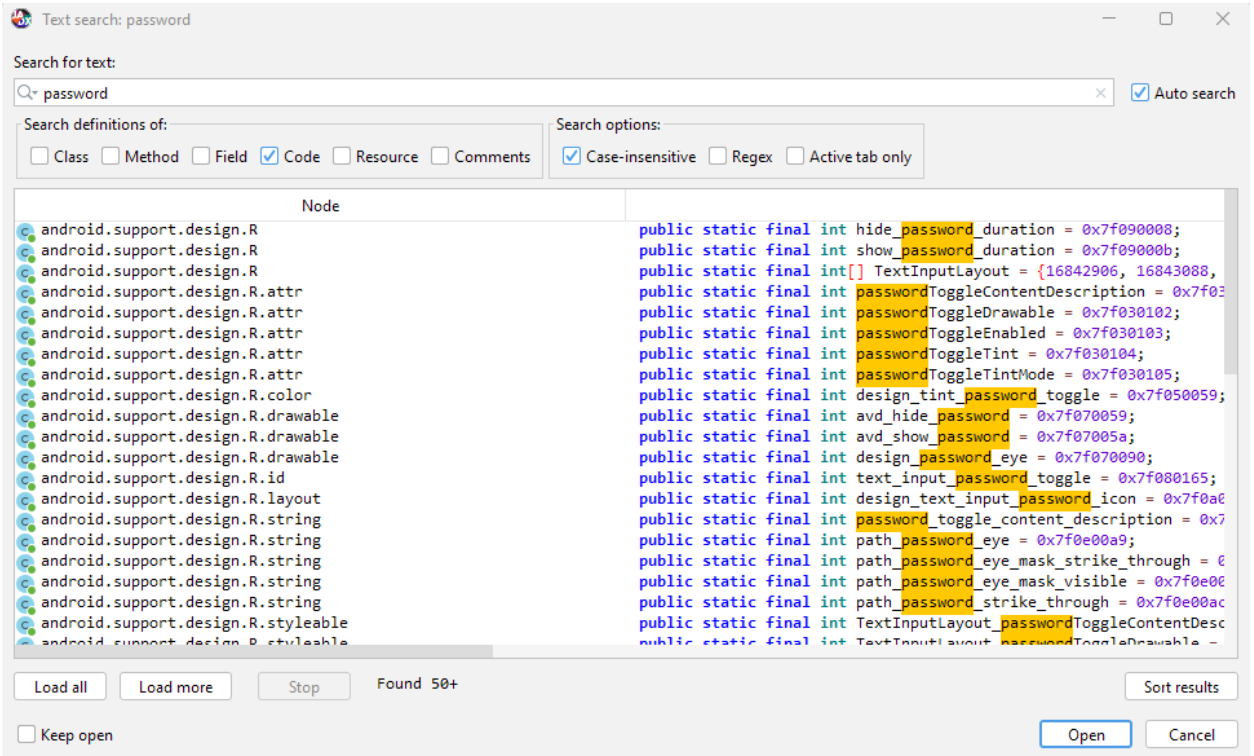
“secret”: There was a very significant result for this keyword, as we can see that a secret is generated using a random function. This is generally considered bad practice and highly unsafe; furthermore, this aligns with MobSF’s findings for the app.

```
LoginBehavior(boolean allowsGetTokenAuth, boolean allowsKatanaAuth, boolean allowsWebViewAuth, boolean allowsDeviceAuth, boolean allowsCustomTabAuth, boolean allowsFacebookLiteAuth) {
    this.allowsGetTokenAuth = allowsGetTokenAuth;
    this.allowsKatanaAuth = allowsKatanaAuth;
    this.allowsWebViewAuth = allowsWebViewAuth;
    this.allowsDeviceAuth = allowsDeviceAuth;
    this.allowsCustomTabAuth = allowsCustomTabAuth;
    this.allowsFacebookLiteAuth = allowsFacebookLiteAuth;
}
```

“token”: For this keyword, we can see that there is a function that accesses tokens for several different web modes, including Katana, webview, and even Facebook. Although this is not necessarily an issue, it seems interesting that the login authentication tokens are easily accessible and locatable.

```java
public static IBinder getBinder(Bundle bundle, String key) {
    if (!sGetIBinderMethodFetched) {
        try {
            sGetIBinderMethod = Bundle.class.getMethod("getIBinder", String.class);
            sGetIBinderMethod.setAccessible(true);
        } catch (NoSuchMethodException e) {
            Log.i(TAG, "Failed to retrieve getIBinder method", e);
        }
        sGetIBinderMethodFetched = true;
    }
    if (sGetIBinderMethod != null) {
        try {
            return (IBinder) sGetIBinderMethod.invoke(bundle, key);
        } catch (IllegalAccessException | IllegalArgumentException | InvocationTargetException e2) {
            Log.i(TAG, "Failed to invoke getIBinder via reflection", e2);
            sGetIBinderMethod = null;
        }
    }
    return null;
}
```

“log”: For this keyword, we can see that the source code does in fact log information in the system, using a public class. Although the effects of this are not easily apparent, logging sensitive information on the system’s memory is bad practice, as similarly noted by MobSF.



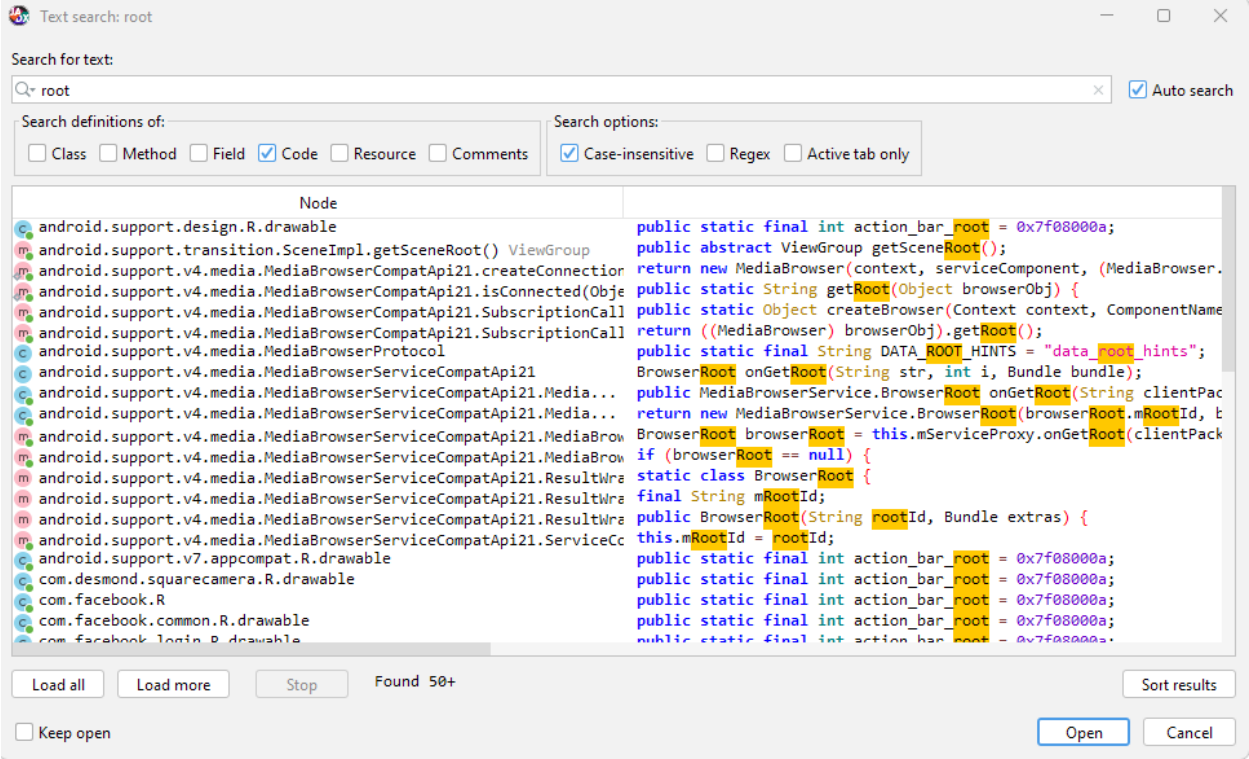
“password”: While there seems to be a number of results at first, most of the outputs for this keyword refer to the actual design and layout of the login page, rather than any hardcoded passwords.

```
<uses-permission android:name="android.permission.INTERNET"/>
<uses-permission android:name="android.permission.WRITE_EXTERNAL_STORAGE"/>
<uses-permission android:name="android.permission.ACCESS_NETWORK_STATE"/>
<uses-feature android:name="android.hardware.camera"/>
<uses-permission android:name="android.permission.CAMERA"/>
<uses-permission android:name="android.permission.READ_EXTERNAL_STORAGE"/>
<uses-permission android:name="android.permission.WAKE_LOCK"/>
<uses-permission android:name="android.permission.VIBRATE"/>
<uses-permission android:name="com.google.android.c2dm.permission.RECEIVE"/>
<uses-permission android:name="com.wellnessfoundry.meallogger.android.permission.C2D_MESSAGE"/>
<uses-permission android:name="com.wellnessfoundry.meallogger.android.permission.PushHandlerActivity"/>
<permission android:name="com.wellnessfoundry.meallogger.android.permission.C2D_MESSAGE" android:protectionLevel="signature"/>
<permission android:name="com.wellnessfoundry.meallogger.android.permission.PushHandlerActivity" android:protectionLevel="signature"/>
<meta-data android:name="android.support.VERSION" android:value="25.3.1"/>
<uses-permission android:name="com.sec.android.provider.badge.permission.READ"/>
<uses-permission android:name="com.sec.android.provider.badge.permission.WRITE"/>
<uses-permission android:name="com.htc.launcher.permission.READ_SETTINGS"/>
<uses-permission android:name="com.htc.launcher.permission.UPDATE_SHORTCUT"/>
<uses-permission android:name="com.sonyericsson.home.permission.BROADCAST_BADGE"/>
<uses-permission android:name="com.sonymobile.home.permission.PROVIDER_INSERT_BADGE"/>
<uses-permission android:name="com.anddoes.launcher.permission.UPDATE_COUNT"/>
<uses-permission android:name="com.majeur.launcher.permission.UPDATE_BADGE"/>
<uses-permission android:name="com.huawei.android.launcher.permission.CHANGE_BADGE"/>
<uses-permission android:name="com.huawei.android.launcher.permission.READ_SETTINGS"/>
<uses-permission android:name="com.huawei.android.launcher.permission.WRITE_SETTINGS"/>
<uses-permission android:name="android.permission.READ_APP_BADGE"/>
<uses-permission android:name="com.oppo.launcher.permission.READ_SETTINGS"/>
<uses-permission android:name="com.oppo.launcher.permission.WRITE_SETTINGS"/>
```

Looking at the AndroidManifest.xml file below, we can see all of the permissions associated with the Meallogger application. Interestingly, the app seems to be able to write to external storage, as well as read settings (like contacts). Furthermore, it is able to detect camera and application activity from the device. For obvious reasons, this is very unsafe, and such suspicions are confirmed by the MobSF report.

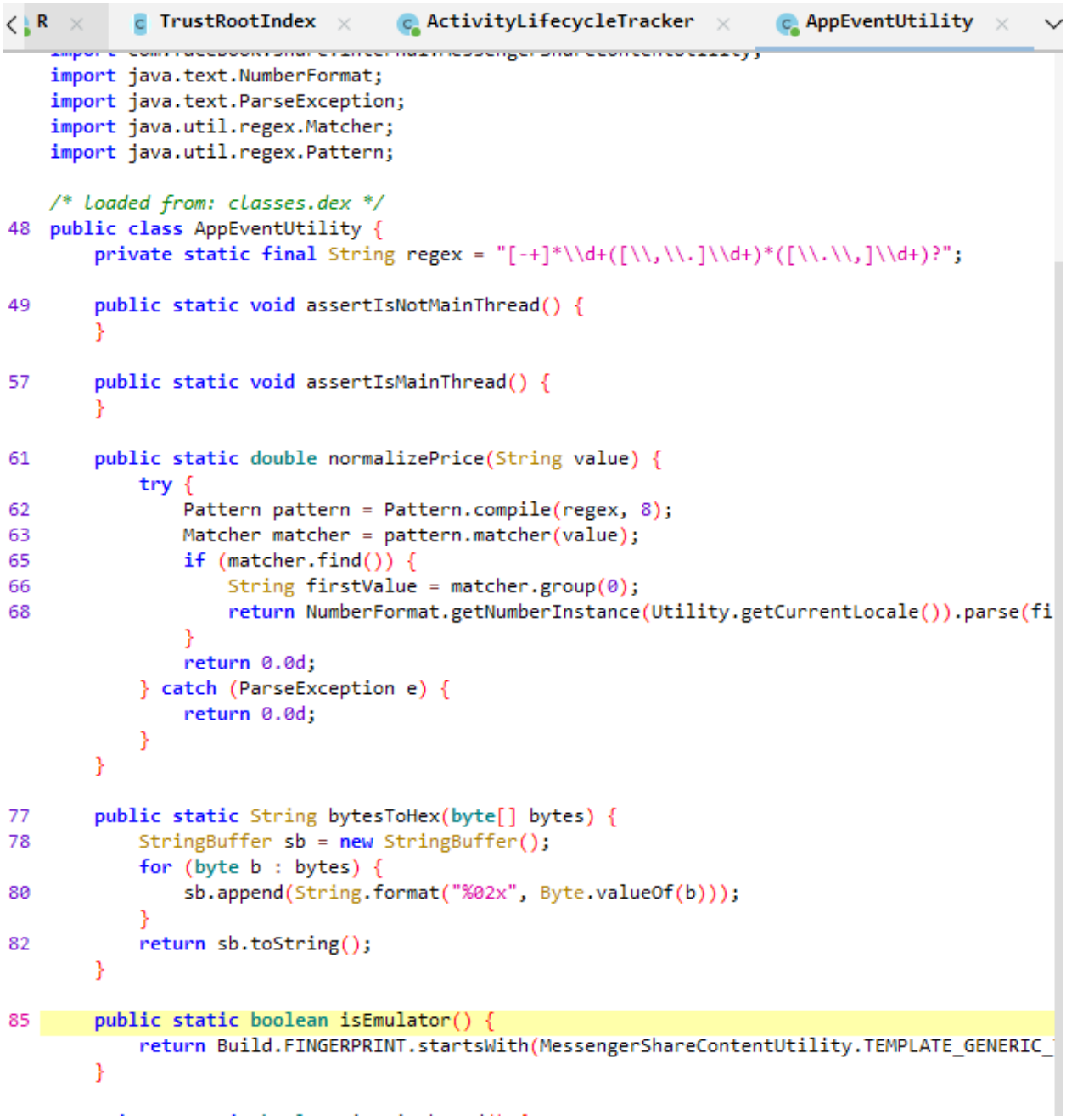
Root Detection

After investigation, the Meallogger application does not seem to have any implementation of root detection. Searching jadx for common root keywords, like superuser or /bin/su, did not return any search results. Searching for “root”, as shown below, also does not return any meaningful results, as most instances refer to the instantiation of a browser rather than a root user. In the same sense, due to the lack of related code, there is no apparent obfuscation for root detection.



Similarly, opening the Meallogger application in a rooted virtual device on Android Studio did not yield any significant results. The application works exactly as intended, and there were no popups or limitations in rooted mode.

Emulator/Fingerprinting



“return” statement:

return

Build.FINGERPRINT.startsWith(MessengerShareContentUtility.TEMPLATE_GENERIC_TYPE) || Build.FINGERPRINT.startsWith("unknown") || Build.MODEL.contains("google_sdk") || Build.MODEL.contains("Emulator") || Build.MODEL.contains("Android SDK built for x86") || Build.MANUFACTURER.contains("Genymotion") || (Build.BRAND.startsWith(MessengerShareContentUtility.TEMPLATE_GENERIC_TYPE) && Build.DEVICE.startsWith(MessengerShareContentUtility.TEMPLATE_GENERIC_TYPE)) || "google_sdk".equals(Build.PRODUCT);

Looking at the screenshots above, we can see that the application clearly has some form of emulator detection, and it also has the ability to fingerprint the device. Closely analyzing the return statement, it is apparent that the application recognizes all of the significant flags (fingerprint, model, manufacturer, brand, etc.) related to device fingerprinting. However, it is

important to note that the application does not have any popups or differing functionality when run in an emulator, as opposed to a normal device.

Looking more closely at the related MSTG Resilience requirements:

- **MSTG-RESILIENCE-5:** While the application certainly detects being run in an emulator, it does not necessarily respond in any unique way apparent to the user. It is possible that discrete background processes are affected by the emulator, but such activity is not easily discernible.
- **MSTG-RESILIENCE-10:** The application follows this standard, implementing device fingerprinting derived from multiple unique properties. As seen by the screenshots above, the application notes each of the significant flags related to fingerprinting (model, manufacturer, brand, etc.)