



SINGAPORE UNIVERSITY OF  
TECHNOLOGY AND DESIGN

# **Study of Models for Runtime Remote Attestations**

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by Design, ISTD (MSSD)

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## Declaration of Authorship

I, Jon Kartago LAMIDA, declare that this thesis titled, “Study of Models for Runtime Remote Attestations” and the work presented in it are my own. I confirm that:

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- Where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated.
- Where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed.
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*“By (the Token of) Time (through the ages), Verily Man is in loss, Except such as have Faith, and do righteous deeds, and (join together) in the mutual teaching of Truth, and of Patience and Constancy.”*

The Quran - The Epoch



SUTD

*Abstract*

ISTD (MSSD)

Master of Science in Security by Design

**Study of Models for  
Runtime Remote Attestations**

by Jon Kartago LAMIDA

Runtime remote attestation enable attesting application to ensure there is no control flow attack that alter the intended behavior of the program. Prior to the ScaRR [28] , remote attestation was only feasible for embedded system and there was no scalable solution for complex programs. This thesis present the implementation of ScaRR offline measurement using LLVM and analyze the performance of the computation.

**Flavio** leave the abstract as last point ◀





## *Acknowledgements*

The acknowledgments and the people to thank go here, don't forget to include your project advisor...



# Contents

<b>Declaration of Authorship</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>Abstract</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>ix</b>
<b>Contents</b>	<b>xi</b>
<b>List of Figures</b>	<b>xiii</b>
<b>List of Tables</b>	<b>xv</b>
<b>1 Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Motivation . . . . .	1
1.2 Related Works . . . . .	2
<b>2 Scope</b>	<b>5</b>
2.1 Outline . . . . .	5
<b>3 Background</b>	<b>7</b>
3.1 Control Flow Attack . . . . .	7
3.2 Remote Attestation . . . . .	8
3.3 ScaRR Control-Flow Model . . . . .	8
3.3.1 Checkpoints . . . . .	8
3.3.2 List of Actions . . . . .	9
3.4 LLVM . . . . .	10
3.4.1 Intermediate Representation . . . . .	10
3.4.2 LLVM Pass . . . . .	12
3.4.3 LLVM API . . . . .	12
Module . . . . .	13
Function . . . . .	13
Basic Block . . . . .	13
Graph Traversal . . . . .	13
3.4.4 Tools . . . . .	13
clang . . . . .	14
opt . . . . .	14
cmake . . . . .	14

<b>4 Methodology</b>	<b>19</b>
4.1 Threat Model . . . . .	19
4.2 Overview . . . . .	19
4.3 Code Inlining . . . . .	20
4.4 ScaRR Checkpoint Marker . . . . .	21
4.5 ScaRR LoA Collector . . . . .	24
<b>5 Results</b>	<b>27</b>
5.1 Running The Pass . . . . .	27
5.2 ScaRR Control-Flow Result . . . . .	28
5.3 Complexity Analysis . . . . .	30
5.4 Case Study . . . . .	30
<b>6 Discussion and Future Works</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>7 Conclusion</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>41</b>

# List of Figures

3.1	Loop CFG. . . . .	9
3.2	CFG for Simple C Program. . . . .	10
3.3	LLVM Pass. . . . .	12
4.1	Generating Offline Measurement. . . . .	20
4.2	Original and Inlined Factorial Program. . . . .	22
5.1	Lines of Code, Lines of IR and Number of BasicBlocks. . . . .	31
5.2	Basic Block and ScaRR Control-Flow Result. . . . .	31
5.3	Simple Loop Basic Block. . . . .	33
5.4	Simple Loop Checkpoints and LoAs. . . . .	34



# List of Tables

5.1	<b>Flavio</b> this is a style example. Important things: no vertical lines, numbers right aligned, keep a consistent number of decimal place (at least per column), no horizontal lines besides top, bottom, and a few middle after the header. Extra point 1, for very long table pls consider to use alternative row colors <a href="https://tex.stackexchange.com/questions/5363/how-to-create-alternating-rows-in-a-table">https://tex.stackexchange.com/questions/5363/how-to-create-alternating-rows-in-a-table</a> . Extra point 2, to span a table over multiple pages check this <a href="https://tex.stackexchange.com/questions/26462/make-a-table-span-multiple-pages">https://tex.stackexchange.com/questions/26462/make-a-table-span-multiple-pages</a> ◀ . . . . .	35
5.3	Redis ScaRR measurements. . . . .	35
5.4	Some additional programs ScaRR measurements. . . . .	35





# List of Listings

3.1	Simple C Program. . . . .	11
3.2	LLVM IR The Sample C Program. . . . .	15
3.3	Running Legacy LLVM Pass. . . . .	15
3.4	Running LLVM New Pass. . . . .	16
3.5	LLVM Module API. . . . .	16
3.6	LLVM Basic Block API. . . . .	16
3.7	Compiling C to LLVM IR. . . . .	16
3.8	Compiling C to LLVM IR without Optimization. . . . .	16
3.9	Cloning LLVM Source Code. . . . .	16
3.10	Building LLVM. . . . .	17
4.1	Program to calculate factorial. . . . .	21
4.2	Add Checkpoint Instance Variable to BasicBlock class. . . . .	23
4.3	Finding ExitPoint Checkpoint . . . . .	23
4.4	Getting Virtual Checkpoint . . . . .	24
4.5	Pseudocode to Collect List of Actions. . . . .	25
5.1	Mark Checkpoint in BasicBlock. . . . .	28
5.2	Print Checkpoints in CFG dot file. . . . .	28
5.3	Get List of Actions . . . . .	28
5.4	Case Study Program. . . . .	33
5.5	Case Study Program IR. . . . .	36



*This thesis is dedicated to my family*



# Chapter 1

## Introduction

Memory corruption errors have been a major security problem for almost 40 years [27, 29]. The errors often happen due to the use of unsafe languages, mainly C and C++. This safety issue becomes a significant attack surface that affects the security of many critical applications. The adversaries can hijack the program and taking control to achieve their goals. Such an attack impacts a wide range of applications, from distributed systems running in the cloud to IoT devices.

Since the identification of these vulnerabilities, continuous arm races have been ongoing between adversaries and defenders. As attackers find a vulnerability, then different defense mechanisms are invented. After that, attackers and researchers find another vulnerability that can circumvent or disable the defense. Or sometimes, the solutions are not just practical to be deployed. So far, we deploy some solutions such as non-executable stack (NX) or Data Execution Prevention (DEP)  $W \oplus R$  [29] Control Flow Integrity (CFG) [1], ASLR [15], Stack Canaries [4] and more. Unfortunately the war is not over.

In 2016, Abera et al. published a solution called C-Flat for detecting a control-flow attack in runtime [2]. The detection is performed by mechanism called remote attestation [14]. The research focused on attesting runtime control-flow attacks on IoT or other embedded devices. Since then, many runtimes remote attestation schema are introduced [13, 30, 16, 12, 3, 17, 26]. Like C-Flat, most of those remote attestation schemes are targeting embedded systems. One unique runtime remote attestation schema name ScaRR tries to cover remote attestation beyond embedded application but also made it work for complex system [28].

This thesis study different model for runtime remote attestation. We zoom in the ScaRR implementation due to the unique strength in making the attestation work for a complex system.

### 1.1 Motivation

In this thesis, we want to answer these questions.

- What are different remote attestation model that is available now and how do they differ?
- How to implement offline program analysis for the ScaRR novel model for remote attestation?
- How is the performance of the model?

## 1.2 Related Works

In this section, we discuss the different runtime remote attestation models. Specifically, we discuss how different attestation schemes encode the offline program representations.

C-Flat [2] is the first remote attestation scheme to detect runtime control flow attack for embedded systems. C-Flat generates offline measurement by traversing all possible paths of a program, from the start node to the termination node. In each node, C-Flat hashes the node ID and the hash of the previous node. In the first node, since there is no previous hash, we pass 0. All of those steps create hash chains which we store as offline measurement database.

With that control-flow model, C-Flat can attest the exact control-flow path of the program. C-Flat also doesn't need source code, because the offline measurement can be run on the binary program. However, C-Flat has one limitation—which is stated by the authors—on its inefficiencies for having to explore all possible paths from program control flow graph [2].

Lo-Fat [13] improves C-Flat by using hardware support for control flow attestation. The hardware will intercept the instructions and process them in the components called branch filter and loop monitor. With this hardware support, Lo-Fat incurs no performance overhead. However, Lo-Fat control-flow representation still inherits C-Flat approach, therefore it still induces high verification cost.

Atrium [30] is remote attestation scheme that can provide resiliency against physical memory attacks where adversaries can exploit the property of Time of Check Time of Use (TOCTOU) during attestation. In this paper, the author describes memory bank attacks. In that attack the adversary can control instruction fetches to benign memory area when attestation is running and directs the fetch to the malicious area otherwise.

The offline measurement is calculated slightly different compared with C-Flat and Lo-Fat. In Atrium, the verifier performs one-time pre-processing to generate CFG of the program and computes cryptographic hash measurement over the instructions and addresses of basic blocks. C-Flat only hashes the node ID. While this approach can mitigate the TOCTOU attack, the offline measurement generation still grows exponentially as the complexity of the program increases.

LiteHax [12] is hardware assisted remote attestation scheme that allow verifier to detect these different attacks:

- control-data attack such as code injection or code reuse attack like ROP
- non-control-data attack
- data-only attack such as DOP which do not affect control flow

The offline measurement phase of LiteHax only generates program CFG without calculating any hash over the whole control flows and data flow events. The way LiteHax calculates hash is different from previous schemes. However, in the online prover-side verification time, provers still compute hashes and sending them as reports to the verifier. Verifier runs symbolic execution and incremental forward data-flow analysis without doing any lookup to offline measurement database.

Diat [3] is a remote attestation scheme that can attest data integrity and control-flow of autonomous collaborative network systems. The program attested must be decomposed into small interacting modules. The scheme does the decomposition to improve the efficiency of the attestation. LiteHax sets Data-flow monitorings between critical modules. Control path attestation is being done against novel execution path representation using multiset has (MSH) function [9]. The use of MSH prevents the reconstruction of some execution order of the program.

OAT [26] is remote attestation scheme to attest operation integrity of embedded device. OAT defines two types of measurements for control flow attestation: a trace (for recording branches and jumps) and a hash (for encoding returns). These two measurements are encoded as  $H = Hash(H \oplus RetAddr)$ . OAT defines called that attestation blob.

During verification, the verifier reconstructs paths from the attestation blob. The control flow violation is identified when the CFI check against an address is failed or mismatched between hash and trace.

Although OAT does not encounter the combinatorial hash explosion in C-Flat, there is a verification overhead since the verifier needs to reconstruct the attestation blob.





## Chapter 2

# Scope

The main work of this research is to study the offline analysis of the ScaRR's model [28] over a set of programs written in C/C++. Specifically, we write a tool to extract offline measurement using the ScaRR control-flow model, verify the scalability of the algorithm and study its limitation.

To sum up, the main contributions of this thesis are:

1. Propose an implementation of ScaRR's offline measurement extractor.
2. Verify the scalability of ScaRR's offline measurement algorithm.
3. Study the algorithm limitation.

### 2.1 Outline

**Chapter 3:** We discuss the background. We present control-flow attack and remote attestation to attest control-flow attack. We also discuss ScaRR control-flow model. Last, we present LLVM, which we use to extract control-flow graph (CFG); to mark the basic block as checkpoints and find the list of actions between those checkpoints.

**Chapter 4:** We present the methodology based on the scope of the contributions. We start by discussing the threat model. We then mainly shows the algorithms and implementation of the offline measurement extractor.

**Chapter 5:** We show the result of the implementation and experiment. We demonstrate how to run the LLVM pass. Finally, we present the control flow result for some programs that we test. We also discuss the complexity analysis of the implementation. Last, we present one of the programs as a case study. We show the breakdown of the process from showing the code, get the control-flow graph, and ultimately how we get the offline measurement result.

**Chapter 6:** We discuss the result, limitation and future works for the research.

**Chapter 7:** We close this thesis with conclusion that we gather after the research.



## Chapter 3

# Background

In this chapter, we present a brief history of memory attacks and some background information on control-flow attacks in section 3.1. In section 3.2, we discuss how remote attestation helps to detect control-flow attack. We present ScaRR control flow model in section 3.3. The chapter ends in section 3.4, which shares an overview of LLVM that is relevant to the research.

### 3.1 Control Flow Attack

A control-flow attack happens when an adversary maliciously makes a program act on his choice. The adversary can do so without statically modifies the program binary but alters the runtime properties of the program. The adversary intention can be to execute malicious operations or to leak secret information. Many of these runtime software security attacks occurs due to memory corruption bug in software written in low-level languages like C and C++ [27].

Once memory corruption is triggered, there are different exploit types which adversary can use to perform the attack. Some of the relevant exploits are control-flow hijack [25, 24] and data only attack [8, 7].

Control-flow hijack can be classified further into code injection attacks and code reuse attacks such as return-oriented programming [23]. Code injection attack injects malicious codes to the program. The malicious code executes action prepared by the attacker. Code injection attack is already mitigated by solutions like non-executable stack (NX), Data Execution Prevention and  $W \oplus R$  [29]. Code reuse attack executes malicious action without injecting any codes. It cannot be detected by the previously mentioned defenses mechanism. As an example, return-oriented program chains together short instruction sequences already present in the program's address space, each of which ends in a `return` instruction. Unfortunately, ROP can not be mitigated by  $W \oplus R$  [23].

Memory error attacks and defenses are a continuous battle which unfortunately has not shown that it is over. In 2016, Abera et al proposed to use remote attestation to detect control flow attack [2]. That paper opened many types of research in this area which we briefly presented in Chapter 1.

## 3.2 Remote Attestation

In this thesis, we explore the use of remote attestation in detecting the control-flow attack. Remote attestation is the activity of making a claim about properties of a remote target by supplying evidence to an appraiser over a network [10]. The ubiquitous deployment of IoT and different applications in the cloud require a robust remote attestation method to ensure detection when the application is attacked. Remote attestation scope was only covering static attestation of the application binary. However, in recent years there has been a more sophisticated attack that can alter the behavior of application so that static attestation does not suffice.

In remote attestation, there are two roles involved, a trusted prover and a verifier. A prover is the one that must prove that the software has not been compromised. Verifier checks prover to ask the current state of the runtime of the program. Alternatively, prover also can just update the verifier periodically without being asked. The verifier compares the response from the prover with the local database which has been generated before. If any of measurement mismatches, it means there has been a violation due to the adversary's attack.

This research mainly focuses on offline measurement data generation for remote attestation. The offline measurement is used by the verifier to validate the control flow graph. In the next section, we discuss the detail of the control-flow model. We use LLVM in implementing the offline program analyzer.

## 3.3 ScaRR Control-Flow Model

ScaRR [28] takes lesson learned from many former runtime remote attestation scheme to build a model that can perform in a scalable way and can perform remote attestation on a complex system. ScaRR control-flow model consists of two main components, checkpoint and list of action.

As with many previous runtime attestation schemes, ScaRR models and validates the attestation based on the program's control flow graph. We need to run one-time measurement computation to extract checkpoints and list of actions of the program.

### 3.3.1 Checkpoints

Checkpoint is basic block of the program that delimits the execution path of the program. ScaRR defines these different checkpoint types:

- Thread Beginning: demarcating the start of program/thread
- Thread End: demarcating the end of program/thread
- Exit Point: representing exit point from an application such as system call or out of translation unit function/library call
- Virtual-Checkpoint: managing cases for loop or recursion

In a program, there should be at least Thread Beginning and Thread End checkpoints. Later, depends on the structure of the program, some different checkpoints are marked in the program CFG.

### 3.3.2 List of Actions

List of actions (LoA) are edges (marked by two checkpoints) that direct one checkpoint to the next one. In a program execution path, we only consider edges that identify the unique execution path.

LoA is defined through the following notation:

$$[(BBL_{s1}, BBL_{d1}), \dots, (BBL_{sn}, BBL_{dn})]$$

Consider again the CFG in the Figure 3.1. The LoA between  $N_3$  (Checkpoint Virtual) and  $N_{10}$  (checkpoint ThreadEnd) is  $[(BBL_3, BBL_{10})]$ . However, the LoA between  $N_0$  and  $N_3$  is  $\square$  (empty set).

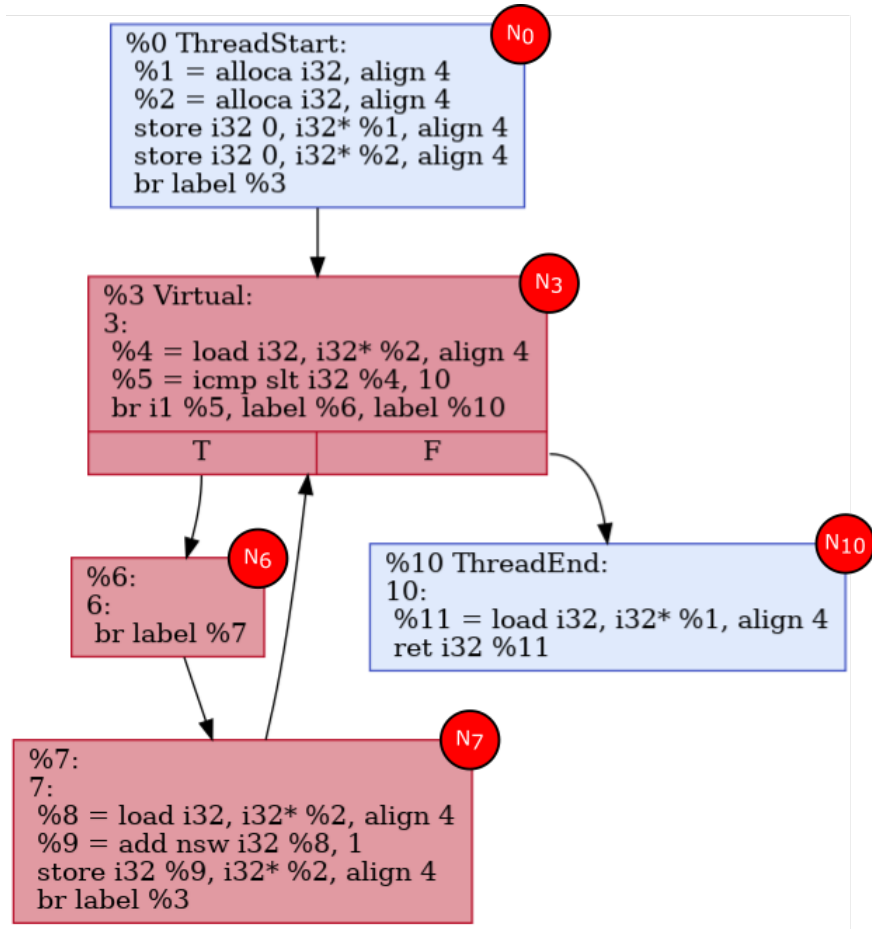


FIGURE 3.1: Loop CFG.

### 3.4 LLVM

LLVM is a compiler framework developed by Chris Lattner. LLVM provides portable program representation and different compiler toolings. LLVM supports the implementation of various frontends, backends, and middle optimizers for various programming languages [lattnerLLVMCompilationFramework2004a].

#### 3.4.1 Intermediate Representation

LLVM intermediate representation (IR) provides high-level information about programs to support sophisticated analysis and transformations. However, the representation is low-level enough to represent arbitrary programs and to allow extensive optimization. As an example, consider a simple C program in listing 3.1.

The IR of the program can be seen in listing 3.2. The text representation below is just one form of IR. Besides this readable instruction representation, LLVM IR also can be represented as byte code and in-memory representation. In the IR, each line contains LLVM instructions. Instructions are grouped in basic blocks: containers for instructions that execute sequentially. This arrangement, makes the application control flow graph (CFG) to be explicit in the IR. The details of LLVM IR is available in the Language Reference [18].

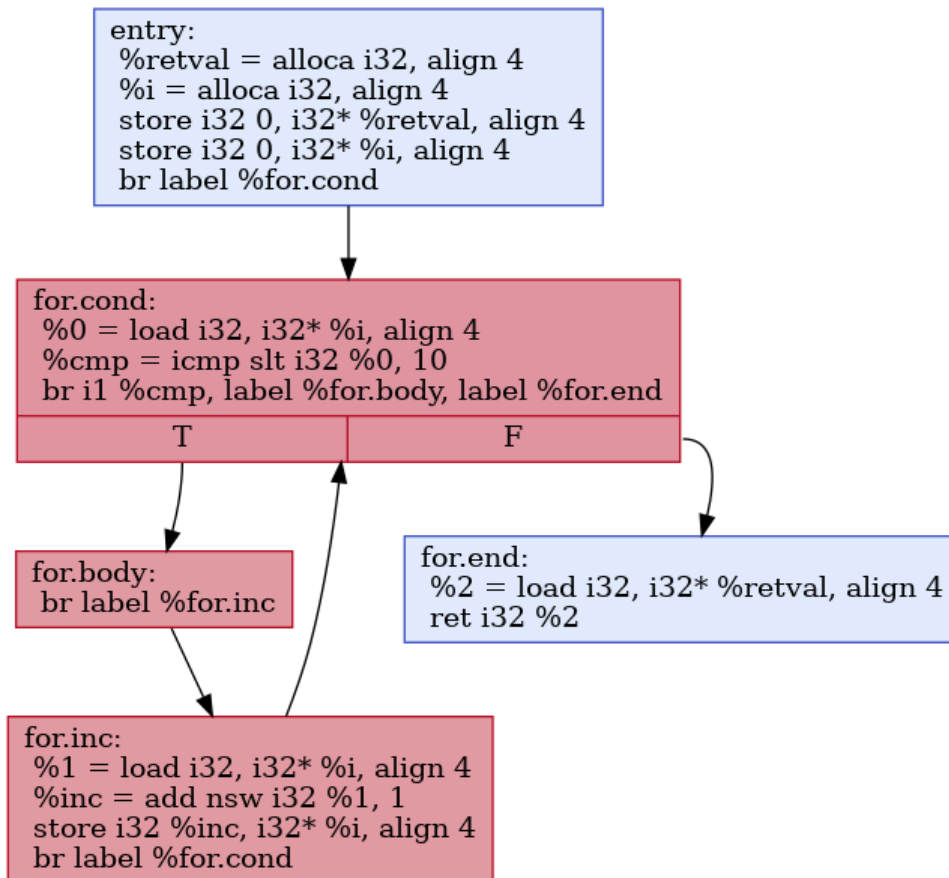


FIGURE 3.2: CFG for Simple C Program.

---

```
1  #include <stdio.h>
2
3  char *get_input()
4  {
5      int rnd = rand() % 2;
6      printf("get_input");
7      return rnd == 1 ? "auth" : "error";
8  }
9
10 char *get_privileged_info()
11 {
12     printf("get_privileged_info");
13     return "you are privileged!";
14 }
15
16 char *get_unprivileged_info()
17 {
18     printf("get_unprivileged_info");
19     return "Invalid!";
20 }
21
22 void print_output(char *result)
23 {
24     printf("%s", result);
25 }
26
27 void my_terminate()
28 {
29     printf("Exiting...");
30 }
31
32 int main()
33 {
34     char *access = get_input();
35     char *result = "";
36     if (strcmp(access, "auth") == 0)
37     {
38         result = get_privileged_info();
39     }
40     else
41     {
42         result = get_unprivileged_info();
43     }
44     print_output(result);
45     my_terminate();
46 }
```

---

LISTING 3.1: Simple C Program.

LLVM optimizer — which includes Analyzer and Transformer — are working on IR. In this thesis, we are using this analyzer and transformer in building the Offline Program Analyzer.

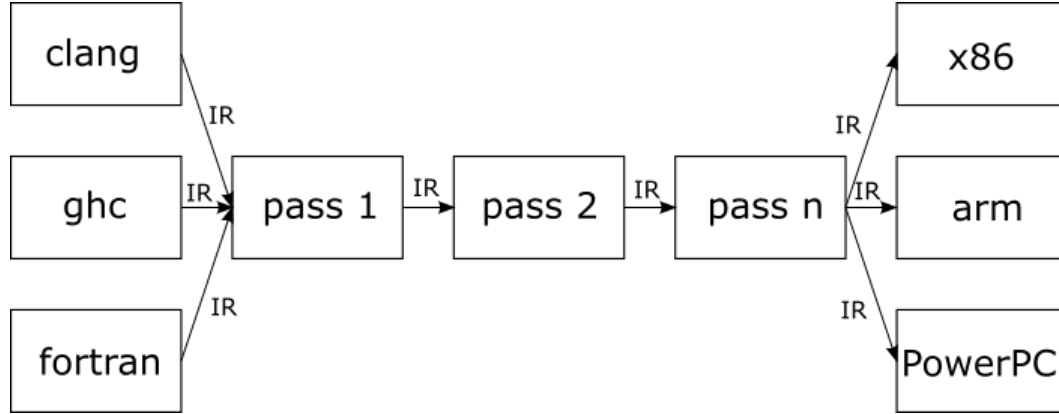


FIGURE 3.3: LLVM Pass.

### 3.4.2 LLVM Pass

LLVM applies transformations — which may include some analysis pipelines — and optimizations on tools called `opt`. `opt` is taking LLVM IR (either as text, bytecode or in memory) as input and then do transformations, analysis, and optimizations on it (see figure 3.3). Transformation and optimization alter the LLVM structure. The analysis gets information from the structure, which usually to be used by one or more transformations. Different transformations, optimizations, and analyses are performed as pipelines of LLVM passes. LLVM pass can run per function, module or loop. LLVM function pass is executed once for every function in the program. LLVM module pass is executed once for every module. LLVM loop pass runs a time for each loop.

In LLVM, there are two ways of implementing pass. First, to use the legacy approach. The latest one, to use the new pass manager approach. The approach is different (1) in structuring the code for the pass and also (2) the way we use the pass. In the legacy approach, we need to inherit from either `ModulePass`, `FunctionPass` or `LoopPass` and override `runOnXXX` method (xxx is either `Function`, `Module`, or `Loop`). In the newer approach, we have to inherit CRTP mix-in `PassInfoMixin<PassT>` and override the `run` method.

In the legacy approach, we need to provide the pass name as a literal argument to `opt`. See the example in listing 3.3. In the new pass manager, we are putting the pass name after `-passes` argument in comma-separated list (listing 3.4). LLVM executes the passes in order.

### 3.4.3 LLVM API

In writing the LLVM pass, we use LLVM API. In this section, we present relevant component that is required in implementing LLVM Pass for the Offline Program Analyzer. LLVM API is leveraging many C++ features and libraries such as template and STL.



The API also provides many ready to use data structure which is not available in the STL. A more broad discussion on the important elements of the API is available in the Programmers Manual [20]. We also can refer to the Complete API documentation in the doxygen page [19].

### Module

Module is the top-level container for all other IR objects. Module contains a list of global variables, functions, symbol tables, and other various data about target characteristics. Module can present as a single translation unit of a program (source file) or can be multiple translation units combined by a linker.

In LLVM pass, we can get access to a module by implementing a `textModule` pass or by parsing IR using `parseIR` or `parseIRFile` from `IRReader.h`. Once we get a handler to a module, getting a functions within module is as simple as pass a module to a loop. Module provides iterator that returns list of functions in the module (see listing 3.5).

### Function

Function in LLVM represents a function in the source program. A function contains a list of zero or more BasicBlocks. There is one entry BasicBlock and can be multiple exit BasicBlocks. We can get a handler to a function either by getting the iterator from a module instance or by implementing a Function Pass. By using optimization, syntax hint, or using an inliner pass, a function can be inlined. In this thesis, we are using *inliner-wrapper* pass to inline most functions before feeding the IR into the ScaRR passes. See also section 4.3 which discusses the inlining process.

### Basic Block

Basic Block represents a single entry and single exit section of the code. The single exit can be one of terminator instruction – branches, return, unwind and invoke. We can get a handle to a basic block from function. Refer to listing 3.6 to see how to get the basic block.

### Graph Traversal

LLVM CFG is structured as a graph. Therefore the basic block can be traversed using different ready-to-use graph traversal algorithms. LLVM offers some common graph traversal algorithms such as breadth-first search and depth-first search. The algorithms can be used immediately on basic blocks and functions. If there is a need to traverse a custom structure, the algorithms just require the new structure to implement *Graph-Writer* interface.

#### 3.4.4 Tools

We are implementing the algorithms using different tools. We are highlighting some of those in this section so that everyone interested can replicate the step.

## **clang**

`clang` is one of the frontend provided by LLVM. It can compile C, C++ and Objective C. `clang` command-line arguments are compatible with widely use GCC compiler. The main use of `clang` in this research is to compile source files into LLVM IR text files. Listing 3.7 shows how to compile a C program into LLVM IR.

We can pass the optimization level from 0 (no optimization) to 3 (maximum optimization) when compiling the source code. The optimization level 3 makes code run faster but it produces a larger code size.

By default, `clang` strips out value names and optimizes the code when generating LLVM IR. We can use this flag to disable optimization and get readable value names that can help when troubleshooting and exploring the generated IR. Listing 3.8 shows how to compile to IR without any optimization and to preserve the function and variable names.

## **opt**

`opt` is the LLVM optimizer and analyzer that can be invoked from the command line. We use `opt` to execute the offline program analyzer which marks basic block checkpoints and calculate list of actions which can be used as information to detect control flow violations during remote attestation.

## **cmake**

`cmake` is a build file generator that has an important role in large projects like LLVM. Although a deep understanding of `cmake` is not required in implementing LLVM pass, but we need to know at least how to build the pass after the implementation so that we can run it.

We can download LLVM uses git. See Listing 3.9. We implement the offline measurement extract using LLVM 13.0.0.

After downloading the code, we can go to the LLVM directory and generate the build files. `cmake` supports several build tools such as `make` and `ninja`. Refer to listing 3.10.

With all background discussion in this chapter, we should be ready to discuss the methodology in Chapter 4.

---

```

1 ; ModuleID = 'simple-loop-no-ext.c'
2 source_filename = "simple-loop-no-ext.c"
3 target datalayout = "e-m:e-p270:32:32-p271:32:32-p272:64:64-i64:..." ; truncated
4 target triple = "x86_64-pc-linux-gnu"
5
6 ; Function Attrs: noinline nounwind uwtable
7 define dso_local i32 @main() #0 {
8   entry:
9     %retval = alloca i32, align 4
10    %i = alloca i32, align 4
11    store i32 0, i32* %retval, align 4
12    store i32 0, i32* %i, align 4
13    br label %for.cond
14
15 for.cond:                                ; preds = %for.inc, %entry
16    %0 = load i32, i32* %i, align 4
17    %cmp = icmp slt i32 %0, 10
18    br i1 %cmp, label %for.body, label %for.end
19
20 for.body:                                ; preds = %for.cond
21    br label %for.inc
22
23 for.inc:                                  ; preds = %for.body
24    %1 = load i32, i32* %i, align 4
25    %inc = add nsw i32 %1, 1
26    store i32 %inc, i32* %i, align 4
27    br label %for.cond
28
29 for.end:                                  ; preds = %for.cond
30    %2 = load i32, i32* %retval, align 4
31    ret i32 %2
32 }
33
34 attributes #0 = { noinline nounwind uwtable ... } ; truncated ...
35
36 !llvm.module.flags = !{!0}
37 !llvm.ident = !{!1}
38
39 !0 = !{i32 1, !"wchar_size", i32 4}
40 !1 = !{"clang version 10.0.0-4ubuntu1 "}

```

---

LISTING 3.2: LLVM IR The Sample C Program.

---

```
opt --dot-cfg file.ll
```

---

LISTING 3.3: Running Legacy LLVM Pass.

---

```
opt -passes=scarr-cp-marker,scarr-loa-collector file.ll
```

---

LISTING 3.4: Running LLVM New Pass.

---

```
1  #include <llvm/IR/LLVMContext.h>
2  #include <llvm/IR/Module.h>
3  #include <llvm/IRReader/IRReader.h>
4  #include <llvm/Support/SourceMgr.h>
5
6  int main()
7  {
8      LLVMContext ctx;
9      SMDiagnostic Err;
10     auto module = parseIRFile("ir-file.ll", Err, ctx);
11     for (auto &function : *module)
12     {
13         // do thing with function
14     }
15 }
```

---

LISTING 3.5: LLVM Module API.

---

```
1     for (auto &function: *module) {
2         for (auto &basicBlock: function) {
3             // do thing with Basic Block
4         }
5     }
```

---

LISTING 3.6: LLVM Basic Block API.

---

```
clang -S -emit-llvm source.c
```

---

LISTING 3.7: Compiling C to LLVM IR.

---

```
clang -S -emit-llvm -Xclang -disable-O0-optnone \
-fno-discard-value-names source.c
```

---

LISTING 3.8: Compiling C to LLVM IR without Optimization.

---

```
git clone https://github.com/llvm/llvm-project
```

---

LISTING 3.9: Cloning LLVM Source Code.

---

```
1      cd llvm-project/llvm
2      mkdir build
3      cd build
4      cmake -G Ninja ../ # generate build file for Ninja
5      ninja opt # build only opt
```

---

LISTING 3.10: Building LLVM.



## Chapter 4

# Methodology

In this chapter, we present the methodology of the research. First, we present the threat model in section 4.1. After that, we show the overview of ScaRR algorithm to extract checkpoints and list of actions in section 4.2. Section 4.4 discusses the LLVM implementation to get checkpoints. Section 4.5 discusses the methodology of getting list of actions. Checkpoints and list of actions are collected to build offline measurement database that is used for the remote attestation. The last section shows how to run the LLVM passes to get the result which is presented in Chapter 5.

### 4.1 Threat Model

We take the threat model in this research from ScaRR [28]. There are two parties: attacker and prover.

**Attacker capabilities:** The attacker aims to control remote service using various methods such as memory attacks or any attack in user-space. The attacker has bypassed memory attack protection such as Control Flow Integrity (CFI) or  $W \oplus R$  or ASLR using techniques like Return-Oriented Programming (ROP) [23] or Jump-Oriented Programming (JOP) [5]. We do not consider physical attack and also non-control data attack which does not alter program's CFG.

**Defender capabilities:** The prover uses kernel as trusted anchor, has common memory corruption attack mitigations such as  $W \oplus R$  and ASLR. Finally, the defender can statically measure the integrity of the Prover's code (*i.e.*, has a hash representation of the prover's code).

### 4.2 Overview

The goal of the offline measurement is to get the information to be used in the remote attestation. In this research, we implement ScaRR Control-flow model [28] which we present in the Section 3.3.

Figure 4.1 shows the high-level step on generating the offline measurement. First, we inline the source code input (which could be in an intermediate representation form). Section 4.3 describes the inlining process. Next, we mark the checkpoints from inline code, particularly marking in the basic block of the code. Section 4.4 discusses

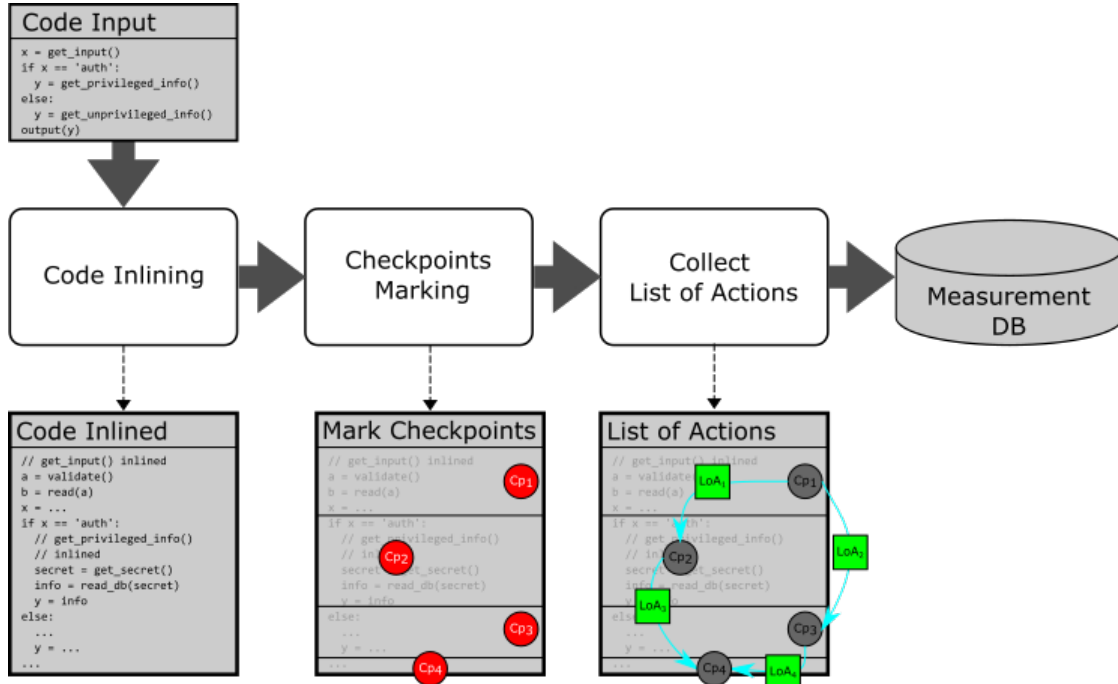


FIGURE 4.1: Generating Offline Measurement.

this checkpoint marking step. Last, for each checkpoint, we collect list of actions which indicates how a process traverses to move from one checkpoint to another. Section 4.5 talks about the process of getting list of actions.

### 4.3 Code Inlining

One most common compiler optimization is inlining. Inlining extracts a body of a function to the function that calls it. For the context of ScaRR control-flow model, inlining helps to generate correct checkpoints and list of actions. Specifically, there is a specific checkpoint called External checkpoint which appears if there function call instruction in a basic block calls an external function. Inlining the code will reduce most inter-translation unit function calls. Hence it makes identifying the checkpoints easier.

In LLVM, we can use an inlining pass that inlines internal function within the same translation unit.

Consider a program in listing 4.1. The main function calls another internal function. Without inlining, the main function control-flow graph shows no branches and the detail of logic in the factorial function. We cannot generate accurate offline measurements with this original form. However, after we inline, we can see branches in the control-flow graph, which represent the loop in the code. In this inlined representation, we can generate more accurate offline measurements. Figure 4.2 shows the factorial CFG without inlining and with inlining.



---

```

1  #include <stdio.h>
2
3  int factorial(int n) {
4      int acc = 1;
5      while (n > 0) {
6          acc *= n;
7          n -= 1;
8      }
9      return acc;
10 }
11
12 int main() {
13     printf("factorial(6) = %d\n", factorial(6));
14 }

```

---

LISTING 4.1: Program to calculate factorial.

## 4.4 ScaRR Checkpoint Marker

Offline measurements use checkpoints and list of actions. We represent offline measurement as a triplet. The first and second element is checkpoint; the last element is hashes of the list of actions. The verifier checks the offline measurement database during remote attestation.

$$(cp_A, cp_B, H(LoA)) \Rightarrow [(BBL_{s1}, BBL_{d1}), \dots, (BBL_{sn}, BBL_{dn})]$$

We need program's control-flow graph (CFG) from inlined codes to generate checkpoints. In Chapter 3 we list these four types of checkpoints: **Thread Begin**, **Thread End**, **Exit Point** and **Virtual Checkpoint**. Now we will present the heuristic on how we will mark as a checkpoint when appropriate. The logic of checkpoint marker is to traverse the control flow graph at least once. For each basic block, we have to check whether the basic block can be considered as any of checkpoint types mentioned above. To allow marking additional information about ScaRR checkpoint, we are modifying the BasicBlock class to add checkpoint instance variable as shown in listing 4.2.

**Thread begin** identifies the beginning of a thread or start of a program. In this thesis, we mark this checkpoint as the first basic block in the main function. If a program is a multithreaded program, we will mark the thread begin for each basic block that starts the thread.

**Thread end** marks the end of a thread or end of a program. In a multiple-threaded program, we will mark the thread end for each of basic block that terminates a thread. In this thesis, we mark thread end checkpoint for the last basic block that has no more successors.

**Exit point** marks that a basic block that calls function outside of translation unit. The

## main function without inlining

```
%0:
%1 = call i32 @factorial(i32 6)
%2 = call i32 (i8*, ...) @printf(i8* getelementptr inbounds ([19 x i8], [19
... x i8]* @.str, i64 0, i64 0), i32 %1)
ret i32 0
```



## main function after inlining

```
%0:
%1 = alloca i32, align 4
%2 = alloca i32, align 4
%3 = bitcast i32* %1 to i8*
call void @llvm.lifetime.start.p0i8(i64 4, i8* %3)
%4 = bitcast i32* %2 to i8*
call void @llvm.lifetime.start.p0i8(i64 4, i8* %4)
store i32 6, i32* %1, align 4
store i32 1, i32* %2, align 4
br label %5
```

```
%5 Unknown:
5:
%6 = load i32, i32* %1, align 4
%7 = icmp sgt i32 %6, 0
br i1 %7, label %8, label %factorial.exit
```

T

F

```
%8 Unknown:
8:
%9 = load i32, i32* %1, align 4
%10 = load i32, i32* %2, align 4
%11 = mul nsw i32 %10, %9
store i32 %11, i32* %2, align 4
%12 = load i32, i32* %1, align 4
%13 = sub nsw i32 %12, 1
store i32 %13, i32* %1, align 4
br label %5, !llvm.loop !4
```

```
factorial.exit:
%14 = load i32, i32* %2, align 4
%15 = bitcast i32* %1 to i8*
call void @llvm.lifetime.end.p0i8(i64 4, i8* %15)
%16 = bitcast i32* %2 to i8*
call void @llvm.lifetime.end.p0i8(i64 4, i8* %16)
%17 = call i32 (i8*, ...) @printf(i8* getelementptr inbounds ([19 x i8], [19
... x i8]* @.str, i64 0, i64 0), i32 %14)
ret i32 0
```

FIGURE 4.2: Original and Inlined Factorial Program.

heuristic of marking this type of basic block is we iterate all instructions in a basic block. For each instruction, if the instruction is a `call` instruction, we check whether the called function has any basic block. If the function has no basic block, it means it is an external function, hence we will mark this as an exit point and stop. If none of the instructions is a `call` instruction or all `call` instruction in this basic block call function with nonempty basic block, it means this basic block calls an internal function, therefore this basic block is not an exit point. Please refer to Listing 4.3.

**Virtual checkpoint** is a checkpoint that marks special cases such as loop or recursion. We will discuss only for loop case in this thesis. Virtual checkpoint in a loop is a loop header. The heuristic to find a loop header is to use `DominatorTree` to find a loop. After we find a loop, then we just need to get the header. Although there is no direct API to check whether a basic block is a loop header, LLVM provides it in `LoopInfoBase` API. See Listing 4.4

---

```
1      class BasicBlock ... {
2      private:
3          // add checkpoint field
4          Checkpoint cp;
5
6      public:
7          // setter and accessor
8          void setCheckpoint (Checkpoint);
9          Checkpoint getCheckpoint() const;
10         ...
11     }
```

---

LISTING 4.2: Add Checkpoint Instance Variable to BasicBlock class.

---

```
1      for (auto &basicBlock: Function) {
2          for (auto &instruction : basicBlock) {
3              if (isa<CallInst>(i)) {
4                  auto *call = &cast<CallBase>(i);
5                  if (call != nullptr && call->getCalledFunction()->empty()) {
6                      // this basicBlock is ExitPoint
7                      basicBlock.setCheckpoint(Checkpoint::ExitPoint);
8                  }
9              }
10         }
```

---

LISTING 4.3: Finding ExitPoint Checkpoint

---

```

1  void findVirtualCheckpoint(DominatorTree &DT, Function &F) {
2      DT.recalculate(F);
3      // generate the LoopInfoBase for the current function
4      LoopInfoBase<BasicBlock, Loop>* KLoop = new LoopInfoBase<BasicBlock, Loop>();
5      KLoop->releaseMemory();
6      KLoop->analyze(DT);
7      for (auto &bb : F) {
8          // Since the BasicBlock would have been inlined,
9          // just traverse from main function
10         if (F.getName() == "main") {
11             auto loop = KLoop->getLoopFor(&bb);
12             if (loop != nullptr) {
13                 // found VirtualCheckpoint
14                 loop->getHeader()->setCheckpoint(Checkpoint::Virtual);
15             }
16         }
17     }
18 }

```

---

LISTING 4.4: Getting Virtual Checkpoint

## 4.5 ScaRR LoA Collector

After we mark checkpoints in the CFG, now we can find list of actions. We traverse the paths between two checkpoints and add significant basic blocks that direct the path between the two checkpoints.

The algorithm of getting LoA between two checkpoints is a little bit more complex. First, we iterate all the basic blocks, and if the basic block is a checkpoint we mark this as *cpA*. Next, we recursively traverse the successor of *cpA* until we find another checkpoint *cpB*. It is possible for *cpA* = *cpB*. If there is no branch between the two checkpoints, the LoA is an empty set. If there is a branch, the first LoA is always *cpA* and the second LoA is always be the first basic block after the branch — which can be *cpB* or just a non-checkpoint basic block. We show the pseudocode for this logic in listing 4.5. Interested readers can refer to the source code of this pass to see the detail.

---

```

1      function collectLoaRecursive(firstCheckpoint, successorBasicBlock) {
2          if (firstCheckpoint has more than one successor and
3              no LoA is added yet) {
4              add firstCheckpoint as 1st (cpA) LoA for this path
5          }
6
7          for (succ = successors of successorBasicBlock) {
8              if (succ is a checkpoint) {
9                  if (one LoA has been added for this path) {
10                     add succ as the 2nd (cpB) LoA
11                 }
12                 add cpA and cpB LoA to measurement
13             } else if (succ is not a checkpoint) {
14                 if (LoA is non empty and the previous LoA is a checkpoint) {
15                     add succ as the 2nd LoA
16                 }
17                 recursively collectLoaRecursive(firstCheckpoint, succ)
18             }
19         }
20     }
21
22     function collectLoa(list of basicBlock) {
23         for (basicBlock = all basicBlocks) {
24             collectLoaRecursive(basicBlock, basicBlock)
25         }
26     }

```

---

LISTING 4.5: Pseudocode to Collect List of Actions.



## Chapter 5

# Results

In this research, we used the offline measurement generator in getting the measurement across different real-world programs. We calculate the ScaRR control flow information for each of the programs. We analyze and present the result in this chapter. The analysis and source code of the program is available in this Github repository: <https://github.com/lamida/scarr-sample-program/>.

We choose four large open-source projects for analysis. We download the latest version of the source code. The first software is Redis 6.2.4 [22], a so-called data structure server that is widely used in the real world. The Redis source build consists of the server binary and the client command-line interface (CLI). We analyze both of the programs.

The second program we analyze is bzip2 1.08 [6]. Bzip2 is a free and open-source file compression program. The third program is OpenSSL 1.1.1j [21]. OpenSSL is a full-featured toolkit for TLS protocol.

The last suite program we analyze is Coreutils 8.32 [11]. Coreutils is a suite of Unix utilities for file, shell, and text manipulation.

For each of program, we are collecting the following measurements:

- source code lines
- IR lines
- number of basic blocks (nBB)
- number of ScaRR measurements (nM)
- number of checkpoints (nCP)
- number of LoA (nLoA)

However, before we go to the result, the following section shows how to run the pass.

### 5.1 Running The Pass

To mark the list of Checkpoints, we can invoke LLVM `opt` as shown in listing 5.1.

We can see the output of the basic block that has been marked with checkpoint using LLVM `dot-cfg` pass.

---

```
opt -passes=scarr-cp-marker <file>.ll
```

---

LISTING 5.1: Mark Checkpoint in BasicBlock.

---

```
opt -passes=scarr-cp-marker,dot-cfg <file>.ll
```

---

LISTING 5.2: Print Checkpoints in CFG dot file.

The commands in listing 5.2 generates different dot files per function. We can use `xdot` command line from Graphviz to see the graph.

To mark the list of actions between checkpoints, we can invoke LLVM `opt` as shown in Listing 5.3

---

```
opt -passes=scarr-cp-marker,scarr-loa-collector <file>.ll
```

---

LISTING 5.3: Get List of Actions

Note that we have to run `scarr-cp-marker` before `scarr-loa-collector`. We discuss the result and its interpretation in the next chapter.

## 5.2 ScaRR Control-Flow Result

program	code lines	IR lines	nBB	nM	nCP	nLoA
basename	190	827	19	17	13	26
cat	767	2215	119	151	94	216
chgrp	319	1158	43	44	32	60
cksum	310	1012	9	11	8	20
cp	1226	3619	79	37	27	56
csplit	1526	5550				
cut	609	2196	40	36	25	56
date	604	2223	69	80	57	110
dd	2581	9420	366	451	235	748
df	1847	8146	377	410	278	698
dirname	136	635	13	13	10	20
du	1140	3973	206	273	138	424
env	952	3875	197	241	141	374
expand	238	1057	46	55	37	78
expr	1117	5549				
false	2	442	6	7	6	12
fmt	1029	4083	44	45	26	64
getlimits	172	2681	109	189	109	324
head	1095	3596	196	253	149	386



program	code lines	IR lines	nBB	nM	nCP	nLoA
id	464	1922	67	47	31	84
install	1059	3545	120	129	72	162
kill	314	1376	64	90	49	142
link	93	581	10	8	8	12
ln	681	2350	64	60	37	100
ls	5520	24925	394	450	249	654
make-prime-list	230	813	32	43	27	78
mkdir	296	1230	28	30	21	42
mktemp	350	1347	65	80	53	120
mv	512	1903	66	61	40	92
nice	221	905	27	31	24	54
nl	596	1994	35	39	24	58
numfmt	1651	6036	113	118	69	154
od	1987	7876	230	291	173	454
paste	530	2234	31	41	27	54
pathchk	422	1306	56	77	44	120
pinky	602	3161	72	84	48	128
pr	2848	10596	105	89	50	142
printenv	154	742	25	34	20	60
printf	715	2811	118	147	92	200
ptx	2153	7888	487	651	294	1060
pwd	394	1777	65	74	50	116
readlink	178	813	34	36	24	50
realpath	278	1382	74	86	49	134
rm	373	1213	40	41	26	64
rmdir	253	1048	31	38	23	62
seq	736	3057	105	132	84	226
shred	1279	3789	67	83	52	130
shuf	615	2524	128	177	106	310
sleep	146	688	21	28	18	46
split	1668	6262	248	302	189	510
stat	1907	18653	55	65	44	86
stdbuf	394	1644	87	109	76	154
stty	2322	5885	163	167	110	250
sum	273	1312	15	19	14	32
sync	239	838	29	39	27	58
tac	713	2324	64	75	48	116
tail	2537	8657	458	575	329	894
tee	278	1193	48	61	37	96
test	867	3968				
tr	1914	6139	152	167	97	282
true	80	441	6	7	6	12
truncate	388	1564	78	94	58	150
tty	133	624	13	14	12	20
uname	376	1236	76	101	61	140
unexpand	326	1255	60	67	46	98

program	code lines	IR lines	nBB	nM	nCP	nLoA
uniq	662	2379	110	125	77	192
unlink	88	543	7	5	6	10
uptime	257	1249	5	2	3	4
users	150	899	5	2	3	4
wc	895	3689	89	100	68	158
yes	130	765	19	26	15	44

### 5.3 Complexity Analysis

We divide the complexity analysis of the program to time complexity and space complexity.

The time complexity of Checkpoint marker is  $O(n)$ . We just need to traverse the basic block once to identify whether a basic block is a checkpoint.

The time complexity of LoA collector is also  $O(n)$ . We need to traverse the basic block one time, to get the bread-first or depth-first list of the basic block. For each basic block, first we mark the first checkpoint as the first basic block. We stop as soon as we find a next checkpoint or a first basic block after branch. Therefore the time complexity of LoA collector is  $O(n)$ .

The space complexity for both algorithms is also  $O(n)$ . The only additional storage that we require is to store N number basic block during markig the checkpoint and then collecting the LoA.

### 5.4 Case Study

In this section we present a simple case study on how we process a program and get the offline measurement. We consider a program in listing 5.4. The IR is in the listing 5.5. We can see the basic block fo the program in figure 5.3.

The first step to get the offline measurement is to inline the code in basic block. In this simple program, the code can't be inlined further because there is no function call at all.

After the code is inline, the offline measurement generator traverse the basic block and using the heuristic marks some basic blocks to some checkpoints type. The next step, the measurement extractor traverse each path between two checkpoints and collect list of action between them. The measurement result is shown in the figure 5.4.

The exact measurement result is the following:

$$\begin{aligned}
 N_0 - N_3 &\Rightarrow [] \\
 N_3 - N_3 &\Rightarrow [N_3, N_6] \\
 N_3 - N_{10} &\Rightarrow [N_3, N_{10}]
 \end{aligned}$$

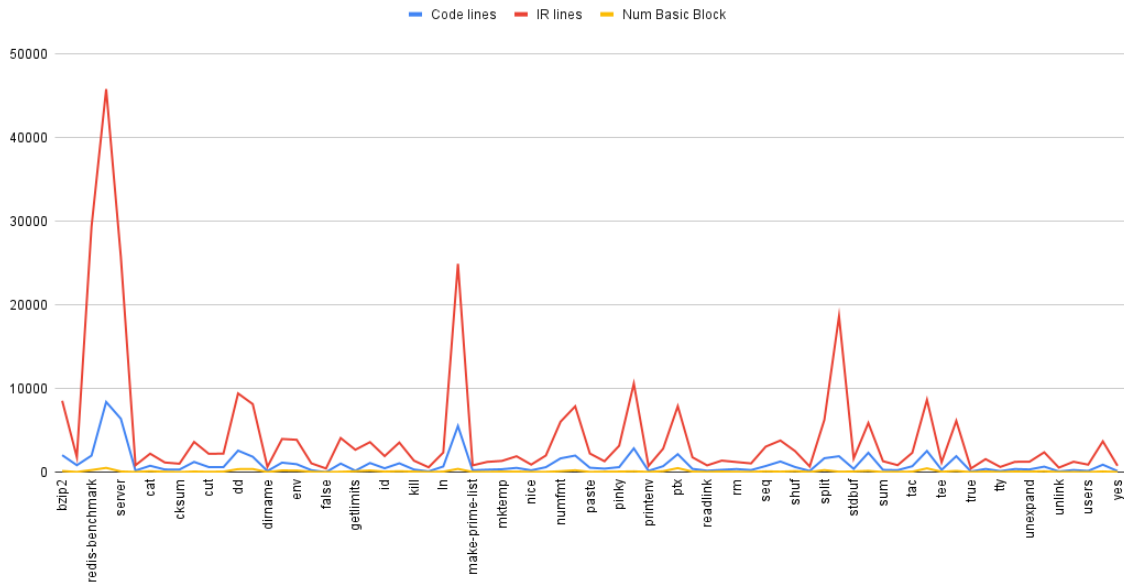


FIGURE 5.1: Lines of Code, Lines of IR and Number of BasicBlocks.

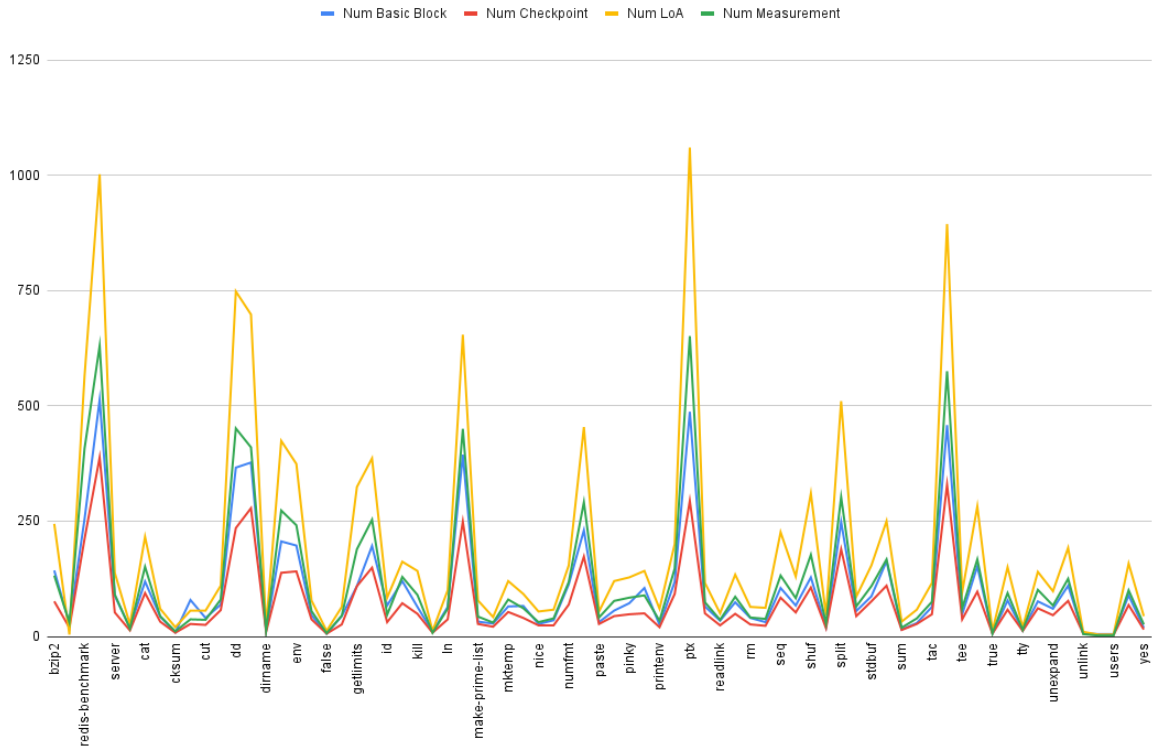


FIGURE 5.2: Basic Block and ScaRR Control-Flow Result.

Program	CL	IRL	BB	M	CP	LoA
basename	190	827	19	17	13	26
cat	767	2215	119	151	94	216
chgrp	319	1158	43	44	32	60
cksum	310	1012	9	11	8	20
cp	1226	3619	79	37	27	56
cut	609	2196	40	36	25	56
date	604	2223	69	80	57	110
dd	2581	9420	366	451	235	748
df	1847	8146	377	410	278	698
dirname	136	635	13	13	10	20
du	1140	3973	206	273	138	424
env	952	3875	197	241	141	374
expand	238	1057	46	55	37	78
false	2	442	6	7	6	12
fmt	1029	4083	44	45	26	64
getlimits	172	2681	109	189	109	324
head	1095	3596	196	253	149	386
id	464	1922	67	47	31	84
install	1059	3545	120	129	72	162
kill	314	1376	64	90	49	142
link	93	581	10	8	8	12
ln	681	2350	64	60	37	100
ls	5520	24925	394	450	249	654
make-prime-list	230	813	32	43	27	78
mkdir	296	1230	28	30	21	42
mktemp	350	1347	65	80	53	120
mv	512	1903	66	61	40	92
nice	221	905	27	31	24	54
nl	596	1994	35	39	24	58
numfmt	1651	6036	113	118	69	154
od	1987	7876	230	291	173	454
paste	530	2234	31	41	27	54
pathchk	422	1306	56	77	44	120
pinky	602	3161	72	84	48	128
pr	2848	10596	105	89	50	142
printenv	154	742	25	34	20	60
printf	715	2811	118	147	92	200
ptx	2153	7888	487	651	294	1060
pwd	394	1777	65	74	50	116
readlink	178	813	34	36	24	50
realpath	278	1382	74	86	49	134
rm	373	1213	40	41	26	64
rmdir	253	1048	31	38	23	62
seq	736	3057	105	132	84	226
shred	1279	3789	67	83	52	130
shuf	615	2524	128	177	106	310
sleep	146	688	21	28	18	46
split	1668	6262	248	302	189	510
stat	1907	18653	55	65	44	86
stdbuf	394	1644	87	109	76	154
stty	2322	5885	163	167	110	250
sum	273	1312	15	19	14	32
sync	229	828	20	22	27	58

---

```

int main() {
    for (int i = 0; i < 10; i++) {
        // do nothing
    }
}

```

---

LISTING 5.4: Case Study Program.

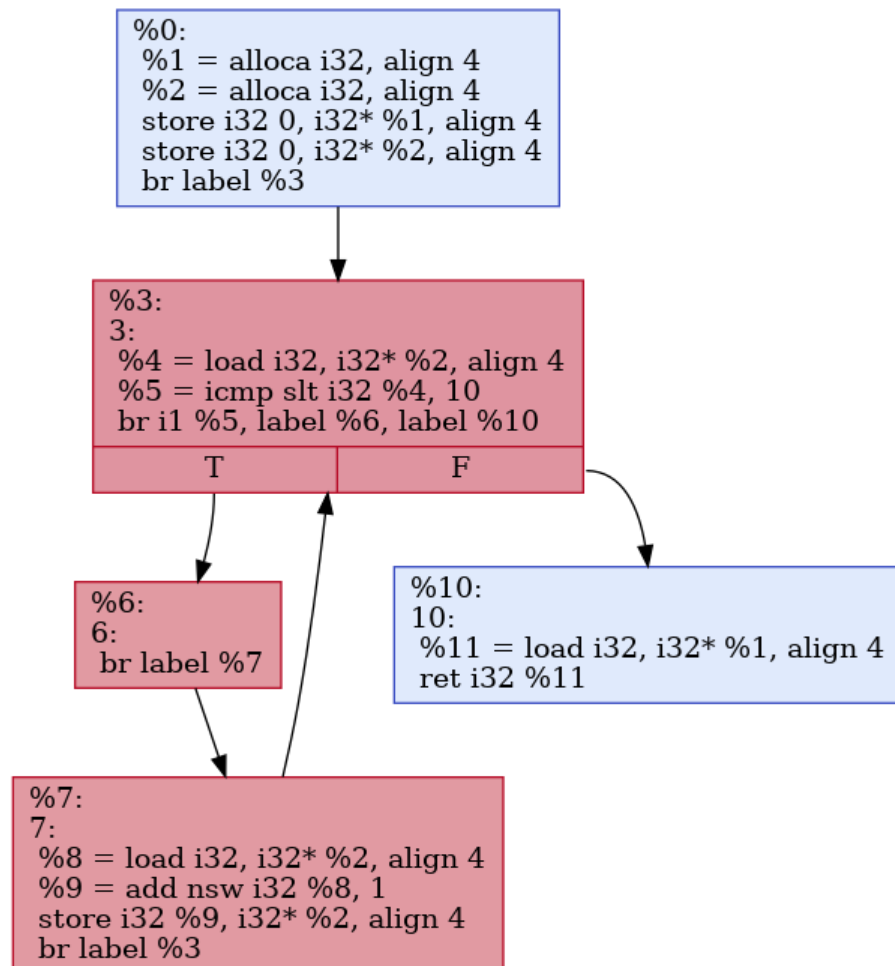


FIGURE 5.3: Simple Loop Basic Block.

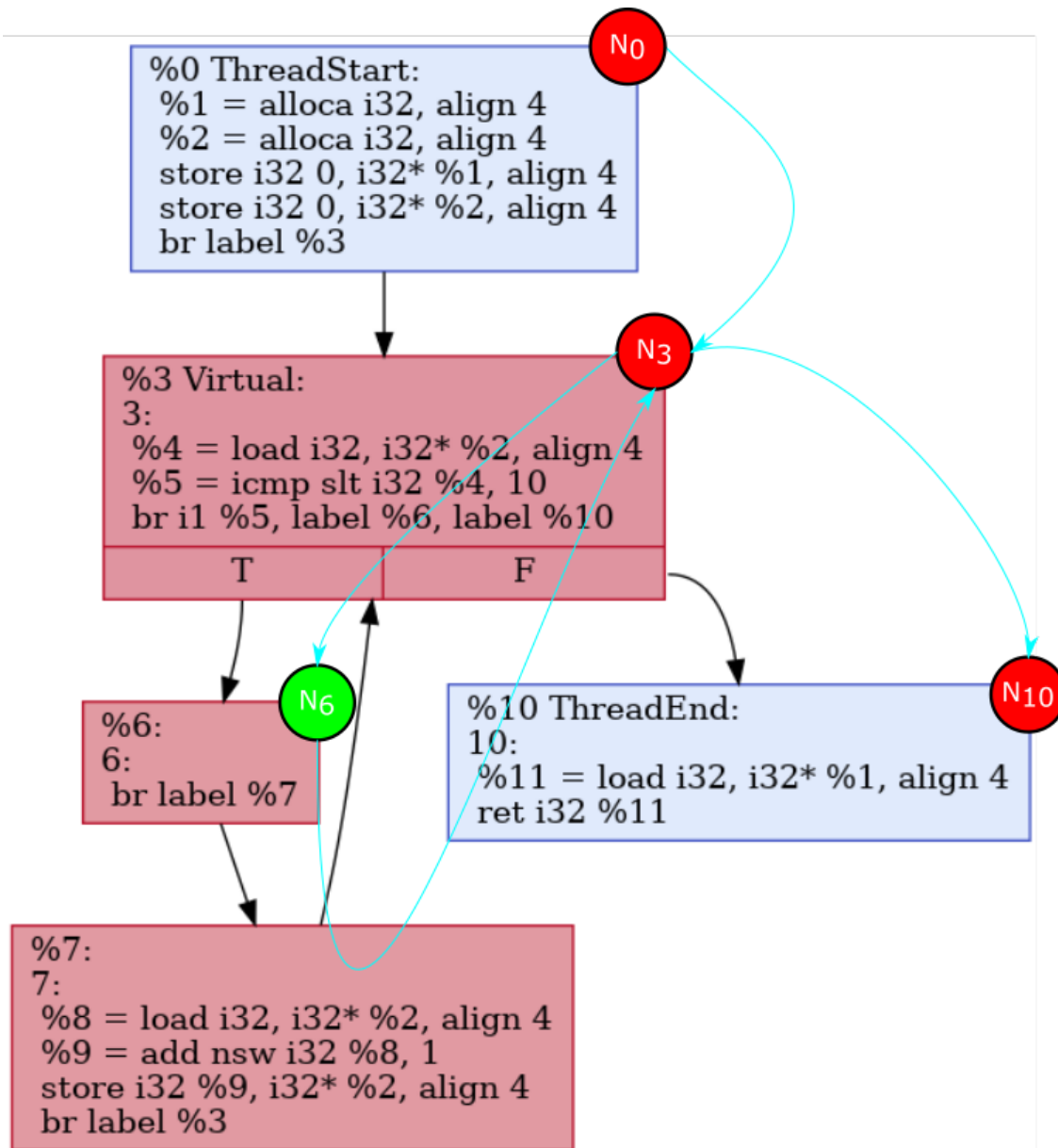


FIGURE 5.4: Simple Loop Checkpoints and LoAs.

Use case	# functions	<i>action</i>		<i>edge</i>		% <i>action</i> explored
		$\mu$	$\sigma$	$\mu$	$\sigma$	
Contact	71	12.77	12.59	15.09	17.64	96.4%
libdvdcss	47	25.40	22.05	34.44	31.50	92.8%
StealthDB	44	18.29	13.53	21.97	18.05	96.6%
SGX-Biniax2	49	8.55	8.75	9.29	11.71	91.6%
Unit-test	17	6.88	7.47	7.17	10.52	94.0%
<i>total</i>	228	-	-	-	-	-

TABLE 5.1: **Flavio** this is a style example. Important things: no vertical lines, numbers right aligned, keep a consistent number of decimal place (at least per column), no horizontal lines besides top, bottom, and a few middle after the header. Extra point 1, for very long table pls consider to use alternative row colors <https://tex.stackexchange.com/questions/5363/how-to-create-alternating-rows-in-a-table>. Extra point 2, to span a table over multiple pages check this <https://tex.stackexchange.com/questions/26462/make-a-table-span-multiple-pages> ◀

program	code lines	IR lines	nBB	nM	nCP	nLoA
redis-benchmark	1982	29367	254	407	211	564
redis-cli	8400	45836	513	630	388	1002
server	6397	25790	88	91	52	138

TABLE 5.3: Redis ScaRR measurements.

program	code lines	IR lines	nBB	nM	nCP	nLoA
bzip2	2036	8542	143	132	76	244
openssl	832	1793	28	30	19	42

TABLE 5.4: Some additional programs ScaRR measurements.

---

```

1 ; ModuleID = 'simple-loop-no-ext.c'
2 source_filename = "simple-loop-no-ext.c"
3 target datalayout = "e-m:e-p270:32:32-p271:truncated..."
4 target triple = "x86_64-pc-linux-gnu"
5
6 ; Function Attrs: noinline nounwind optnone uwtable
7 define dso_local i32 @main() #0 {
8     %1 = alloca i32, align 4
9     %2 = alloca i32, align 4
10    store i32 0, i32* %1, align 4
11    store i32 0, i32* %2, align 4
12    br label %3
13
14 3:                                     ; preds = %7, %0
15    %4 = load i32, i32* %2, align 4
16    %5 = icmp slt i32 %4, 10
17    br i1 %5, label %6, label %10
18
19 6:                                     ; preds = %3
20    br label %7
21
22 7:                                     ; preds = %6
23    %8 = load i32, i32* %2, align 4
24    %9 = add nsw i32 %8, 1
25    store i32 %9, i32* %2, align 4
26    br label %3
27
28 10:                                    ; preds = %3
29    %11 = load i32, i32* %1, align 4
30    ret i32 %11
31 }
32
33 ;attributes #0 = { noinline nounwind optnone uwtable truncated...}
34
35 !llvm.module.flags = !{!0}
36 !llvm.ident = !{!1}
37
38 !0 = !{i32 1, !"wchar_size", i32 4}
39 !1 = !{"clang version 10.0.0-4ubuntu1 "}

```

---

LISTING 5.5: Case Study Program IR.



## Chapter 6

# Discussion and Future Works

In Chapter 5, we present the result of the implementation of ScaRR's offline measurement generator. We learn that the algorithm time complexity is linear to the input. The input here is the size of the program. We measure the size of the program as a number of lines. The number of lines is also linear with the size of intermediate representation and the number of basic blocks. Ultimately, the most important finding we confirm that the number of measurement is also linear with the size of the program. With that confidence that we can use the algorithm to do runtime remote attestation for a complex program.

In this study, we identify the limitation of the algorithm. We can use this for possible future works. First, we do not test the algorithm with a program that contains recursion, signals, and exception. We also just test the algorithm with single-threaded program. We do not run the algorithm on a program that is written by a programming language other than C.

We also noticed the limitation on the algorithm cannot detect non-control data attack which do not modify the program control-flow. The algorithm do know whether a program is going to a loop. Unfortunately, the algorithm do not know how many iteration a program should run. The offline measurement cannot know if there is any attack that modifies the number of the loop.



## Chapter 7

# Conclusion

In this thesis, we study the risk of control-flow attack and how remote attestation can help to detect the attack. We implement ScaRR control flow model extractor. We can use the model to build an offline measurement database for remote attestation to detect control flow attack. We present the design and the implementation of the tool as two different LLVM passes. We verify the scalability of the algorithm. We also discuss the limitation of the algorithm and future works.



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