

# Security Assessment

# SYNDICATE PROTOCOL

Dec 31st, 2021



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# **Summary**

This report has been prepared for SYNDICATE PROTOCOL to discover issues and vulnerabilities in the source code of the SYNDICATE PROTOCOL project as well as any contract dependencies that were not part of an officially recognized library. A comprehensive examination has been performed, utilizing Static Analysis and Manual Review techniques.

The auditing process pays special attention to the following considerations:

- Testing the smart contracts against both common and uncommon attack vectors.
- Assessing the codebase to ensure compliance with current best practices and industry standards.
- Ensuring contract logic meets the specifications and intentions of the client.
- Cross referencing contract structure and implementation against similar smart contracts produced by industry leaders.
- Thorough line-by-line manual review of the entire codebase by industry experts.

The security assessment resulted in findings that ranged from critical to informational. We recommend addressing these findings to ensure a high level of security standards and industry practices. We suggest recommendations that could better serve the project from the security perspective:

- Enhance general coding practices for better structures of source codes;
- Add enough unit tests to cover the possible use cases;
- Provide more comments per each function for readability, especially contracts that are verified in public;
- Provide more transparency on privileged activities once the protocol is live.



# **Overview**

# **Project Summary**

Project Name	SYNDICATE PROTOCOL
Platform	ethereum
Language	Solidity
Codebase	https://github.com/superpowerlabs/syndicate
Commit	9ba4867092d02b8ea436798c0e42abd344a47772

## **Audit Summary**

Delivery Date	Dec 31, 2021
Audit Methodology	Static Analysis, Manual Review
Key Components	

# **Vulnerability Summary**

Vulnerability Level	Total	① Pending	⊗ Declined	(i) Acknowledged	Partially Resolved	⊗ Resolved
<ul><li>Critical</li></ul>	0	0	0	0	0	0
<ul><li>Major</li></ul>	1	0	0	1	0	0
<ul><li>Medium</li></ul>	4	0	0	3	0	1
<ul><li>Minor</li></ul>	1	0	0	0	0	1
<ul><li>Informational</li></ul>	5	0	0	2	0	3
<ul><li>Discussion</li></ul>	0	0	0	0	0	0

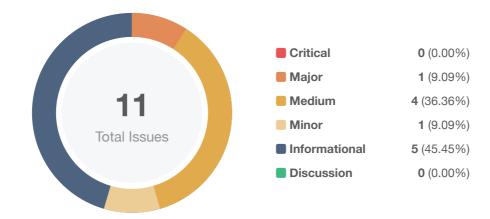


## **Audit Scope**

ID	File	SHA256 Checksum
SAS	pools/SyndicateAware.sol	918297a33a7cbe38f44d1ecb07068bdda088facbab7fa115367e5c410b 30e743
SCS	pools/SyndicateCorePool.sol	6ae34aa281b88911bb940babbc83deecab736f880f398bfda0d67080c4 9361ce
SFP	pools/SyndicateFlashPool.sol	7f23a5dab399097044ba7b039e2e48a47b7de4ece9fcb84b283807a27f 34bd58
SPB	pools/SyndicatePoolBase.sol	0131fc7037eab81adca254d02b5f50a424650254111f3a3dbb4bf8ca861 7be9b
SPF	pools/SyndicatePoolFactory.sol	944b83a659dd785607e682c86c4097df0a7f67c3421a1b36f53f6b88df5 98f8e
ERC	token/ERC20Receiver.sol	16cfd09bc6cff4be2877ca80dbac8620a132d0561c60605b82df14a2e4d 5894f
ESE	token/EscrowedSyndicateERC2 0.sol	7d5d4c091d010131f52d9482955173883a863d0213d710342336e49ea 2da2faf
SER	token/SyndicateERC20.sol	a9c0b7df7d74d766d480141ffcd0327e1857dcd99cfc27a37d3c41c361a 73929



# **Findings**



ID	Title	Category	Severity	Status
SYNDICATE PROTOCOL-01	Financial Models	Logical Issue	<ul><li>Informational</li></ul>	(i) Acknowledged
SYNDICATE PROTOCOL-02	Centralization Risk	Volatile Code	<ul><li>Major</li></ul>	(i) Acknowledged
SCS-01	Lack of validation for poolToken	Logical Issue	<ul><li>Informational</li></ul>	⊗ Resolved
SCS-02	The amount may not be accurate	Logical Issue	<ul><li>Informational</li></ul>	⊗ Resolved
SER-01	Initial token distribution	Centralization / Privilege	<ul><li>Medium</li></ul>	(i) Acknowledged
SER-02	Inconsistent Comments and Code	Logical Issue	<ul><li>Minor</li></ul>	⊗ Resolved
SER-03	Potential Over Mint	Logical Issue	<ul><li>Medium</li></ul>	(i) Acknowledged
SER-04	Not standard implement	Volatile Code	<ul><li>Informational</li></ul>	(i) Acknowledged
SPB-01	Lack of Input Validation	Control Flow	<ul><li>Informational</li></ul>	⊗ Resolved
SPB-02	Lack of updates of user.subYieldRewards	Logical Issue	<ul><li>Medium</li></ul>	(i) Acknowledged
SPF-01	Missing calculate reward	Logical Issue	<ul><li>Medium</li></ul>	⊗ Resolved



## **SYNDICATE PROTOCOL-01 | Financial Models**

Category	Severity	Location	Status
Logical Issue	<ul><li>Informational</li></ul>	Global	① Acknowledged

## Description

The main function of Syndicate protocol is providing Syndicate mining pool.

- 1. the protocol publishes two ERC20 token: Syndicate and Escrowed Syndicate.
- 2. The SyndicatePoolFactory can create SyndicateCorePool and register it.
- 3. The SyndicateFlashPool can be created by anyone and the owner of the SyndicatePoolFactory can register it into the factory.
- 4. Each kind of token corresponds to one pool. If one kind of token is registered to a pool, it can not be registered to another pool again.
- 5. The pool whose poolToken is not Syndicate will accumulate rewards and stake them to the pool whose poolToken is Syndicate by the function stakeAsPool(). The rewards staked by the function stakeAsPool() will participate in the rewards accumulation in the Syndicate pool as same as the normal token staked to the pool.
- 6. Every stake is recorded as the deposit in the contract and the deposit has an expiry date. User can withdraw their Syndicate from the deposit.

And then, there are some questions:

- 1. Is the pool with Syndicate as the poolToken a SyndicateCorePool. Are those pools whose poolToken are not Syndicate SyndicateFlashPool?
- 2. The function \_unstake() checks the lockUntil of deposit. However, the contract has the function updateStakeLock which can change the lockUntil of the specified deposit. It makes the checks in the \_unstake() meaningless.

#### Recommendation

Financial models of blockchain protocols need to be resilient to attacks. They need to pass simulations and verifications to guarantee the security of the overall protocol.

The financial model of this protocol is not in the scope of this audit.

#### Alleviation



#### [SYNDICATE PROTOCOL]:

- 1. The CorePool stakes SYN or SYN related LP token, e.g SYN/ETH LP token from Uniswap. The FlashPool stakes non directly related tokens. The CorePool has a locking period, Flash pool does not have a locking period.
- 2. The updateStakeLock only allows updating to a later unlock date.



## **SYNDICATE PROTOCOL-02 | Centralization Risk**

Category	Severity	Location	Status
Volatile Code	<ul><li>Major</li></ul>	Global	① Acknowledged

## Description

In the contract SyndicatePoolFactory, the role owner has the authority over the following function:

- createPool(): create a SyndicateCorePool and register it.
- registerPool(): register the specified pool.
- changePoolWeight(): chage the weight of the pool.

Any compromise to the owner account may allow the hacker to take advantage of this.

In the contract EscrowedSyndicateERC20, the role ROLE\_RECEIVERS\_MANAGER has the authority over the following function:

• updateAllowedReceivers(): decided the user can whether receive the Escrowed Syndicate.

In the contract Syndicate and EscrowedSyndicateERC20, the role ROLE\_TOKEN\_CREATOR has the authority to mint tokens.

In the contract Syndicate, the role ROLE\_TOKEN\_DESTROYER has the authority to burn anyone's Syndicate.

In the contract Syndicate, the role FEATURE\_DELEGATIONS has the authority to make someone delegate another user.

#### Recommendation

We advise the client to carefully manage these accounts' private keys to avoid any potential risks of being hacked.

In general, we strongly recommend centralized privileges or roles in the protocol to be improved via a decentralized mechanism or smart-contract-based accounts with enhanced security practices, e.g., Multisignature wallets.

Indicatively, here is some feasible suggestions that would also mitigate the potential risk at the different level in term of short-term and long-term:

• Time-lock with reasonable latency, e.g., 48 hours, for awareness on privileged operations;



- Assignment of privileged roles to multi-signature wallets to prevent a single point of failure due to the private key;
- Introduction of a DAO/governance/voting module to increase transparency and user involvement.

### Alleviation

**[SYNDICATE PROTOCOL]**: We will use openzeppelin's defender to manage the multi-sig wallet and time locked upgrading. Once the tokens are sufficiently distributed, DAO will decide on important issues.



## SCS-01 | Lack of validation for poolToken

Category	Severity	Location	Status
Logical Issue	<ul><li>Informational</li></ul>	projects/Syndicate/contracts/pools/SyndicateCorePool.sol (9ab9f5c): 2 20	⊗ Resolved

## Description

The function \_stake lacks validation for the state variable poolToken. The variable poolReserve is used to record the balance of SyndicateERC20 token in the contract.

#### Recommendation

Add the validation.

## Alleviation

**[SYNDICATE PROTOCOL]**: The poolToken is an immutable state variable set in the constructor and validated then.



## SCS-02 | The amount may not be accurate

Category	Severity	Location	Status
Logical Issue	<ul><li>Informational</li></ul>	projects/Syndicate/contracts/pools/SyndicateCorePool.sol (9ab9f5c): 2	⊗ Resolved

## Description

If the poolToken is a deflationary token, the amount may be less than the input number.

### Recommendation

Use the balance after the function stake() minus the balance before the function stake().

## Alleviation

**[SYNDICATE PROTOCOL]**: Issue is addressed explicitly in SyndicatePoolBase L444-450.



## SER-01 | Initial token distribution

Category	Severity	Location	Status
Centralization / Privilege	<ul><li>Medium</li></ul>	projects/Syndicate/contracts/token/SyndicateERC20.sol (9a b9f5c): 402	(i) Acknowledged

## Description

All of the SyndicateERC20 tokens are sent to the contract deployer when deploying the contract. This could be a centralization risk as the deployer can distribute SyndicateERC20 tokens without obtaining the consensus of the community.

#### Recommendation

We recommend the team to be transparent regarding the initial token distribution process, and the team shall make enough efforts to restrict the access of the private key.

#### Alleviation

**[SYNDICATE PROTOCOL]**: The contract owner will distribute the token strictly according to schedule and once the tokens are sufficiently distributed, DAO will decide on important issues.



## **SER-02** | Inconsistent Comments and Code

Category	Severity	Location	Status
Logical Issue	<ul><li>Minor</li></ul>	projects/Syndicate/contracts/token/SyndicateERC20.sol (9ab9f5c): 480	⊗ Resolved

## Description

```
// depending on `FEATURE_UNSAFE_TRANSFERS` we execute either safe (default)
// or unsafe transfer
// if `FEATURE_UNSAFE_TRANSFERS` is enabled
// or receiver has `ROLE_ERC20_RECEIVER` permission
// or sender has `ROLE_ERC20_SENDER` permission
if(isFeatureEnabled(FEATURE_UNSAFE_TRANSFERS)
// I isOperatorInRole(_to, ROLE_ERC20_RECEIVER)
// II isSenderInRole(ROLE_ERC20_SENDER)) {
```

Referring to the L477 comments, the if condition should verify the permission of sender instead of msg.sender.

#### Recommendation

We recommend verifying the input parameter \_from.

#### Alleviation

**[SYNDICATE PROTOCOL]**: The function is SendFrom, which is a third party. It is expected that we check the action executer. Eg msg.sender, not the source of fund \_from.



## **SER-03 | Potential Over Mint**

Category	Severity	Location	Status
Logical Issue	<ul><li>Medium</li></ul>	projects/Syndicate/contracts/token/SyndicateERC20.sol (9ab9f5c): 781 , 20	(i) Acknowledged

## Description

```
- Maximum final token supply: 10,000,000 SYN
```

```
769 function mint(address _to, uint256 _value) public {
      // check if caller has sufficient permissions to mint tokens
771
       require(isSenderInRole(ROLE_TOKEN_CREATOR), "insufficient privileges
(ROLE_TOKEN_CREATOR required)");
773
       // non-zero recipient address check
      require(_to != address(0), "ERC20: mint to the zero address"); // Zeppelin msg
774
775
       // non-zero _value and arithmetic overflow check on the total supply
776
777
       // this check automatically secures arithmetic overflow on the individual balance
       require(totalSupply + _value > totalSupply, "zero value mint or arithmetic
778
overflow");
779
       // uint192 overflow check (required by voting delegation)
780
       require(totalSupply + _value <= type(uint192).max, "total supply overflow</pre>
(uint192)");
```

Refer to the L20 comment Maximum final token supply: 10,000,000 SYN. The function mint may issue more tokens than the issuance limit.

#### Recommendation

We recommend that the annotations and the code logic are consistent, and the information about the upper limit of tokens should be public in the white paper.

#### Alleviation

**[SYNDICATE PROTOCOL]**: 2^192 is much larger than 10,000,000. We will leave it as an extra sanity check.

[CertiK]: Refer to the function mint source code, the actual minting limit is 2^129.



## **SER-04** | Not standard implement

Category	Severity	Location	Status
Volatile Code	<ul><li>Informational</li></ul>	projects/Syndicate/contracts/token/SyndicateERC20.sol (9ab9f5c): 289~297	(i) Acknowledged

## Description

The DOMAIN\_TYPEHASH is different from the implement in: <a href="https://eips.ethereum.org/EIPS/eip-712#rationale-for-typehash">https://eips.ethereum.org/EIPS/eip-712#rationale-for-typehash</a>.

- string name the user-readable name of signing domain, i.e. the name of the DApp or the protocol.
- string version the current major version of the signing domain. Signatures from different versions are not compatible.
- uint256 chainId the EIP-155 chain id. The user agent should refuse signing if it does not match the currently active chain.
- address verifyingContract the address of the contract that will verify the signature. The useragent may do contract-specific phishing prevention.
- bytes32 salt a disambiguating salt for the protocol. This can be used as a domain separator of last resort.

#### Recommendation

Review the code and do more testing.

#### Alleviation

[SYNDICATE PROTOCOL]: We will address it as soon as possible.



## SPB-01 | Lack of Input Validation

Category	Severity	Location	Status
Control Flow	<ul><li>Informational</li></ul>	projects/Syndicate/contracts/pools/SyndicatePoolBase.sol (9ab9f5c): 2 00	⊗ Resolved

## Description

The state variable minLockTime has no function to modify. If it is set a wrong number, the only way to change it will be deploying a new contract. So, it is necessary to add basic checks on this variable.

#### Recommendation

Consider adding validation check minLockTime.

## Alleviation

**[SYNDICATE PROTOCOL]**: The variable minLockTime has been removed.



## SPB-02 | Lack of updates of user.subYieldRewards

Category	Severity	Location	Status
Logical Issue	<ul><li>Medium</li></ul>	projects/Syndicate/contracts/pools/SyndicatePoolBase.sol (9ab9f5c): 3 31~333	(i) Acknowledged

## Description

The function updateStakeLock() calls the function \_processRewards() and passes false as the variable \_withUpdate. So, the function \_processRewards() will accumulate the user's rewards without updating user.subYieldRewards. It may let the user can get the rewards repeatedly.

#### Recommendation

Add the updates of user.subYieldRewards.

#### Alleviation

[SYNDICATE PROTOCOL]: We acknowledged this finding, and we will change the \_withUpdate to true.



## SPF-01 | Missing calculate reward

Category	Severity	Location	Status
Logical Issue	<ul><li>Medium</li></ul>	projects/Syndicate/contracts/pools/SyndicatePoolFactory.sol (9ab9f5c): 308	

## Description

The function changePoolWeight(address, uint32) is used to change the weight of the pool but the previous rewards were ignored.

#### Recommendation

We recommend calculating the previous rewards before modifying the weight of the pool.

#### Alleviation

**[SYNDICATE PROTOCOL]**: Adjust of pool weight is usually done when the pol is just created and thus no need to adjust.



# **Appendix**

## **Finding Categories**

## Centralization / Privilege

Centralization / Privilege findings refer to either feature logic or implementation of components that act against the nature of decentralization, such as explicit ownership or specialized access roles in combination with a mechanism to relocate funds.

## Logical Issue

Logical Issue findings detail a fault in the logic of the linked code, such as an incorrect notion on how block.timestamp works.

## **Control Flow**

Control Flow findings concern the access control imposed on functions, such as owner-only functions being invoke-able by anyone under certain circumstances.

#### Volatile Code

Volatile Code findings refer to segments of code that behave unexpectedly on certain edge cases that may result in a vulnerability.

#### **Checksum Calculation Method**

The "Checksum" field in the "Audit Scope" section is calculated as the SHA-256 (Secure Hash Algorithm 2 with digest size of 256 bits) digest of the content of each file hosted in the listed source repository under the specified commit.

The result is hexadecimal encoded and is the same as the output of the Linux "sha256sum" command against the target file.



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