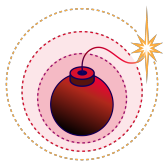
RADIUS/UDP Considered Harmful

The Blast-RADIUS Attack

Sharon Goldberg[1], Miro Haller[2], Nadia Heninger[2], Mike Milano[3], Dan Shumow[4], Marc Stevens[5], **Adam Suhl**[2]

[1]Cloudflare, [2]UC San Diego, [3]BastionZero, [4]Microsoft Research, [5]Centrum Wiskunde & Informatica

August 16, 2024



Attack Summary

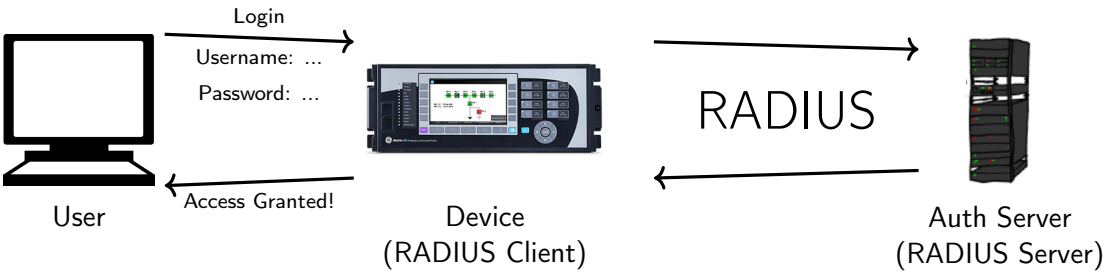
MitM network attacker can forge arbitrary RADIUS responses (for non-EAP authentication modes)

e.g., can log into victim device with bogus credentials

This is a **protocol vulnerability**: RADIUS hard codes weak authentication based on broken MD5 hash function.

What is RADIUS?

- RADIUS is the de facto standard lightweight protocol for authentication, authorization, and accounting (AAA) for networked devices.
- Log into X but handle auth on server Y



What uses RADIUS?

> *RADIUS is in wide-spread use, and is supported by essentially every switch, router, access point, and VPN concentrator product sold in the past twenty-five years.*
>
> *(Alan DeKok, lead developer of FreeRADIUS, [DeK24])*

- Backbone routers
- VPNs
- ISP infrastructure (DSL/FTTH)
- IoT devices
- Identity Providers and MFA (Okta, Duo)
- Power grid equipment
- Not vulnerable to this attack: 802.1X, enterprise WiFi, eduroam

RADIUS still uses 90s-era cryptography

- MD5 was broken 20 years ago
- Perceived lack of urgency to deprecate

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> *("Deprecating Insecure Practices in RADIUS" IETF draft, 2023)*

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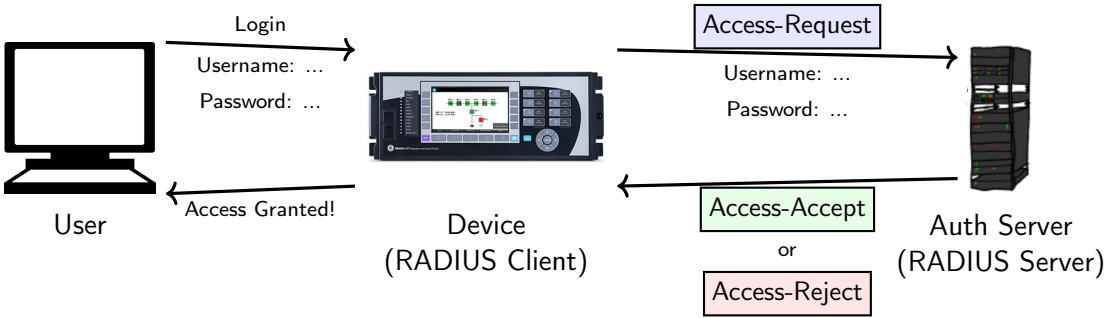
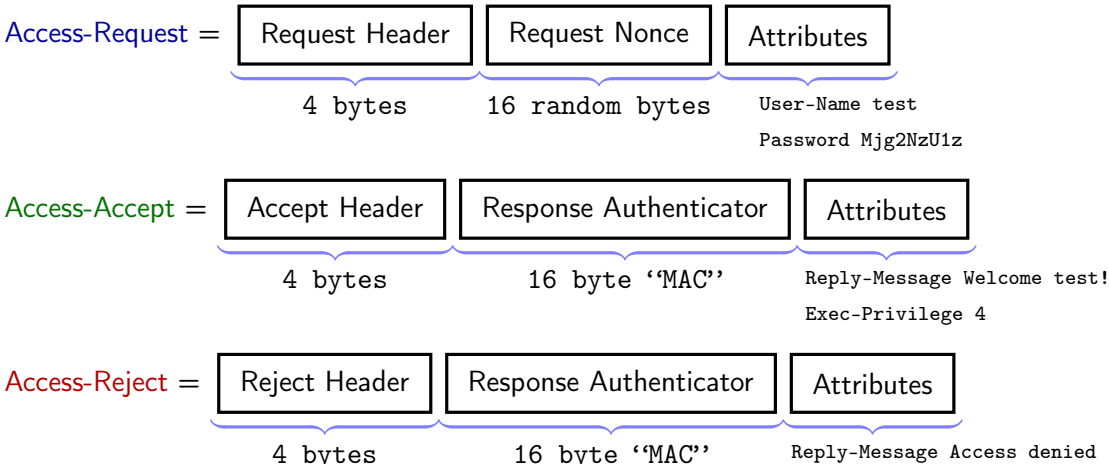
..until now!

How does RADIUS work?



- RADIUS requests and responses are often sent over UDP.
- Client and server share fixed shared secret for authenticating responses and obfuscating passwords.

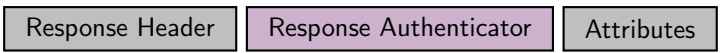
Packet Formats



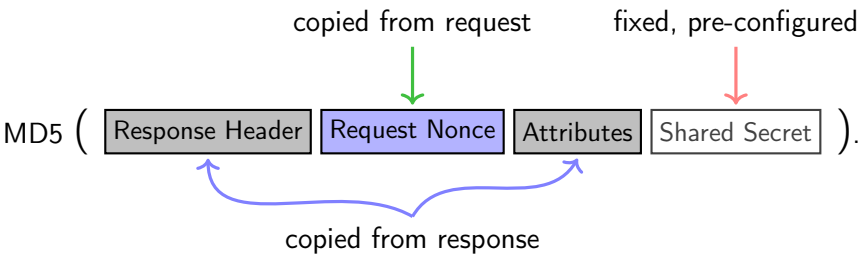
Response Authenticator

Goal: Prevent forgery of packets, e.g., by machine-in-the-middle attacker.

The Response Authenticator from packet



is computed as



Blast-RADIUS: Turning Access-Reject Into Access-Accept

- MitM attacker wants to forge an Access-Accept
  - Don't know shared secret, so can't compute Response Authenticator
- Attack: create an MD5 collision such that Access-Accept and Access-Reject will produce the same Response Authenticator (very simplifed):

$$\text{MD5}(\text{Access-Accept}) = \text{MD5}(\text{Access-Reject})$$

- Trick server into sending the Access-Reject

Blast-RADIUS Attack Overview

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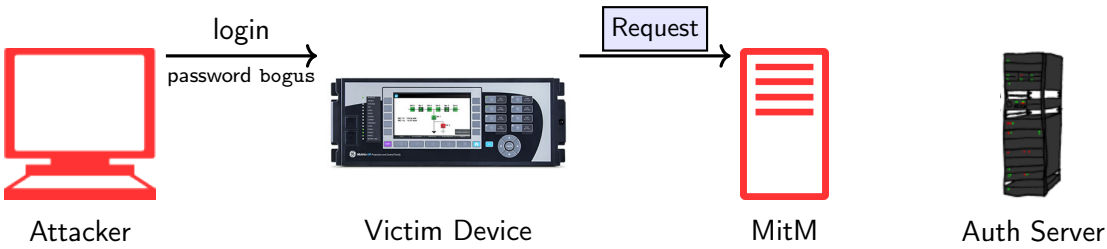
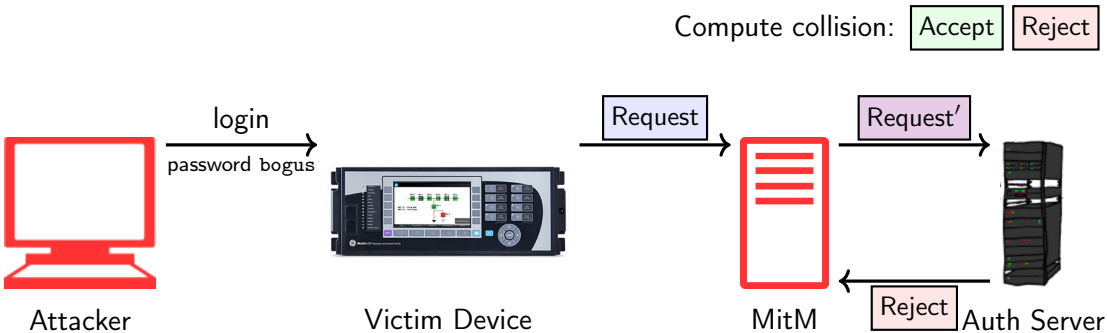


Blast-RADIUS Attack Overview

Compute collision: Accept Reject

Blast-RADIUS Attack Overview



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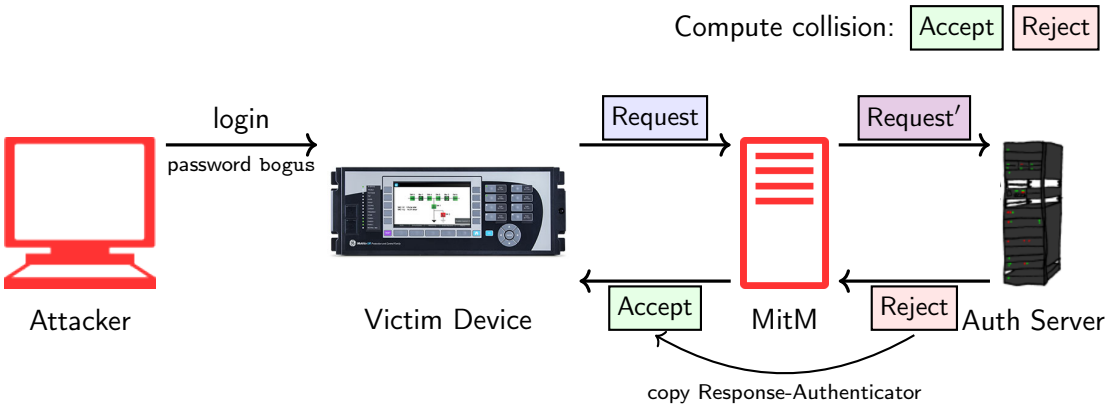

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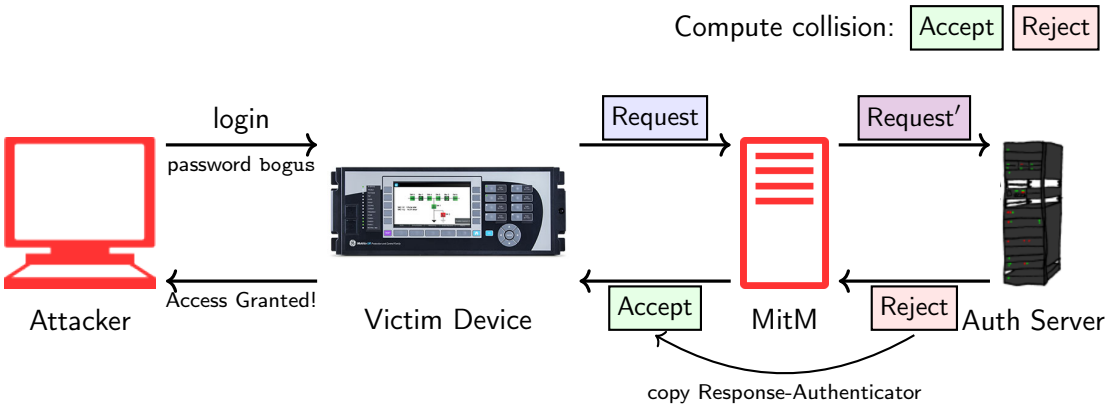
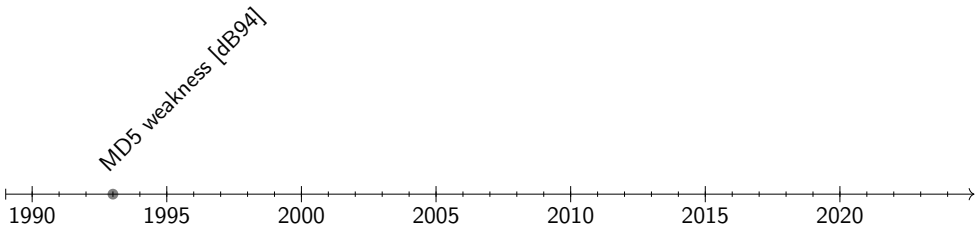


MD5 Collision Attack History



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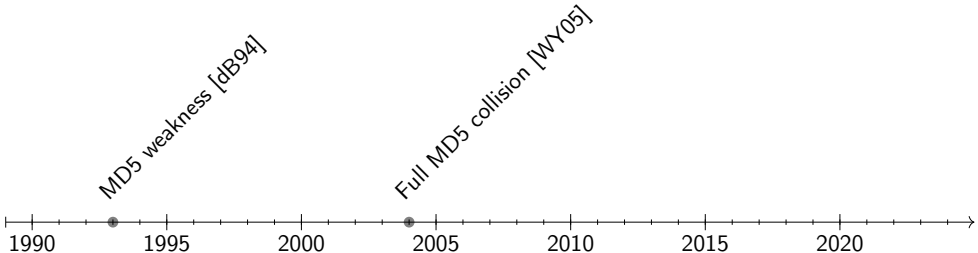

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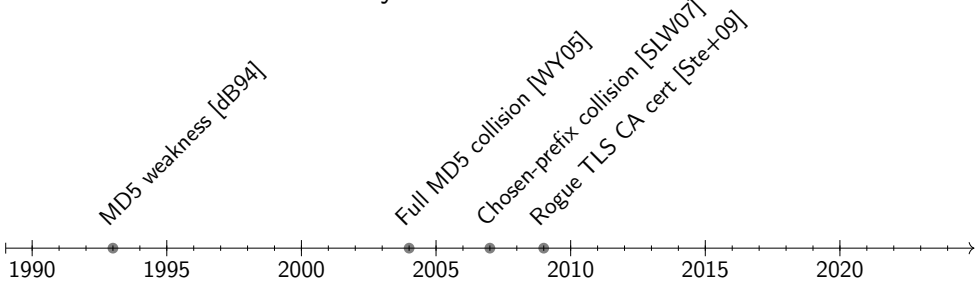

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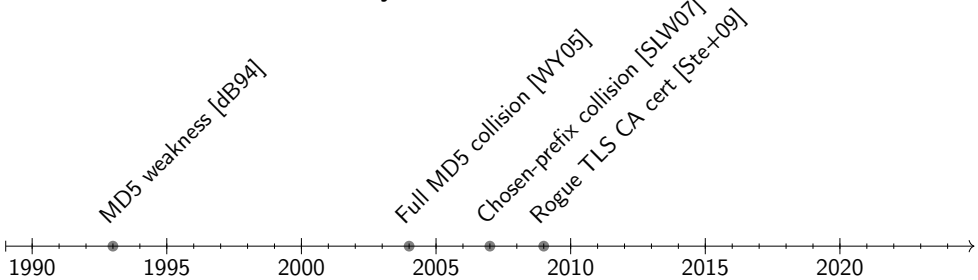

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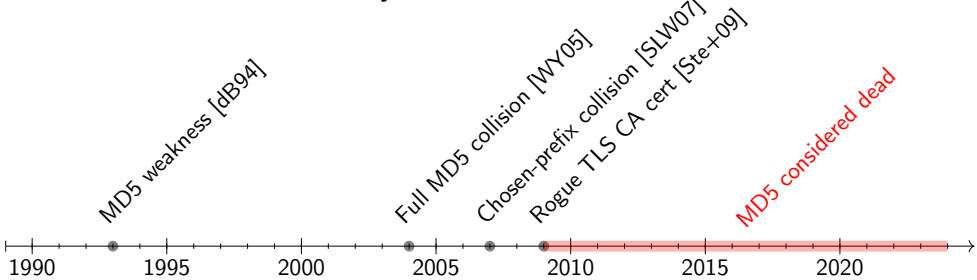

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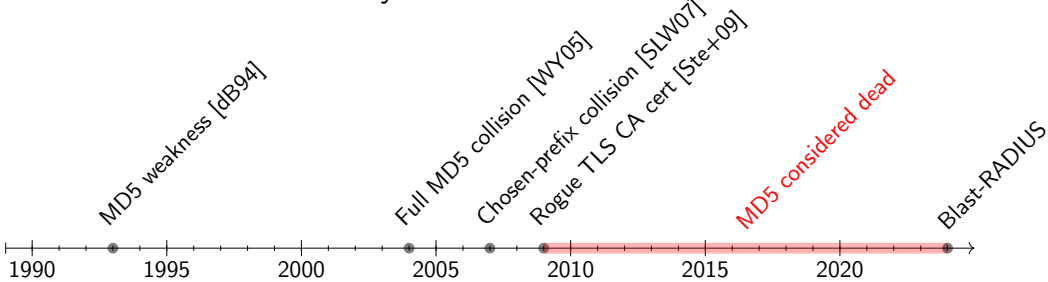

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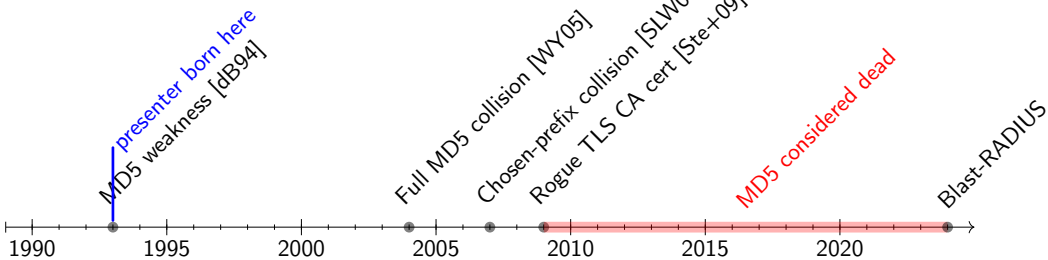

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MD5 Collision for RADIUS Response Authenticator

Given prefixes P_1, P_2, generated collision gibberish G_1, G_2, and suffix S:

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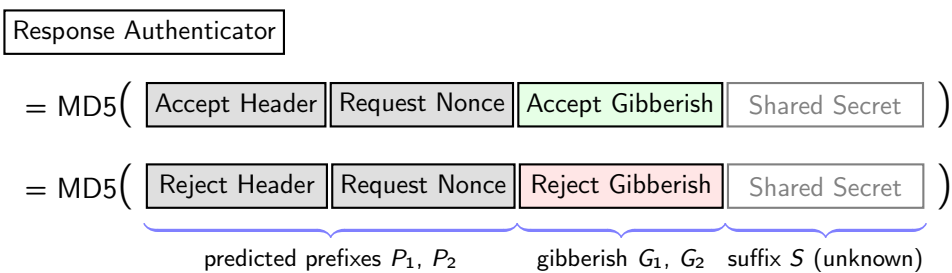
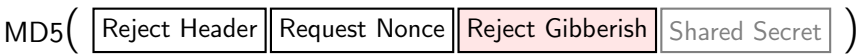
Applied to RADIUS:



Challenge 1: RejectGibberish Injection

- Server needs to include `Reject Gibberish` in Response Authenticator:



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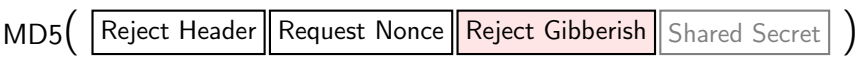

- The Proxy-State attribute:

  This Attribute is available to be sent by a proxy server to another server when forwarding an Access-Request and ***MUST be returned unmodified*** *in the Access-Accept, Access-Reject or Access-Challenge.*

  (RFC 2058, emphasis added)

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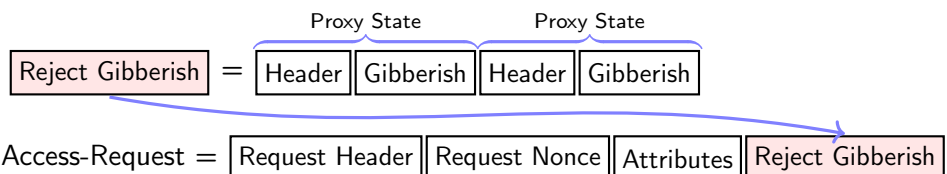
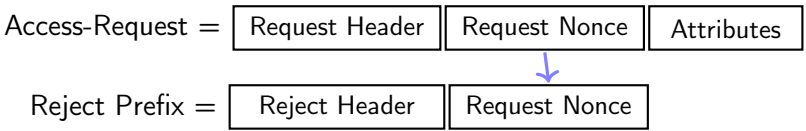


Challenge 2: Online Collision Computation



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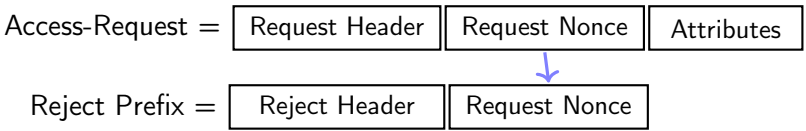

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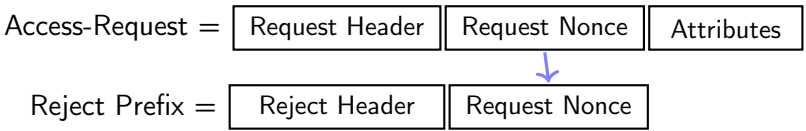

- Prefixes require knowing the `Request Nonce`.
- Collision must be computed before RADIUS client times out.
- Collision time depends on collision length and type:
  - $\mathrm{MD5}(G_1) = \mathrm{MD5}(G_2)$ and $\mathrm{MD5}(P||G_1) = \mathrm{MD5}(P||G_2)$ takes seconds.
  - Chosen-prefix collision of [Ste+09]: 204-byte G_1 and G_2 in 28h on 215 PS3.
  - We optimized our 428-byte collision from days to $\leq$ 5m on 47 servers.

Impact

Affected modes:

- PAP, CHAP, MS-CHAP are vulnerable
- EAP modes likely not vulnerable (require Message-Authenticator)

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Timing:

- RADIUS client timeouts $\leq$ 1m, our PoCs take $\approx$ 5m.
- Optimizations feasible: parallelizes well, hardware implementation.

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- Massive disclosure with 90+ vendors.
- Challenges: widespread, backwards compatibility.

Some power plants use RADIUS [TKSA14].

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- Message-Authenticator attribute uses HMAC-MD5 not vulnerable to MD5 collisions.
- All requests and responses should include and verify Message-Authenticator.

Long-term:

- Encapsulate all RADIUS traffic in (D)TLS tunnel.
- Current IETF draft is being standardized [RW24].

Some power plants use RADIUS [TKSA14].

Blast-RADIUS attack

Attack summary: MD5 collision attack on RADIUS authentication by MitM adversary.

`https://blastradius.fail`

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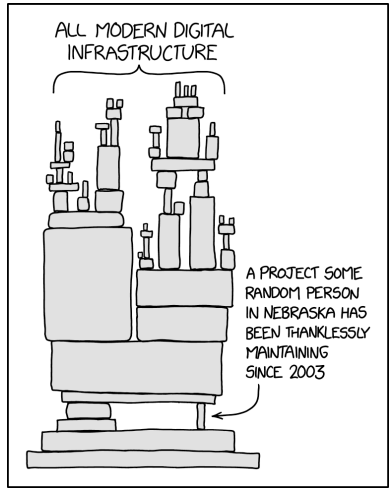
USENIX Security, August 2024.



References

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[DeK24] Alan DeKok. *RADIUS and MD5 Collision Attacks*. https://networkradius.com/assets/pdf/radius_and_md5_collisions.pdf. 2024.

[RW24] Jan-Frederik Rieckers and Stefan Winter. *(Datagram) Transport Layer Security ((D)TLS Encryption for RADIUS*. Internet-Draft draft-ietf-radext-radiusdtls-bis-02. Work in Progress. Internet Engineering Task Force, July 2024. 38 pp. URL: https://datatracker.ietf.org/doc/draft-ietf-radext-radiusdtls-bis/02/.

References II

[SLW07] Marc Stevens, Arjen K. Lenstra, and Benne de Weger. "Chosen-Prefix Collisions for MD5 and Colliding X.509 Certificates for Different Identities". In: *EUROCRYPT*. Vol. 4515. Lecture Notes in Computer Science. Springer, 2007, pp. 1–22.

[Ste+09] Marc Stevens et al. "Short Chosen-Prefix Collisions for MD5 and the Creation of a Rogue CA Certificate". In: *CRYPTO*. Vol. 5677. Lecture Notes in Computer Science. Springer, 2009, pp. 55–69.

[TKSA14] Henrik Thejl, Nagaraja K S, and Karl-Georg Aspacher. "A method for user management and a power plant control system thereof for a power plant system". Pat. 2765466. Siemens Gamesa Renewable Energy A/S. Jan. 24, 2014. URL: https://data.epo.org/publication-server/rest/v1.0/publication-dates/20190904/patents/EP2765466NWB1/document.pdf.

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[WY05] Xiaoyun Wang and Hongbo Yu. "How to Break MD5 and Other Hash Functions". In: *EUROCRYPT*. Vol. 3494. Lecture Notes in Computer Science. Springer, 2005, pp. 19–35.

Backup Slides

Blast-RADIUS Attack Example (1/3)

1. Attacker triggers Access-Request.
2. MITM attacker observes Access-Request.

01	1d	0047	726164617574...72	010674...3a

Request Authenticator

3. MITM attacker predicts the following prefixes

AcceptPrefix = | 02 | 1d | 01c0 | 726164617574...72 |

RejectPrefix = | 03 | 1d | 01c0 | 726164617574...72 |

to compute the MD5 chosen-prefix collision gibberish.

AcceptGibberish = | 21 | ec | 3d...86 | 21 | c0 | f5...9e | (428 bytes)

RejectGibberish = | 21 | ec | 96...86 | 21 | c0 | f5...9e | (428 bytes)

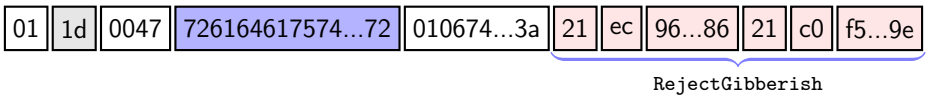
Proxy State Proxy State

PoC example packets

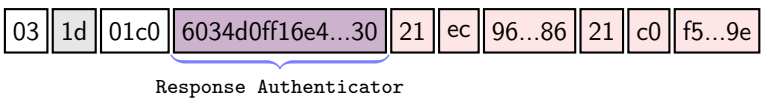
`blastradius.fail/example.py`

Blast-RADIUS Attack Example (2/3)

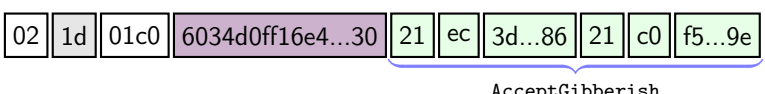
4. MITM sends Access-Request with appended `RejectGibberish` to server.



5. MITM intercepts Access-Reject, learning the Response Authenticator.

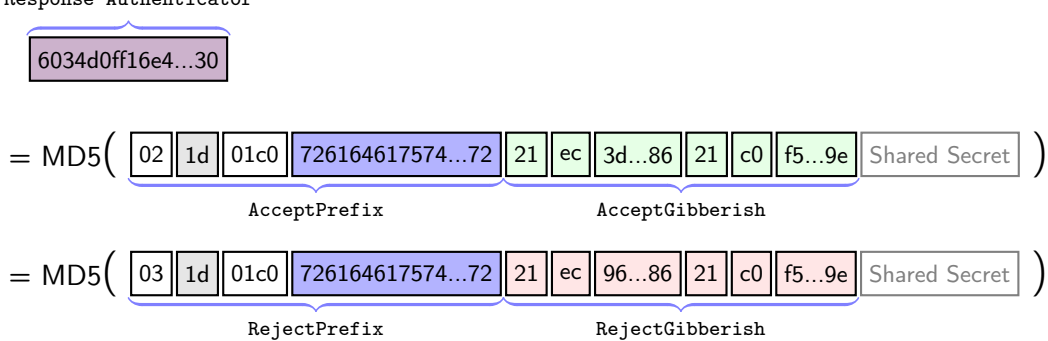


6. MITM puts Response Authenticator in Access-Accept packet with appended `AcceptGibberish`.



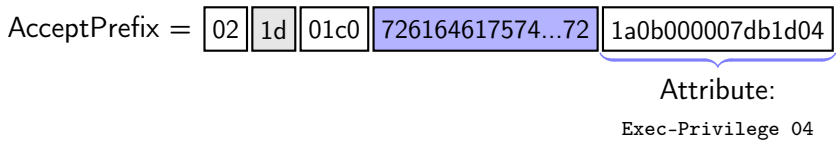
Blast-RADIUS Attack Example (3/3)

7. Access-Accept and Access-Reject produce the same Response Authenticator, and, hence, pass the RADIUS client authentication check.



Attack Extensions

- Adversary can add arbitrary attributes in prefix for Access-Accept.



- Proxy-State attributes are *not* the only way to inject the `RejectGibberish`.
  - Any reflected user input could work, e.g. the User-Name or Vendor-Specific attributes.
    - In Access-Request:
      `User-Name: 0PZjN-_ayr83S-nc6q...Mt85`
    - In Access-Reject:
      `Reply-Message: Login for 0PZjN-_ayr83S-nc6q...Mt85 failed!`
  - The client does not need to support or parse these attributes.