**The Politics of Routing**

How Malicious Routing Behaviour Correlates with Freedom

Ben Kendall

BSc Hons Computer Science

[DATE]

Declaration

I certify that the material contained in this dissertation is my own work and does not contains unreferenced or unacknowledged material. I also warrant that the above statement applies to the implementation of the project and all associated documentation. Regarding he electronically submitted version of this submitted work, I consent to this being stored electronically and copied for assessment purposes, including the School’s use of plagiarism detection systems in order to check the integrity of assessed work.

I agree to my dissertation being placed in the public domain with my name explicitly included as the author of the work.

(not sure about that last one…)

Date:

Signed:

Project Supervisor: Dr Vasileios Giotsas

**Abstract.**

In an era of hidden mass surveillance programs that violate human rights, it has become unclear whether a person’s real-world individual freedoms translate into the digital world. The design of the Internet as a global communication network without centralized control, creates challenges for governments who try to restrict freedom of expression. Consequently, governments that suppress individual freedoms tend to exercise tight control over Internet communications to reduce their citizen’s freedom of speech. This report will investigate the distinctions between online and offline freedoms, how different metrics of freedom correlate with nation states and Autonomous Systems (ASes) that participate in malicious routing behaviour and the impacts of their imposed policies.

Contents

[Introduction 6](#_Toc532295781)

[1.1 Chapter Overview 6](#_Toc532295782)

[1.2 Motivation for Research 6](#_Toc532295783)

[1.3 Aims and Objectives 7](#_Toc532295784)

[1.4 Report Structure 7](#_Toc532295785)

[Background Research 9](#_Toc532295786)

[2.1 Chapter Overview 9](#_Toc532295787)

[2.2 Paper 1 … 9](#_Toc532295788)

[2.x Related Work 9](#_Toc532295789)

[Freedom 10](#_Toc532295790)

[3.1 Chapter Overview 10](#_Toc532295791)

[3.2 Defining Freedom 10](#_Toc532295792)

[Malicious Routing 11](#_Toc532295793)

[4.1 Chapter Overview 11](#_Toc532295794)

[4.2 What is Malicious Routing 11](#_Toc532295795)

[4.3 Nations and Autonomous Systems 11](#_Toc532295796)

[4.4 Methodology 11](#_Toc532295797)

[4.5 Correlations 11](#_Toc532295798)

[Trends and Impacts 12](#_Toc532295799)

[5.1 Chapter Overview 12](#_Toc532295800)

[5.2 Policy 12](#_Toc532295801)

[5.3 Case Studies 12](#_Toc532295802)

[Findings 13](#_Toc532295803)

[6.1 Chapter Overview 13](#_Toc532295804)

[Conclusions 14](#_Toc532295805)

[7.1 Chapter Overview 14](#_Toc532295806)

[References 15](#_Toc532295807)

Chapter 1

# Introduction

## Chapter Overview

This chapter will explain the reasons for conducting this research and the potential benefits that may come of it. An early approximation of what could be achieved by the report’s aims and objectives will also be laid out. These are dynamic objectives and may be added to or adjusted depending on how the results shape up. The report’s general structure will also be outlined, and each section explained.

## Motivation for Research

In June 2013, Edward Snowden stole and leaked an estimated 1,500,000 documents exposing the colossal power and capability of intelligence agencies such as the National Security Agency (NSA, US) and their Five-Eyes (FVEY) partners. It was revealed that mass surveillance tools such as “PRISM” [1] and “X-KEYSCORE” [2] provided the capability to collect and search through millions of people’s digital lives. It was also revealed that many Autonomous Systems (ASes) and Internet Service Providers (ISPs) such as British Telecom, Vodafone Cable, Verizon Business, Level 3, Viatel, Global Crossing and Interoute were collaborating with projects such as “TEMPORA” [3] which tapped fibre optic cables and intercepted dataflows. It seemed that the online world was far less private or free than previously realised.

In parallel with the aforementioned revelations, global freedom has been in continual decline for 12 consecutive years [4]. The internet, as an openly accessible and free network, affords freedom of expression, information, religion, identity and trade as laid out by the Human Freedom Index 2018 [5]. Therefore, a decline in internet freedom must be the result of restrictive policies imposed by government, ASes or ISPs. For example, since the Snowden leaks of 2013 and the Investigatory Powers Act of 2016, the UK has dropped 12 places on the Freedom of the Press Index [6]. Restrictions of internet freedom such as these fall under the umbrella term ‘malicious routing’. This report will investigate how these malicious routing policies correlate with an individual’s internet freedom.

## Aims and Objectives

The aims of this report are therefore as follows:

* Determine what it means to have ‘total internet freedom’ and what positive and negative freedoms make up internet freedom.
* Discover the extent to which a correlation exists between a nation’s malicious routing behaviours and the freedom of their citizens.

From the report’s aims, the formal objectives are:

* Form and collect information about each nation’s malicious routing behaviours.
* Analyse and rank nations based on their malicious routing activity.
* Compare each nation’s propensity to engage in malicious routing activity with various measures of their freedom to determine the degree to which they are correlated.
* Consider whether the finding are significant and determine whether propensity to engage in malicious routing activity is a good predictor of freedom.

## 1.4 Report Structure

This report will begin with a review of the relevant existing research surrounding malicious routing. This will help gain a more comprehensive understanding of the current academic reasoning, backgrounds and issues faces in this area of research. The existing research associated with defining and measuring freedom will also be investigated to aid with narrowing the selection of freedom indexes to the most relevant for this topic.

A nation’s freedom can be measured in a wide variety of different ways, each resulting in a different freedom index. Before any research is conducted into malicious routing, the report will cover the various definitions of freedom and determine which indexes are most applicable when correlating with malicious routing. A combined index will also be created, considering only the factors directly related to internet freedom within a nation. This will function as a prediction for the most closely correlated index and will also help determine whether the best predictor of internet freedom is a nation’s propensity to conduct malicious routing activity.

The main section of the report will focus on the technical aspects of malicious routing in defining its component elements, examining the nations that partake in it and finding any correlations with freedom. This will begin by accurately defining what actions and policies malicious routing comprises of. Then a table of nations that partake in malicious routing will be built, holding information about the activities of each nation, as well as a standardised numerical score for each nation based on the amount of malicious routing behaviour that said nation conducts. Once the table has been created and the ranks calculated, it will then be possible to contrast malicious routing behaviour with freedom to determine if any correlations are present.

Depending on the results from the correlations, there may be clear connections between certain kinds of malicious routing behaviour and freedom. This next section will examine trends seen across the data as well as stand-out and edge cases. This will be followed up with the ‘findings’ chapter that will contain a careful analysis of the results and a critical review of the methods used. Finally, the report will end with conclusions based on the research and a discussion of the limitations and lessons learnt, as well as any possible future work.

Chapter 2

# Background Research

## 2.1 Chapter Overview

Sample text

## 2.2 Paper 1 …

Sample text

## 2.x Related Work

Sample text

Chapter 3

# Freedom

## 3.1 Chapter Overview

Sample text

## 3.2 Defining Freedom

Sample text

Chapter 4

# Malicious Routing

## 4.1 Chapter Overview

Sample text

## 4.2 What is Malicious Routing

Sample text

## 4.3 Nations and Autonomous Systems

Sample text

## 4.4 Methodology

Sample text

## 4.5 Correlations

Sample text

Chapter 5

# Trends and Impacts

## 5.1 Chapter Overview

Sample text

## 5.2 Policy

Sample text

## 5.3 Case Studies

Sample text

Chapter 6

# Findings

## 6.1 Chapter Overview

Sample text

Chapter 7

# Conclusions

## 7.1 Chapter Overview

Sample text

# References

[1] Glenn Greenwald. NSA collecting phone records of millions of Verizon customers daily | US news | The Guardian. [ONLINE]. 6th June 2013. Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/jun/06/nsa-phone-records-verizon-court-order. [Accessed 09 December 2018].

[2] Glenn Greenwald. XKeyscore: NSA tool collects 'nearly everything a user does on the internet'. The Guardian. [ONLINE]. 31st July 2013. Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/jul/31/nsa-top-secret-program-online-data. [Accessed 09 December 2018].

[3] John Goetz and Frederik Obermaier. “Snowden reveals the names of the peering telecom companies.” Suddeutsche Zeitung, 2 Aug. 2013.  <https://www.sueddeutsche.de/digital/internet-ueberwachung-snowden-enthuellt-namen-der-spaehenden-telekomfirmen-1.1736791> [Accessed 24 Oct. 2018].

[4] Freedom House USA. “Democracy in Crisis.” Freedom in the World Index 2018. 2018 - ongoing (updating)  <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/freedom-world-2018> [Accessed 24 Oct. 2018]

[5] CATO Institute. “Human Freedom Index.” The Human Freedom Index – 2018. <https://www.cato.org/human-freedom-index> [Accessed 10th December 2018].

[6] Damien Gayle. “Downward spiral: UK slips to 40th place in press freedom rankings.” The Guardian. 26 Apr 2017. <https://www.theguardian.com/media/2017/apr/26/uk-world-press-freedom-index-reporters-without-borders> [Accessed 20 Oct. 2018]

[7]

[8]

[9]