

# **BRNO UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY**

VYSOKÉ UČENÍ TECHNICKÉ V BRNĚ

FACULTY OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY FAKULTA INFORMAČNÍCH TECHNOLOGIÍ

**DEPARTMENT OF INTELLIGENT SYSTEMS**ÚSTAV INTELIGENTNÍCH SYSTÉMŮ

# EXTENDING AUDIT2ALLOW TO PROVIDE MORE RESTRICTIVE SOLUTIONS

ROZŠÍŘENÍ NÁSTROJE AUDIT2ALLOW PRO POSKYTOVÁNÍ VÍCE OMEZUJÍCÍCH ŘEŠENÍ

**BACHELOR'S THESIS** 

**BAKALÁŘSKÁ PRÁCE** 

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# Zadání bakalářské práce

Řešitel:

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Obor:

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Téma:

Rozšíření nástroje audit2allow pro poskytování více omezujících řešení

**Extending audit2allow to Provide More Restrictive Solutions** 

Kategorie: Operační systémy

## Pokyny:

1. Nastudujte technologii SELinux. Nastudujte projekt audit2allow. Seznamte se s existujícími bezpečnostními politikami operačních systémů Fedora a RHEL.

- 2. Analyzujte současné problémy s méně omezujícími návrhy úprav bezpečnostní politiky poskytované nástrojem audit2allow. Navrhněte rozšíření audit2allow, které bude podporovat více omezující rozšíření bezpečnostní politiky SELinux (např. úprava pouze nekritických částí politiky, úprava politiky na základě hodnot argumentů systémových volání, úprava politiky pouze pro vybraný přístup k souborovému systému).
- 3. Implementujte vybraná rozšíření bezpečnostních politik v nástroji audit2allow.
- 4. Ověřte funkcionalitu řešení na základě umělé testovací sady.

#### Literatura:

 Vermeulen, Sven. Selinux System Administration: Ward Off Traditional Security Permissions and Effectively Secure Your Linuxs Systems with Selinux. second ed. Birmingham, UK: Packt Publishing, 2016.

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# Abstract

The thesis analyzes the role of the audit2allow utility in troubleshooting Security-Enhanced Linux denials and proposes extensions that will provide more restrictive and more secure solutions to the user. In the first part, basic concepts of SELinux are explained. The second part contains analysis of situations when audit2allow provides ineffective and insecure solutions. The third part describes implementation of chosen extensions to audit2allow that provide more restrictive and secure solutions. The last part describes testing of these extensions.

# Abstrakt

Bakalářská práce rozebírá roli nástroje audit2allow při řešení zamítnutí přístupu systémem Security-Enhanced Linux a navrhuje rozšíření nástroje tak, aby poskytoval více omezující a bezpečnější řešení uživateli. První část popisuje základní koncepty systému SELinux. Druhá část obsahuje analýzu situací, kdy nástroj audit2allow poskytuje řešení, která jsou neefektivní a potenciálně nebezpečná. Třetí část popisuje implementaci vybraných rozšíření, která poskytují více omezující a bezpečnější řešení. Poslední část popisuje testování těchto rozšíření.

# Keywords

SELinux, audit2allow, security, mandatory access control, security policy

# Klíčová slova

SELinux, audit2allow, bezpečnost, mandatorní řízení přístupu, bezpečnostní politika

# Reference

ŽÁRSKÝ, Jan. Extending audit2allow to Provide More Restrictive Solutions. Brno, 2018. Bachelor's thesis. Brno University of Technology, Faculty of Information Technology. Supervisor Ing. Aleš Smrčka, Ph.D.

# Rozšířený abstrakt

Bakalářská práce se věnuje systému Security-Enhanced Linux, konkrétně nástroji audit2allow, který analyzuje zprávy o zamítnutí přístupu a převádí je na pravidla bezpečnostní politiky udělující oprávnění, která byla původně zamítnuta. Cílem práce je analyzovat situace, ve kterých nástroj audit2allow poskytuje řešení, která udělují zbytečně velké množství oprávnění určitým procesům.

Kapitola 2 představuje SELinux a nástroj audit2allow. Práce představuje účel SELinuxu a přístupy, na kterých je založen, jako je mandatorní řízení přístupu (mandatory access control, MAC), řízení přístupu založené na rolích (role-based access control, RBAC) a vynucení typu (type enforcement, TE). Základní příkazy bezpečnostní politiky jsou představeny, zejména příkazy udělující oprávnění, jelikož jsou výstupem nástroje audit2allow. Pozornost je věnována způsobu, jakým získávají soubory svůj bezpečnostní kontext a jakých situacích můžou nabýt jiného, než výchozího kontextu. Nástroj audit2allow je podrobně popsán, jeho účel a schopnosti, implementační detaily.

Kapitola 3 analyzuje situace, kdy audit2allow poskytuje řešení, která jsou neefektivní a potenciálně nebezpečná. Nástroj audit2allow nerozeznává tzv. rozšířená oprávnění, která umožňují granulárnějsí způsob přidělování oprávnění, například dokáží přidělit procesu oprávnění volat jen některá ioctl systémová volání. Práce rozebírá možnost implementace podpory pro rozšířená oprávnění. Nástroj audit2allow spoléhá při analýze zamítnutí přístupu na to, že objekty, ke kterým byl přístup zamítnut, měly správný bezpečnostní kontext. Práce popisuje, jak by měl nástroj audit2allow detekovat objekty (konkrétně soubory a síťové porty, uzly a rozhraní), které mají špatný bezpečnostní kontext.

Kapitola 4 popisuje

# Extending audit2allow to Provide More Restrictive Solutions

# Declaration

I hereby declare that this bachelor's thesis was prepared as an original author's work under the supervision of Ing. Aleš Smrčka, Ph.D. The supplementary information was provided by Mgr. Miloš Malík, Petr Lautrbach, Bc. Lukáš Vrabec and Ing. Vít Mojžíš. All the relevant information sources, which were used during preparation of this thesis, are properly cited and included in the list of references.

Jan Žárský April 29, 2018

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# Contents

1	Intr	roducti	on	3				
2	Sec	Security-Enhanced Linux and audit2allow						
	2.1	Securi	ty-Enhanced Linux	4				
		2.1.1	Purpose of SELinux	4				
		2.1.2	SELinux Components	4				
	2.2	Basic	Concepts	6				
		2.2.1	Subjects and Objects	6				
		2.2.2	Mandatory Access Control	7				
		2.2.3	SELinux and MAC Checks	7				
		2.2.4	SELinux Users	7				
		2.2.5	Role-Based Access Control	8				
		2.2.6	Type Enforcement	8				
		2.2.7	Multi-Level and Multi-Category Security	9				
		2.2.8	SELinux Security Context	9				
		2.2.9	Object Classes	10				
		2.2.10	Labeling Subjects and Objects	11				
		2.2.11		11				
		2.2.12	SELinux Modes of Operation	12				
	2.3		ux Policy	12				
		2.3.1	User, Role and Type Statements	13				
		2.3.2	Access Vector Rules	15				
		2.3.3	Extended Permission Access Vector Rules	16				
		2.3.4	Policy Modules	17				
		2.3.5	Conditional Policy	17				
		2.3.6	Labeling Network Objects	18				
	2.4	File C	ontexts	19				
		2.4.1	Temporary Changes	19				
		2.4.2	Type Transition	19				
		2.4.3	File Context Configuration Files	20				
		2.4.4	Building File Context Configuration Files	20				
		2.4.5	Changing File Context Configuration Files	21				
	2.5	Auditi	ng Security Events	21				
		2.5.1	Auditing SELinux Denials	22				
	2.6	Troub	leshooting SELinux	22				
	2.7		udit2allow Utility	22				
			Purpose of audit?allow	22				

В	Mai R 1		eam Renository	<b>4</b> 0			
			or Enclosed Memory Media				
			of Enclosed Memory Media	4			
		graphy		43			
6	Con	clusio		42			
		5.2.3	Integration Tests of File Contexts Checks	4			
		5.2.2	Testing policygen Module	4			
	J. <b>_</b>	5.2.1	Testing audit.py Module	4			
	5.2		g Implementation of File Contexts Checks	4			
		5.1.6	Integration Tests of Extended Permissions	4			
		5.1.4 $5.1.5$	Testing refpolicy.py Module	4			
		5.1.3 5.1.4	Testing access.py Module	3			
		5.1.2	Testing audit.py Module	3			
		5.1.1	Testing audit2allow Script	3			
	5.1		g Extended Permissions Implementation	3			
5	Functional Testing						
	_			3			
		4.2.2	Checking Default Context	3			
		4.2.1	Parsing File Path	3			
	4.2		peled Files	3			
		4.1.4	Generating Extended Permission AV Rules	3			
		4.1.2 $4.1.3$	Representation of Extended Permission AV Rules	3			
		4.1.1 $4.1.2$	Parsing AVC Denial Messages	3			
	4.1		ded Permissions	3			
4	_		tation	3			
	_						
		3.3.3	Network Interfaces				
		3.3.2	Network Nodes				
		3.3.1	Network Ports	٤			
	3.3		ng Network Ports, Nodes, and Interfaces	•			
		3.2.3	Improving audit2allow	٠			
		3.2.2	Solving Problems With Mislabeled Files	٠			
	0.2	3.2.1	AVC Denial Messages Caused by Mislabeled Files	٠			
	3.2		peled Files	9			
		3.1.1	Generating Extended Permission AV Rules in audit2allow	3			
	J.1	3.1.1	AVC Denials Caused by Extended Permission AV Rules	2			
3	<b>Ana</b> 3.1	llysis Extend	ded Permission Access Vector Rules	2			
n	<b>A</b>	1		0			
		2.7.5	Implementation of audit2allow	2			
		2.7.4	How Does audit2allow Work	2			
		2.7.3	Command-Line Options	2			
		2.7.2	Basic Mode of Operation	2			

B.2	Fedora packages	46
В.3		46

# Chapter 1

# Introduction

Security-Enhanced Linux (SELinux) is a mandatory access control mechanism used in Linux distributions. It extends the traditional file permissions using a security policy that cannot be overridden by users. The audit2allow utility is one of several tools used by system administrators to troubleshoot SELinux denials. Security policy developers use audit2allow to create a basis for security policy modules for their products. The audit2allow utility analyzes SELinux denials and generates policy rules that can be loaded into the security policy to allow the operations that were previously denied before.

In certain situations, the audit2allow utility fails to provide effective and secure solution. The utility was designed to solve problems caused by missing rules in the security policy, but users often use audit2allow to solve problems that should not be solved by adding new rules to the policy. As a result, users end up with policy rules that give processes too much permissions, making whole system more vulnerable.

In other situations, the audit2allow utility provides nonfunctional solutions because it is not aware of recently added features of SELinux. There are new policy statements that provide more granular control over given permissions. The audit2allow utility is unable to detect that the denial was caused by these statement and fails to provide working solution. Security policy developers cannot use the audit2allow utility to generate these statements.

The users, not familiar with SELinux, cannot recognize limitations of the audit2allow utility. They either fail to solve the problem or end up with workaround that is potentionally unsecure. This thesis aims to analyze different causes of SELinux denials and evaluate the quality of solutions provided by the audit2allow utility. Situations that are best resolved using other tools should be detected by audit2allow and the user should be warned. Support for new SELinux features should be added to audit2allow. As a part of thesis, two new features were implemented.

The second chapter of the thesis presents Security-Enhanced Linux, introduces SELinux policy language, describes auditing of security events, and provides detailed description of the audit2allow utility. The third chapter analyzes situations where the audit2allow utility generates nonfunctional or unsecure solutions. The fourth chapter goes through implementation details of selected improvements to audit2allow. The fifth one describes unit and integration tests of implemented improvements to audit2allow.

# Chapter 2

# Security-Enhanced Linux and audit2allow

This chapter describes basic concepts of Security-Enhanced Linux, introduces the SELinux security policy language, provides overview of the Linux Audit System, and describes in detail the audit2allow utility.

# 2.1 Security-Enhanced Linux

Security-Enhanced Linux (SELinux) is a mandatory access control mechanism that consists of kernel modifications and user-space tools and is a part of several Linux distributions.

## 2.1.1 Purpose of SELinux

Without SELinux, the operating system relies on traditinal access control methods such as file permissions. Users can grant insecure file permissions to others or gain access to the files that they do not need [10]:

- Users can reveal sensitive information by setting world readable permissions on their files. For example, they can set read permission for everyone on SSH keys in the ~/.ssh/ directory.
- Processes can change security properties. For example, a mail client can make the user's mail readable by other users.
- Processes inherit the user's rights. For example, every application, even though it may be compromised, is able to read all user's files.

SELinux enforces a security policy that cannot be overriden by users. Application are allowed to perform only actions they need for normal operation, everything else is denied by default. Applications do not need to be aware of SELinux. When an action is denied, it is reported via an "access denied" error code to the application [4].

#### 2.1.2 SELinux Components

SELinux is composed of kernel and userspace parts [14, pp. 19–22]. The main components of SELinux, are shown in figure 2.1.



Figure 2.1: Main SELinux components.

- **libsepol and libsemanage** Libraries for working with SELinux binary policy and policy infrastructure. The libsepol library is used for example for loading policy modules into the active security policy. The libsemanage library is used for example for assigning security contexts to TCP or UDP ports.
- **libselinux** API for implementing SELinux-aware applications. For example, SELinux-aware window manager can use the libselinux library to compute security contexts of its objects.
- checkmodule, semodule\_package, semodule Utilities that compile SELinux policy and load it into the kernel.
- **semanage** Utility for configuring various parts of policy, for example setting contexts for TCP and UDP ports. It uses mainly the libsemanage library.
- restorecon and setfiles Utilities for restoring default context of files (see section 2.4).
- **policycoreutils** Various utilities for working with and troubleshooting of SELinux, for example the audit2allow utility described in section 2.7.
- Modified Linux Commands Standard Linux commands such as ls or ps, modified to support SELinux.
- **SELinux and proc filesystem** Userspace tools communicate with the kernel security server via the /proc and /sys/fs/selinux filesystem.
- **Security Server** Makes security decisions. It is embedded in the kernel and it obtains the security policy via userspace tools. Security server does not enforce the decision, it only states whether the operation is allowed or not.

Access Vector Cache Caches security decision made by security server.

Linux Security Module Hooks Call SELinux Security Server.

# 2.2 Basic Concepts

This section defines basic terms related to SELinux, such as mandatory access control, type enforcement, multi-level and multi-category security, security context, and others.

## 2.2.1 Subjects and Objects

There are two basic entities in SELinux [14, p. 29]:

- **Subject** is an entity that causes information to flow among objects or changes the system state. Within SELinux, a subject is an active process that can access objects. A process can also be an object, for example when a process is sending signal to another process, the process receiving the signal is treated as an object.
- **Object** is a system resource such as a file, a socket, a pipe, TCP or UDP port, a network interface, a semaphore or shared memory segment.

#### 2.2.2 Mandatory Access Control

SELinux provides a mandatory access control mechanism that extends the discretionary access control mechanisms present in Linux kernel.

#### **Discretionary Access Control**

Discretionary access control (DAC) is defined by Trusted Computer System Evaluation Criteria (TCSEC) standard [11]. System with DAC must enable users to protect their data by controlling access to their data, e.g. by setting permissions for other users or user groups. In DAC, users make security decisions by specifying who can access their data. The disadvantage is that users can propagate sensitive information.

Linux implements the discretionary access control. Each object has an owner that controls the access to that object. Permissions are set in three scopes: user, group, and others. For each scope, permissions to read, write, and execute can be set.

#### **Mandatory Access Control**

Mandatory access control (MAC), defined by TCSEC standard, provides more restrictions than DAC. In this type of access control, operating system can prevent subjects from performing operations on objects. This is achieved by attaching subjects and objects set of security attributes. When a subject (usually a process) wants to perform an operation on an object (a file, a directory, a socket, etc.), the operating system first examines these attributes. Then the security policy is used to determine whether this operation should be allowed or not. When using MAC, users do not have the ability to override the security policy and, for example, propagate sensitive information.

There are several implementations of MAC. Linux kernel currently contains several security modules implemented using *Linux Security Modules* (LSM) framework [6]. Security-Enhanced Linux, developed by National Security Agency and Red Hat [2], is used in Red Hat Enterprise Linux (RHEL), CentOS, Fedora, and Android [10, 9, 7]. AppArmor developed by SUSE, is used in SUSE Linux Enterprise, openSUSE and Ubuntu [5, 1]. There are two other Linux security modules, Smack and TOMOYO Linux.

#### 2.2.3 SELinux and MAC Checks

SELinux security checks are carried out after standard Linux DAC checks. When running an SELinux-enabled system, when a userspace process makes a system call, standard file permissions are checked first. Then, if the access is allowed, the Linux Security Module hooks call security checks in SELinux.

#### 2.2.4 SELinux Users

SELinux uses its own user names that are different from standard Linux user names [14, p. 24]. Each Linux user is associated to an SELinux user. For example, Linux user root is mapped to SELinux user unconfined\_u on Fedora 27. There is a special SELinux user that is mapped to no user: system\_u.

Available SELinux users can be listed using the seinfo --user command:

```
$ seinfo --user

Users: 8
guest_u
root
staff_u
sysadm_u
system_u
unconfined_u
user_u
xguest_u
```

#### 2.2.5 Role-Based Access Control

SELinux uses the role-based access control (RBAC) as one of its security mechanisms. RBAC as general concept is based on users, roles, and permissions, and relationships between them. RBAC defines the role-permission, user-role, and role-role relationships.

In SELinux, each user is associated to one or more roles [14, p. 24]. Each role can access only types that are associated to that role. For example, the system\_u user is associated to roles unconfined\_r and system\_r on Fedora 27.

Available SELinux roles can be listed using the seinfo --role command:

```
$ seinfo --role
Roles: 14
   auditadm r
   dbadm r
   guest_r
   logadm_r
   nx_server_r
   object_r
   secadm_r
   staff_r
   sysadm_r
   system_r
   unconfined_r
   user_r
   webadm_r
   xguest_r
```

## 2.2.6 Type Enforcement

SELinux uses type enforcement for enforcing mandatory access control [14, pp. 25–26]. All subjects and objects are associated to an SELinux type. Processes running with the same type are called a *domain*. SELinux policy then contains rules that allow domains access types.

Available SELinux types can be listed using the seinfo --type command:

```
$ seinfo --type

Types: 4845
   abrt_t
   alsa_t
   antivirus_t
   bin_t
   cluster_t
   crond_t
   ...
```

# 2.2.7 Multi-Level and Multi-Category Security

In addition to the type enforcement and the role-based access control, SELinux also supports multi-level security (MLS) and multi-category security (MCS) [14, pp. 48–53]. For the purposes of MLS and MCS, the security context is extended by a level or range entry.

Security levels conform to the Bell-LaPadula model. For processes, security levels describe subjects clearance, for objects, they describe objects classification. Process running at a certain security level can:

- read and write at their current level,
- read only at lower levels,
- write only at higher levels.

This means that processes cannot read data with a higher security level and cannot leak sensitive information to the lower levels. Multi-level security is not used by default in most SELinux-enabled Linux distributions such as Fedora or RHEL, but it is supported.

## 2.2.8 SELinux Security Context

Security decisions are based on a *security context* that must be assigned to each subject and object [14, pp. 27–28]. The security context is sometimes reffered to as a *security label* or just a *label*. The security context is a string in the following form:

```
user:role:type[:range]
Where:
user The SELinux user (see section 2.2.4).
role The SELinux role used by role-based access control (see section 2.2.5).
type The SELinux type used by type enforcement (see section 2.2.6).
range Used by MLS or MCS (see section 2.2.7). It is optional.
```

An example of subject security contexts:

```
$ ps -eZ
LABEL
                                  PID TTY
                                                   TIME CMD
system_u:system_r:init_t:s0
                                    1 ?
                                               00:00:04 systemd
system_u:system_r:kernel_t:s0
                                    2 ?
                                               00:00:00 kthreadd
system_u:system_r:auditd_t:s0
                                 1139 ?
                                               00:00:00 auditd
system_u:system_r:alsa_t:s0
                                 1164 ?
                                               00:00:00 alsactl
```

An example of object security contexts:

# 2.2.9 Object Classes

Each object belongs to an object class. Object classes specify operations that can be performed on the object [14, pp. 29–30]. For example, on Fedora 27, there are the following classes:

```
$ seinfo --class

Classes: 97
blk_file
chr_file
dbus
dir
fd
file
filesystem
ipc
...
```

Each class is associated to a set of permissions. For example, on Fedora 27, the node class provides the following permissions:

```
$ seinfo --class node -x
Classes: 1
    class node
{
        dccp_send
        enforce_dest
        tcp_recv
        rawip_send
```

```
tcp_send
udp_recv
dccp_recv
sendto
udp_send
recvfrom
rawip_recv
}
```

SELinux object classes maps to the kernel object classes (files, sockets, etc.) and userspace objects (for X-Windows or D-Bus).

# 2.2.10 Labeling Subjects and Objects

Security contexts for subjects and objects are computed by the kernel security server using several policy statements [14, pp. 31–33].

#### Labeling Processes

The first init process usually transitions to its own unique domain, for example init\_t. On fork, the child process inherits the security context of its parent. On exec, the child process may transition to a different security context. This is achieved by type transition policy statements. SELinux-aware processes may change context by calling setcon() or setexeccon() functions from the libselinux library.

#### Labeling Files

Security context for files is computed as follows:

user User is inherited from the creating process.

role Role defaults to object\_r unless modified by role\_transition statement.

type Type defaults to the type of the parent directory unless modified by type\_transition statement.

File contexts are covered in depth in section 2.4.

#### 2.2.11 Type Transitions

To run different processes in different domains, we need a way how to *transition* a process from one domain to another. To attach specific label to an object, we need to transition an object from one type to another. Both transitions can be achieved using the type\_transition statement.

#### **Domain Transition**

Starting a new process with a different security context is called domain transition [14, pp. 43–47]. For example, systemd process running as init\_t needs to start the Apache HTTP Server as httpd\_t. Apache executables are labeled httpd\_exec\_t. The following policy rule allows the transition:

```
type_transition init_t httpd_exec_t:process httpd_t;
```

The systemd process does not need to be aware of SELinux. The type\_transition rule in the policy will cause the exec call to automatically perform the transition. There are conditions that need to be met before a domain transition can happen:

1. The source domain has a permission to transition into the target domain. For example:

```
allow init_t httpd_t:process transition;
```

2. The source domain has a permission to read and execute the binary. For example:

```
allow init_t httpd_exec_t:file { execute read getattr };
```

3. The context of the executable needs to be set as an entry point into the target domain. For example:

```
allow httpd_t httpd_exec_t:file entrypoint;
```

# **Object Transition**

When a new object is created it inherits the security context of its parent. If a different context of the object is required, the object transition must be used [14, pp. 47–48]. For example when an X server creates a file in the /tmp directory (which has the tmp\_t context), it gets the user\_tmp\_t context. This is achieved by the following type\_transition rule:

```
type_transition xserver_t tmp_t:file user_tmp_t;
```

The X server does not need to be aware of SELinux, the kernel computes the label automatically.

## 2.2.12 SELinux Modes of Operation

SELinux has three modes of operation [10]. The default mode is *enforcing*. In this mode, everything, which is not allowed by the policy, is denied. When a process tries to perform an action, which is not allowed by the policy, it is logged. In *permissive* mode, SELinux is not enforcing the policy, it only logs actions. In *disabled* mode, SELinux is turned off.

Running SELinux in permissive mode is useful for catching AVC denials that can be analyzed using the audit2allow utility. To perform single task (for example to save a file), several SELinux checks are usually needed. When running in enforcing mode, only the first denial would be logged and the troubleshooting would be more difficult.

# 2.3 SELinux Policy

Security decisions made by the security server in the kernel are resolved using SELinux policy. This section describes the most important SELinux policy statements. The primary output audit2allow utility are policy statements.

SELinux supports either monolithic (compiled from a single source file) or modular policy. Modular policy, which is used in Fedora and RHEL, consists of the mandatory base policy source file and loadable modules. In Fedora, almost each module contains a policy for one application or service, such as the apache or xserver module. The audit2allow utility can be used to create a loadable policy module.



Figure 2.2: Relationship of the user, role, and type statements

SELinux policy statements start with a statement keyword, usually followed by several identifiers and a semicolon at the end. Comments start with a "#". An example of an allow rule:

```
# This is an allow rule
allow httpd_t httpd_exec_t: file { ioctl read getattr lock execute open };
```

# 2.3.1 User, Role and Type Statements

To support mechanisms such as the type enforcement, the role-based access control, and multi-level and multi-category security, SELinux assigns security contexts to subjects and objects. Security context is a combination of a user, a role, a type, and optionally range identifiers (see section 2.2.8). This section describes policy statements that declare these identifiers.

SELinux users are declared using the user statement. The users are assigned one or more roles. SELinux roles are declared using the role statement. The roles are assigned types that they can access. SELinux types are declared using the type statement.

The roles can be grouped together using the attribute\_role and roleattribute statements. Types can be grouped together using the attribute and typeattribute statements. Type aliases can be defined using typealias statements. The relationship between various statements is shown in figure 2.2.

#### User Statements

```
The user statement declares an identifier for an SELinux user. Syntax:
```

```
user seuser_id roles role_id;
Where:
seuser_id SELinux user identifier.
role_id One or more role identifiers.
Example from Fedora 27:
user staff_u roles { system_r unconfined_r sysadm_r staff_r };
```

#### Role Statements

The role statement either declares an identifier for an SELinux role and optionally associates a role to one or more types. Syntax:

```
role role_id;
role role_id types type_id;
Where:

role_id SELinux role identifier.

type_id One or more type identifiers.

Example from Fedora 27:

role auditadm_r types { auditadm_t auditadm_screen_t auditadm_su_t auditadm_sudo_t chkpwd_t updpwd_t exim_t auditctl_t auditd_t mailman_mail_t user_mail_t postfix_postdrop_t postfix_postqueue_t qmail_inject_t qmail_queue_t run_init_t user_tmp_t vlock_t };
```

#### Type Statements

The type statement declares an identifier for an SELinux type. Type identifiers usually ends with '\_t' to distinguish them from attribute identifiers. Syntax:

```
type type_id;
type type_id, attribute_id;
type type_id alias alias_id;
type type_id alias alias_id, attribute_id;
Where:
```

type\_id SELinux type identifier.

alias\_id One or more optional aliases declared by the typealias statement. Multiple aliases must be enclosed in braces.

attribute\_id One or more optional attributes declared by the attribute statement. Multiple attributes must be separated by a comma.

An example from Fedora 27:

```
type httpd_sys_content_t alias { httpd_fastcgi_content_t
   httpd_httpd_sys_script_ro_t httpd_fastcgi_script_ro_t },
   httpdcontent, httpd_content_type, entry_type, exec_type, file_type,
   non_auth_file_type, non_security_file_type;
```

#### Other Statements

The attribute\_role statement declares an identifier for a group of role identifiers. Syntax:

```
attribute role attribute id;
```

The roleattribute statement associates roles to role attributes. Syntax:

```
roleattribute role_id attribute_id;
```

The attribute statement declares an identifier for a group of type identifiers. Syntax:

```
attribute attribute_id;
```

The typeattribute statement associates types to attributes. Syntax:

```
typeattribute type_id attribute_id;
```

The typealias statement declares type aliases. Syntax:

```
typealias type_id alias alias_id;
```

#### 2.3.2 Access Vector Rules

The access vector rules support type enforcement within SELinux. They control which access processes get. The audit2allow utility generates access vector rules as an output. The allow rule grants an access to an object. Syntax:

```
allow source_type target_type:obj_class perm_set;
```

Where:

**source\_type** One or more type or attribute identifiers (see section 2.3.1). This field identifies the subject that is performing the operation.

target\_type One or more type or attribute identifiers. This field identifies the object that is being accessed. When the target type is the same as the source type, the self keyword can be used instead of the target type.

obj\_class One or more object classes (for example file or tcp\_socket).

perm\_set One or more permissions (for example read or connectto).

An example:

```
allow httpd_t samba_share_t:file { getattr open read };
```

In this example, processes running as httpd\_t are allowed to getattr, open, and read files labeled as samba\_share\_t.

There are three other AV rules that follow the syntax pattern of the allow rule:

dontaudit Stops auditing (logging) of denials. It is used when the denial is expected to happen and does not cause any issues. The dontaudit rules help to keep audit logs clean.

auditallow Audits the event. The auditallow rule itself does not allow the operation, so the rule must appear together with standard allow rule.

**neverallow** Compiler statement that stops compilation if this rule is found somewhere in policy. It is used for marking rules that may be insecure.

Internally, access vectors defined by AV rules are stored in the memory as bit arrays that are 32 bits long. Because of this limitation, object classes cannot have more than 32 different permissions. Extended permission AV rules were introduced to overcome this issue.

#### 2.3.3 Extended Permission Access Vector Rules

Since policy version 30, there are extended permission access vector rules that expand the permission sets. Standard access vector rules operates with 32 bit permission sets, extended permission AV rules add arbitrary number of 256 bit increments. The extended permission AV rules are currently (as of policy version 31) used only for ioctl whitelisting, but they provide generic tool that can be used for more granular control over an operation in the future [16].

Support for extended permission AV rules by the audit2allow utility was implemented as a part of this thesis. Syntax of extended permission AV rules [3]:

```
rule_name source_type target_type : obj_class operation xperm_set;
Where:
```

- rule\_name is one of the following: allowxperm, dontauditxperm, auditallowxperm, or neverallowxperm. The meaning is the same as with standard AV rules. The allowxperm rule allows the access, the dontauditxperm rule denies and logs the access, the auditallowxperm rule logs the access, and the neverallowxperm rules is a compiler statement to prevent insecure rules from appearing in the policy.
- source\_type, target\_type, obj\_class are a source type, a target type, and an object class, the same as with a standard AV rule.
- operation is a single keyword defining the operation to be implemented by the rule. As of policy version 31, only the ioctl operation is supported. In contrast to permissions in standard access vector rules, each extended permission AV rule has only one operation (standard AV rules can have a lot of permissions).
- xperm\_set are extended permissions represented by numeric values. The meaning of the
  values depends on the operation. The values can be written in a decimal or hexadecimal form, for example 42 or 0x2a. Multiple values must be separated by a space and
  enclosed in braces, for example { 1 2 3 }. Value ranges are supported, for example
  50-60 (both 50 and 60 are included in the range). To allow all values except for those
  explicitly listed, the complement operator can be used, for example ~{ 1 2 3 }.

An example of an extended permission AV rule:

```
allowsperm my_app_t my_socket_t: tcp_socket ioctl { 20 30 0x40 50-60 }; This rule allows a process running as my_app_t to call ioctl on a TCP socket labeled my_socket_t with parameters 20, 30, 64, or any number from 50 to 60.
```

## Filtering the ioctl System Call

Filtering ioctl calls is as of policy version 31 the only implementation of extended permission AV rules. The ioctl system call accepts three parameters: a file descriptor, a request number, and a pointer [12]. The extended permission AV rules allow filtering based on the request number. For ioctl calls, the operation keyword is ioctl and numbers in the xperm\_set represent request numbers.

When there is only an allow rule for a particular source and a target context and object class, all ioctl calls are allowed. With an additional allowsperm rule, only the ioctl calls with parameters allowed by the allowsperm rules are allowed. The allowsperm rule alone has no effect, for ioctl filtering, both allow and allowsperm rules must be present.

## 2.3.4 Policy Modules

The module and require statements are used to support policy modules. The audit2allow utility is able to generate these statements when specified by command-line options. Each policy module must start with the module statement. Syntax:

```
module module_name version;
```

Where:

module name Name of the module.

version Version number in format X.Y.Z.

This name is used to refer to the module when using userspace utilities. For example this command is used to remove a module from the policy:

```
$ semodule -r module_name
```

The require statement indicates which parts of the policy are imported from other modules or the base policy. Syntax:

```
require { require_list }
```

Where:

require\_list One or more keywords followed by an identifier separated by a semicolon. The valid keywords are: role, type, attribute, user, bool, sensitivity, category, class.

Example of module and require statements:

```
module my_module 1.2.0;

require {
   type nscd_t, nscd_var_run_t;
   class nscd { getserv getpwd getgrp gethost shmempwd shmemgrp
        shmemhost shmemserv };
}
```

When loading this module, the nscd\_t and nscd\_var\_run\_t types and the nscd class with specified permissions must be defined somewhere in the policy (either in the base policy or in another policy module).

# 2.3.5 Conditional Policy

SELinux policy allows turning on and off a set of policy statements without the need for reloading policy. Conditional policy is defined using the bool statement that defines a condition. Then an if/else construct is used to mark statements that depend on the condition. An example:

```
bool allow_execmem false;
if (allow_execmem) {
    allow sysadm_t self:process execmem;
}
```

Booleans can be turned on and off using the semanage boolean command. The audit2allow utility is able to detect that certain AVC denials can be solved by turning on a boolean.

## 2.3.6 Labeling Network Objects

SELinux policy supports labeling of the following network objects:

Network ports TCP or UDP port numbers.

**Network nodes** Nodes represented by IP addresses and subnet masks.

Network interfaces Interfaces managed by ifconfig (e.g. eth0).

The audit2allow utility can be extended to suggest changing labels of network objects, see section 3.3.

#### **Network Interfaces**

The netifcon statement labels network interface statements. Syntax:

```
netifcon netif_id netif_context packet_context
```

Where:

netif\_id Name of the network interface (e.g. eth0).

netif\_context Security context of the interface.

packet\_context Security context of the packets. This context is not currently used (the kernel does not support labeling of packets).

An example:

```
netifcon eth0 system_u:object_r:netif_t:s0 system_u:object_r:netif_t:s0
```

#### **Network Nodes**

The nodecon statement labels network addresses. Syntax:

nodecon subnet netmask node\_context

Where:

subnet The IP address.

netmask The subnet mask.

node\_context Security context of the node.

An example:

```
nodecon ff00:: ff00:: system_u:object_r:multicast_node_t:s0
```

#### **Network Ports**

```
The portcon statement labels TCP and UDP ports. Syntax:

portcon protocol port_number port_context

Where:

protocol Either udp or tcp.

port_number Port number or a range.

port_context Security context of the port.

An example:

portcon tcp 22 system_u:object_r:ssh_port_t:s0
```

#### 2.4 File Contexts

When accessing files, SELinux relies on the labels stored with those files to make a security decision. SELinux labels can be viewed using the 1s -Z command:

```
$ ls -Z
unconfined_u:object_r:user_home_t:s0 testdir
unconfined_u:object_r:user_home_t:s0 testfile
```

The labels are stored in *extended attributes* in the security namespace [13]. The extended attributes associated with a file can be viewed using the getfattr command:

```
$ getfattr -n security.selinux testfile
# file: testfile
security.selinux="unconfined_u:object_r:user_home_t:s0"
```

Mislabeled files often causes AVC denials that should not be solved using the audit2allow utility and audit2allow should detect these situations. Proper solutions should be presented to the user. See section 3.2.

## 2.4.1 Temporary Changes

The choon command changes the SELinux context of files [10]. The user must have a permission to relabel files. The changes made by choon are overwritten by a file system relabel or running of restorecon.

## 2.4.2 Type Transition

There are rules in policy that specifies the context of files created by processes. For example, when process running with the httpd\_t context creates a file in directory with the var\_run\_t context, the file will get context httpd\_var\_run\_t:

```
type_transition httpd_t var_run_t:file httpd_var_run_t;
```

Type transitions are explained in section 2.2.11.

#### 2.4.3 File Context Configuration Files

There are situations when files get a label that is different than the default one [10]:

- 1. When moving files, the label is preserved. This does not happen when copying files because a new file is always created.
- 2. When SELinux is disabled, labels are not assigned to files.
- 3. When the policy is changed (for example when a module is unloaded), there may be some files left with a type that is no longer defined in the policy.

For these situations, there is a **file\_contexts** file which specifies default contexts for each file based on its path. For example:

The -- means that the context should be applied to all file types (e.g., files, directories, sockets). The -c means that the context should be applied only when the file is a character device. Utilities such as restorecon and setfiles uses the file\_contexts configuration file to relabel files on the filesystem.

#### 2.4.4 Building File Context Configuration Files

Utilities such as restorecon and setfiles use several files to restore default contexts of the files [14, pp. 165–167]:

file\_contexts Contains default contexts for files.

file\_contexts.homedirs Contains default contexts for files inside the user home directories.

file\_contexts.local Contains local modifications of default file contexts.

file\_contexts.subs and file\_contexts.subs\_dist Contains file name substitutions. For example, these files can specify that /usr/lib64 should be treated the same way as /usr/lib.

These files are created when building the policy, see figure 2.3. All .fc files from the base policy and from policy modules are used to build the file\_contexts.template file. This file may contain rules having special keywords inside their path, such as HOME\_ROOT, HOME\_DIR, or USER. All rules without special keywords are used to build the file\_contexts file which is used directly by utilities such as restorecon or setfiles.

Rules with special keywords are used to build the homedir\_template file. These rules are associated with user home directories and need to be expanded for individual users using the genhomedircon utility. For example the following homedir\_template entry:

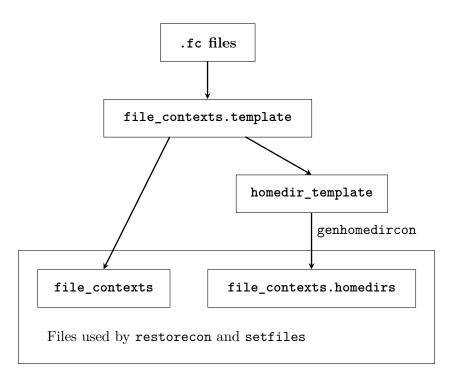


Figure 2.3: File Context Configuration Files

```
HOME_DIR/\.ssh(/.*)? system_u:object_r:ssh_home_t:s0
would be expanded to the following rules:
/home/[^/]*/\.ssh(/.*)? system_u:object_r:ssh_home_t:s0
/root/\.ssh(/.*)? system_u:object_r:ssh_home_t:s0
```

Expanded rules are then stored in the file\_contexts.homedirs file and used by restorecon and setfiles utilities [14, pp. 134–140].

## 2.4.5 Changing File Context Configuration Files

The file\_contexts.local file can be changed using the semanage fcontext command [10]. For example:

In this example, a new file contexts entry was added. The rule states that the /etc/myfile file should obtain the system\_u:object\_r:samba\_share\_t:s0 context.

# 2.5 Auditing Security Events

The *Linux Audit system* provides an auditing system for tracking security-relevant system events. It is used to track file access, monitor system calls, record commands run by the user, record failed login attempts and others [8]. The Linux Audit system does not provide additional security by itself, it can be only used to discover security violations.

The Linux Audit system consists of kernel and userspace parts. The kernel filters the events and sends them to the *audit daemon*. The audit daemon writes the received events to a log file then. There are several userspace tools used for interacting with the audit system and for working with the log file.

# 2.5.1 Auditing SELinux Denials

In Fedora and RHEL, SELinux uses the Linux Audit system to log security events. When a process tries to perform an operation without the permissions, an *Access Vector Cache* (AVC) denial message is logged using the audit daemon [10]. This message can be processed by tools such as setroubleshoot or audit2allow then.

Each AVC message contains information about a source context (the context of the process), an object class (for example a file), and a target context (the context of the object). For example, when a process httpd running in the unconfined\_u:system\_r:httpd\_t:s0 context is trying to perform the getattr operation on the /var/www/html/file1 file with context system\_u:object\_r:samba\_share\_t:s0 and fails, the following AVC message is generated:

```
type=AVC msg=audit(1223024155.684:49): avc: denied { getattr }
for pid=2000 comm="httpd" path="/var/www/html/file1" dev=dm-0
ino=399185 scontext=unconfined_u:system_r:httpd_t:s0
tcontext=system_u:object_r:samba_share_t:s0 tclass=file
```

# 2.6 Troubleshooting SELinux

When SELinux denies access that is requested by a process, the process may fail to function normally and reports error or crashes. Determining if the failure is related to SELinux is done by switching whole SELinux or just one domain into the permissive mode. For example, for debugging httpd it is advised to set the httpd\_t domain into the permissive mode:

```
# semanage permissive -a httpd_t
```

SELinux denials caused by the httpd\_t domain would still be logged but not enforced.

On Fedora and RHEL, SELinux denials are analyzed by the setroubleshootd daemon that provides suggestions for resolving the problem using various plugins. Majority of problems are caused by missing allow rules in policy. To add missing rules, the audit2allow utility is used. However, not every problem requires new policy rules, some issues may require relabeling of objects using restorecon or semanage.

# 2.7 The audit2allow Utility

The audit2allow is a userspace tool that scans the AVC messages and generates SELinux policy snippets based on them.

## 2.7.1 Purpose of audit2allow

The audit2allow utility is designed for both system administrators and SELinux policy developers. System administrators use audit2allow to analyze SELinux denials and to

create new policy modules. When suitable, the audit2allow utility suggests other options to resolve denials, such as turning on a boolean (see section 2.3.5).

Policy developers use audit2allow to create basis for a new policy modules for their products. When writing a policy for their program, they can run the programs test suite in the permissive mode, collect AVC denials, create a policy module, and then manually finish the policy module. Policy developers can use the --reference option to generate the policy using predefined macros.

## 2.7.2 Basic Mode of Operation

In default mode, audit2allow scans AVC denial messages and generates policy rules which allow operations that were denied. For example, when the httpd process tries to perform the getattr operation on the /var/www/html/file1 file, the following AVC message is generated:

```
type=AVC msg=audit(1223024155.684:49): avc: denied { getattr }
for pid=2000 comm="httpd" path="/var/www/html/file1" dev=dm-0
ino=399185 scontext=unconfined_u:system_r:httpd_t:s0
tcontext=system_u:object_r:samba_share_t:s0 tclass=file
```

The audit2allow utility would generate the following policy rule:

```
allow httpd_t samba_share_t:file getattr;
```

The audit2allow utility is able to process multiple AVC denial messages, deal with duplicates, and output all rules based on the fields in AVC denial messages.

# 2.7.3 Command-Line Options

The audit2allow utility is able to read AVC messages from stdin, dmesg, audit log, or arbitrary file (see --dmesg, --all, and --input options). There is --boot option which loads only the messages generated since last boot and --lastreload option which loads only the messages since last SELinux policy reload.

The audit2allow utility can output the policy rules directly to stdout or a file, or create a policy module which can be loaded directly into the policy (see --module, -M, and --output options).

The audit2allow utility is using the currently loaded policy (or another policy specified with the --policy option) to get more information about the denials. For example, audit2allow suggests turning on a boolean that would allow the denied operations.

When run with the --reference option, audit2allow tries to match the denials against defined interfaces. An example of audit2allow output without the --reference option:

The audit2allow found an interface which contained the same allow rule. Interfaces create more readable code but can contain more rules that are necessary.

The --why option does not output any policy rules but provides a text description of why the access was denied. Example of audit2allow --why output:

```
type=AVC msg=audit(1223024155.684:49): avc: denied { getattr }
for pid=2000 comm="httpd" path="/var/www/html/file1" dev=dm-0
ino=399185 scontext=unconfined_u:system_r:httpd_t:s0
tcontext=system_u:object_r:samba_share_t:s0 tclass=file

Was caused by:
    Missing type enforcement (TE) allow rule.

You can use audit2allow to generate a~loadable module to allow this access.
```

The --dontaudit option generates dontaudit rules instead of allow rules (see section 2.3.2).

#### 2.7.4 How Does audit2allow Work

The audit2allow collects audit messages from various sources first. The messages are stored based on their type and then parsed. Each AVC denial message is analyzed together with a binary policy file to find out the reason of denial.

From AVC denial messages, source contexts, target contexts, object classes, and permissions are extracted and converted into access vector sets. Each access vector in the set contains a unique combination of a source context, a target context, and object class. Permissions from multiple AVC messages are merged into one access vector set. An example of an access vector set:

```
{
    src: 'unconfined_u:system_r:httpd_t:s0',
    tgt: 'system_u:object_r:samba_share_t:s0',
    cls: 'file', perms: [ 'getattr', 'open']
},
    {
    src: 'unconfined_u:system_r:httpd_t:s0',
    tgt: 'system_u:object_r:sssd_conf_t:s0',
    cls: 'file', perms: [ 'getattr']
}
}
```

Each access vector is converted into an allow rule then. After that all rules are printed to the output. An example:

```
allow httpd_t samba_share_t:file { getattr open };
allow httpd_t sssd_conf_t:file getattr;
```

The module and require statements (see section 2.3.4) may be optionally written to the output. Various other information is stored during the processing. The audit2allow prints comments with helpful messages.

## 2.7.5 Implementation of audit2allow

The audit2allow utility is a part of SELinux userspace. It is written mostly in Python, with several parts written in C. It uses sepolgen and sepolicy Python packages and libselinux and libsepol libraries.

The main script, audit2allow, parses command-line options, retrieves audit messages, and prints the output. The main logic of converting AVC denial messages to access vector rules is implemented in the sepolgen package.

The sepolgen package contains the following modules:

audit.py Defines classes for various audit messages, contains audit message parser.

access.py Defines access vectors and access vector sets.

policygen.py Creates policy rules based on access vectors.

refpolicy.py Contains classes that represent the policy statements.

output.py Outputs the generated rules.

Other modules There are several other modules which are either not significant (e.g. the utils.py module) or used only to generate policy using the interfaces (e.g. the interfaces.py package).

#### The audit2allow Script

The main script does the following steps:

- 1. Parse command-line arguments and check potential conflicts.
- 2. Read audit messages. Create AuditParser instance and feed it the messages.
- 3. Filter the messages (if specified by the --type option) and convert them to access vectors.
- 4. Create and setup a PolicyGenerator instance, feed it the access vectors, and convert them to policy rules.
- 5. Write the output.

#### The audit.py Module

The audit.py module is used for parsing audit messages. It is not a general purpose library for parsing Audit messages, it is meant to parse mainly the AVC messages and policy load messages.

The AuditParser class reads strings and creates objects of an appropriate type for each message. The AuditMessage class is the base class for all message types. The AVCMessage class represents AVC denials and is used for generating access vectors.

After parsing of AVC message, the denial is analyzed in the audit2why.c module (from the libselinux library). The audit2why.c module tries to find out the reason of the denial by analyzing the policy. The module is written in C and uses the libsepol library.

Each message is then converted to an access vector from the access module. AVC denial messages can be filtered using regular expressions via the AVCTypeFilter class. Only messages that match the regular expression are processed.

Policy load messages are important for the --lastreload command-line option. The AuditParser processes then only messages after the last policy load message.

#### The access.py Module

The access.py module defines the AccessVector and AccessVectorSet classes. The access vector is a basic representation of an access in SELinux. It contains single source and target type, single object class, and a set of permissions. Each AVC denial message can be converted into an access vector. For example this AVC denial message:

```
type=AVC msg=audit(1223024155.684:49): avc: denied { getattr }
for pid=2000 comm="httpd" path="/var/www/html/file1" dev=dm-0
ino=399185 scontext=unconfined_u:system_r:httpd_t:s0
tcontext=system_u:object_r:samba_share_t:s0 tclass=file
would be converted into the following access vector:
{
    source_context: 'unconfined_u:system_r:httpd_t:s0',
    target_context: 'system_u:object_r:samba_share_t:s0',
    object_class: 'file',
    permissions: [ 'getattr' ]
}
```

Multiple access vectors are aggregated in access vector sets. Access vectors sharing the same source and target type, as well as the object class are merged together, so that there are no duplicates. For example, if we add the following access vector:

```
{
    source_context: 'unconfined_u:system_r:httpd_t:s0',
    target_context: 'system_u:object_r:samba_share_t:s0',
    object_class: 'file',
    permissions: [ 'open', 'read' ]
}
```

to the access vector above, they would be merged into the following access vector (they share source and target context and the object class):

```
{
    source_context: 'unconfined_u:system_r:httpd_t:s0',
    target_context: 'system_u:object_r:samba_share_t:s0',
    object_class: 'file',
    permissions: [ 'getattr', 'open', 'read' ]
}
```

Access vector sets serve as a basis for generating policy access vector rules in the policygen.py module.

#### The policygen.py Module

The policygen.py module defines the PolicyGenerator class that generates a policy module from access vectors. PolicyGenerator converts an access vector set into SELinux policy statements. For example, this access vector:

```
{
    source_context: 'unconfined_u:system_r:httpd_t:s0',
    target_context: 'system_u:object_r:samba_share_t:s0',
    object_class: 'file',
    permissions: [ 'getattr', 'open', 'read' ]
}
would be converted into the following policy statement:
allow httpd_t samba_share_t:file { getattr open read };
```

PolicyGenerator uses objects from the refpolicy.py module to represent policy statements. PolicyGenerator provides several configuration methods:

```
set_gen_refpol() Turn on interface generation.
```

**set\_gen\_requires()** Generate **require** statements that are neccessary for creating a standalone policy module (see section 2.3.4).

set\_gen\_explain() Add comments explaining why the policy statements were generated.

set gen dontaudit() Generate dontaudit rules instead of allow rules (see section 2.3.2).

The output of PolicyGenerator is a tree-like structure containing generated policy statements. The output.py module then just prints out each statement.

#### The refpolicy.py Module

This module contains classes that represent SELinux policy statements. The Node and Leaf classes are base classes for all policy statements. Each statement is either a node that is a parent of other statements (for example the Module class), or a leaf (for example the AVRule class). The refpolicy.py module contains functions for traversing trees made out of nodes and leaves. These functions are used when printing statements in the output.py module.

The IdSet class represents a set of arbitrary identifiers and is used by many statements for storing permissions and other sets. The SecurityContext class represents an SELinux security context. Classes such as TypeAttribute, RoleAttribute, Role, Type, and others represent policy statements as described in section 2.3 and are used mainly for interface generation.

For the basic operation mode, the following classes are used: AVRule, ModuleDeclaration, Module, and Require. The AVRule class contains the following attributes:

```
src_types IdSet() of source types.

tgt_types IdSet() of target types.

obj_classes IdSet() of object classes.

perms IdSet() of permissions.

rule_type One of the following: ALLOW, DONTAUDIT, AUDITALLOW, or NEVERALLOW.
```

The Module class serves only as a node that is parent to all statements inside a module. The ModuleDeclaration class represents the module statement and is generated with the --module option. The Require class represents the require statement inside policy modules and is generated with either --module or --require options.

# Chapter 3

# **Analysis**

Two general areas for improvement to audit2allow were identified:

- 1. Changing label of an object instead of creating new policy rules. This includes checking of mislabeled files, labeling network ports, nodes, and interfaces.
- 2. Support for new SELinux policy statements such as extended permission access vector rules.

# 3.1 Extended Permission Access Vector Rules

Since policy version 30, SELinux policy supports extended permission access vector rules (see section 2.3.3). Usage of extended permission AV rules introduces situations when audit2allow is not able to detect the true cause of denial. As a result, when using extended permission AV rules, audit2allow may suggest rules that do not solve the denial.

## 3.1.1 AVC Denials Caused by Extended Permission AV Rules

Suppose there are the following rules present in the policy:

```
allow src_t tgt_t : tcp_socket ioctl;
allowxperm src_t tgt_t : tcp_socket ioctl 0x42;
```

When a process tries to call ioctl(0x1234, ...), the operation would be denied, because only syscall ioctl(0x42, ...) is allowed. The following AVC denial message would be generated:

```
type=AVC msg=audit(1515017775.689:1722): avc: denied { ioctl } for
pid=14587 comm="test" dev="dm-0" ino=8390105 ioctlcmd=0x1234
scontext=unconfined_u:unconfined_r:src_t:s0-s0:c0.c1023
tcontext=unconfined_u:object_r:tgt_t:s0 tclass=tcp_socket permissive=0
```

The ioctlcmd field contains the first parameter of the ioctl syscall that was denied. This value can be used to construct an allowxperm rule to allow this operation.

When used for troubleshooting this AVC denial, audit2allow produces the following output:

which is not helpful. The users are expected to know about the extended permissions to assume that the allow rule was overridden.

## 3.1.2 Generating Extended Permission AV Rules in audit2allow

The audit2allow does have all the information to generate extended permission AV rules. There are two situations that may arise when using extended permission AV rules:

- There is neither allow nor allowsperm rule in the policy. The audit2allow utility has two options: either generate only the allow rule (current behaviour) or generate allow and allowsperm rules. Generating allowsperm rules is more secure and provides more granular access control. However, for many processes that use lots of different icctl calls it may be inefficient. Generating the allowsperm rules automatically also changes the default output of audit2allow and breaks lots of integration tests written using the audit2allow utility.
- There are both allow and allowsperm rules in the policy. This means that the specific ioctl parameter is not allowed. In this case the allowsperm rule should be generated.

It is not possible to distinguish these two situations by analyzing the AVC denial itself, because both denials contain the ioctlcmd field. The audit2allow utility would need to analyze the binary policy. The audit2allow utility may rather generate extended permission AV rules in all cases (stricter, more secure solution) or only when requested by user (for example using command-line option, less secure solution, does not break backward compatibility).

In case of using the command-line option, there is still a risk, that the users do not know that they should be using that option. Consider the following example:

In this example, it is not clear that the denial is caused by an extended permission AV rule. In situations when the denial would be allowed according to the binary policy (there is an allow rule) and the AVC denial message contains the ioctlcmd field, the user should be warned about extended permission AV rules. For example:

Support for extended permissions was implemented as a part of this thesis, see section 4.1.

#### 3.2 Mislabeled Files

SELinux relies correctly labeled files. Sometimes, if files get mislabeled, processes cannot access these files and causes AVC denials. When used for troubleshooting, audit2allow suggests adding new rules to the policy instead of changing the file label.

### 3.2.1 AVC Denial Messages Caused by Mislabeled Files

When a process is trying to access a file that is mislabeled, the operation is usually denied (unless the process has also access to the incorrect label). For example, when a user moves files from the /root directory to the /var/www/html/ directory, the files retain their original label:

The index.html file has the correct label, but the my\_file.html file has an incorrect one. The httpd process cannot access the files labeled admin\_home\_t, because there are no allow rules in the policy for this operation:

```
$ sesearch -A -s httpd_t -t admin_home_t -c file -p read
(nothing)
```

As a result, when trying to view my\_file.html, a similar AVC denial message is generated:

```
type=AVC msg=audit(1226270358.848:238): avc: denied { read }
for pid=13349 comm="httpd" ino=8390105 name="my_file.html"
dev=dm-0 ino=218171 scontext=system_u:system_r:httpd_t:s0
tcontext=system_u:object_r:admin_home_t:s0 tclass=file
```

In this case, there is the ino field, which contains the inode number associated with the denial, and the name field, which contains the name of the file (but not the full path). In cases of getattr denial, the path field is present.

## 3.2.2 Solving Problems With Mislabeled Files

The restorecon utility uses file contexts files to get default security contexts of files (see section 2.4). For example, when the /var/www/html/my\_file.html file is mislabeled, the denial should be fixed by running restorecon on the file:

```
# restorecon -v /var/www/html/my_file.html
Relabeled /var/www/html/my_file.html from unconfined_u:object_r:
admin_home_t:s0 to unconfined_u:object_r:httpd_sys_content_t:s0
```

When using audit2allow, the following rules are generated:

```
allow httpd_t admin_home_t:file getattr;
```

This means that the httpd process would gain access to all root's files. This solution is not secure because it contains unnecessary rules to be added to the policy and it does not solve the real problem.

#### 3.2.3 Improving audit2allow

The audit2allow utility should detect when the AVC message is caused by a mislabeled file and suggest a solution using the restorecon utility.

There are three fields in the AVC message that can be used to detect if the file was mislabeled: path, name and inode. When the path field is present, audit2allow can run matchpathcon to get the default context of the file and compare it with an actual file context.

In many cases, the path field is not present, only an inode number and the name of the file (without the full path). In this case it is difficult to find the full path of the file. Ryan Hallisey created a solution [15] that uses the locate utility to get all files matching the name and then stat these files to get the inode number. This solution is only partial, it does not work on files that are not indexed in the database created by updatedb.

# 3.3 Labeling Network Ports, Nodes, and Interfaces

SELinux policy supports labeling of TCP and UDP ports, network nodes (represented by IP addresses and subnet masks), and network interfaces (e.g. eth0).

#### 3.3.1 Network Ports

SELinux can enforce binding to system ports. For example, in Fedora 27, there are several hundred portcon rules that label TCP and UDP ports. Example:

```
Portcon: 615

portcon tcp 1-511 system_u:object_r:reserved_port_t:s0
portcon tcp 7 system_u:object_r:echo_port_t:s0
portcon tcp 21 system_u:object_r:ftp_port_t:s0
portcon tcp 22 system_u:object_r:ssh_port_t:s0
portcon tcp 53 system_u:object_r:dns_port_t:s0
portcon tcp 80 system_u:object_r:http_port_t:s0
portcon udp 1-511 system_u:object_r:reserved_port_t:s0
portcon udp 1 system_u:object_r:inetd_child_port_t:s0
portcon udp 7 system_u:object_r:echo_port_t:s0
portcon udp 53 system_u:object_r:dns_port_t:s0
portcon udp 67 system_u:object_r:dhcpd_port_t:s0
```

Portcon rules can overlap, for example TCP port number 80 is labeled http\_port\_t but also reserved\_port\_t because it is in range 1–511. Each port has either domain-specific label or one of the following labels (based on range):

```
\begin{array}{lll} 1-511 & \texttt{reserved\_port\_t} \\ 512-1023 & \texttt{hi\_reserved\_port\_t} \\ 1024-32767 & \texttt{unreserved\_port\_t} \\ 32768-61000 & \texttt{ephemeral\_port\_t} \\ 61001-65535 & \texttt{unreserved\_port\_t} \end{array}
```

When a process tries to bind to a port and it is denied by SELinux, AVC denial message is generated. For example:

```
type=AVC msg=audit(1516026512.648:4191): avc: denied { name_bind } for
pid=6116 comm="test" src=43 scontext=unconfined_u:unconfined_r:my_app_t:s0
tcontext=system_u:object_r:reserved_port_t:s0
tclass=tcp_socket_permissive=0
```

The proper way how to allow the process to bind on port number 43 would be to label this port with a application-specific context using either a portcon rule or the semanage port command. For example:

```
# semanage port --add -t system_u:object_r:my_app_port_t:s0 -p TCP 43
```

When used for troubleshooting this denial, the audit2allow utility suggests adding the following rule to the policy:

```
allow my_app_t reserved_port_t:tcp_socket name_bind;
```

This rule would allow my\_app\_t access to all reserved ports which is unneccessary and potentially unsecure.

The ports can be labeled using the portcon rules, but as of policy version 31, these rules are not valid in a policy module, only in the base policy. So audit2allow would not be able to generate the portcon rules directly. Another way of labeling ports is via the semanage port command. The audit2allow should suggest using the semanage port command when appropriate.

#### 3.3.2 Network Nodes

SELinux is capable of labeling network nodes. For example, there can be rules that allow process to communicate only on private LAN or even only on local host. Attempts to violate these rules would then produce AVC denial messages that contain IP address of the node.

The proper solution would be to modify a label of a certain subnet of the network, for example using the semanage node command. AVC denial messages provide only IP addresses. As IP addresses can often change, labeling a single network node would not be useful. Labeling of network nodes is not used on Fedora and RHEL. Improving the audit2allow utility to suggest semanage node commands would not make a big impact on security.

#### 3.3.3 Network Interfaces

SELinux is capable of labeling network interfaces (such as eth0). In Fedora and RHEL, labeling of network interfaces is not used. Improving audit2allow to suggest semanage interface commands would not make a big impact on security.

# Chapter 4

# Implementation

From the list of possible improvements to audit2allow, the following improvements have been implemented:

- Support for extended permissions. The audit2allow utility can now detect denials that may be caused by extended permission AV rules. With the --xperms option, audit2allow generates extended AV rules.
- Checking mislabeled files. The audit2allow utility now parses the path field in AVC denial messages and checks if files have the default context. When the context in AVC denial message is different than the default one, audit2allow produces warning.

#### 4.1 Extended Permissions

Main script audit2allow and the audit.py, access.py, policygen.py, refpolicy.py modules were modified to support extended permissions. Support for extended permission AV rules with the --reference option was not implemented.

In main script, a new command-line option --xperms was added to turn on generating of the extended permission AV rules. This option turns on extended permission AV rules generating in PoligyGenerator.

#### 4.1.1 Parsing AVC Denial Messages

Despite extended permissions being a general concept, AVC denial messages generated by the Linux Audit system contain operation-specific field ioctlcmd. In the future, with introduction of new operation to the extended permissions, the audit.py module will need to be updated.

The audit.py module was extended to parse the ioctlcmd field in AVC denial messages. The ioctlcmd field is then converted to fit the general concept of extended permissions and passed to the access vector set. The following code in the AuditParser.to\_access() method converts operation-specific fields to generic extended permission dictionary:

```
if avc.ioctlcmd:
    xperm_set = refpolicy.XpermSet()
    xperm_set.add(avc.ioctlcmd)
    xperms = { "ioctl": xperm_set }
```

#### 4.1.2 Storing Extended Permissions

AVC denial messages are converted to access vectors (see section 4). Two messages that contains same source and target context and object class are merged together. Denials caused by the ioctl system call produce AVC denial messages containing the ioctlcmd field. These messages can be treated the same way as any other AVC denial message, but for generating extended permission AV rules, the ioctlcmd field must be stored. The AccessVector class was extended to store the ioctlcmd field and potentionally any other extended permission fields introduced in the future.

Single access vector may be product of several AVC denial messages that contain different values in the ioctlcmd field. For the purpose of representing extended permission values, new class XpermSet was implemented in the refpolicy.py module. The XpermSet class supports merging of multiple values. It is likely that in the future new extended permission operation will be introduced. Access vector must store values for different operations. For this purpose, XpermSet objects are stored in a dictionary where an operation is the key, for example:

```
{
    'ioctl': <refpolicy.XpermSet() object>,
    'other_command': <refpolicy.XpermSet() object>,
    'another_command': <refpolicy.XpermSet() object>,
}
```

When merging two access vectors, the permissions set are merged using the union() method. Extended permission dictionary is merged using the following code from the AccessVector.merge() method:

```
for op in av.xperms:
    if op not in self.xperms:
        self.xperms[op] = refpolicy.XpermSet()
    self.xperms[op].extend(av.xperms[op])
```

The av variable contains access vector that is to be merged with self access vector.

#### 4.1.3 Representation of Extended Permission AV Rules

Extended permission access vector rules are represented by new AVExtRule class from the refpolicy.py module. This class is very similar to the AVRule class, but contains attributes specific to extended permission AV rules. The operation attribute is a string identifying the operation, e.g. 'ioctl'. The xperms attribute is an XpermSet instance. Method to\_string() prints out the rule. An example of an extended permission AV rule:

```
allowxperm my_app_t my_socket_t : tcp_socket ioctl { 20 30 0x40 50-60 };
```

The AVExtRule class is initialized from an access vector using the from\_av() method. This method contains the op parameter to select which extended permission operation from the access vector should appear in the rule.

Without extended permissions, every access vector can be converted into single AV rule. With extended permissions attached to the access vector, to fully convert access vector to policy rules, there needs to be one AV rule and possibly several extended permission AV rules. For example, this access vector:

```
{
    source_context: 'unconfined_u:system_r:src_t:s0',
    target_context: 'system_u:object_r:tgt_t:s0',
    object_class: 'tcp_socket',
    permissions: { 'getattr', 'ioctl' }
    extended_permissions: {
        'ioctl': { 1, 2, 3 },
        'other_command': { 40, 50, 60 },
        'another_command': { 700, 800, 900 },
    }
}
would be converted into these policy rules<sup>1</sup>:
allow src_t tgt_t:tcp_socket { getattr ioctl };
allowxperm src_t tgt_t:tcp_socket ioctl { 1 2 3 };
allowxperm src_t tgt_t:tcp_socket other_command { 40 50 60 };
allowxperm src_t tgt_t:tcp_socket another_command { 700 800 900 };
```

#### 4.1.4 Generating Extended Permission AV Rules

New configuration method set\_gen\_xperms() was added to the PolicyGenerator from the policygen.py module, to specify whether the extended permission AV rules should be generated.

In the old implementation, method add\_access() called the \_\_add\_allow\_rules() method which generated AV rules for every access vector set. In new implementation, there are two methods, \_\_add\_av\_rule() and \_\_add\_ext\_av\_rules(). Both accept access vector as a parameter, the \_\_add\_av\_rule() method generates single standard access vector rule, \_\_add\_ext\_av\_rules() method generates (possibly) several extended permission access vector rules. Both methods are called from the add access() methods:

```
for av in raw_allow:
    self.__add_av_rule(av)
    if self.xperms and av.xperms:
        self.__add_ext_av_rules(av)
```

### 4.2 Mislabeled Files

The audit2allow utility was extended to check the default context of file if the path field is present in the AVC denial message. The audit.py and policygen.py modules were modified.

#### 4.2.1 Parsing File Path

The audit.py module was modified to parse the path field in AVC denial messages. Only paths found directly in AVC denial messages will be analyzed later by matchpathcon. As a result, the context will not be checked in many cases, because the AVC denials often does not contain full path, only inode number and file name.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>Note that as of policy version 31, only the ioctl operation is supported, operations other\_command and another\_command were added only as an example.

## 4.2.2 Checking Default Context

In policygen.py module, new option was added to the PolicyGenerator to turn on or off checking of mislabeled files. Checking is turned on by default. Every AVC message from every access vector is checked whether it contains the path. Default context of the path is then obtained via selinux.matchpathcon() function. Target context of the access vector is then compared with the default context. In case of difference, comment is added to warn user about mislabeled file. For example:

# Chapter 5

# **Functional Testing**

The functionality of implemented features to audit2allow was tested by extending existing unit tests and writing integration tests that are focused on interoperation between audit2allow, SELinux, and Linux Audit system.

# 5.1 Testing Extended Permissions Implementation

Unit tests were extended to ensure that the new functionality does not break existing code. New test cases were added to test the new features.

#### 5.1.1 Testing audit2allow Script

In main script, new --xperms and -x option was added to turn on extended permission AV rules generation.

Audit2allowTests class from the test_audit2allow.py module:	
test_xperms()	Test that audit2allow -x produces at least one allowxperm rule.

## 5.1.2 Testing audit.py Module

In this module, audit message parser was modified to recognize new field in AVC denial messages and to convert the field to extended permissions.

Testing AVCMessage.\_\_init\_\_():

TestAVCMessage class from the test_audit.py module:	
test_defs()	Test that AVCMessage.ioctlcmd is None.

Testing AVCMessage.from\_split\_string():

TestAVCMessage class from the test_audit.py module:		
test_xperms()	Test that the ioctlcmd field is parsed.	
test_xperms_invalid()	Test message with invalid value in the ioctlcmd field	
test_xperms_without()	Test message without the ioctlcmd field.	

Testing AVCMessage.to\_access():

TestAuditParser class from the test_audit.py module:		
test_parse_xperms()	Test that correct access vectors are generated from a set of AVC denial messages.	

## 5.1.3 Testing access.py Module

In this module, classes AccessVector and AccessVectorSet were extended. Testing AccessVector.\_\_init\_\_():

TestAccessVector class from the test_access.py module:	
test_init()	Test that AccessVector.xperms is a dictionary.

Testing AccessVector.merge(): this method must correctly merge permissions and extended permissions of two access vectors.

TestAccessVector class from the test_access.py module:		
test_merge_noxperm()	Test merging two AVs without extended permissions.	
test_merge_xperm1()	Test merging AV that contains extended permissions with AV that does not.	
test_merge_xperm2()	Test merging AV that does not contain extended permissions with AV that does.	
<pre>test_merge_xperm_diff_op()</pre>	Test merging two AVs both containing extended permissions, but with different operations.	
<pre>test_merge_xperm_same_op()</pre>	Test merging two AVs both containing extended permissions with the same operation.	

Testing AccessVector.add\_av(): this method adds access vector to the set.

TestAccessVectorSet class from the test_access.py module:		
test_add_av_first()	Test adding first access vector to the access vector set.	
test_add_av_second()	Test adding second AV to the set with same source and target context and class.	
test_add_av_with_msg()	Test adding audit message.	

Testing AccessVector.add(): this method just creates an instance of AccessVector class and passes the AV to the AccessVector.add\_av() method.

TestAccessVectorSet class from the test_access.py module:	
test_add() Test adding access vector to the set.	

## 5.1.4 Testing policygen.py Module

In this module, PolicyGenerator was extended to generate extended permission access vector rules.

Testing PolicyGenerator.\_\_init\_\_():

TestPolicyGenerator class from the test_policygen.py module:	
test_init()	Test that extended permission AV rules are not generated by default.

Testing PolicyGenerator.set\_gen\_xperms():

TestPolicyGenerator class from the test_policygen.py module:		
test_set_gen_xperms()	Test turning on and off generating of extended permission AV rules.	

Testing PolicyGenerator.add\_access():

TestPolicyGenerator class from the test_policygen.py module:	
test_av_rules()	Test that new implementation of the add_access() method does not break generating of standard AV rules.
test_ext_av_rules()	Test that correct extended permission AV rules are generated from access vectors.

## 5.1.5 Testing refpolicy.py Module

The XpermSet and AVExtRule classes were added to represent extended permission access vector rules.

Testing XpermSet class: this class represents extended permission values. The add() method adds values or ranges of values, the extend() method combines two XpermSet objects, and the to\_string() method prints the rule.

TestXpermSet class from the test_refpolicy.py module:		
test_init()	Test that all atttributes are correctly initialized.	
<pre>test_normalize_ranges()</pre>	Test that ranges that are overlapping or neighboring are correctly merged into one range.	
test_add()	Test adding new values or ranges to the set.	
test_extend()	Test adding ranges from another XpermSet object.	
test_to_string()	Test printing the values to a string.	

Testing AVExtRule class: this class is similar to the AVRule class. The from\_av() method creates the rule from an access vector and the to\_string() method prints the rule to a string.

TestAVExtRule class from the test_refpolicy.py module:		
test_init()	Test that all attributes are correctly initialized.	
test_rule_type_str()	Test printing the rule type.	
test_from_av()	Test creating the rule from an access vector.	
test_from_av_self()	Test creating the rule from an access vector that has same source and target context.	
test_to_string()	Test printing the rule.	

#### 5.1.6 Integration Tests of Extended Permissions

Integration test was written to check audit2allow functionality in real world situation. First, SELinux policy module with extended permission AV rules is loaded. Testing program then tries to call ioctl on a file with different parameters. AVC denials are collected and sent to audit2allow with different command-line options.

# 5.2 Testing Implementation of File Contexts Checks

New unit tests were written to cover new functionality.

## 5.2.1 Testing audit.py Module

In this module, the AVCMessage.from\_split\_string() method was extended to parse path field. Test cases:

TestAVCMessage class from the test_audit.py module:		
test_path()	Test that the path field is parsed.	

## 5.2.2 Testing policygen Module

In this module, new configuration option was added to the PolicyGenerator. For the purposes of testing, selinux.matchpathcon() function used for checking the default context was replaced.

TestPolicyGenerator class from the test_policygen.py module:		
<pre>test_check_mislabeled_nothing()</pre>	Test no mislabeled files.	
test_check_mislabeled_one()	Test one mislabeled file.	

#### 5.2.3 Integration Tests of File Contexts Checks

To test checking of mislabeled files, integration test was written. First, SELinux policy module that defines new SELinux type is loaded. Test file is created and labeled with new type. Testing program then tries to open that file and fails. AVC denials are collected and sent to the audit2allow utility. The output is checked for warnings about mislabeled file.

# Chapter 6

# Conclusion

The aim of this thesis was to identify situations where the audit2allow utility provides unsecure and too permissive solutions. Several situations were found. The audit2allow utility relies on objects having correct labels and it is not able to detect that the denials were caused by mislabeled objects.

In case of mislabeled files, audit2allow is only partially able to detect that the file is mislabeled. There are ways how to check if the file is mislabeled, but in most situations, not enough information is logged using the Linux Audit system to get full path of the file. Checking of default file context was implemented as a part of this thesis. This improvement warns users that the file is mislabeled and another tool needs to be used to restore the default context of the file.

The audit2allow utility is not aware of recently added support for extended permission that provide more granular control of permissions given to processes. When used for troubleshooting SELinux denials caused by extended permissions, the audit2allow utility is not able to provide functional solution. Support for generating extended permission access vector rules was implemented as a part of this thesis. The audit2allow utility can now detect that the denial was caused by extended permissions and generate extended permission access vector rules to allow the operations that were denied. SELinux policy developers can now use audit2allow to generate more restrictive rules as a basis of a security policy for their products.

In case of mislabeled TCP or UDP ports, audit2allow can detect that the port needs an application-specific label. Creating new labels for ports is a task that requires certain knowledge of SELinux and the solution is not straightforward. Suggesting labels for ports can be imhemented in the future.

The audit2allow utility can be further improved to detect situations where the correct solution is to use different tool. This thesis serves as a basis for discussion about new features that would make troubleshooting problems with SELinux easier.

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# Appendix A

# Contents of Enclosed Memory Media

The contents of the enclosed memory media:

/packages RPM packages for Fedora 28

/source-packages Source RPM packages

/selinux-xperms Source codes for extended permission support

/selinux-restorecon Source codes for checking mislabeled files

/patches Source codes as a patches to the upstream repository

/tests Integration tests

/thesis Sources for building the text of the thesis

Extending-audit2allow.pdf Text of the thesis

# Appendix B

# Manual

# **B.1** Upstream Repository

Improvements to audit2allow were implemented as a series of patches to a 2.8-rc1 version of the SELinux userspace upstream repository. To install upstream version of userspace, follow the instructions in README.

The /selinux-xperms directory contains the SELinux userspace repository with support for extended permissions applied on top of the f04d6401 commit from the upstream repository.

The /selinux-restorecon directory contains the SELinux userspace repository with support for checking mislabeled files applied on top of the f04d6401 commit from the upstream repository.

The /patches directory contains patches against the f04d6401 commit.

# B.2 Fedora packages

Patches for both extended permission support and support for checking mislabeled files were applied to Fedora userspace packages and can be installed on Fedora 28. The /packages directory contains RPM packages. The /source-packages directory contains SRPM packages with source codes.

These packages can be installed directly using the dnf command:

```
# dnf install packages/*.rpm
or from a COPR repository:
# dnf copr enable janzarsky/selinux-fedora
# dnf install policycoreutils-python-utils
```

## B.3 Tests

To run unit tests, install modified packages on the system. Then navigate to the /selinux-xperms or /selinux-restorecon directory and run tests from the upstream repository. As a part of this thesis, tests in selinux/python/sepolgen/tests and selinux/python/audit2allow/test\_audit2allow were implemented.

The /tests directory contains integration tests. These tests require the beakerlib library. To run the tests, install modified packages on the system and run the runtest.sh files.