

Detecting Rclone – An Effective Tool for Exfiltration

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◆ Research ◆ Threat Intelligence ◆ Managed Detection & Response

NCC Group's Cyber Incident Response Team (CIRT) have responded to a large number of ransomware cases where frequently the open source tool [Rclone](#) being used for data exfiltration. Rclone provides an easy and effective way of copying data to an array of cloud storage providers. This blog post builds on the work by others [1][2] and provides additional methods of detection, including [Sigma](#) rules to assist with hunting in your own environment.

Frequently Rclone is used with a MEGA.io account to stage the exfiltrated data before it is made available on leak sites. In the case of Conti ransomware there are strong indications that once the data has been uploaded to MEGA it is being copied to another location using [MEGAsync](#). More recently there has been a move away from solely using cloud storage providers and instead VPS hosting is being used as a destination for data exfiltration.

Internal file servers with unfiltered Internet access are common targets and frequently Rclone is left to run for a period of time spanning multiple hours, which provides the actor enough time to exfiltrate a large volume of data. In all cases observed so far, data exfiltration has taken place long before the ransomware is deployed, often days in advance.

Rclone requires a configuration to be created before it can connect to MEGA (or other cloud storage provider) which can be done in one of two ways:


On the command line:



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Sigma Rules


The following Sigma rules has been created to aid in the detection of Rclone.

Rclone Execution via Command Line or PowerShell	This rule detects the execution of Rclone.
Rclone config file creation	This Sigma rule will detect the creation of the Rclone configuration file. The Sysmon configuration must include the following for the FileCreate rule group.
DNS Query MEGA. Domain	

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