Boot a Windows Server Domain Controller into Directory Services Restore/Repair Mode

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Summary:

NOTE: The information contained in this article was taken from a Dell knowledge base article.

http://www.dell.com/support/article/us/en/19/SLN155833/EN

This document explains how to boot a Windows Server Domain Controller into Directory Services Restore/Repair Mode

Directory Services Repair Mode (DSRM, known as Directory Services Restore Mode in versions prior to Windows Server 2012) is an operating mode of a Windows Server domain controller (DC) that roughly equates to Safe Mode with Networking, but without Active Directory (AD) running. This mode is useful if there is a problem with the AD database that is preventing a DC from booting into normal mode. DSRM is used to restore AD from a backup.

Details:

To boot a Windows Server 2012 and later DC into DSRM locally:

1. Use one of the methods in this article to boot to the Advanced Boot Options menu.
2. Select **Directory Services Repair Mode** from the menu. The DC will boot into DSRM.

To boot a Windows Server 2012 and later DC into DSRM remotely:
Note: The DC must be running and accessible via Remote Desktop.

1. Establish a Remote Desktop session on the DC.
2. Open an elevated command prompt and type **bcdedit /set safeboot dsrepair**.
3. Reboot the DC. The Remote Desktop session will disconnect.
4. Wait a few minutes, then establish a new Remote Desktop session. The DC will be running in DSRM.
5. To reboot into normal mode, type **bcdedit /deletevalue safeboot** at an elevated command prompt and reboot the DC.

To boot a pre-Windows Server 2012 DC into DSRM locally:

1. Reboot the DC if it is running.
2. Press F8 immediately after the POST process completes to bring up the Advanced Boot Options menu.
3. Select **Directory Services Restore Mode** from the menu. The DC will boot into DSRM.

To boot a pre-Windows Server 2012 DC into DSRM remotely:
Note: The DC must be running and accessible via Remote Desktop.

1. Establish a Remote Desktop session on the DC.
2. **Windows Server 2008 and 2008 R2:** Open an elevated command prompt and type **bcdedit /set safeboot dsrepair**.
   Pre-Windows Server 2008: Run the **msconfig** utility and select **/SAFEBOOT** and **DSREPAIR** in the **BOOT.INI** tab. Click **OK.**
3. Reboot the DC. The Remote Desktop session will disconnect.
4. Wait a few minutes, then establish a new Remote Desktop session. The DC will be running in DSRM.
5. When you wish to reboot into normal mode, perform the following:
   Windows Server 2008 and 2008 R2: Type **bcdedit /deletevalue safeboot** at an elevated command prompt and reboot the DC.
   Pre-Windows Server 2008: Run **msconfig** and uncheck the **/SAFEBOOT** checkbox in the **BOOT.INI** tab. Click **OK** and reboot the DC.

More Information:

https://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/library/cc816897%28v=ws.10%29.aspx

https://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/library/cc794729%28v=ws.10%29.aspx