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INTERNET SECURITY

CIS Microsoft Windows Server 2012 R2

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Overview

This document provides prescriptive guidance for establishing a secure configuration posture for CIS Microsoft Windows Server 2012 R2. To obtain the latest version of this guide, please visit <http://benchmarks.cisecurity.org>. If you have questions, comments, or have identified ways to improve this guide, please write us at feedback@cisecurity.org.

Intended Audience

This document is intended for system and application administrators, security specialists, auditors, help desk, and platform deployment personnel who plan to develop, deploy, assess, or secure solutions that incorporate Microsoft Windows Server 2012 R2.

Consensus Guidance

This benchmark was created using a consensus review process comprised of subject matter experts. Consensus participants provide perspective from a diverse set of backgrounds including consulting, software development, audit and compliance, security research, operations, government, and legal.

Each CIS benchmark undergoes two phases of consensus review. The first phase occurs during initial benchmark development. During this phase, subject matter experts convene to discuss, create, and test working drafts of the benchmark. This discussion occurs until consensus has been reached on benchmark recommendations. The second phase begins after the benchmark has been published. During this phase, all feedback provided by the Internet community is reviewed by the consensus team for incorporation in the benchmark. If you are interested in participating in the consensus process, please visit <https://community.cisecurity.org>.

Typographical Conventions

The following typographical conventions are used throughout this guide:

Convention	Meaning
<code>Stylized Monospace font</code>	Used for blocks of code, command, and script examples. Text should be interpreted exactly as presented.
<code>Monospace font</code>	Used for inline code, commands, or examples. Text should be interpreted exactly as presented.
<i><italic font in brackets></i>	Italic texts set in angle brackets denote a variable requiring substitution for a real value.
<i>Italic font</i>	Used to denote the title of a book, article, or other publication.
Note	Additional information or caveats

Scoring Information

A scoring status indicates whether compliance with the given recommendation impacts the assessed target's benchmark score. The following scoring statuses are used in this benchmark:

Scored

Failure to comply with "Scored" recommendations will decrease the final benchmark score. Compliance with "Scored" recommendations will increase the final benchmark score.

Not Scored

Failure to comply with "Not Scored" recommendations will not decrease the final benchmark score. Compliance with "Not Scored" recommendations will not increase the final benchmark score.

Profile Definitions

The following configuration profiles are defined by this Benchmark:

- **Level 1 - Domain Controller**

Items in this profile apply to Domain Controllers and intend to:

- be practical and prudent;
- provide a clear security benefit; and
- not inhibit the utility of the technology beyond acceptable means.

- **Level 1 - Member Server**

Items in this profile apply to Member Servers and intend to:

- be practical and prudent;
- provide a clear security benefit; and
- not inhibit the utility of the technology beyond acceptable means.

Items in this profile also apply to Member Servers that have the following Roles enabled:

- AD Certificate Services
- DHCP Server
- DNS Server
- File Server
- Hyper-V
- Network Policy and Access Services
- Print Server
- Remote Access Services
- Remote Desktop Services
- Web Server

- **Level 2 - Domain Controller**

This profile extends the "Level 1 - Domain Controller" profile. Items in this profile exhibit one or more of the following characteristics:

- are intended for environments or use cases where security is paramount
- acts as defense in depth measure
- may negatively inhibit the utility or performance of the technology

- **Level 2 - Member Server**

This profile extends the "Level 1 - Member Server" profile. Items in this profile exhibit one or more of the following characteristics:

- are intended for environments or use cases where security is paramount
- acts as defense in depth measure
- may negatively inhibit the utility or performance of the technology

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Recommendations

1 Account Policies

This section contains recommendations for account policies.

1.1 Password Policy

This section contains recommendations for password policy.

1.1.1 (L1) Set 'Enforce password history' to '24 or more password(s)' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines the number of renewed, unique passwords that have to be associated with a user account before you can reuse an old password. The value for this policy setting must be between 0 and 24 passwords. The default value for Windows Vista is 0 passwords, but the default setting in a domain is 24 passwords. To maintain the effectiveness of this policy setting, use the Minimum password age setting to prevent users from repeatedly changing their password.

The recommended state for this setting is: `24 or more password(s)`.

Rationale:

The longer a user uses the same password, the greater the chance that an attacker can determine the password through brute force attacks. Also, any accounts that may have been compromised will remain exploitable for as long as the password is left unchanged. If password changes are required but password reuse is not prevented, or if users continually reuse a small number of passwords, the effectiveness of a good password policy is greatly reduced.

If you specify a low number for this policy setting, users will be able to use the same small number of passwords repeatedly. If you do not also configure the Minimum password age setting, users might repeatedly change their passwords until they can reuse their original password.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to 24 or more password(s):

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Account Policies>Password Policy\Enforce password history
```

Impact:

The major impact of this configuration is that users must create a new password every time they are required to change their old one. If users are required to change their passwords to new unique values, there is an increased risk of users who write their passwords somewhere so that they do not forget them. Another risk is that users may create passwords that change incrementally (for example, password01, password02, and so on) to facilitate memorization but make them easier to guess. Also, an excessively low value for the Minimum password age setting will likely increase administrative overhead, because users who forget their passwords might ask the help desk to reset them frequently.

Default Value:

24 passwords remembered

References:

1. CCE-37166-6

1.1.2 (L1) Set 'Maximum password age' to '60 or fewer days, but not 0' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting defines how long a user can use their password before it expires.

Values for this policy setting range from 0 to 999 days. If you set the value to 0, the password will never expire. The default value for this policy setting is 42 days.

Because attackers can crack passwords, the more frequently you change the password the less opportunity an attacker has to use a cracked password. However, the lower this value is set, the higher the potential for an increase in calls to help desk support due to users having to change their password or forgetting which password is current.

The recommended state for this setting is *60 or fewer days, but not 0*.

Rationale:

The longer a password exists the higher the likelihood that it will be compromised by a brute force attack, by an attacker gaining general knowledge about the user, or by the user sharing the password. Configuring the Maximum password age setting to 0 so that users are never required to change their passwords is a major security risk because that allows a compromised password to be used by the malicious user for as long as the valid user is authorized access.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to *60 or fewer days, but not 0*:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Account Policies>Password Policy\Maximum password age
```

Impact:

If the Maximum password age setting is too low, users are required to change their passwords very often. Such a configuration can reduce security in the organization, because users might write their passwords in an insecure location or lose them. If the value for this policy setting is too high, the level of security within an organization is reduced because it allows potential attackers more time in which to discover user passwords or to use compromised accounts.

Default Value:

42 days

References:

1. CCE-37167-4

1.1.3 (L1) Set 'Minimum password age' to '1 or more day(s)' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines the number of days that you must use a password before you can change it. The range of values for this policy setting is between 1 and 999 days. (You may also set the value to 0 to allow immediate password changes.) The default value for this setting is 0 days.

The recommended state for this setting is: `1 or more day(s)`.

Rationale:

Users may have favorite passwords that they like to use because they are easy to remember and they believe that their password choice is secure from compromise. Unfortunately, passwords are compromised and if an attacker is targeting a specific individual user account, with foreknowledge of data about that user, reuse of old passwords can cause a security breach. To address password reuse a combination of security settings is required. Using this policy setting with the Enforce password history setting prevents the easy reuse of old passwords. For example, if you configure the Enforce password history setting to ensure that users cannot reuse any of their last 12 passwords, they could change their password 13 times in a few minutes and reuse the password they started with, unless you also configure the Minimum password age setting to a number that is greater than 0. You must configure this policy setting to a number that is greater than 0 for the Enforce password history setting to be effective.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `1 or more day(s)`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Account Policies>Password Policy\Minimum password age
```

Impact:

If an administrator sets a password for a user but wants that user to change the password when the user first logs on, the administrator must select the User must change password at next logon check box, or the user will not be able to change the password until the next day.

Default Value:

0 days

References:

1. CCE-37073-4

1.1.4 (L1) Set 'Minimum password length' to '14 or more character(s)' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines the least number of characters that make up a password for a user account. There are many different theories about how to determine the best password length for an organization, but perhaps "pass phrase" is a better term than "password." In Microsoft Windows 2000 or later, pass phrases can be quite long and can include spaces. Therefore, a phrase such as "I want to drink a \$5 milkshake" is a valid pass phrase; it is a considerably stronger password than an 8 or 10 character string of random numbers and letters, and yet is easier to remember. Users must be educated about the proper selection and maintenance of passwords, especially with regard to password length.

In enterprise environments, the ideal value for the Minimum password length setting is 14 characters, however you should adjust this value to meet your organization's business requirements.

The recommended state for this setting is: `14 or more character(s)`.

Rationale:

Types of password attacks include dictionary attacks (which attempt to use common words and phrases) and brute force attacks (which try every possible combination of characters). Also, attackers sometimes try to obtain the account database so they can use tools to discover the accounts and passwords.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to 14 or more character(s):

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Account Policies>Password Policy\Minimum password length
```

Impact:

Requirements for extremely long passwords can actually decrease the security of an organization, because users might leave the information in an insecure location or lose it. If very long passwords are required, mistyped passwords could cause account lockouts and increase the volume of help desk calls. If your organization has issues with forgotten passwords due to password length requirements, consider teaching your users about pass phrases, which are often easier to remember and, due to the larger number of character combinations, much harder to discover.

Note: Older versions of Windows such as Windows 98 and Windows NT 4.0 do not support passwords that are longer than 14 characters. Computers that run these older operating systems are unable to authenticate with computers or domains that use accounts that require long passwords.

Default Value:

0 characters

References:

1. CCE-36534-6

1.1.5 (L1) Set 'Password must meet complexity requirements' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting checks all new passwords to ensure that they meet basic requirements for strong passwords.

When this policy is enabled, passwords must meet the following minimum requirements:

- Not contain the user's account name or parts of the user's full name that exceed two consecutive characters
- Be at least six characters in length
- Contain characters from three of the following four categories:
 - English uppercase characters (A through Z)
 - English lowercase characters (a through z)
 - Base 10 digits (0 through 9)
 - Non-alphabetic characters (for example, !, \$, #, %)
- A catch-all category of any Unicode character that does not fall under the previous four categories. This fifth category can be regionally specific.

Each additional character in a password increases its complexity exponentially. For instance, a seven-character, all lower-case alphabetic password would have 26⁷ (approximately 8 x 10⁹ or 8 billion) possible combinations. At 1,000,000 attempts per second (a capability of many password-cracking utilities), it would only take 133 minutes to crack. A seven-character alphabetic password with case sensitivity has 52⁷ combinations. A seven-character case-sensitive alphanumeric password without punctuation has 62⁷ combinations. An eight-character password has 26⁸ (or 2 x 10¹¹) possible combinations. Although this might seem to be a large number, at 1,000,000 attempts per second it would take only 59 hours to try all possible passwords. Remember, these times will significantly increase for passwords that use ALT characters and other

special keyboard characters such as "!" or "@". Proper use of the password settings can help make it difficult to mount a brute force attack.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

Passwords that contain only alphanumeric characters are extremely easy to discover with several publicly available tools.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Account Policies>Password Policy>Password must meet complexity requirements
```

Impact:

If the default password complexity configuration is retained, additional help desk calls for locked-out accounts could occur because users might not be accustomed to passwords that contain non-alphabetic characters. However, all users should be able to comply with the complexity requirement with minimal difficulty.

If your organization has more stringent security requirements, you can create a custom version of the Passfilt.dll file that allows the use of arbitrarily complex password strength rules. For example, a custom password filter might require the use of non-upper row characters. (Upper row characters are those that require you to hold down the SHIFT key and press any of the digits between 1 and 0.) A custom password filter might also perform a dictionary check to verify that the proposed password does not contain common dictionary words or fragments.

Also, the use of ALT key character combinations can greatly enhance the complexity of a password. However, such stringent password requirements can result in unhappy users and an extremely busy help desk. Alternatively, your organization could consider a requirement for all administrator passwords to use ALT characters in the 01280159 range. (ALT characters outside of this range can represent standard alphanumeric characters that would not add additional complexity to the password.)

Default Value:

Disabled

References:

1. CCE-37063-5

1.1.6 (L1) Set 'Store passwords using reversible encryption' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines whether the operating system stores passwords in a way that uses reversible encryption, which provides support for application protocols that require knowledge of the user's password for authentication purposes. Passwords that are stored with reversible encryption are essentially the same as plaintext versions of the passwords.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Disabled`.

Rationale:

Enabling this policy setting allows the operating system to store passwords in a weaker format that is much more susceptible to compromise and weakens your system security.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Disabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Account Policies>Password Policy\Store passwords using reversible encryption
```

Impact:

If your organization uses either the CHAP authentication protocol through remote access or IAS services or Digest Authentication in IIS, you must configure this policy setting to Enabled. This setting is extremely dangerous to apply through Group Policy on a user-by-user basis, because it requires the appropriate user account object to be opened in Active Directory Users and Computers.

Default Value:

Disabled

References:

1. CCE-36286-3

1.2 Account Lockout Policy

This section contains recommendations for account lockout policy.

1.2.1 (L1) Set 'Account lockout duration' to '15 or more minute(s)' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines the length of time that must pass before a locked account is unlocked and a user can try to log on again. The setting does this by specifying the number of minutes a locked out account will remain unavailable. If the value for this policy setting is configured to 0, locked out accounts will remain locked out until an administrator manually unlocks them.

Although it might seem like a good idea to configure the value for this policy setting to a high value, such a configuration will likely increase the number of calls that the help desk receives to unlock accounts locked by mistake. Users should be aware of the length of time a lock remains in place, so that they realize they only need to call the help desk if they have an extremely urgent need to regain access to their computer.

The recommended state for this setting is: `15 or more minute(s)`.

Rationale:

A denial of service (DoS) condition can be created if an attacker abuses the Account lockout threshold and repeatedly attempts to log on with a specific account. Once you configure the Account lockout threshold setting, the account will be locked out after the specified number of failed attempts. If you configure the Account lockout duration setting to 0, then the account will remain locked out until an administrator unlocks it manually.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to 15 or more minute(s):

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Account Policies\Account Lockout Policy\Account lockout duration
```

Impact:

Although it may seem like a good idea to configure this policy setting to never automatically unlock an account, such a configuration can increase the number of requests that your organization's help desk receives to unlock accounts that were locked by mistake.

Default Value:

Not defined

References:

1. CCE-37034-6

1.2.2 (L1) Set 'Account lockout threshold' to '10 or fewer invalid logon attempt(s), but not 0' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines the number of failed logon attempts before the account is locked. Setting this policy to 0 does not conform with the benchmark as doing so disables the account lockout threshold.

The recommended state for this setting is: 10 or fewer invalid logon attempt(s), but not 0.

Rationale:

Setting an account lockout threshold reduces the likelihood that an online password brute force attack will be successful. Setting the account lockout threshold too low introduces risk of increased accidental lockouts and/or a malicious actor intentionally locking out accounts.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to 10 or fewer invalid login attempt(s), but not 0:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Account Policies\Account Lockout Policy\Account lockout threshold
```

Impact:

If this policy setting is enabled, a locked-out account will not be usable until it is reset by an administrator or until the account lockout duration expires. This setting may generate a additional help desk calls.

If you enforce this setting an attacker could cause a denial of service condition by deliberately generating failed logons for multiple user, therefore you should also configure the Account Lockout Duration to a relatively low value.

If you configure the Account Lockout Threshold to 0, there is a possibility that an attacker's attempt to discover passwords with a brute force password attack might go undetected if a robust audit mechanism is not in place.

Default Value:

0 invalid logon attempts

References:

1. CCE-36008-1

1.2.3 (L1) Set 'Reset account lockout counter after' to '15 or more minute(s)' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines the length of time before the Account lockout threshold resets to zero. The default value for this policy setting is Not Defined. If the Account lockout threshold is defined, this reset time must be less than or equal to the value for the Account lockout duration setting.

If you leave this policy setting at its default value or configure the value to an interval that is too long, your environment could be vulnerable to a DoS attack. An attacker could maliciously perform a number of failed logon attempts on all users in the organization, which will lock out their accounts. If no policy were determined to reset the account lockout, it would be a manual task for administrators. Conversely, if a reasonable time value is configured for this policy setting, users would be locked out for a set period until all of the accounts are unlocked automatically.

The recommended state for this setting is: `15 or more minute(s)`.

Rationale:

Users can accidentally lock themselves out of their accounts if they mistype their password multiple times. To reduce the chance of such accidental lockouts, the Reset account lockout counter after setting determines the number of minutes that must elapse before the counter that tracks failed logon attempts and triggers lockouts is reset to 0.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to 15 or more minute(s):

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Account Policies\Account Lockout Policy\Reset account lockout counter after
```

Impact:

If you do not configure this policy setting or if the value is configured to an interval that is too long, a DoS attack could occur. An attacker could maliciously attempt to log on to each user's account numerous times and lock out their accounts as described in the preceding paragraphs. If you do not configure the Reset account lockout counter after setting, administrators would have to manually unlock all accounts. If you configure this policy setting to a reasonable value the users would be locked out for some period, after which their accounts would unlock automatically. Be sure that you notify users of the values used for this policy setting so that they will wait for the lockout timer to expire before they call the help desk about their inability to log on.

Default Value:

0

References:

1. CCE-36883-7

2 Local Policies

This section contains recommendations for local policies.

2.1 Audit Policy

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

2.2 User Rights Assignment

This setting contains recommendations for user rights assignments.

2.2.1 (L1) Set 'Access Credential Manager as a trusted caller' to 'No One' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This security setting is used by Credential Manager during Backup and Restore. No accounts should have this user right, as it is only assigned to Winlogon. Users' saved credentials might be compromised if this user right is assigned to other entities.

The recommended state for this setting is: No One.

Rationale:

If an account is given this right the user of the account may create an application that calls into Credential Manager and is returned the credentials for another user.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to No One:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\User Rights Assignment\Access Credential Manager as a trusted caller
```

Impact:

None, this is the default configuration.

Default Value:

No one

References:

1. CCE-37056-9

2.2.2 (L1) Configure 'Access this computer from the network' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows other users on the network to connect to the computer and is required by various network protocols that include Server Message Block (SMB)based protocols, NetBIOS, Common Internet File System (CIFS), and Component Object Model Plus (COM+).

- **Level 1 - Domain Controller.** The recommended state for this setting is: Administrators, Authenticated Users, ENTERPRISE DOMAIN CONTROLLERS.
- **Level 1 - Member Server.** The recommended state for this setting is: Administrators, Authenticated Users.

Rationale:

Users who can connect from their computer to the network can access resources on target computers for which they have permission. For example, the Access this computer from the network user right is required for users to connect to shared printers and folders. If this user right is assigned to the Everyone group, then anyone in the group will be able to read the files in those shared folders. However, this situation is unlikely for new installations of Windows Server 2003 with Service Pack 1 (SP1), because the default share and NTFS permissions in Windows Server 2003 do not include the Everyone group. This vulnerability may have a higher level of risk for computers that you upgrade from Windows NT 4.0 or Windows 2000, because the default permissions for these operating systems are not as restrictive as the default permissions in Windows Server 2003.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, configure the following UI path:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\User Rights Assignment\Access this computer from the network
```

Impact:

If you remove the Access this computer from the network user right on domain controllers for all users, no one will be able to log on to the domain or use network resources. If you remove this user right on member servers, users will not be able to connect to those servers through the network. Successful negotiation of IPsec connections requires that the initiating machine has this right, therefore it is recommended that it is assigned to the Users group. If you have installed optional components such as ASP.NET or Internet Information Services (IIS), you may need to assign this user right to additional accounts that are required by those components. It is important to verify that authorized users are assigned this user right for the computers they need to access the network.

Default Value:

Everyone, Administrators, Users, Backup Operators

References:

1. CCE-35818-4

2.2.3 (L1) Set 'Act as part of the operating system' to 'No One' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows a process to assume the identity of any user and thus gain access to the resources that the user is authorized to access.

The recommended state for this setting is: No One.

Rationale:

The Act as part of the operating system user right is extremely powerful. Anyone with this user right can take complete control of the computer and erase evidence of their activities.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to No One:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\User Rights Assignment\Act as part of the operating system
```

Impact:

There should be little or no impact because the Act as part of the operating system user right is rarely needed by any accounts other than the Local System account.

Default Value:

No one

References:

1. CCE-36876-1

2.2.4 (L1) Set 'Add workstations to domain' to 'Administrators' (DC only) (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller

Description:

This policy setting specifies which users can add computer workstations to a specific domain. For this policy setting to take effect, it must be assigned to the user as part of the Default Domain Controller Policy for the domain. A user who has been assigned this right can add up to 10 workstations to the domain. Users who have been assigned the Create Computer Objects permission for an OU or the Computers container in Active Directory can add an unlimited number of computers to the domain, regardless of whether they have been assigned the Add workstations to a domain user right.

By default, all users in the Authenticated Users group have the ability to add up to 10 computer accounts to an Active Directory domain. These new computer accounts are created in the Computers container.

In Windowsbased networks, the term security principal is defined as a user, group, or computer that is automatically assigned a security identifier to control access to resources. In an Active Directory domain, each computer account is a full security principal with the ability to authenticate and access domain resources. However, some organizations may want to limit the number of computers in an Active Directory environment so that they can consistently track, build, and manage the computers. If users are allowed to add computers to the domain, tracking and management efforts would be hampered. Also, users could perform activities that are more difficult to trace because of their ability to create additional unauthorized domain computers.

The recommended state for this setting is: *Administrators*.

Rationale:

The Add workstations to domain user right presents a moderate vulnerability. Users with this right could add a computer to the domain that is configured in a way that violates organizational security policies. For example, if your organization does not want its users to have administrative privileges on their computers, a user could install Windows on his or her computer and then add the computer to the domain. The user would know the password for the local administrator account, and could log on with that account and then add his or her domain account to the local Administrators group.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Administrators:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\User Rights Assignment\Add workstations to domain
```

Impact:

For organizations that have never allowed users to set up their own computers and add them to the domain, this countermeasure will have no impact. For those that have allowed some or all users to configure their own computers, this countermeasure will force the organization to establish a formal process for these procedures going forward. It will not affect existing computers unless they are removed from and re-added to the domain.

Default Value:

Not defined (Authenticated Users for domain controllers)

References:

1. CCE-36282-2

2.2.5 (L1) Set 'Adjust memory quotas for a process' to 'Administrators, LOCAL SERVICE, NETWORK SERVICE' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows a user to adjust the maximum amount of memory that is available to a process. The ability to adjust memory quotas is useful for system tuning, but it can be abused. In the wrong hands, it could be used to launch a denial of service (DoS) attack.

The recommended state for this setting is: Administrators, LOCAL SERVICE, NETWORK SERVICE.

Note: A server that holds the *Web Server (IIS)* Role with *Web Server* Role Service will require a special exception to this recommendation, to allow IIS application pool(s) to be granted this user right.

Rationale:

A user with the Adjust memory quotas for a process privilege can reduce the amount of memory that is available to any process, which could cause business-critical network applications to become slow or to fail. In the wrong hands, this privilege could be used to start a denial of service (DoS) attack.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Administrators, LOCAL SERVICE, NETWORK SERVICE:

Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\User Rights Assignment\Adjust memory quotas for a process

Impact:

Organizations that have not restricted users to roles with limited privileges will find it difficult to impose this countermeasure. Also, if you have installed optional components such as ASP.NET or IIS, you may need to assign the Adjust memory quotas for a process user right to additional accounts that are required by those components. Otherwise, this countermeasure should have no impact on most computers. If this user right is necessary for a user account, it can be assigned to a local computer account instead of a domain account.

Default Value:

Administrators, LOCAL SERVICE, NETWORK SERVICE

References:

1. CCE-37071-8

2.2.6 (L1) Configure 'Allow log on locally' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines which users can interactively log on to computers in your environment. Logons that are initiated by pressing the CTRL+ALT+DEL key sequence on the client computer keyboard require this user right. Users who attempt to log on through Terminal Services or IIS also require this user right.

The Guest account is assigned this user right by default. Although this account is disabled by default, it is recommended that you enable this setting through Group Policy. However, this user right should generally be restricted to the Administrators and Users groups. Assign this user right to the Backup Operators group if your organization requires that they have this capability.

- **Level 1 - Domain Controller.** The recommended state for this setting is:
Administrators, ENTERPRISE DOMAIN CONTROLLERS.
- **Level 1 - Member Server.** The recommended state for this setting is:
Administrators.

Rationale:

Any account with the Allow log on locally user right can log on at the console of the computer. If you do not restrict this user right to legitimate users who need to be able to log on to the console of the computer, unauthorized users could download and run malicious software to elevate their privileges.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, configure the following UI path:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\User Rights Assignment\Allow log on locally
```

Impact:

If you remove these default groups, you could limit the abilities of users who are assigned to specific administrative roles in your environment. You should confirm that delegated activities will not be adversely affected by any changes that you make to the Allow log on locally user rights assignments.

Default Value:

Administrators, Users, Backup Operators

References:

1. CCE-37659-0

2.2.7 (L1) Configure 'Allow log on through Remote Desktop Services' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines which users or groups have the right to log on as a Terminal Services client. Remote desktop users require this user right. If your organization uses Remote Assistance as part of its help desk strategy, create a group and assign it this user right through Group Policy. If the help desk in your organization does not use Remote Assistance, assign this user right only to the Administrators group or use the restricted groups feature to ensure that no user accounts are part of the Remote Desktop Users group.

Restrict this user right to the Administrators group, and possibly the Remote Desktop Users group, to prevent unwanted users from gaining access to computers on your network by means of the Remote Assistance feature.

- **Level 1 - Domain Controller.** The recommended state for this setting is: Administrators.
- **Level 1 - Member Server.** The recommended state for this setting is: Administrators, Remote Desktop Users.

Note: A server that holds the *Remote Desktop Services* Role with *Remote Desktop Connection Broker* Role Service will require a special exception to this recommendation, to allow the `Authenticated Users` group to be granted this user right.

Note #2: The above lists are to be treated as whitelists, which implies two things. First, the above principals need not be present for assessment of this recommendation to pass. Second, other authorized principals may be considered acceptable by the enterprise.

Rationale:

Any account with the Allow log on through Terminal Services user right can log on to the remote console of the computer. If you do not restrict this user right to legitimate users who need to log on to the console of the computer, unauthorized users could download and run malicious software to elevate their privileges.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, configure the following UI path:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\User Rights Assignment\Allow log on through Remote Desktop Services
```

Impact:

Removal of the Allow log on through Terminal Services user right from other groups or membership changes in these default groups could limit the abilities of users who perform specific administrative roles in your environment. You should confirm that delegated activities will not be adversely affected.

Default Value:

Administrators, Remote Desktop Users

References:

1. CCE-37072-6

2.2.8 (L1) Set 'Back up files and directories' to 'Administrators' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows users to circumvent file and directory permissions to back up the system. This user right is enabled only when an application (such as NTBACKUP) attempts to access a file or directory through the NTFS file system backup application programming interface (API). Otherwise, the assigned file and directory permissions apply.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Administrators`.

Rationale:

Users who are able to back up data from a computer could take the backup media to a non-domain computer on which they have administrative privileges and restore the data. They could take ownership of the files and view any unencrypted data that is contained within the backup set.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Administrators`.

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\User Rights Assignment\Back up files and directories
```

Impact:

Changes in the membership of the groups that have the Back up files and directories user right could limit the abilities of users who are assigned to specific administrative roles in your environment. You should confirm that authorized backup administrators are still able to perform backup operations.

Default Value:

Administrators, Backup Operators

References:

1. CCE-35912-5

2.2.9 (L1) Set 'Change the system time' to 'Administrators, LOCAL SERVICE' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines which users and groups can change the time and date on the internal clock of the computers in your environment. Users who are assigned this user right can affect the appearance of event logs. When a computer's time setting is changed, logged events reflect the new time, not the actual time that the events occurred.

When configuring a user right in the SCM enter a comma delimited list of accounts. Accounts can be either local or located in Active Directory, they can be groups, users, or computers.

Note: Discrepancies between the time on the local computer and on the domain controllers in your environment may cause problems for the Kerberos authentication protocol, which could make it impossible for users to log on to the domain or obtain authorization to access domain resources after they are logged on. Also, problems will occur when Group Policy is applied to client computers if the system time is not synchronized with the domain controllers.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Administrators, LOCAL SERVICE`.

Rationale:

Users who can change the time on a computer could cause several problems. For example, time stamps on event log entries could be made inaccurate, time stamps on files and folders that are created or modified could be incorrect, and computers that belong to a domain may not be able to authenticate themselves or users who try to log on to the domain from them. Also, because the Kerberos authentication protocol requires that the requestor and authenticator have their clocks synchronized within an administrator-defined skew period, an attacker who changes a computer's time may cause that computer to be unable to obtain or grant Kerberos tickets.

The risk from these types of events is mitigated on most domain controllers, member servers, and end-user computers because the Windows Time service automatically synchronizes time with domain controllers in the following ways:

- All client desktop computers and member servers use the authenticating domain controller as their inbound time partner.
- All domain controllers in a domain nominate the primary domain controller (PDC) emulator operations master as their inbound time partner.
- All PDC emulator operations masters follow the hierarchy of domains in the selection of their inbound time partner.
- The PDC emulator operations master at the root of the domain is authoritative for the organization. Therefore it is recommended that you configure this computer to synchronize with a reliable external time server.

This vulnerability becomes much more serious if an attacker is able to change the system time and then stop the Windows Time service or reconfigure it to synchronize with a time server that is not accurate.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to

Administrators, LOCAL SERVICE:

Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\User Rights Assignment\Change the system time

Impact:

There should be no impact, because time synchronization for most organizations should be fully automated for all computers that belong to the domain. Computers that do not belong to the domain should be configured to synchronize with an external source.

Default Value:

Administrators, LOCAL SERVICE

References:

1. CCE-37452-0

2.2.10 (L1) Set 'Change the time zone' to 'Administrators, LOCAL SERVICE' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This setting determines which users can change the time zone of the computer. This ability holds no great danger for the computer and may be useful for mobile workers.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Administrators, LOCAL SERVICE`.

Rationale:

Changing the time zone represents little vulnerability because the system time is not affected. This setting merely enables users to display their preferred time zone while being synchronized with domain controllers in different time zones.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Administrators, LOCAL SERVICE`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\User Rights Assignment\Change the time zone
```

Impact:

None. This is the default configuration.

Default Value:

`Administrators, LOCAL SERVICE`

References:

1. CCE-37700-2

2.2.11 (L1) Set 'Create a pagefile' to 'Administrators' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows users to change the size of the pagefile. By making the pagefile extremely large or extremely small, an attacker could easily affect the performance of a compromised computer.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Administrators`.

Rationale:

Users who can change the page file size could make it extremely small or move the file to a highly fragmented storage volume, which could cause reduced computer performance.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Administrators`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\User Rights Assignment\Create a pagefile
```

Impact:

None. This is the default configuration.

Default Value:

`Administrators`

References:

1. CCE-35821-8

2.2.12 (L1) Set 'Create a token object' to 'No One' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows a process to create an access token, which may provide elevated rights to access sensitive data.

The recommended state for this setting is: No One.

Rationale:

A user account that is given this user right has complete control over the system and can lead to the system being compromised. It is highly recommended that you do not assign any user accounts this right.

The operating system examines a user's access token to determine the level of the user's privileges. Access tokens are built when users log on to the local computer or connect to a remote computer over a network. When you revoke a privilege, the change is immediately recorded, but the change is not reflected in the user's access token until the next time the user logs on or connects. Users with the ability to create or modify tokens can change the level of access for any currently logged on account. They could escalate their own privileges or create a DoS condition.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to No One:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\User Rights Assignment\Create a token object
```

Impact:

None. This is the default configuration.

Default Value:

No one

References:

1. CCE-36861-3

2.2.13 (L1) Set 'Create global objects' to 'Administrators, LOCAL SERVICE, NETWORK SERVICE, SERVICE' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines whether users can create global objects that are available to all sessions. Users can still create objects that are specific to their own session if they do not have this user right.

Users who can create global objects could affect processes that run under other users' sessions. This capability could lead to a variety of problems, such as application failure or data corruption.

The recommended state for this setting is: Administrators, LOCAL SERVICE, NETWORK SERVICE, SERVICE.

Rationale:

Users who can create global objects could affect Windows services and processes that run under other user or system accounts. This capability could lead to a variety of problems, such as application failure, data corruption and elevation of privilege.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Administrators, LOCAL SERVICE, NETWORK SERVICE, SERVICE:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\User Rights Assignment\Create global objects
```

Impact:

None. This is the default configuration.

Default Value:

Administrators, LOCAL SERVICE, NETWORK SERVICE, SERVICE

References:

1. CCE-37453-8

2.2.14 (L1) Set 'Create permanent shared objects' to 'No One' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This user right is useful to kernel-mode components that extend the object namespace. However, components that run in kernel mode have this user right inherently. Therefore, it is typically not necessary to specifically assign this user right.

The recommended state for this setting is: No One.

Rationale:

Users who have the Create permanent shared objects user right could create new shared objects and expose sensitive data to the network.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to No One:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\User Rights Assignment\Create permanent shared objects
```

Impact:

None. This is the default configuration.

Default Value:

No one

References:

1. CCE-36532-0

2.2.15 (L1) Configure 'Create symbolic links' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines which users can create symbolic links. In Windows Vista, existing NTFS file system objects, such as files and folders, can be accessed by referring to a new kind of file system object called a symbolic link. A symbolic link is a pointer (much like a shortcut or .lnk file) to another file system object, which can be a file, folder, shortcut or another symbolic link. The difference between a shortcut and a symbolic link is that a shortcut only works from within the Windows shell. To other programs and applications, shortcuts are just another file, whereas with symbolic links, the concept of a shortcut is implemented as a feature of the NTFS file system.

Symbolic links can potentially expose security vulnerabilities in applications that are not designed to use them. For this reason, the privilege for creating symbolic links should only be assigned to trusted users. By default, only Administrators can create symbolic links.

- **Level 1 - Domain Controller.** The recommended state for this setting is:
Administrators.
- **Level 1 - Member Server.** The recommended state for this setting is:
Administrators and (when the *Hyper-V* Role is installed) NT VIRTUAL
MACHINE\Virtual Machines.

Rationale:

Users who have the Create Symbolic Links user right could inadvertently or maliciously expose your system to symbolic link attacks. Symbolic link attacks can be used to change the permissions on a file, to corrupt data, to destroy data, or as a Denial of Service attack.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To implement the recommended configuration state, configure the following UI path:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\User Rights Assignment\Create symbolic links
```

Impact:

In most cases there will be no impact because this is the default configuration, however, on Windows Servers with the Hyper-V server role installed this user right should also be granted to the special group "Virtual Machines" otherwise you will not be able to create new virtual machines.

Default Value:

Administrators

References:

1. CCE-35823-4

2.2.16 (L1) Set 'Debug programs' to 'Administrators' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines which user accounts will have the right to attach a debugger to any process or to the kernel, which provides complete access to sensitive and critical operating system components. Developers who are debugging their own applications do not need to be assigned this user right; however, developers who are debugging new system components will need it.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Administrators`.

Rationale:

The Debug programs user right can be exploited to capture sensitive computer information from system memory, or to access and modify kernel or application structures. Some attack tools exploit this user right to extract hashed passwords and other private security information, or to insert rootkit code. By default, the Debug programs user right is assigned only to administrators, which helps to mitigate the risk from this vulnerability.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Administrators`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\User Rights Assignment\Debug programs
```


Impact:

If you revoke this user right, no one will be able to debug programs. However, typical circumstances rarely require this capability on production computers. If a problem arises that requires an application to be debugged on a production server, you can move the server to a different OU temporarily and assign the Debug programs user right to a separate Group Policy for that OU.

The service account that is used for the cluster service needs the Debug programs privilege; if it does not have it, Windows Clustering will fail. For additional information about how to configure Windows Clustering in conjunction with computer hardening, see Microsoft Knowledge Base article 891597: [How to apply more restrictive security settings on a Windows Server 2003-based cluster server](#).

Tools that are used to manage processes will be unable to affect processes that are not owned by the person who runs the tools. For example, the Windows Server 2003 Resource Kit tool Kill.exe requires this user right for administrators to terminate processes that they did not start.

Default Value:

Administrators

References:

1. CCE-37075-9

2.2.17 (L1) Configure 'Deny access to this computer from the network' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting prohibits users from connecting to a computer from across the network, which would allow users to access and potentially modify data remotely. In high security environments, there should be no need for remote users to access data on a computer. Instead, file sharing should be accomplished through the use of network servers.

- **Level 1 - Domain Controller.** The recommended state for this setting is to include: `Guests, Local account.`
- **Level 1 - Member Server.** The recommended state for this setting is to include: `Guests, Local account and member of Administrators group.`

Caution: Configuring a standalone (non-domain-joined) server as described above may result in an inability to remotely administer the server.

Note: Configuring a member server or standalone server as described above may adversely affect applications that create a local service account and place it in the Administrators group - in which case you must either convert the application to use a domain-hosted service account, or remove `Local account and member of Administrators group` from this User Right Assignment. Using a domain-hosted service account is strongly preferred over making an exception to this rule, where possible.

Rationale:

Users who can log on to the computer over the network can enumerate lists of account names, group names, and shared resources. Users with permission to access shared folders and files can connect over the network and possibly view or modify data.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, configure the following UI path:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\User Rights Assignment\Deny access to this computer from the network
```

Impact:

If you configure the Deny access to this computer from the network user right for other groups, you could limit the abilities of users who are assigned to specific administrative roles in your environment. You should verify that delegated tasks will not be negatively affected.

Default Value:

Guest

References:

1. CCE-37954-5

2.2.18 (L1) Set 'Deny log on as a batch job' to include 'Guests' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines which accounts will not be able to log on to the computer as a batch job. A batch job is not a batch (.bat) file, but rather a batch-queue facility. Accounts that use the Task Scheduler to schedule jobs need this user right.

The Deny log on as a batch job user right overrides the Log on as a batch job user right, which could be used to allow accounts to schedule jobs that consume excessive system resources. Such an occurrence could cause a DoS condition. Failure to assign this user right to the recommended accounts can be a security risk.

The recommended state for this setting is to include: `Guests`.

Rationale:

Accounts that have the Deny log on as a batch job user right could be used to schedule jobs that could consume excessive computer resources and cause a DoS condition.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to include `Guests`:

Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\User Rights Assignment\Deny log on as a batch job

Impact:

If you assign the Deny log on as a batch job user right to other accounts, you could deny users who are assigned to specific administrative roles the ability to perform their required job activities. You should confirm that delegated tasks will not be affected adversely.

For example, if you assign this user right to the IWAM_<ComputerName> account, the MSM Management Point will fail. On a newly installed computer that runs Windows Server 2003 this account does not belong to the Guests group, but on a computer that was upgraded from Windows 2000 this account is a member of the Guests group. Therefore, it is important that you understand which accounts belong to any groups that you assign the Deny log on as a batch job user right.

Default Value:

No one

References:

1. CCE-36923-1

2.2.19 (L1) Set 'Deny log on as a service' to include 'Guests' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This security setting determines which service accounts are prevented from registering a process as a service. This policy setting supersedes the Log on as a service policy setting if an account is subject to both policies. Note: This security setting does not apply to the System, Local Service, or Network Service accounts.

The recommended state for this setting is to include: `Guests`.

Rationale:

Accounts that can log on as a service could be used to configure and start new unauthorized services, such as a keylogger or other malicious software. The benefit of the specified countermeasure is somewhat reduced by the fact that only users with administrative privileges can install and configure services, and an attacker who has already attained that level of access could configure the service to run with the System account.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to include `Guests`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\User Rights Assignment\Deny log on as a service
```

Impact:

If you assign the Deny log on as a service user right to specific accounts, services may not be able to start and a DoS condition could result.

Default Value:

No one

References:

1. CCE-36877-9

2.2.20 (L1) Set 'Deny log on locally' to include 'Guests' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This security setting determines which users are prevented from logging on at the computer. This policy setting supersedes the Allow log on locally policy setting if an account is subject to both policies. Important: If you apply this security policy to the Everyone group, no one will be able to log on locally.

The recommended state for this setting is to include: `Guests`.

Rationale:

Any account with the ability to log on locally could be used to log on at the console of the computer. If this user right is not restricted to legitimate users who need to log on to the console of the computer, unauthorized users might download and run malicious software that elevates their privileges.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to include `Guests`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\User Rights Assignment\Deny log on locally
```

Impact:

If you assign the Deny log on locally user right to additional accounts, you could limit the abilities of users who are assigned to specific roles in your environment. However, this user right should explicitly be assigned to the ASPNET account on computers that run IIS 6.0. You should confirm that delegated activities will not be adversely affected.

Default Value:

Guests

References:

1. CCE-37146-8

2.2.21 (L1) Set 'Deny log on through Remote Desktop Services' to include 'Guests, Local account' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines whether users can log on as Terminal Services clients. After the baseline member server is joined to a domain environment, there is no need to use local accounts to access the server from the network. Domain accounts can access the server for administration and end-user processing.

The recommended state for this setting is to include: `Guests, Local account`.

Caution: Configuring a standalone (non-domain-joined) server as described above may result in an inability to remotely administer the server.

Rationale:

Any account with the right to log on through Terminal Services could be used to log on to the remote console of the computer. If this user right is not restricted to legitimate users who need to log on to the console of the computer, unauthorized users might download and run malicious software that elevates their privileges.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to include `Guests, Local account`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\User Rights Assignment\Deny log on through Remote Desktop Services
```

Impact:

If you assign the Deny log on through Terminal Services user right to other groups, you could limit the abilities of users who are assigned to specific administrative roles in your environment. Accounts that have this user right will be unable to connect to the computer through either Terminal Services or Remote Assistance. You should confirm that delegated tasks will not be negatively impacted.

Default Value:

No one

References:

1. CCE-36867-0

2.2.22 (L1) Configure 'Enable computer and user accounts to be trusted for delegation' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows users to change the Trusted for Delegation setting on a computer object in Active Directory. Abuse of this privilege could allow unauthorized users to impersonate other users on the network.

- **Level 1 - Domain Controller.** The recommended state for this setting is: Administrators.
- **Level 1 - Member Server.** The recommended state for this setting is: No One.

Rationale:

Misuse of the Enable computer and user accounts to be trusted for delegation user right could allow unauthorized users to impersonate other users on the network. An attacker could exploit this privilege to gain access to network resources and make it difficult to determine what has happened after a security incident.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, configure the following UI path:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\User Rights Assignment\Enable computer and user accounts to be trusted for delegation
```

Impact:

None. This is the default configuration.

Default Value:

No one

References:

1. CCE-36860-5

2.2.23 (L1) Set 'Force shutdown from a remote system' to 'Administrators' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows users to shut down Windows Vista-based computers from remote locations on the network. Anyone who has been assigned this user right can cause a denial of service (DoS) condition, which would make the computer unavailable to service user requests. Therefore, it is recommended that only highly trusted administrators be assigned this user right.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Administrators`.

Rationale:

Any user who can shut down a computer could cause a DoS condition to occur. Therefore, this user right should be tightly restricted.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Administrators`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\User Rights Assignment\Force shutdown from a remote system
```

Impact:

If you remove the Force shutdown from a remote system user right from the Server Operator group you could limit the abilities of users who are assigned to specific administrative roles in your environment. You should confirm that delegated activities will not be adversely affected.

Default Value:

Administrators

References:

1. CCE-37877-8

2.2.24 (L1) Set 'Generate security audits' to 'LOCAL SERVICE, NETWORK SERVICE' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines which users or processes can generate audit records in the Security log.

The recommended state for this setting is: LOCAL SERVICE, NETWORK SERVICE.

Note: A server that holds the *Web Server (IIS)* Role with *Web Server* Role Service will require a special exception to this recommendation, to allow IIS application pool(s) to be granted this user right.

Note #2: A server that holds the *Active Directory Federation Services* Role will require a special exception to this recommendation, to allow the NT SERVICE\ADFSSRV and NT SERVICE\DRS services, as well as the associated Active Directory Federation Services service account, to be granted this user right.

Rationale:

An attacker could use this capability to create a large number of audited events, which would make it more difficult for a system administrator to locate any illicit activity. Also, if the event log is configured to overwrite events as needed, any evidence of unauthorized activities could be overwritten by a large number of unrelated events.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to LOCAL SERVICE, NETWORK SERVICE:

Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\User Rights Assignment\Generate security audits

Impact:

On most computers, this is the default configuration and there will be no negative impact. However, if you have installed the *Web Server (IIS)* Role with *Web Services* Role Service, you will need to allow the IIS application pool(s) to be granted this User Right Assignment.

Default Value:

LOCAL SERVICE, NETWORK SERVICE

References:

1. CCE-37639-2

2.2.25 (L1) Configure 'Impersonate a client after authentication' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

The policy setting allows programs that run on behalf of a user to impersonate that user (or another specified account) so that they can act on behalf of the user. If this user right is required for this kind of impersonation, an unauthorized user will not be able to convince a client to connect—for example, by remote procedure call (RPC) or named pipes—to a service that they have created to impersonate that client, which could elevate the unauthorized user's permissions to administrative or system levels.

Services that are started by the Service Control Manager have the built-in Service group added by default to their access tokens. COM servers that are started by the COM infrastructure and configured to run under a specific account also have the Service group added to their access tokens. As a result, these processes are assigned this user right when they are started.

Also, a user can impersonate an access token if any of the following conditions exist:

- The access token that is being impersonated is for this user.
- The user, in this logon session, logged on to the network with explicit credentials to create the access token.
- The requested level is less than Impersonate, such as Anonymous or Identify.

An attacker with the Impersonate a client after authentication user right could create a service, trick a client to make them connect to the service, and then impersonate that client to elevate the attacker's level of access to that of the client.

- **Level 1 - Domain Controller.** The recommended state for this setting is: Administrators, LOCAL SERVICE, NETWORK SERVICE, SERVICE.
- **Level 1 - Member Server.** The recommended state for this setting is: Administrators, LOCAL SERVICE, NETWORK SERVICE, SERVICE and (when the *Web Server (IIS)* Role with *Web Services* Role Service is installed) IIS_IUSRS.

Rationale:

An attacker with the Impersonate a client after authentication user right could create a service, trick a client to make them connect to the service, and then impersonate that client to elevate the attacker's level of access to that of the client.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, configure the following UI path:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\User Rights Assignment\Impersonate a client after authentication
```

Impact:

In most cases this configuration will have no impact. If you have installed the *Web Server (IIS)* Role with *Web Services* Role Service, you will need to also assign the user right to IIS_IUSRS.

Default Value:

Administrators, LOCAL SERVICE, NETWORK SERVICE, SERVICE

References:

1. CCE-37106-2

2.2.26 (L1) Set 'Increase scheduling priority' to 'Administrators' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines whether users can increase the base priority class of a process. (It is not a privileged operation to increase relative priority within a priority class.) This user right is not required by administrative tools that are supplied with the operating system but might be required by software development tools.

The recommended state for this setting is: *Administrators*.

Rationale:

A user who is assigned this user right could increase the scheduling priority of a process to Real-Time, which would leave little processing time for all other processes and could lead to a DoS condition.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to *Administrators*:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\User Rights Assignment\Increase scheduling priority
```

Impact:

None. This is the default configuration.

Default Value:

Administrators

References:

1. CCE-38326-5

2.2.27 (L1) Set 'Load and unload device drivers' to 'Administrators' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows users to dynamically load a new device driver on a system. An attacker could potentially use this capability to install malicious code that appears to be a device driver. This user right is required for users to add local printers or printer drivers in Windows Vista.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Administrators`.

Rationale:

Device drivers run as highly privileged code. A user who has the Load and unload device drivers user right could unintentionally install malicious code that masquerades as a device driver. Administrators should exercise greater care and install only drivers with verified digital signatures.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Administrators`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\User Rights Assignment\Load and unload device drivers
```

Impact:

If you remove the Load and unload device drivers user right from the Print Operators group or other accounts you could limit the abilities of users who are assigned to specific administrative roles in your environment. You should ensure that delegated tasks will not be negatively affected.

Default Value:

Administrators

References:

1. CCE-36318-4

2.2.28 (L1) Set 'Lock pages in memory' to 'No One' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows a process to keep data in physical memory, which prevents the system from paging the data to virtual memory on disk. If this user right is assigned, significant degradation of system performance can occur.

The recommended state for this setting is: No One.

Rationale:

Users with the Lock pages in memory user right could assign physical memory to several processes, which could leave little or no RAM for other processes and result in a DoS condition.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to No One:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\User Rights Assignment\Lock pages in memory
```

Impact:

None. This is the default configuration.

Default Value:

No one

References:

1. CCE-36495-0

2.2.29 (L1) Configure 'Manage auditing and security log' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines which users can change the auditing options for files and directories and clear the Security log.

For environments running Microsoft Exchange Server, the `Exchange Servers` group must possess this privilege on Domain Controllers to properly function. Given this, DCs granting the `Exchange Servers` group this privilege do conform with this benchmark. If the environment does not use Microsoft Exchange Server, then this privilege should be limited to only `Administrators` on DCs.

- **Level 1 - Domain Controller.** The recommended state for this setting is: `Administrators` and (when Exchange is running in the environment) `Exchange Servers`.
- **Level 1 - Member Server.** The recommended state for this setting is: `Administrators`.

Rationale:

The ability to manage the Security event log is a powerful user right and it should be closely guarded. Anyone with this user right can clear the Security log to erase important evidence of unauthorized activity.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, configure the following UI path:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\User Rights Assignment\Manage auditing and security log
```

Impact:

None. This is the default configuration.

Default Value:

Administrators

References:

1. CCE-35906-7

2.2.30 (L1) Set 'Modify an object label' to 'No One' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This privilege determines which user accounts can modify the integrity label of objects, such as files, registry keys, or processes owned by other users. Processes running under a user account can modify the label of an object owned by that user to a lower level without this privilege.

The recommended state for this setting is: No One.

Rationale:

By modifying the integrity label of an object owned by an other user a malicious user may cause them to execute code at a higher level of privilege than intended.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to No One:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\User Rights Assignment\Modify an object label
```

Impact:

None, by default the Administrators group has this user right.

Default Value:

None

References:

1. CCE-36054-5

2.2.31 (L1) Set 'Modify firmware environment values' to 'Administrators' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows users to configure the system-wide environment variables that affect hardware configuration. This information is typically stored in the Last Known Good Configuration. Modification of these values and could lead to a hardware failure that would result in a denial of service condition.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Administrators`.

Rationale:

Anyone who is assigned the Modify firmware environment values user right could configure the settings of a hardware component to cause it to fail, which could lead to data corruption or a DoS condition.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Administrators`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\User Rights Assignment\Modify firmware environment values
```

Impact:

None. This is the default configuration.

Default Value:

`Administrators`

References:

1. CCE-38113-7

2.2.32 (L1) Set 'Perform volume maintenance tasks' to 'Administrators' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows users to manage the system's volume or disk configuration, which could allow a user to delete a volume and cause data loss as well as a denial-of-service condition.

The recommended state for this setting is: Administrators.

Rationale:

A user who is assigned the Perform volume maintenance tasks user right could delete a volume, which could result in the loss of data or a DoS condition.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Administrators:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\User Rights Assignment\Perform volume maintenance tasks
```

Impact:

None. This is the default configuration.

Default Value:

Administrators

References:

1. CCE-36143-6

2.2.33 (L1) Set 'Profile single process' to 'Administrators' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines which users can use tools to monitor the performance of non-system processes. Typically, you do not need to configure this user right to use the Microsoft Management Console (MMC) Performance snap-in. However, you do need this user right if System Monitor is configured to collect data using Windows Management Instrumentation (WMI). Restricting the Profile single process user right prevents intruders from gaining additional information that could be used to mount an attack on the system.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Administrators`.

Rationale:

The Profile single process user right presents a moderate vulnerability. An attacker with this user right could monitor a computer's performance to help identify critical processes that they might wish to attack directly. The attacker may also be able to determine what processes run on the computer so that they could identify countermeasures that they may need to avoid, such as antivirus software, an intrusion-detection system, or which other users are logged on to a computer.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to

`Administrators`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\User Rights Assignment\Profile single process
```

Impact:

If you remove the Profile single process user right from the Power Users group or other accounts, you could limit the abilities of users who are assigned to specific administrative roles in your environment. You should ensure that delegated tasks will not be negatively affected.

Default Value:

Administrators

References:

1. CCE-37131-0

2.2.34 (L1) Set 'Profile system performance' to 'Administrators, NT SERVICE\WdiServiceHost' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows users to use tools to view the performance of different system processes, which could be abused to allow attackers to determine a system's active processes and provide insight into the potential attack surface of the computer.

The recommended state for this setting is: Administrators, NT SERVICE\WdiServiceHost.

Rationale:

The Profile system performance user right poses a moderate vulnerability. Attackers with this user right could monitor a computer's performance to help identify critical processes that they might wish to attack directly. Attackers may also be able to determine what processes are active on the computer so that they could identify countermeasures that they may need to avoid, such as antivirus software or an intrusion detection system.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to

Administrators, NT SERVICE\WdiServiceHost:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\User Rights Assignment\Profile system performance
```

Impact:

None. This is the default configuration.

Default Value:

Administrators, NT SERVICE\WdiServiceHost

References:

1. CCE-36052-9

2.2.35 (L1) Set 'Replace a process level token' to 'LOCAL SERVICE, NETWORK SERVICE' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows one process or service to start another service or process with a different security access token, which can be used to modify the security access token of that sub-process and result in the escalation of privileges.

The recommended state for this setting is: LOCAL SERVICE, NETWORK SERVICE.

Note: A server that holds the *Web Server (IIS)* Role with *Web Server* Role Service will require a special exception to this recommendation, to allow IIS application pool(s) to be granted this user right.

Rationale:

User with the Replace a process level token privilege are able to start processes as other users whose credentials they know. They could use this method to hide their unauthorized actions on the computer. (On Windows 2000-based computers, use of the Replace a process level token user right also requires the user to have the Adjust memory quotas for a process user right that is discussed earlier in this section.)

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to LOCAL SERVICE, NETWORK SERVICE:

Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\User Rights Assignment\Replace a process level token

Impact:

On most computers, this is the default configuration and there will be no negative impact. However, if you have installed the *Web Server (IIS)* Role with *Web Services* Role Service, you will need to allow the IIS application pool(s) to be granted this User Right Assignment.

Default Value:

LOCAL SERVICE, NETWORK SERVICE

References:

1. CCE-37430-6

2.2.36 (L1) Set 'Restore files and directories' to 'Administrators' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines which users can bypass file, directory, registry, and other persistent object permissions when restoring backed up files and directories on computers that run Windows Vista in your environment. This user right also determines which users can set valid security principals as object owners; it is similar to the Back up files and directories user right.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Administrators`.

Rationale:

An attacker with the Restore files and directories user right could restore sensitive data to a computer and overwrite data that is more recent, which could lead to loss of important data, data corruption, or a denial of service. Attackers could overwrite executable files that are used by legitimate administrators or system services with versions that include malicious software to grant themselves elevated privileges, compromise data, or install backdoors for continued access to the computer.

Note

Even if the following countermeasure is configured, an attacker could still restore data to a computer in a domain that is controlled by the attacker. Therefore, it is critical that organizations carefully protect the media that are used to back up data.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to

`Administrators`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\User Rights Assignment\Restore files and directories
```

Impact:

If you remove the Restore files and directories user right from the Backup Operators group and other accounts you could make it impossible for users who have been delegated specific tasks to perform those tasks. You should verify that this change won't negatively affect the ability of your organization's personnel to do their jobs.

Default Value:

Administrators, Backup Operators

References:

1. CCE-37613-7

2.2.37 (L1) Set 'Shut down the system' to 'Administrators' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines which users who are logged on locally to the computers in your environment can shut down the operating system with the Shut Down command. Misuse of this user right can result in a denial of service condition.

The recommended state for this setting is: *Administrators*.

Rationale:

The ability to shut down domain controllers should be limited to a very small number of trusted administrators. Although the Shut down the system user right requires the ability to log on to the server, you should be very careful about which accounts and groups you allow to shut down a domain controller.

When a domain controller is shut down, it is no longer available to process logons, serve Group Policy, and answer Lightweight Directory Access Protocol (LDAP) queries. If you shut down domain controllers that possess Flexible SingleMaster Operations (FSMO) roles, you can disable key domain functionality, such as processing logons for new passwords—the Primary Domain Controller (PDC) Emulator role.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to *Administrators*:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\User Rights Assignment\Shut down the system
```

Impact:

The impact of removing these default groups from the Shut down the system user right could limit the delegated abilities of assigned roles in your environment. You should confirm that delegated activities will not be adversely affected.

Default Value:

Administrators, Backup Operators

References:

1. CCE-38328-1

2.2.38 (L1) Set 'Synchronize directory service data' to 'No One' (DC only) (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller

Description:

This security setting determines which users and groups have the authority to synchronize all directory service data.

The recommended state for this setting is: No One.

Rationale:

The Synchronize directory service data user right affects domain controllers; only domain controllers should be able to synchronize directory service data. Domain controllers have this user right inherently, because the synchronization process runs in the context of the System account on domain controllers. Attackers who have this user right can view all information stored within the directory. They could then use some of that information to facilitate additional attacks or expose sensitive data, such as direct telephone numbers or physical addresses.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to No One:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\User Rights Assignment\Synchronize directory service data
```

Impact:

None. This is the default configuration.

Default Value:

Not defined

References:

1. CCE-36099-0

2.2.39 (L1) Set 'Take ownership of files or other objects' to 'Administrators' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows users to take ownership of files, folders, registry keys, processes, or threads. This user right bypasses any permissions that are in place to protect objects to give ownership to the specified user.

The recommended state for this setting is: Administrators.

Rationale:

Any users with the Take ownership of files or other objects user right can take control of any object, regardless of the permissions on that object, and then make any changes they wish to that object. Such changes could result in exposure of data, corruption of data, or a DoS condition.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Administrators:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\User Rights Assignment\Take ownership of files or other objects
```

Impact:

None. This is the default configuration.

Default Value:

Administrators

References:

1. CCE-38325-7

2.3 Security Options

This section contains recommendations for security options.

2.3.1 Accounts

This section contains recommendations related to default accounts.

2.3.1.1 (L1) Set 'Accounts: Administrator account status' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting enables or disables the Administrator account during normal operation. When a computer is booted into safe mode, the Administrator account is always enabled, regardless of how this setting is configured. Note that this setting will have no impact when applied to the domain controller organizational unit via group policy because domain controllers have no local account database. It can be configured at the domain level via group policy, similar to account lockout and password policy settings.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Disabled`.

Rationale:

In some organizations, it can be a daunting management challenge to maintain a regular schedule for periodic password changes for local accounts. Therefore, you may want to disable the built-in Administrator account instead of relying on regular password changes to protect it from attack. Another reason to disable this built-in account is that it cannot be locked out no matter how many failed logons it accrues, which makes it a prime target for brute force attacks that attempt to guess passwords. Also, this account has a well-known security identifier (SID) and there are third-party tools that allow authentication by using the SID rather than the account name. This capability means that even if you rename the Administrator account, an attacker could launch a brute force attack by using the SID to log on.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Disabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Accounts: Administrator account status
```

Impact:

Maintenance issues can arise under certain circumstances if you disable the Administrator account. For example, if the secure channel between a member computer and the domain controller fails in a domain environment for any reason and there is no other local Administrator account, you must restart in safe mode to fix the problem that broke the secure channel.

If the current Administrator password does not meet the password requirements, you will not be able to re-enable the Administrator account after it is disabled. If this situation occurs, another member of the Administrators group must set the password on the Administrator account with the Local Users and Groups tool.

Default Value:

Disabled

References:

1. CCE-37953-7

2.3.1.2 (L1) Set 'Accounts: Block Microsoft accounts' to 'Users can't add or log on with Microsoft accounts' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting prevents users from adding new Microsoft accounts on this computer.

If you select the "Users can't add Microsoft accounts" option, users will not be able to create new Microsoft accounts on this computer, switch a local account to a Microsoft account, or connect a domain account to a Microsoft account. This is the preferred option if you need to limit the use of Microsoft accounts in your enterprise.

If you select the "Users can't add or log on with Microsoft accounts" option, existing Microsoft account users will not be able to log on to Windows. Selecting this option might make it impossible for an existing administrator on this computer to log on and manage the system.

If you disable or do not configure this policy (recommended), users will be able to use Microsoft accounts with Windows.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Users can't add or log on with Microsoft accounts.`

Rationale:

Organizations that want to effectively implement identity management policies and maintain firm control of what accounts are used to log onto their computers will probably want to block Microsoft accounts. Organizations may also need to block Microsoft accounts in order to meet the requirements of compliance standards that apply to their information systems.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Policies\System:NoConnectedUser
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Users can't add or log on with Microsoft accounts`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Accounts: Block Microsoft accounts
```

Impact:

Users will not be able to log onto the computer with their Microsoft account.

Default Value:

Not defined

References:

1. CCE-36147-7

2.3.1.3 (L1) Set 'Accounts: Guest account status' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines whether the Guest account is enabled or disabled. The Guest account allows unauthenticated network users to gain access to the system. Note that this setting will have no impact when applied to the domain controller organizational unit via group policy because domain controllers have no local account database. It can be configured at the domain level via group policy, similar to account lockout and password policy settings.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Disabled`.

Rationale:

The default Guest account allows unauthenticated network users to log on as Guest with no password. These unauthorized users could access any resources that are accessible to the Guest account over the network. This capability means that any network shares with permissions that allow access to the Guest account, the Guests group, or the Everyone group will be accessible over the network, which could lead to the exposure or corruption of data.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Disabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Accounts: Guest account status
```

Impact:

All network users will need to authenticate before they can access shared resources. If you disable the Guest account and the Network Access: Sharing and Security Model option is set to Guest Only, network logons, such as those performed by the Microsoft Network Server (SMB Service), will fail. This policy setting should have little impact on most organizations because it is the default setting in Microsoft Windows 2000, Windows XP, and Windows Server™ 2003.

Default Value:

Disabled

References:

1. CCE-37432-2

2.3.1.4 (L1) Set 'Accounts: Limit local account use of blank passwords to console logon only' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines whether local accounts that are not password protected can be used to log on from locations other than the physical computer console. If you enable this policy setting, local accounts that have blank passwords will not be able to log on to the network from remote client computers. Such accounts will only be able to log on at the keyboard of the computer.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

Blank passwords are a serious threat to computer security and should be forbidden through both organizational policy and suitable technical measures. In fact, the default settings for Active Directory domains require complex passwords of at least seven characters. However, if users with the ability to create new accounts bypass your domain-based password policies, they could create accounts with blank passwords. For example, a user could build a stand-alone computer, create one or more accounts with blank passwords, and then join the computer to the domain. The local accounts with blank passwords would still function. Anyone who knows the name of one of these unprotected accounts could then use it to log on.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Control\Lsa:LimitBlankPasswordUse
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Accounts: Limit local account use of blank passwords to console logon only
```

Impact:

None. This is the default configuration.

Default Value:

Enabled

References:

1. CCE-37615-2

2.3.1.5 (L1) Configure 'Accounts: Rename administrator account' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

The built-in local administrator account is a well-known account name that attackers will target. It is recommended to choose another name for this account, and to avoid names that denote administrative or elevated access accounts. Be sure to also change the default description for the local administrator (through the Computer Management console).

Rationale:

The Administrator account exists on all computers that run the Windows 2000 or later operating systems. If you rename this account, it is slightly more difficult for unauthorized persons to guess this privileged user name and password combination.

The built-in Administrator account cannot be locked out, regardless of how many times an attacker might use a bad password. This capability makes the Administrator account a popular target for brute force attacks that attempt to guess passwords. The value of this countermeasure is lessened because this account has a well-known SID, and there are third-party tools that allow authentication by using the SID rather than the account name. Therefore, even if you rename the Administrator account, an attacker could launch a brute force attack by using the SID to log on.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, configure the following UI path:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local  
Policies\Security Options\Accounts: Rename administrator account
```

Impact:

You will have to inform users who are authorized to use this account of the new account name. (The guidance for this setting assumes that the Administrator account was not disabled, which was recommended earlier in this chapter.)

Default Value:

Administrator

References:

1. CCE-38233-3

2.3.1.6 (L1) Configure 'Accounts: Rename guest account' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

The built-in local guest account is another well-known name to attackers. It is recommended to rename this account to something that does not indicate its purpose. Even if you disable this account, which is recommended, ensure that you rename it for added security.

Rationale:

The Guest account exists on all computers that run the Windows 2000 or later operating systems. If you rename this account, it is slightly more difficult for unauthorized persons to guess this privileged user name and password combination.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, configure the following UI path:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Accounts: Rename guest account
```

Impact:

There should be little impact, because the Guest account is disabled by default.

Default Value:

Guest

References:

1. CCE-38027-9

2.3.2 Audit

This section contains recommendations related to auditing controls.

2.3.2.1 (L1) Set 'Audit: Force audit policy subcategory settings (Windows Vista or later) to override audit policy category settings' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows administrators to enable the more precise auditing capabilities present in Windows Vista.

The Audit Policy settings available in Windows Server 2003 Active Directory do not yet contain settings for managing the new auditing subcategories. To properly apply the auditing policies prescribed in this baseline, the Audit: Force audit policy subcategory settings (Windows Vista or later) to override audit policy category settings setting needs to be configured to Enabled.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

Prior to the introduction of auditing subcategories in Windows Vista, it was difficult to track events at a per-system or per-user level. The larger event categories created too many events and the key information that needed to be audited was difficult to find.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Control\Lsa:scenoapplylegacyauditpolicy
```


Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Audit: Force audit policy subcategory settings (Windows Vista or later) to override audit policy category settings
```

Impact:

The individual audit policy subcategories that are available in Windows Vista are not exposed in the interface of Group Policy tools. Administrators can deploy a custom audit policy that applies detailed security auditing settings to Windows Vista-based client computers in a Windows Server 2003 domain or in a Windows 2000 domain. If after enabling this setting, you attempt to modify an auditing setting by using Group Policy, the Group Policy auditing setting will be ignored in favor of the custom policy setting. To modify auditing settings by using Group Policy, you must first disable this key.

Important

Be very cautious about audit settings that can generate a large volume of traffic. For example, if you enable either success or failure auditing for all of the Privilege Use subcategories, the high volume of audit events generated can make it difficult to find other types of entries in the Security log. Such a configuration could also have a significant impact on system performance.

Default Value:

Not defined

References:

1. CCE-37850-5

2.3.2.2 (L1) Set 'Audit: Shut down system immediately if unable to log security audits' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines whether the system shuts down if it is unable to log Security events. It is a requirement for Trusted Computer System Evaluation Criteria (TCSEC)-C2 and Common Criteria certification to prevent auditable events from occurring if the audit system is unable to log them. Microsoft has chosen to meet this requirement by halting the system and displaying a stop message if the auditing system experiences a failure. When this policy setting is enabled, the system will be shut down if a security audit cannot be logged for any reason.

If the Audit: Shut down system immediately if unable to log security audits setting is enabled, unplanned system failures can occur. Therefore, this policy setting is configured to Not Defined for both of the environments that are discussed in this chapter.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Disabled`.

Rationale:

If the computer is unable to record events to the Security log, critical evidence or important troubleshooting information may not be available for review after a security incident. Also, an attacker could potentially generate a large volume of Security log events to purposely force a computer shutdown.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Control\Lsa:crashonauditfail
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Disabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local  
Policies\Security Options\Audit: Shut down system immediately if unable to log  
security audits
```

Impact:

If you enable this policy setting, the administrative burden can be significant, especially if you also configure the Retention method for the Security log to Do not overwrite events (clear log manually). This configuration causes a repudiation threat (a backup operator could deny that they backed up or restored data) to become a denial of service (DoS) vulnerability, because a server could be forced to shut down if it is overwhelmed with logon events and other security events that are written to the Security log. Also, because the shutdown is not graceful, it is possible that irreparable damage to the operating system, applications, or data could result. Although the NTFS file system guarantees its integrity when an ungraceful computer shutdown occurs, it cannot guarantee that every data file for every application will still be in a usable form when the computer restarts.

Default Value:

Disabled

References:

1. CCE-35907-5

2.3.3 DCOM

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

2.3.4 Devices

This section contains recommendations related to managing devices.

2.3.4.1 (L1) Set 'Devices: Allowed to format and eject removable media' to 'Administrators' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines who is allowed to format and eject removable NTFS media. You can use this policy setting to prevent unauthorized users from removing data on one computer to access it on another computer on which they have local administrator privileges.

The recommended state for this setting is: Administrators.

Rationale:

Users may be able to move data on removable disks to a different computer where they have administrative privileges. The user could then take ownership of any file, grant themselves full control, and view or modify any file. The fact that most removable storage devices will eject media by pressing a mechanical button diminishes the advantage of this policy setting.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows NT\CurrentVersion\Winlogon:AllocatedDASD
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Administrators:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Devices: Allowed to format and eject removable media
```

Impact:

None - this is the default value. Only Administrators will be able to format and eject removable NTFS media.

Default Value:

Administrators

References:

1. CCE-37701-0

2.3.4.2 (L1) Set 'Devices: Prevent users from installing printer drivers' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

It is feasible for an attacker to disguise a Trojan horse program as a printer driver. The program may appear to users as if they must use it to print, but such a program could unleash malicious code on your computer network. To reduce the possibility of such an event, only administrators should be allowed to install printer drivers. However, because laptops are mobile devices, laptop users may occasionally need to install a printer driver from a remote source to continue their work. Therefore, this policy setting should be disabled for laptop users, but always enabled for desktop users.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

It may be appropriate in some organizations to allow users to install printer drivers on their own workstations. However, you should allow only Administrators, not users, to do so on servers, because printer driver installation on a server may unintentionally cause the computer to become less stable. A malicious user could install inappropriate printer drivers in a deliberate attempt to damage the computer, or a user might accidentally install malicious software that masquerades as a printer driver.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Control\Print\Providers\LanMan Print Services\Servers:AddPrinterDrivers
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Devices: Prevent users from installing printer drivers
```

Impact:

Only users with Administrative, Power User, or Server Operator privileges will be able to install printers on the servers. If this policy setting is enabled but the driver for a network printer already exists on the local computer, users can still add the network printer.

Default Value:

Enabled

References:

1. CCE-37942-0

2.3.5 Domain controller

This section contains recommendations related to domain controllers.

2.3.5.1 (L1) Set 'Domain controller: Allow server operators to schedule tasks' to 'Disabled' (DC only) (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller

Description:

This policy setting determines whether members of the Server Operators group are allowed to submit jobs by means of the AT schedule facility. The impact of this policy setting configuration should be small for most organizations. Users, including those in the Server Operators group, will still be able to create jobs by means of the Task Scheduler Wizard, but those jobs will run in the context of the account with which the user authenticates when they set up the job.

Note: An AT Service Account can be modified to select a different account rather than the LOCAL SYSTEM account. To change the account, open System Tools, click Scheduled Tasks, and then click Accessories folder. Then click AT Service Account on the Advanced menu.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Disabled`.

Rationale:

If you enable this policy setting, jobs that are created by server operators by means of the AT service will execute in the context of the account that runs that service. By default, that is the local SYSTEM account. If you enable this policy setting, server operators could perform tasks that SYSTEM is able to do but that they would typically not be able to do, such as add their account to the local Administrators group.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Control\Lsa:SubmitControl
```


Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Disabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local  
Policies\Security Options\Domain controller: Allow server operators to schedule tasks
```

Impact:

The impact should be small for most organizations. Users (including those in the Server Operators group) will still be able to create jobs by means of the Task Scheduler Wizard. However, those jobs will run in the context of the account that the user authenticates with when setting up the job.

Default Value:

Not defined

References:

1. CCE-37848-9

2.3.5.2 (L1) Set 'Domain controller: LDAP server signing requirements' to 'Require signing' (DC only) (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller

Description:

This policy setting determines whether the Lightweight Directory Access Protocol (LDAP) server requires LDAP clients to negotiate data signing.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Require signing`.

Rationale:

Unsigned network traffic is susceptible to man-in-the-middle attacks. In such attacks, an intruder captures packets between the server and the client, modifies them, and then forwards them to the client. Where LDAP servers are concerned, an attacker could cause a client to make decisions that are based on false records from the LDAP directory. To lower the risk of such an intrusion in an organization's network, you can implement strong physical security measures to protect the network infrastructure. Also, you could implement Internet Protocol security (IPsec) authentication header mode (AH), which performs mutual authentication and packet integrity for IP traffic to make all types of man-in-the-middle attacks extremely difficult.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Services\NTDS\Parameters:ldapserverintegrity
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Require signing`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Domain controller: LDAP server signing requirements
```

Impact:

Clients that do not support LDAP signing will be unable to run LDAP queries against the domain controllers. All Windows 2000-based computers in your organization that are managed from Windows Server 2003-based or Windows XP-based computers and that use Windows NT Challenge/Response (NTLM) authentication must have Windows 2000 Service Pack 3 (SP3) installed. Alternatively, these clients must have a registry change. For information about this registry change, see Microsoft Knowledge Base article 325465: [Windows 2000 domain controllers require SP3 or later when using Windows Server 2003 administration tools](#). Also, some non-Microsoft operating systems do not support LDAP signing. If you enable this policy setting, client computers that use those operating systems may be unable to access domain resources.

Default Value:

Not defined

References:

1. CCE-35904-2

2.3.5.3 (L1) Set 'Domain controller: Refuse machine account password changes' to 'Disabled' (DC only) (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller

Description:

This security setting determines whether domain controllers will refuse requests from member computers to change computer account passwords. By default, member computers change their computer account passwords every 30 days. If enabled, the domain controller will refuse computer account password change requests.

If it is enabled, this setting does not allow a domain controller to accept any changes to a computer account's password.

Default: This policy is not defined, which means that the system treats it as Disabled.

The recommended state for this setting is: Disabled.

Rationale:

If you enable this policy setting on all domain controllers in a domain, domain members will not be able to change their computer account passwords, and those passwords will be more susceptible to attack.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Services\Netlogon\Parameters:RefusePasswordChange
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Disabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Domain controller: Refuse machine account password changes
```

Impact:

None. This is the default configuration.

Default Value:

Not defined

References:

1. CCE-36921-5

2.3.6 Domain member

This section contains recommendations related to domain membership.

2.3.6.1 (L1) Set 'Domain member: Digitally encrypt or sign secure channel data (always)' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines whether all secure channel traffic that is initiated by the domain member must be signed or encrypted. If a system is set to always encrypt or sign secure channel data, it cannot establish a secure channel with a domain controller that is not capable of signing or encrypting all secure channel traffic, because all secure channel data must be signed and encrypted.

Microsoft recommends to configure the Domain member: Digitally encrypt or sign secure channel data (always) setting to Enabled.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

When a computer joins a domain, a computer account is created. After it joins the domain, the computer uses the password for that account to create a secure channel with the domain controller for its domain every time that it restarts. Requests that are sent on the secure channel are authenticated—and sensitive information such as passwords are encrypted—but the channel is not integrity-checked, and not all information is encrypted. If a computer is configured to always encrypt or sign secure channel data but the domain controller cannot sign or encrypt any portion of the secure channel data, the computer and domain controller cannot establish a secure channel. If the computer is configured to encrypt or sign secure channel data when possible, a secure channel can be established, but the level of encryption and signing is negotiated.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Services\Netlogon\Parameters:requiresignorseal
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Domain member: Digitally encrypt or sign secure channel data (always)
```

Impact:

Digital encryption and signing of the secure channel is a good idea where it is supported. The secure channel protects domain credentials as they are sent to the domain controller. However, only Windows NT 4.0 with Service Pack 6a (SP6a) and subsequent versions of the Windows operating system support digital encryption and signing of the secure channel. Windows 98 Second Edition clients do not support it unless they have the Dsclient installed. Therefore, you cannot enable the Domain member: Digitally encrypt or sign secure channel data (always) setting on domain controllers that support Windows 98 clients as members of the domain. Potential impacts can include the following:

- The ability to create or delete trust relationships with clients running versions of Windows earlier than Windows NT 4.0 with SP6a will be disabled.
- Logons from clients running versions of Windows earlier than Windows NT 4.0 with SP6a will be disabled.
- The ability to authenticate other domains' users from a domain controller running a version of Windows earlier than Windows NT 4.0 with SP6a in a trusted domain will be disabled.

You can enable this policy setting after you eliminate all Windows 9x clients from the domain and upgrade all Windows NT 4.0 servers and domain controllers from trusted/trusting domains to Windows NT 4.0 with SP6a. You can enable the other two policy settings, Domain member: Digitally encrypt secure channel data (when possible) and Domain member: Digitally encrypt sign channel data (when possible), on all computers in the domain that support them and clients running versions of Windows earlier than Windows NT 4.0 with SP6a and applications that run on these versions of Windows will not be affected.

Digital encryption and signing of the secure channel is a good idea where it is supported. The secure channel protects domain credentials as they are sent to the domain controller. However, only Windows NT 4.0 with Service Pack 6a (SP6a) and subsequent versions of the Windows operating system support digital encryption and signing of the secure channel. Windows 98 Second Edition clients do not support it unless they have the Dsclient installed. Therefore, you cannot enable the Domain member: Digitally encrypt or sign secure channel data (always) setting on domain controllers that support Windows 98 clients as members of the domain. Potential impacts can include the following:

- The ability to create or delete trust relationships with clients running versions of Windows earlier than Windows NT 4.0 with SP6a will be disabled.
- Logons from clients running versions of Windows earlier than Windows NT 4.0 with SP6a will be disabled.
- The ability to authenticate other domains' users from a domain controller running a version of Windows earlier than Windows NT 4.0 with SP6a in a trusted domain will be disabled.

You can enable this policy setting after you eliminate all Windows 9x clients from the domain and upgrade all Windows NT 4.0 servers and domain controllers from trusted/trusting domains to Windows NT 4.0 with SP6a. You can enable the other two policy settings, Domain member: Digitally encrypt secure channel data (when possible) and Domain member: Digitally encrypt sign channel data (when possible), on all computers in the domain that support them and clients running versions of Windows earlier than Windows NT 4.0 with SP6a and applications that run on these versions of Windows will not be affected.

Default Value:

Enabled

References:

1. CCE-36142-8

2.3.6.2 (L1) Set 'Domain member: Digitally encrypt secure channel data (when possible)' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines whether a domain member should attempt to negotiate encryption for all secure channel traffic that it initiates. If you enable this policy setting, the domain member will request encryption of all secure channel traffic. If you disable this policy setting, the domain member will be prevented from negotiating secure channel encryption.

Microsoft recommends to configure the Domain member: Digitally encrypt secure channel data (when possible) setting to Enabled.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

When a Windows Server 2003, Windows XP, Windows 2000, or Windows NT computer joins a domain, a computer account is created. After it joins the domain, the computer uses the password for that account to create a secure channel with the domain controller for its domain every time that it restarts. Requests that are sent on the secure channel are authenticated—and sensitive information such as passwords are encrypted—but the channel is not integrity-checked, and not all information is encrypted. If a computer is configured to always encrypt or sign secure channel data but the domain controller cannot sign or encrypt any portion of the secure channel data, the computer and domain controller cannot establish a secure channel. If the computer is configured to encrypt or sign secure channel data when possible, a secure channel can be established, but the level of encryption and signing is negotiated.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Services\Netlogon\Parameters:sealsecurechannel
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local  
Policies\Security Options\Domain member: Digitally encrypt secure channel data (when  
possible)
```

Impact:

Digital encryption and signing of the secure channel is a good idea where it is supported. The secure channel protects domain credentials as they are sent to the domain controller. However, only Windows NT 4.0 Service Pack 6a (SP6a) and subsequent versions of the Windows operating system support digital encryption and signing of the secure channel. Windows 98 Second Edition clients do not support it unless they have the Dsclient installed. Therefore, you cannot enable the Domain member: Digitally encrypt or sign secure channel data (always) setting on domain controllers that support Windows 98 clients as members of the domain. Potential impacts can include the following:

Default Value:

Enabled

References:

1. CCE-37130-2

2.3.6.3 (L1) Set 'Domain member: Digitally sign secure channel data (when possible)' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines whether a domain member should attempt to negotiate whether all secure channel traffic that it initiates must be digitally signed. Digital signatures protect the traffic from being modified by anyone who captures the data as it traverses the network.

Microsoft recommends to configure the Domain member: Digitally sign secure channel data (when possible) setting to Enabled.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

When a computer joins a domain, a computer account is created. After it joins the domain, the computer uses the password for that account to create a secure channel with the domain controller for its domain every time that it restarts. Requests that are sent on the secure channel are authenticated—and sensitive information such as passwords are encrypted—but the channel is not integrity-checked, and not all information is encrypted. If a computer is configured to always encrypt or sign secure channel data but the domain controller cannot sign or encrypt any portion of the secure channel data, the computer and domain controller cannot establish a secure channel. If the computer is configured to encrypt or sign secure channel data when possible, a secure channel can be established, but the level of encryption and signing is negotiated.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Services\Netlogon\Parameters:signsecurechannel
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Domain member: Digitally sign secure channel data (when possible)
```

Impact:

Digital encryption and signing of the secure channel is a good idea where it is supported. The secure channel protects domain credentials as they are sent to the domain controller. However, only Windows NT 4.0 with Service Pack 6a (SP6a) and subsequent versions of the Windows operating system support digital encryption and signing of the secure channel. Windows 98 Second Edition clients do not support it unless they have the Dsclient installed. Therefore, you cannot enable the Domain member: Digitally encrypt or sign secure channel data (always) setting on domain controllers that support Windows 98 clients as members of the domain. Potential impacts can include the following:

- The ability to create or delete trust relationships with clients running versions of Windows earlier than Windows NT 4.0 with SP6a will be disabled.
- Logons from clients running versions of Windows earlier than Windows NT 4.0 with SP6a will be disabled.
- The ability to authenticate other domains' users from a domain controller running a version of Windows earlier than Windows NT 4.0 with SP6a in a trusted domain will be disabled.

You can enable this policy setting after you eliminate all Windows 9x clients from the domain and upgrade all Windows NT 4.0 servers and domain controllers from trusted/trusting domains to Windows NT 4.0 with SP6a. You can enable the other two policy settings, Domain member: Digitally encrypt secure channel data (when possible) and Domain member: Digitally encrypt sign channel data (when possible), on all computers in the domain that support them and clients running versions of Windows earlier than Windows NT 4.0 with SP6a and applications that run on these versions of Windows will not be affected.

Default Value:

Enabled

References:

1. CCE-37222-7

2.3.6.4 (L1) Set 'Domain member: Disable machine account password changes' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines whether a domain member can periodically change its computer account password. If you enable this policy setting, the domain member will be prevented from changing its computer account password. If you disable this policy setting, the domain member can change its computer account password as specified by the Domain Member: Maximum machine account password age setting, which by default is every 30 days. Computers that cannot automatically change their account passwords are potentially vulnerable, because an attacker might be able to determine the password for the system's domain account.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Disabled`.

Rationale:

The default configuration for Windows Server 2003-based computers that belong to a domain is that they are automatically required to change the passwords for their accounts every 30 days. If you disable this policy setting, computers that run Windows Server 2003 will retain the same passwords as their computer accounts. Computers that are no longer able to automatically change their account password are at risk from an attacker who could determine the password for the computer's domain account.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Services\Netlogon\Parameters:disablepasswordchange
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Disabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Domain member: Disable machine account password changes
```

Impact:

None. This is the default configuration.

Default Value:

Disabled

References:

1. CCE-37508-9

2.3.6.5 (L1) Set 'Domain member: Maximum machine account password age' to '30 or fewer days, but not 0' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines the maximum allowable age for a computer account password. By default, domain members automatically change their domain passwords every 30 days. If you increase this interval significantly so that the computers no longer change their passwords, an attacker would have more time to undertake a brute force attack against one of the computer accounts.

The recommended state for this setting is: `30 or fewer days, but not 0`.

Note: A value of `0` does not conform to the benchmark as it disables maximum password age.

Rationale:

In Active Directory-based domains, each computer has an account and password just like every user. By default, the domain members automatically change their domain password every 30 days. If you increase this interval significantly, or set it to `0` so that the computers no longer change their passwords, an attacker will have more time to undertake a brute force attack to guess the password of one or more computer accounts.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `30 or fewer days, but not 0`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Domain member: Maximum machine account password age
```

Impact:

None. This is the default configuration.

Default Value:

30 days

References:

1. CCE-37431-4

2.3.6.6 (L1) Set 'Domain member: Require strong (Windows 2000 or later) session key' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

When this policy setting is enabled, a secure channel can only be established with domain controllers that are capable of encrypting secure channel data with a strong (128-bit) session key.

To enable this policy setting, all domain controllers in the domain must be able to encrypt secure channel data with a strong key, which means all domain controllers must be running Microsoft Windows 2000 or later. If communication to non-Windows 2000-based domains is required, it is recommended that you disable this policy setting.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

Session keys that are used to establish secure channel communications between domain controllers and member computers are much stronger in Windows 2000 than they were in previous Microsoft operating systems.

Whenever possible, you should take advantage of these stronger session keys to help protect secure channel communications from attacks that attempt to hijack network sessions and eavesdropping. (Eavesdropping is a form of hacking in which network data is read or altered in transit. The data can be modified to hide or change the sender, or be redirected.)

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Services\Netlogon\Parameters:requirestrongkey
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local  
Policies\Security Options\Domain member: Require strong (Windows 2000 or later)  
session key
```

Impact:

Computers that have this policy setting enabled will not be able to join Windows NT 4.0 domains, and trusts between Active Directory domains and Windows NT-style domains may not work properly. Also, computers that do not support this policy setting will not be able to join domains in which the domain controllers have this policy setting enabled.

Default Value:

Disabled

References:

1. CCE-37614-5

2.3.7 Interactive logon

This section contains recommendations related to interactive logons.

2.3.7.1 (L1) Set 'Interactive logon: Do not display last user name' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines whether the account name of the last user to log on to the client computers in your organization will be displayed in each computer's respective Windows logon screen. Enable this policy setting to prevent intruders from collecting account names visually from the screens of desktop or laptop computers in your organization.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

An attacker with access to the console (for example, someone with physical access or someone who is able to connect to the server through Terminal Services) could view the name of the last user who logged on to the server. The attacker could then try to guess the password, use a dictionary, or use a brute-force attack to try and log on.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Policies\System:DontDisplayLastUserName
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Interactive logon: Do not display last user name
```

Impact:

Users will not see their user name or domain name when unlocking their computer, they will have to enter that information.

Default Value:

Disabled

References:

1. CCE-36056-0

2.3.7.2 (L1) Set 'Interactive logon: Do not require CTRL+ALT+DEL' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines whether users must press CTRL+ALT+DEL before they log on. If you enable this policy setting, users can log on without this key combination. If you disable this policy setting, users must press CTRL+ALT+DEL before they log on to Windows unless they use a smart card for Windows logon. A smart card is a tamper-proof device that stores security information.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Disabled`.

Rationale:

Microsoft developed this feature to make it easier for users with certain types of physical impairments to log on to computers that run Windows. If users are not required to press CTRL+ALT+DEL, they are susceptible to attacks that attempt to intercept their passwords. If CTRL+ALT+DEL is required before logon, user passwords are communicated by means of a trusted path.

An attacker could install a Trojan horse program that looks like the standard Windows logon dialog box and capture the user's password. The attacker would then be able to log on to the compromised account with whatever level of privilege that user has.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Policies\System:DisableCAD
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Disabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Interactive logon: Do not require CTRL+ALT+DEL
```

Impact:

Unless they use a smart card to log on, users will have to simultaneously press three keys before the logon dialog box will display.

Default Value:

Disabled

References:

1. CCE-37637-6

2.3.7.3 (L1) Set 'Interactive logon: Machine inactivity limit' to '900 or fewer second(s), but not 0' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

Windows notices inactivity of a logon session, and if the amount of inactive time exceeds the inactivity limit, then the screen saver will run, locking the session.

The recommended state for this setting is: 900 or fewer second(s), but not 0.

Note: A value of 0 does not conform to the benchmark as it disables the machine inactivity limit.

Rationale:

If a user forgets to lock their computer when they walk away it's possible that a passerby will hijack it.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Policies\System:InactivityTimeoutSecs
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to 900 or fewer seconds, but not 0:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Interactive logon: Machine inactivity limit
```

Impact:

The screen saver will automatically activate when the computer has been unattended for the amount of time specified. The impact should be minimal since the screen saver is enabled by default.

Default Value:

Not defined

References:

1. CCE-38235-8

2.3.7.4 (L1) Configure 'Interactive logon: Message text for users attempting to log on' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting specifies a text message that displays to users when they log on. Configure this setting in a manner that is consistent with the security and operational requirements of your organization.

Rationale:

Displaying a warning message before logon may help prevent an attack by warning the attacker about the consequences of their misconduct before it happens. It may also help to reinforce corporate policy by notifying employees of the appropriate policy during the logon process. This text is often used for legal reasons—for example, to warn users about the ramifications of misusing company information or to warn them that their actions may be audited.

Note: Any warning that you display should first be approved by your organization's legal and human resources representatives.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Policies\System:LegalNoticeText
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, configure the following UI path to a value that is consistent with the security and operational requirements of your organization:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Interactive logon: Message text for users attempting to log on
```

Impact:

Users will see a message in a dialog box before they can log on to the server console.

Note Windows Vista and Windows XP Professional support logon banners that can exceed 512 characters in length and that can also contain carriage-return line-feed sequences. However, Windows 2000-based clients cannot interpret and display these messages. You must use a Windows 2000-based computer to create a logon message policy that applies to Windows 2000-based computers. If you inadvertently create a logon message policy on a Windows Vista-based or Windows XP Professional-based computer and you discover that it does not display properly on Windows 2000-based computers, do the following: Change the setting to Not Defined, and then change the setting to the desired value by using a Windows 2000-based computer.

Important

If you do not reconfigure this setting to Not Defined before reconfiguring the setting using a Windows 2000-based computer, the changes will not take effect properly.

Default Value:

Not defined

References:

1. CCE-37226-8

2.3.7.5 (L1) Configure 'Interactive logon: Message title for users attempting to log on' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting specifies the text displayed in the title bar of the window that users see when they log on to the system. Configure this setting in a manner that is consistent with the security and operational requirements of your organization.

Rationale:

Displaying a warning message before logon may help prevent an attack by warning the attacker about the consequences of their misconduct before it happens. It may also help to reinforce corporate policy by notifying employees of the appropriate policy during the logon process.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Policies\System:LegalNoticeCaption
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, configure the following UI path to a value that is consistent with the security and operational requirements of your organization:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Interactive logon: Message title for users attempting to log on
```

Impact:

Users will see a message in a dialog box before they can log on to the server console.

Note Windows Vista and Windows XP Professional support logon banners that can exceed 512 characters in length and that can also contain carriage-return line-feed sequences. However, Windows 2000-based clients cannot interpret and display these messages. You must use a Windows 2000-based computer to create a logon message policy that applies to Windows 2000-based computers. If you inadvertently create a logon message policy on a Windows Vista-based or Windows XP Professional-based computer and you discover that it does not display properly on Windows 2000-based computers, do the following: Change the setting to Not Defined, and then change the setting to the desired value by using a Windows 2000-based computer.

Important

If you do not reconfigure this setting to Not Defined before reconfiguring the setting using a Windows 2000-based computer, the changes will not take effect properly.

Default Value:

Not defined

References:

1. CCE-37512-1

2.3.7.6 (L1) Set 'Interactive logon: Number of previous logons to cache (in case domain controller is not available)' to '4 or fewer logon(s)' (MS only) (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines whether a user can log on to a Windows domain using cached account information. Logon information for domain accounts can be cached locally to allow users to log on even if a domain controller cannot be contacted. This policy setting determines the number of unique users for whom logon information is cached locally. If this value is set to 0, the logon cache feature is disabled. An attacker who is able to access the file system of the server could locate this cached information and use a brute force attack to determine user passwords.

The recommended state for this setting is: `4 or fewer logon(s)`.

Rationale:

The number that is assigned to this policy setting indicates the number of users whose logon information the servers will cache locally. If the number is set to 10, then the server caches logon information for 10 users. When an eleventh user logs on to the computer, the server overwrites the oldest cached logon session.

Users who access the server console will have their logon credentials cached on that server. An attacker who is able to access the file system of the server could locate this cached information and use a brute force attack to attempt to determine user passwords.

To mitigate this type of attack, Windows encrypts the information and obscures its physical location.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows  
NT\CurrentVersion\Winlogon:cachedlogonscount
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to 4 or fewer logon(s):

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Interactive logon: Number of previous logons to cache (in case domain controller is not available)
```

Impact:

Users will be unable to log on to any computers if there is no domain controller available to authenticate them. Organizations may want to configure this value to 2 for end-user computers, especially for mobile users. A configuration value of 2 means that the user's logon information will still be in the cache, even if a member of the IT department has recently logged on to their computer to perform system maintenance. This method allows users to log on to their computers when they are not connected to the organization's network.

Default Value:

10 logons

References:

1. CCE-37439-7

2.3.7.7 (L1) Set 'Interactive logon: Prompt user to change password before expiration' to 'between 5 and 14 days' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines how far in advance users are warned that their password will expire. It is recommended that you configure this policy setting to at least 5 days but no more than 14 days to sufficiently warn users when their passwords will expire.

The recommended state for this setting is: `between 5 and 14 days`.

Rationale:

It is recommended that user passwords be configured to expire periodically. Users will need to be warned that their passwords are going to expire, or they may inadvertently be locked out of the computer when their passwords expire. This condition could lead to confusion for users who access the network locally, or make it impossible for users to access your organization's network through dial-up or virtual private network (VPN) connections.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows  
NT\CurrentVersion\Winlogon:passwordexpirywarning
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to a value `between 5 and 14 days`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local  
Policies\Security Options\Interactive logon: Prompt user to change password before  
expiration
```

Impact:

Users will see a dialog box prompt to change their password each time that they log on to the domain when their password is configured to expire between 5 and 14 days.

Default Value:

14 days

References:

1. CCE-37622-8

2.3.7.8 (L1) Set 'Interactive logon: Require Domain Controller Authentication to unlock workstation' to 'Enabled' (MS only) (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

Logon information is required to unlock a locked computer. For domain accounts, the Interactive logon: Require Domain Controller authentication to unlock workstation setting determines whether it is necessary to contact a domain controller to unlock a computer. If you enable this setting, a domain controller must authenticate the domain account that is being used to unlock the computer. If you disable this setting, logon information confirmation with a domain controller is not required for a user to unlock the computer. However, if you configure the Interactive logon: Number of previous logons to cache (in case domain controller is not available) setting to a value that is greater than zero, then the user's cached credentials will be used to unlock the computer.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

By default, the computer caches in memory the credentials of any users who are authenticated locally. The computer uses these cached credentials to authenticate anyone who attempts to unlock the console. When cached credentials are used, any changes that have recently been made to the account—such as user rights assignments, account lockout, or the account being disabled—are not considered or applied after the account is authenticated. User privileges are not updated, and (more importantly) disabled accounts are still able to unlock the console of the computer.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows  
NT\CurrentVersion\Winlogon:ForceUnlockLogon
```

Remediation:

To implement the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Interactive logon: Require Domain Controller Authentication to unlock workstation
```

Impact:

When the console on a computer is locked, either by a user or automatically by a screen saver time-out, the console can only be unlocked if the user is able to re-authenticate to the domain controller. If no domain controller is available, then users cannot unlock their workstations. If you configure the Interactive logon: Number of previous logons to cache (in case domain controller is not available) setting to 0, users whose domain controllers are unavailable (such as mobile or remote users) will not be able to log on.

Default Value:

Not Configured

References:

1. CCE-38240-8

2.3.7.9 (L1) Set 'Interactive logon: Smart card removal behavior' to 'Lock Workstation' or higher (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines what happens when the smart card for a logged-on user is removed from the smart card reader.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Lock Workstation`. Configuring this setting to `Force Logoff` OR `Disconnect if a Remote Desktop Services session` also conforms with the benchmark.

Rationale:

Users sometimes forget to lock their workstations when they are away from them, allowing the possibility for malicious users to access their computers. If smart cards are used for authentication, the computer should automatically lock itself when the card is removed to ensure that only the user with the smart card is accessing resources using those credentials.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed, noting that values of `Force Logoff` OR `Disconnect if a Remote Desktop Services session` are also acceptable settings. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows  
NT\CurrentVersion\Winlogon:scremoveoption
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Lock Workstation` (or, if applicable for your environment, `Force Logoff` OR `Disconnect if a Remote Desktop Services session`):

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local  
Policies\Security Options\Interactive logon: Smart card removal behavior
```

Impact:

If you select Force Logoff, users will have to re-insert their smart cards and re-enter their PINs when they return to their workstations. Enforcing this setting on computers used by people who must log onto multiple computers in order to perform their duties could be frustrating and lower productivity. For example, if network administrators are limited to a single account but need to log into several computers simultaneously in order to effectively manage the network enforcing this setting will limit them to logging onto one computer at a time. For these reasons it is recommended that this setting only be enforced on workstations used for purposes commonly associated with typical users such as document creation and email.

Default Value:

No Action

References:

1. CCE-38333-1

2.3.8 Microsoft network client

This section contains recommendations related to configuring the Microsoft network client.

2.3.8.1 (L1) Set 'Microsoft network client: Digitally sign communications (always)' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines whether packet signing is required by the SMB client component. If you enable this policy setting, the Microsoft network client computer cannot communicate with a Microsoft network server unless that server agrees to sign SMB packets. In mixed environments with legacy client computers, set this option to Disabled because these computers will not be able to authenticate or gain access to domain controllers. However, you can use this policy setting in Windows 2000 or later environments.

Note When Windows Vistabased computers have this policy setting enabled and they connect to file or print shares on remote servers, it is important that the setting is synchronized with its companion setting, Microsoft network server: Digitally sign communications (always), on those servers. For more information about these settings, see the "Microsoft network client and server: Digitally sign communications (four related settings)" section in Chapter 5 of the Threats and Countermeasures guide.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

Session hijacking uses tools that allow attackers who have access to the same network as the client or server to interrupt, end, or steal a session in progress. Attackers can potentially intercept and modify unsigned SMB packets and then modify the traffic and forward it so that the server might perform undesirable actions. Alternatively, the attacker could pose as the server or client after legitimate authentication and gain unauthorized access to data.

SMB is the resource sharing protocol that is supported by many Windows operating systems. It is the basis of NetBIOS and many other protocols. SMB signatures authenticate both users and the servers that host the data. If either side fails the authentication process, data transmission will not take place.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Services\LanmanWorkstation\Parameters:RequireSecuritySignature
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Microsoft network client: Digitally sign communications (always)
```

Impact:

The Windows 2000 Server, Windows 2000 Professional, Windows Server 2003, Windows XP Professional and Windows Vista implementations of the SMB file and print sharing protocol support mutual authentication, which prevents session hijacking attacks and supports message authentication to prevent man-in-the-middle attacks. SMB signing provides this authentication by placing a digital signature into each SMB, which is then verified by both the client and the server.

Implementation of SMB signing may negatively affect performance, because each packet needs to be signed and verified. If these settings are enabled on a server that is performing multiple roles, such as a small business server that is serving as a domain controller, file server, print server, and application server performance may be substantially slowed. Additionally, if you configure computers to ignore all unsigned SMB communications, older applications and operating systems will not be able to connect. However, if you completely disable all SMB signing, computers will be vulnerable to session hijacking attacks.

When SMB signing policies are enabled on domain controllers running Windows Server 2003 and member computers running Windows Vista SP1 or Windows Server 2008 group policy processing will fail. A hotfix is available from Microsoft that resolves this issue; see Microsoft Knowledge Base article 950876 for more details: [Group Policy settings are not applied on member computers that are running Windows Server 2008 or Windows Vista SP1 when certain SMB signing policies are enabled.](#)

Default Value:

Disabled

References:

1. CCE-36325-9

2.3.8.2 (L1) Set 'Microsoft network client: Digitally sign communications (if server agrees)' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines whether the SMB client will attempt to negotiate SMB packet signing. The implementation of digital signing in Windowsbased networks helps to prevent sessions from being hijacked. If you enable this policy setting, the Microsoft network client will use signing only if the server with which it communicates accepts digitally signed communication.

Note: Enabling this policy setting on SMB clients on your network makes them fully effective for packet signing with all clients and servers in your environment.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

Session hijacking uses tools that allow attackers who have access to the same network as the client or server to interrupt, end, or steal a session in progress. Attackers can potentially intercept and modify unsigned SMB packets and then modify the traffic and forward it so that the server might perform undesirable actions. Alternatively, the attacker could pose as the server or client after legitimate authentication and gain unauthorized access to data.

SMB is the resource sharing protocol that is supported by many Windows operating systems. It is the basis of NetBIOS and many other protocols. SMB signatures authenticate both users and the servers that host the data. If either side fails the authentication process, data transmission will not take place.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Services\LanmanWorkstation\Parameters:EnableSecuritySignature
```


Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Microsoft network client: Digitally sign communications (if server agrees)
```

Impact:

The Windows 2000 Server, Windows 2000 Professional, Windows Server 2003, Windows XP Professional and Windows Vista implementations of the SMB file and print sharing protocol support mutual authentication, which prevents session hijacking attacks and supports message authentication to prevent man-in-the-middle attacks. SMB signing provides this authentication by placing a digital signature into each SMB, which is then verified by both the client and the server.

Implementation of SMB signing may negatively affect performance, because each packet needs to be signed and verified. If these settings are enabled on a server that is performing multiple roles, such as a small business server that is serving as a domain controller, file server, print server, and application server performance may be substantially slowed. Additionally, if you configure computers to ignore all unsigned SMB communications, older applications and operating systems will not be able to connect. However, if you completely disable all SMB signing, computers will be vulnerable to session hijacking attacks.

When SMB signing policies are enabled on domain controllers running Windows Server 2003 and member computers running Windows Vista SP1 or Windows Server 2008 group policy processing will fail. A hotfix is available from Microsoft that resolves this issue; see Microsoft Knowledge Base article 950876 for more details: [Group Policy settings are not applied on member computers that are running Windows Server 2008 or Windows Vista SP1 when certain SMB signing policies are enabled.](#)

Default Value:

Enabled

References:

1. CCE-36269-9

2.3.8.3 (L1) Set 'Microsoft network client: Send unencrypted password to third-party SMB servers' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

Disable this policy setting to prevent the SMB redirector from sending plaintext passwords during authentication to third-party SMB servers that do not support password encryption. It is recommended that you disable this policy setting unless there is a strong business case to enable it. If this policy setting is enabled, unencrypted passwords will be allowed across the network.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Disabled`.

Rationale:

If you enable this policy setting, the server can transmit passwords in plaintext across the network to other computers that offer SMB services. These other computers may not use any of the SMB security mechanisms that are included with Windows Server 2003.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Services\LanmanWorkstation\Parameters:EnablePlainTextPassword
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Disabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Microsoft network client: Send unencrypted password to third-party SMB servers
```

Impact:

Some very old applications and operating systems such as MS-DOS, Windows for Workgroups 3.11, and Windows 95a may not be able to communicate with the servers in your organization by means of the SMB protocol.

Default Value:

Disabled

References:

1. CCE-37863-8

2.3.9 Microsoft network server

This section contains recommendations related to configuring the Microsoft network server.

2.3.9.1 (L1) Set 'Microsoft network server: Amount of idle time required before suspending session' to '15 or fewer minute(s), but not 0' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows you to specify the amount of continuous idle time that must pass in an SMB session before the session is suspended because of inactivity. Administrators can use this policy setting to control when a computer suspends an inactive SMB session. If client activity resumes, the session is automatically reestablished.

A value of 0 appears to allow sessions to persist indefinitely. The maximum value is 99999, which is over 69 days; in effect, this value disables the setting.

The recommended state for this setting is: `15 or fewer minute(s), but not 0`.

Rationale:

Each SMB session consumes server resources, and numerous null sessions will slow the server or possibly cause it to fail. An attacker could repeatedly establish SMB sessions until the server's SMB services become slow or unresponsive.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Services\LanManServer\Parameters:autodisconnect
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to 15 or fewer minute(s), but not 0:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local  
Policies\Security Options\Microsoft network server: Amount of idle time required  
before suspending session
```

Impact:

There will be little impact because SMB sessions will be re-established automatically if the client resumes activity.

Default Value:

15 minutes

References:

1. CCE-38046-9

2.3.9.2 (L1) Set 'Microsoft network server: Digitally sign communications (always)' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines if the server side SMB service is required to perform SMB packet signing. Enable this policy setting in a mixed environment to prevent downstream clients from using the workstation as a network server.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

Session hijacking uses tools that allow attackers who have access to the same network as the client or server to interrupt, end, or steal a session in progress. Attackers can potentially intercept and modify unsigned SMB packets and then modify the traffic and forward it so that the server might perform undesirable actions. Alternatively, the attacker could pose as the server or client after legitimate authentication and gain unauthorized access to data.

SMB is the resource sharing protocol that is supported by many Windows operating systems. It is the basis of NetBIOS and many other protocols. SMB signatures authenticate both users and the servers that host the data. If either side fails the authentication process, data transmission will not take place.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Services\LanManServer\Parameters:requiresecuritysignature
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Microsoft network server: Digitally sign communications (always)
```

Impact:

The Windows 2000 Server, Windows 2000 Professional, Windows Server 2003, Windows XP Professional and Windows Vista implementations of the SMB file and print sharing protocol support mutual authentication, which prevents session hijacking attacks and supports message authentication to prevent man-in-the-middle attacks. SMB signing provides this authentication by placing a digital signature into each SMB, which is then verified by both the client and the server.

Implementation of SMB signing may negatively affect performance, because each packet needs to be signed and verified. If these settings are enabled on a server that is performing multiple roles, such as a small business server that is serving as a domain controller, file server, print server, and application server performance may be substantially slowed. Additionally, if you configure computers to ignore all unsigned SMB communications, older applications and operating systems will not be able to connect. However, if you completely disable all SMB signing, computers will be vulnerable to session hijacking attacks.

When SMB signing policies are enabled on domain controllers running Windows Server 2003 and member computers running Windows Vista SP1 or Windows Server 2008 group policy processing will fail. A hotfix is available from Microsoft that resolves this issue; see Microsoft Knowledge Base article 950876 for more details: [Group Policy settings are not applied on member computers that are running Windows Server 2008 or Windows Vista SP1 when certain SMB signing policies are enabled.](#)

Default Value:

Disabled

References:

1. CCE-37864-6

2.3.9.3 (L1) Set 'Microsoft network server: Digitally sign communications (if client agrees)' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines if the server side SMB service is able to sign SMB packets if it is requested to do so by a client that attempts to establish a connection. If no signing request comes from the client, a connection will be allowed without a signature if the Microsoft network server: Digitally sign communications (always) setting is not enabled.

Note: Enable this policy setting on SMB clients on your network to make them fully effective for packet signing with all clients and servers in your environment.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

Session hijacking uses tools that allow attackers who have access to the same network as the client or server to interrupt, end, or steal a session in progress. Attackers can potentially intercept and modify unsigned SMB packets and then modify the traffic and forward it so that the server might perform undesirable actions. Alternatively, the attacker could pose as the server or client after legitimate authentication and gain unauthorized access to data.

SMB is the resource sharing protocol that is supported by many Windows operating systems. It is the basis of NetBIOS and many other protocols. SMB signatures authenticate both users and the servers that host the data. If either side fails the authentication process, data transmission will not take place.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Services\LanManServer\Parameters:enablesecuritysignature
```


Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Microsoft network server: Digitally sign communications (if client agrees)
```

Impact:

The Windows 2000 Server, Windows 2000 Professional, Windows Server 2003, Windows XP Professional and Windows Vista implementations of the SMB file and print sharing protocol support mutual authentication, which prevents session hijacking attacks and supports message authentication to prevent man-in-the-middle attacks. SMB signing provides this authentication by placing a digital signature into each SMB, which is then verified by both the client and the server.

Implementation of SMB signing may negatively affect performance, because each packet needs to be signed and verified. If these settings are enabled on a server that is performing multiple roles, such as a small business server that is serving as a domain controller, file server, print server, and application server performance may be substantially slowed. Additionally, if you configure computers to ignore all unsigned SMB communications, older applications and operating systems will not be able to connect. However, if you completely disable all SMB signing, computers will be vulnerable to session hijacking attacks.

When SMB signing policies are enabled on domain controllers running Windows Server 2003 and member computers running Windows Vista SP1 or Windows Server 2008 group policy processing will fail. A hotfix is available from Microsoft that resolves this issue; see Microsoft Knowledge Base article 950876 for more details: [Group Policy settings are not applied on member computers that are running Windows Server 2008 or Windows Vista SP1 when certain SMB signing policies are enabled.](#)

Default Value:

Disabled

References:

1. CCE-35988-5

2.3.9.4 (L1) Set 'Microsoft network server: Disconnect clients when logon hours expire' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines whether to disconnect users who are connected to the local computer outside their user account's valid logon hours. It affects the SMB component. If you enable this policy setting, client sessions with the SMB service will be forcibly disconnected when the client's logon hours expire. If you disable this policy setting, established client sessions will be maintained after the client's logon hours expire. If you enable this policy setting you should also enable Network security: Force logoff when logon hours expire.

If your organization configures logon hours for users, it makes sense to enable this policy setting.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

If your organization configures logon hours for users, then it makes sense to enable this policy setting. Otherwise, users who should not have access to network resources outside of their logon hours may actually be able to continue to use those resources with sessions that were established during allowed hours.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Services\LanManServer\Parameters:enableforcedlogoff
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local  
Policies\Security Options\Microsoft network server: Disconnect clients when logon  
hours expire
```

Impact:

If logon hours are not used in your organization, this policy setting will have no impact. If logon hours are used, existing user sessions will be forcibly terminated when their logon hours expire.

Default Value:

Enabled

References:

1. CCE-37972-7

2.3.9.5 (L1) Set 'Microsoft network server: Server SPN target name validation level' to 'Accept if provided by client' or higher (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting controls the level of validation a computer with shared folders or printers (the server) performs on the service principal name (SPN) that is provided by the client computer when it establishes a session using the server message block (SMB) protocol.

The server message block (SMB) protocol provides the basis for file and print sharing and other networking operations, such as remote Windows administration. The SMB protocol supports validating the SMB server service principal name (SPN) within the authentication blob provided by a SMB client to prevent a class of attacks against SMB servers referred to as SMB relay attacks. This setting will affect both SMB1 and SMB2.

This security setting determines the level of validation a SMB server performs on the service principal name (SPN) provided by the SMB client when trying to establish a session to an SMB server.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Accept if provided by client`. Configuring this setting to `Required from client` also conforms with the benchmark.

Rationale:

The identity of a computer can be spoofed to gain unauthorized access to network resources.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Services\LanManServer\Parameters:SMBServerNameHardeningLevel
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Accept if provided by client` (configuring to `Required from client` also conforms with the benchmark):

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Microsoft network server: Server SPN target name validation level
```

Impact:

All Windows operating systems support both a client-side SMB component and a server-side SMB component. This setting affects the server SMB behavior, and its implementation should be carefully evaluated and tested to prevent disruptions to file and print serving capabilities.

Default Value:

Not defined

References:

1. CCE-36170-9

2.3.10 Network access

This section contains recommendations related to network access.

2.3.10.1 (L1) Set 'Network access: Allow anonymous SID/Name translation' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines whether an anonymous user can request security identifier (SID) attributes for another user, or use a SID to obtain its corresponding user name. Disable this policy setting to prevent unauthenticated users from obtaining user names that are associated with their respective SIDs.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Disabled`.

Rationale:

If this policy setting is enabled, a user with local access could use the well-known Administrator's SID to learn the real name of the built-in Administrator account, even if it has been renamed. That person could then use the account name to initiate a password guessing attack.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Disabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Network access: Allow anonymous SID/Name translation
```

Impact:

Disabled is the default configuration for this policy setting on member computers; therefore it will have no impact on them. The default configuration for domain controllers is Enabled. If you disable this policy setting on domain controllers, legacy computers may be unable to communicate with Windows Server 2003-based domains. For example, the following computers may not work:

- Windows NT 4.0-based Remote Access Service servers.
- Microsoft SQL Servers™ that run on Windows NT 3.x-based or Windows NT 4.0-based computers.
- Remote Access Service or Microsoft SQL servers that run on Windows 2000-based computers and are located in Windows NT 3.x domains or Windows NT 4.0 domains.

Default Value:

Disabled

References:

1. CCE-36065-1

2.3.10.2 (L1) Set 'Network access: Do not allow anonymous enumeration of SAM accounts' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting controls the ability of anonymous users to enumerate the accounts in the Security Accounts Manager (SAM). If you enable this policy setting, users with anonymous connections cannot enumerate domain account user names on the workstations in your environment. This policy setting also allows additional restrictions on anonymous connections.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

An unauthorized user could anonymously list account names and use the information to perform social engineering attacks or attempt to guess passwords. (Social engineering attacks try to deceive users in some way to obtain passwords or some form of security information.)

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Control\Lsa:RestrictAnonymousSAM
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Network access: Do not allow anonymous enumeration of SAM accounts
```


Impact:

It will be impossible to establish trusts with Windows NT 4.0-based domains. Also, client computers that run older versions of the Windows operating system such as Windows NT 3.51 and Windows 95 will experience problems when they try to use resources on the server.

Default Value:

Enabled

References:

1. CCE-36316-8

2.3.10.3 (L1) Set 'Network access: Do not allow anonymous enumeration of SAM accounts and shares' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting controls the ability of anonymous users to enumerate SAM accounts as well as shares. If you enable this policy setting, anonymous users will not be able to enumerate domain account user names and network share names on the workstations in your environment.

The Network access: Do not allow anonymous enumeration of SAM accounts and shares setting is configured to Enabled for the two environments that are discussed in this guide.

The recommended state for this setting is: Enabled.

Rationale:

An unauthorized user could anonymously list account names and shared resources and use the information to attempt to guess passwords or perform social engineering attacks.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Control\Lsa:RestrictAnonymous
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Network access: Do not allow anonymous enumeration of SAM accounts and shares
```

Impact:

It will be impossible to grant access to users of another domain across a one-way trust because administrators in the trusting domain will be unable to enumerate lists of accounts in the other domain. Users who access file and print servers anonymously will be unable to list the shared network resources on those servers; the users will have to authenticate before they can view the lists of shared folders and printers.

Default Value:

Disabled

References:

1. CCE-36077-6

2.3.10.4 (L2) Set 'Network access: Do not allow storage of passwords and credentials for network authentication' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 2 - Domain Controller
- Level 2 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines whether the Stored User Names and Passwords feature may save passwords or credentials for later use when it gains domain authentication. If you enable this policy setting, the Stored User Names and Passwords feature of Windows does not store passwords and credentials.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

Passwords that are cached can be accessed by the user when logged on to the computer. Although this information may sound obvious, a problem can arise if the user unknowingly executes hostile code that reads the passwords and forwards them to another, unauthorized user.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Control\Lsa:disableddomaincreds
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Network access: Do not allow storage of passwords and credentials for network authentication
```

Impact:

Users will be forced to enter passwords whenever they log on to their Passport account or other network resources that aren't accessible to their domain account. Testing has shown that clients running Windows Vista or Windows Server 2008 will be unable to connect to Distributed File System (DFS) shares in untrusted domains. Enabling this setting also makes it impossible to specify alternate credentials for scheduled tasks, this can cause a variety of problems. For example, some third party backup products will no longer work. This policy setting should have no impact on users who access network resources that are configured to allow access with their Active Directory-based domain account.

Default Value:

Not Configured

References:

1. CCE-38119-4

2.3.10.5 (L1) Set 'Network access: Let Everyone permissions apply to anonymous users' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines what additional permissions are assigned for anonymous connections to the computer. If you enable this policy setting, anonymous Windows users are allowed to perform certain activities, such as enumerate the names of domain accounts and network shares. An unauthorized user could anonymously list account names and shared resources and use the information to guess passwords or perform social engineering attacks.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Disabled`.

Rationale:

An unauthorized user could anonymously list account names and shared resources and use the information to attempt to guess passwords, perform social engineering attacks, or launch DoS attacks.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Control\Lsa:EveryoneIncludesAnonymous
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Disabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Network access: Let Everyone permissions apply to anonymous users
```

Impact:

None. This is the default configuration.

Default Value:

Disabled

References:

1. CCE-36148-5

2.3.10.6 (L1) Configure 'Network access: Named Pipes that can be accessed anonymously' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines which communication sessions, or pipes, will have attributes and permissions that allow anonymous access.

The recommended state for this setting is:

- **Level 1 - Domain Controller.** The recommended state for this setting is: `LSARPC`, `NETLOGON`, `SAMR` and (when the legacy *Computer Browser* service is enabled) `BROWSER`.
- **Level 1 - Member Server.** The recommended state for this setting is: `<blank>` (i.e. None), or (when the legacy *Computer Browser* service is enabled) `BROWSER`.

Note: A server that holds the *Remote Desktop Services* Role with *Remote Desktop Licensing* Role Service will require a special exception to this recommendation, to allow the `HydraLSPipe` and `TermServLicensing` Named Pipes to be accessed anonymously.

Rationale:

Limiting named pipes that can be accessed anonymously will reduce the attack surface of the system.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Services\LanManServer\Parameters:NullSessionPipes
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, configure the following UI path:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Network access: Named Pipes that can be accessed anonymously
```


Impact:

This configuration will disable null session access over named pipes, and applications that rely on this feature or on unauthenticated access to named pipes will no longer function.

The `BROWSER` named pipe may need to be added to this list if the *Computer Browser* service is needed for supporting legacy components. The *Computer Browser* service is disabled by default.

Default Value:

None

References:

1. CCE-38258-0

2.3.10.7 (L1) Set 'Network access: Remotely accessible registry paths' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines which registry paths will be accessible after referencing the WinReg key to determine access permissions to the paths.

Note: This setting does not exist in Windows XP. There was a setting with that name in Windows XP, but it is called "Network access: Remotely accessible registry paths and subpaths" in Windows Server 2003, Windows Vista, and Windows Server 2008.

Note: When you configure this setting you specify a list of one or more objects. The delimiter used when entering the list is a line feed or carriage return, that is, type the first object on the list, press the Enter button, type the next object, press Enter again, etc. The setting value is stored as a comma-delimited list in group policy security templates. It is also rendered as a comma-delimited list in Group Policy Editor's display pane and the Resultant Set of Policy console. It is recorded in the registry as a line-feed delimited list in a REG_MULTI_SZ value.

The recommended state for this setting is:

```
System\CurrentControlSet\Control\ProductOptions  
System\CurrentControlSet\Control\Server Applications  
Software\Microsoft\Windows NT\CurrentVersion
```

Rationale:

The registry is a database that contains computer configuration information, and much of the information is sensitive. An attacker could use this information to facilitate unauthorized activities. To reduce the risk of such an attack, suitable ACLs are assigned throughout the registry to help protect it from access by unauthorized users.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Control\SecurePipeServers\Winreg\AllowedEx  
actPaths:Machine
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to

```
System\CurrentControlSet\Control\ProductOptions
```

```
System\CurrentControlSet\Control\Server Applications
```

```
Software\Microsoft\Windows NT\CurrentVersion:
```

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local  
Policies\Security Options\Network access: Remotely accessible registry paths
```

Impact:

Remote management tools such as the Microsoft Baseline Security Analyzer and Microsoft Systems Management Server require remote access to the registry to properly monitor and manage those computers. If you remove the default registry paths from the list of accessible ones, such remote management tools could fail.

Note: If you want to allow remote access, you must also enable the Remote Registry service.

Default Value:

```
System\CurrentControlSet\Control\ProductOptions
```

```
System\CurrentControlSet\Control\Server Applications
```

```
Software\Microsoft\Windows NT\CurrentVersion
```

References:

1. CCE-37194-8

2.3.10.8 (L1) Set 'Network access: Remotely accessible registry paths and sub-paths' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines which registry paths and sub-paths will be accessible when an application or process references the WinReg key to determine access permissions.

Note: In Windows XP this setting is called "Network access: Remotely accessible registry paths," the setting with that same name in Windows Vista, Windows Server 2008, and Windows Server 2003 does not exist in Windows XP.

Note #2: When you configure this setting you specify a list of one or more objects. The delimiter used when entering the list is a line feed or carriage return, that is, type the first object on the list, press the Enter button, type the next object, press Enter again, etc. The setting value is stored as a comma-delimited list in group policy security templates. It is also rendered as a comma-delimited list in Group Policy Editor's display pane and the Resultant Set of Policy console. It is recorded in the registry as a line-feed delimited list in a REG_MULTI_SZ value.

The recommended state for this setting is:

```
System\CurrentControlSet\Control\Print\Printers
System\CurrentControlSet\Services\Eventlog
Software\Microsoft\OLAP Server
Software\Microsoft\Windows NT\CurrentVersion\Print
Software\Microsoft\Windows NT\CurrentVersion\Windows
System\CurrentControlSet\Control\ContentIndex
System\CurrentControlSet\Control\Terminal Server
System\CurrentControlSet\Control\Terminal Server\UserConfig
System\CurrentControlSet\Control\Terminal Server\DefaultUserConfiguration
Software\Microsoft\Windows NT\CurrentVersion\Perflib
System\CurrentControlSet\Services\SysmonLog
```

The recommended state for servers that hold the *Active Directory Certificate Services* Role with *Certification Authority* Role Service includes the above list and:

```
System\CurrentControlSet\Services\CertSvc
```

The recommended state for servers that have the *WINS Server* Feature installed includes the above list and:

```
System\CurrentControlSet\Services\WINS
```

Rationale:

The registry contains sensitive computer configuration information that could be used by an attacker to facilitate unauthorized activities. The fact that the default ACLs assigned throughout the registry are fairly restrictive and help to protect the registry from access by unauthorized users reduces the risk of such an attack.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Control\SecurePipeServers\Winreg\AllowedPaths:Machine
```

Remediation:

To implement the recommended configuration state, set the following Group Policy setting to System\CurrentControlSet\Control\Print\Printers

```
System\CurrentControlSet\Services\Eventlog
```

```
Software\Microsoft\OLAP Server
```

```
Software\Microsoft\Windows NT\CurrentVersion\Print
```

```
Software\Microsoft\Windows NT\CurrentVersion\Windows
```

```
System\CurrentControlSet\Control\ContentIndex
```

```
System\CurrentControlSet\Control\Terminal Server
```

```
System\CurrentControlSet\Control\Terminal Server\UserConfig
```

```
System\CurrentControlSet\Control\Terminal Server\DefaultUserConfiguration
```

```
Software\Microsoft\Windows NT\CurrentVersion\Perflib
```

```
System\CurrentControlSet\Services\SysmonLog:
```

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Network access: Remotely accessible registry paths and sub-paths
```

When a server holds the *Active Directory Certificate Services Role with Certification Authority Role Service*, the above list should also

include: System\CurrentControlSet\Services\CertSvc.

When a server has the *WINS Server Feature* installed, the above list should also include:

```
System\CurrentControlSet\Services\WINS
```

Impact:

Remote management tools such as the Microsoft Baseline Security Analyzer and Microsoft Systems Management Server require remote access to the registry to properly monitor and manage those computers. If you remove the default registry paths from the list of accessible ones, such remote management tools could fail.

Note: If you want to allow remote access, you must also enable the Remote Registry service.

Default Value:

System\CurrentControlSet\Control\Print\Printers

System\CurrentControlSet\Services\Eventlog

Software\Microsoft\OLAP Server

Software\Microsoft\Windows NT\CurrentVersion\Print

Software\Microsoft\Windows NT\CurrentVersion\Windows

System\CurrentControlSet\Control\ContentIndex

System\CurrentControlSet\Control\Terminal Server

System\CurrentControlSet\Control\Terminal Server\UserConfig

System\CurrentControlSet\Control\Terminal Server\DefaultUserConfiguration

Software\Microsoft\Windows NT\CurrentVersion\Perflib

System\CurrentControlSet\Services\SysmonLog

References:

1. CCE-36347-3

2.3.10.9 (L1) Set 'Network access: Restrict anonymous access to Named Pipes and Shares' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

When enabled, this policy setting restricts anonymous access to only those shares and pipes that are named in the `Network access: Named pipes that can be accessed anonymously` and `Network access: Shares that can be accessed anonymously` settings.

This policy setting controls null session access to shares on your computers by adding `RestrictNullSessAccess` with the value 1 in the `HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System`

`\CurrentControlSet\Services\LanManServer\Parameters` registry key. This registry value toggles null session shares on or off to control whether the server service restricts unauthenticated clients' access to named resources.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

Null sessions are a weakness that can be exploited through shares (including the default shares) on computers in your environment.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Services\LanManServer\Parameters:restrictnullsessaccess
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Network access: Restrict anonymous access to Named Pipes and Shares
```

Impact:

You can enable this policy setting to restrict null session access for unauthenticated users to all server pipes and shared folders except those that are listed in the `NullSessionPipes` and `NullSessionShares` entries.

If you choose to enable this setting and are supporting Windows NT 4.0 domains, you should check if any of the named pipes are required to maintain trust relationships between the domains, and then add the pipe to the **Network access: Named pipes that can be accessed anonymously** list:

- COMNAP: SNA session access
- COMNODE: SNA session access
- SQL\QUERY: SQL instance access
- SPOOLSS: Spooler service
- LLSRPC: License Logging service
- NETLOGON: Net Logon service
- LSARPC: LSA access
- SAMR: Remote access to SAM objects
- BROWSER: Computer Browser service

Previous to the release of Windows Server 2003 with Service Pack 1 (SP1) these named pipes were allowed anonymous access by default, but with the increased hardening in Windows Server 2003 with SP1 these pipes must be explicitly added if needed.

Default Value:

Enabled

References:

1. CCE-36021-4

2.3.10.10 (L1) Set 'Network access: Shares that can be accessed anonymously' to 'None' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines which network shares can be accessed by anonymous users. The default configuration for this policy setting has little effect because all users have to be authenticated before they can access shared resources on the server.

The recommended state for this setting is: <blank> (i.e. None).

Rationale:

It is very dangerous to enable this setting. Any shares that are listed can be accessed by any network user, which could lead to the exposure or corruption of sensitive data.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Services\LanManServer\Parameters:NullSessionShares
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to <blank> (i.e. None):

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Network access: Shares that can be accessed anonymously
```

Impact:

There should be little impact because this is the default configuration. Only authenticated users will have access to shared resources on the server.

Default Value:

Not defined

References:

1. CCE-38095-6

2.3.10.11 (L1) Set 'Network access: Sharing and security model for local accounts' to 'Classic - local users authenticate as themselves' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines how network logons that use local accounts are authenticated. The Classic option allows precise control over access to resources, including the ability to assign different types of access to different users for the same resource. The Guest only option allows you to treat all users equally. In this context, all users authenticate as Guest only to receive the same access level to a given resource.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Classic - local users authenticate as themselves.`

Rationale:

With the Guest only model, any user who can authenticate to your computer over the network does so with guest privileges, which probably means that they will not have write access to shared resources on that computer. Although this restriction does increase security, it makes it more difficult for authorized users to access shared resources on those computers because ACLs on those resources must include access control entries (ACEs) for the Guest account. With the Classic model, local accounts should be password protected. Otherwise, if Guest access is enabled, anyone can use those user accounts to access shared system resources.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Control\Lsa:ForceGuest
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Classic - local users authenticate as themselves:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Network access: Sharing and security model for local accounts
```

Impact:

None. This is the default configuration.

Default Value:

Classic - local users authenticate as themselves

References:

1. CCE-37623-6

2.3.11 Network security

This section contains recommendations related to network security.

2.3.11.1 (L1) Set 'Network security: Allow Local System to use computer identity for NTLM' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

When enabled, this policy setting causes Local System services that use Negotiate to use the computer identity when NTLM authentication is selected by the negotiation. This policy is supported on at least Windows 7 or Windows Server 2008 R2.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

When connecting to computers running versions of Windows earlier than Windows Vista or Windows Server 2008, services running as Local System and using SPNEGO (Negotiate) that revert to NTLM use the computer identity. In Windows 7, if you are connecting to a computer running Windows Server 2008 or Windows Vista, then a system service uses either the computer identity or a NULL session. When connecting with a NULL session, a system-generated session key is created, which provides no protection but allows applications to sign and encrypt data without errors. When connecting with the computer identity, both signing and encryption is supported in order to provide data protection.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Control\Lsa:UseMachineId
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local  
Policies\Security Options\Network security: Allow Local System to use computer  
identity for NTLM
```

Impact:

If you enable this policy setting, services running as Local System that use Negotiate will use the computer identity. This might cause some authentication requests between Windows operating systems to fail and log an error.

If you disable this policy setting, services running as Local System that use Negotiate when reverting to NTLM authentication will authenticate anonymously. This was the behavior in previous versions of Windows.

Default Value:

Not defined

References:

1. CCE-38341-4

2.3.11.2 (L1) Set 'Network security: Allow LocalSystem NULL session fallback' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

Allow NTLM to fall back to NULL session when used with LocalSystem. The default is TRUE up to Windows Vista / Server 2008 and FALSE from Windows 7 / Server 2008 R2 and beyond.

The recommended state for this setting is: Disabled.

Rationale:

NULL sessions are less secure because by definition they are unauthenticated.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Control\Lsa\MSV1_0:allownullsessionfallback
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Disabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Network security: Allow LocalSystem NULL session fallback
```

Impact:

Any applications that require NULL sessions for LocalSystem will not work as designed.

Default Value:

Not defined

References:

1. CCE-37035-3

2.3.11.3 (L1) Set 'Network Security: Allow PKU2U authentication requests to this computer to use online identities' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This setting determines if online identities are able to authenticate to this computer.

Windows 7 and Windows Server 2008 R2 introduced an extension to the Negotiate authentication package, Spnego.dll. In previous versions of Windows, Negotiate decides whether to use Kerberos or NTLM for authentication. The extension SSP for Negotiate, Negoexts, which is treated as an authentication protocol by Windows, supports Microsoft SSPs including PKU2U.

When computers are configured to accept authentication requests by using online IDs, Negoexts.dll calls the PKU2U SSP on the computer that is used to log on. The PKU2U SSP obtains a local certificate and exchanges the policy between the peer computers. When validated on the peer computer, the certificate within the metadata is sent to the logon peer for validation and associates the user's certificate to a security token and the logon process completes.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Disabled`.

Rationale:

The PKU2U protocol is a peer-to-peer authentication protocol, in most managed networks authentication should be managed centrally.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Control\Lsa\pku2u:AllowOnlineID
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Disabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local  
Policies\Security Options\Network Security: Allow PKU2U authentication requests to  
this computer to use online identities
```

Impact:

Disabling this setting will disallow the online identities to be able to authenticate to the domain joined machine in Windows 7 and later.

Default Value:

This policy is turned off by default on domain joined machines.

References:

1. CCE-38047-7

2.3.11.4 (L1) Set 'Network Security: Configure encryption types allowed for Kerberos' to 'RC4_HMAC_MD5, AES128_HMAC_SHA1, AES256_HMAC_SHA1, Future encryption types' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows you to set the encryption types that Kerberos is allowed to use.

This policy is supported on at least Windows 7 or Windows Server 2008 R2.

The recommended state for this setting is: RC4_HMAC_MD5, AES128_HMAC_SHA1, AES256_HMAC_SHA1, Future encryption types.

Rationale:

The strength of each encryption algorithm varies from one to the next, choosing stronger algorithms will reduce the risk of compromise however doing so may cause issues when the computer attempts to authenticate with systems that do not support them.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Policies\System\Kerberos\Parameters:SupportedEncryptionTypes
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to RC4_HMAC_MD5, AES128_HMAC_SHA1, AES256_HMAC_SHA1, Future encryption types:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Network Security: Configure encryption types allowed for Kerberos
```

Impact:

If not selected, the encryption type will not be allowed. This setting may affect compatibility with client computers or services and applications. Multiple selections are permitted.

Default Value:

Not defined

References:

1. CCE-37755-6

2.3.11.5 (L1) Set 'Network security: Do not store LAN Manager hash value on next password change' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines whether the LAN Manager (LM) hash value for the new password is stored when the password is changed. The LM hash is relatively weak and prone to attack compared to the cryptographically stronger Microsoft Windows NT hash.

Note: Older operating systems and some third-party applications may fail when this policy setting is enabled. Also, note that the password will need to be changed on all accounts after you enable this setting to gain the proper benefit.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

The SAM file can be targeted by attackers who seek access to username and password hashes. Such attacks use special tools to crack passwords, which can then be used to impersonate users and gain access to resources on your network. These types of attacks will not be prevented if you enable this policy setting, but it will be much more difficult for these types of attacks to succeed.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Control\Lsa:NoLMHash
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Network security: Do not store LAN Manager hash value on next password change
```

Impact:

Earlier operating systems such as Windows 95, Windows 98, and Windows ME as well as some third-party applications will fail.

Default Value:

Enabled

References:

1. CCE-36326-7

2.3.11.6 (L1) Set 'Network security: Force logoff when logon hours expire' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting, which determines whether to disconnect users who are connected to the local computer outside their user account's valid logon hours, affects the SMB component. If you enable this policy setting, client sessions with the SMB server will be disconnected when the client's logon hours expire. If you disable this policy setting, established client sessions will be maintained after the client's logon hours expire.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

If this setting is disabled, a user could remain connected to the computer outside of their allotted logon hours.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Services\LanManServer\Parameters:EnableForcedLogOff
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`.

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Network security: Force logoff when logon hours expire
```

Impact:

When a user's logon time expires, SMB sessions will terminate. The user will be unable to log on to the computer until their next scheduled access time commences.

Default Value:

Disabled

References:

1. CCE-36270-7

2.3.11.7 (L1) Set 'Network security: LAN Manager authentication level' to 'Send NTLMv2 response only. Refuse LM & NTLM' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

LAN Manager (LM) is a family of early Microsoft client/server software that allows users to link personal computers together on a single network. Network capabilities include transparent file and print sharing, user security features, and network administration tools. In Active Directory domains, the Kerberos protocol is the default authentication protocol. However, if the Kerberos protocol is not negotiated for some reason, Active Directory will use LM, NTLM, or NTLMv2. LAN Manager authentication includes the LM, NTLM, and NTLM version 2 (NTLMv2) variants, and is the protocol that is used to authenticate all Windows clients when they perform the following operations:

- Join a domain
- Authenticate between Active Directory forests
- Authenticate to down-level domains
- Authenticate to computers that do not run Windows 2000, Windows Server 2003, or Windows XP)
- Authenticate to computers that are not in the domain

The possible values for the Network security: LAN Manager authentication level setting are:

- Send LM & NTLM responses
- Send LM & NTLM — use NTLMv2 session security if negotiated
- Send NTLM responses only
- Send NTLMv2 responses only
- Send NTLMv2 responses only\refuse LM
- Send NTLMv2 responses only\refuse LM & NTLM
- Not Defined

The Network security: LAN Manager authentication level setting determines which challenge/response authentication protocol is used for network logons. This choice affects the authentication protocol level that clients use, the session security level that the computers negotiate, and the authentication level that servers accept as follows:

- Send LM & NTLM responses. Clients use LM and NTLM authentication and never use NTLMv2 session security. Domain controllers accept LM, NTLM, and NTLMv2 authentication.
- Send LM & NTLM - use NTLMv2 session security if negotiated. Clients use LM and NTLM authentication and use NTLMv2 session security if the server supports it. Domain controllers accept LM, NTLM, and NTLMv2 authentication.
- Send NTLM response only. Clients use NTLM authentication only and use NTLMv2 session security if the server supports it. Domain controllers accept LM, NTLM, and NTLMv2 authentication.
- Send NTLMv2 response only. Clients use NTLMv2 authentication only and use NTLMv2 session security if the server supports it. Domain controllers accept LM, NTLM, and NTLMv2 authentication.
- Send NTLMv2 response only\refuse LM. Clients use NTLMv2 authentication only and use NTLMv2 session security if the server supports it. Domain controllers refuse LM (accept only NTLM and NTLMv2 authentication).
- Send NTLMv2 response only\refuse LM & NTLM. Clients use NTLMv2 authentication only and use NTLMv2 session security if the server supports it. Domain controllers refuse LM and NTLM (accept only NTLMv2 authentication).
- These settings correspond to the levels discussed in other Microsoft documents as follows:
 - Level 0 - Send LM and NTLM response; never use NTLMv2 session security. Clients use LM and NTLM authentication, and never use NTLMv2 session security. Domain controllers accept LM, NTLM, and NTLMv2 authentication.
 - Level 1 - Use NTLMv2 session security if negotiated. Clients use LM and NTLM authentication, and use NTLMv2 session security if the server supports it. Domain controllers accept LM, NTLM, and NTLMv2 authentication.
 - Level 2 - Send NTLM response only. Clients use only NTLM authentication, and use NTLMv2 session security if the server supports it. Domain controllers accept LM, NTLM, and NTLMv2 authentication.
 - Level 3 - Send NTLMv2 response only. Clients use NTLMv2 authentication, and use NTLMv2 session security if the server supports it. Domain controllers accept LM, NTLM, and NTLMv2 authentication.
 - Level 4 - Domain controllers refuse LM responses. Clients use NTLM authentication, and use NTLMv2 session security if the server supports it. Domain controllers refuse LM authentication, that is, they accept NTLM and NTLMv2.
 - Level 5 - Domain controllers refuse LM and NTLM responses (accept only NTLMv2). Clients use NTLMv2 authentication, use and NTLMv2 session security if the server supports it. Domain controllers refuse NTLM and LM authentication (they accept only NTLMv2).

The recommended state for this setting is: Send NTLMv2 response only. Refuse LM & NTLM.

Rationale:

In Windows Vista, this setting is undefined. However, in Windows 2000, Windows Server 2003, and Windows XP clients are configured by default to send LM and NTLM authentication responses (Windows 95-based and Windows 98-based clients only send LM). The default setting on servers allows all clients to authenticate with servers and use their resources. However, this means that LM responses—the weakest form of authentication response—are sent over the network, and it is potentially possible for attackers to sniff that traffic to more easily reproduce the user's password.

The Windows 95, Windows 98, and Windows NT operating systems cannot use the Kerberos version 5 protocol for authentication. For this reason, in a Windows Server 2003 domain, these computers authenticate by default with both the LM and NTLM protocols for network authentication. You can enforce a more secure authentication protocol for Windows 95, Windows 98, and Windows NT by using NTLMv2. For the logon process, NTLMv2 uses a secure channel to protect the authentication process. Even if you use NTLMv2 for earlier clients and servers, Windows-based clients and servers that are members of the domain will use the Kerberos authentication protocol to authenticate with Windows Server 2003 domain controllers.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Control\Lsa:LmCompatibilityLevel
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to: Send NTLMv2 response only. Refuse LM & NTLM:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Network security: LAN Manager authentication level
```

Impact:

Clients that do not support NTLMv2 authentication will not be able to authenticate in the domain and access domain resources by using LM and NTLM.

Note: For information about a hotfix to ensure that this setting works in networks that include Windows NT 4.0-based computers along with Windows 2000, Windows XP, and Windows Server 2003-based computers, see Microsoft Knowledge Base article 305379: [Authentication Problems in Windows 2000 with NTLM 2 Levels Above 2 in a Windows NT 4.0 Domain](#).

Default Value:

Send NTLMv2 response only

References:

1. CCE-36173-3

2.3.11.8 (L1) Set 'Network security: LDAP client signing requirements' to 'Negotiate signing or higher' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines the level of data signing that is requested on behalf of clients that issue LDAP BIND requests, as follows:

- None. The LDAP BIND request is issued with the caller-specified options.
- Negotiate signing. If Transport Layer Security/Secure Sockets Layer (TLS/SSL) has not been started, the LDAP BIND request is initiated with the LDAP data signing option set in addition to the caller-specified options. If TLS/SSL has been started, the LDAP BIND request is initiated with the caller-specified options.
- Require signature. This level is the same as Negotiate signing. However, if the LDAP server's intermediate saslBindInProgress response does not indicate that LDAP traffic signing is required, the caller is told that the LDAP BIND command request failed.

Note: This policy setting does not have any impact on ldap_simple_bind or ldap_simple_bind_s. No Microsoft LDAP clients that are included with Windows XP Professional use ldap_simple_bind or ldap_simple_bind_s to communicate with a domain controller.

The possible values for the Network security: LDAP client signing requirements setting are:

- None
- Negotiate signing
- Require signature
- Not Defined

The recommended state for this setting is: `Negotiate signing or higher`.

Rationale:

Unsigned network traffic is susceptible to man-in-the-middle attacks in which an intruder captures the packets between the client and server, modifies them, and then forwards them to the server. For an LDAP server, this susceptibility means that an attacker could cause a server to make decisions that are based on false or altered data from the LDAP queries. To lower this risk in your network, you can implement strong physical security measures to protect the network infrastructure. Also, you can make all types of man-in-the-middle attacks extremely difficult if you require digital signatures on all network packets by means of IPsec authentication headers.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Services\LDAP:LDAPClientIntegrity
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Negotiate signing` or higher:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Network security: LDAP client signing requirements
```

Impact:

If you configure the server to require LDAP signatures you must also configure the client. If you do not configure the client it will not be able to communicate with the server, which could cause many features to fail, including user authentication, Group Policy, and logon scripts.

Default Value:

Negotiate signing

References:

1. CCE-36858-9

2.3.11.9 (L1) Set 'Network security: Minimum session security for NTLM SSP based (including secure RPC) clients' to 'Require NTLMv2 session security, Require 128-bit encryption' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines which behaviors are allowed for applications using the NTLM Security Support Provider (SSP). The SSP Interface (SSPI) is used by applications that need authentication services. The setting does not modify how the authentication sequence works but instead require certain behaviors in applications that use the SSPI.

The possible values for the Network security: Minimum session security for NTLM SSP based (including secure RPC) clients setting are:

- Require message confidentiality. This option is only available in Windows XP and Windows Server 2003, the connection will fail if encryption is not negotiated. Encryption converts data into a form that is not readable until decrypted.
- Require message integrity. This option is only available in Windows XP and Windows Server 2003, the connection will fail if message integrity is not negotiated. The integrity of a message can be assessed through message signing. Message signing proves that the message has not been tampered with; it attaches a cryptographic signature that identifies the sender and is a numeric representation of the contents of the message.
- Require 128-bit encryption. The connection will fail if strong encryption (128-bit) is not negotiated.
- Require NTLMv2 session security. The connection will fail if the NTLMv2 protocol is not negotiated.
- Not Defined.

The recommended state for this setting is: Require NTLMv2 session security, Require 128-bit encryption.

Rationale:

You can enable all of the options for this policy setting to help protect network traffic that uses the NTLM Security Support Provider (NTLM SSP) from being exposed or tampered with by an attacker who has gained access to the same network. In other words, these options help protect against man-in-the-middle attacks.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Control\Lsa\MSV1_0:NTLMMinClientSec
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Require NTLMv2 session security, Require 128-bit encryption`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Network security: Minimum session security for NTLM SSP based (including secure RPC) clients
```

Impact:

Client applications that are enforcing these settings will be unable to communicate with older servers that do not support them. This setting could impact Windows Clustering when applied to servers running Windows Server 2003, see Microsoft Knowledge Base articles 891597: [How to apply more restrictive security settings on a Windows Server 2003-based cluster server](#) and 890761: [You receive an "Error 0x8007042b" error message when you add or join a node to a cluster if you use NTLM version 2 in Windows Server 2003](#) for more information on possible issues and how to resolve them.

Default Value:

No minimum

References:

1. CCE-37553-5

2.3.11.10 (L1) Set 'Network security: Minimum session security for NTLM SSP based (including secure RPC) servers' to 'Require NTLMv2 session security, Require 128-bit encryption' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines which behaviors are allowed for applications using the NTLM Security Support Provider (SSP). The SSP Interface (SSPI) is used by applications that need authentication services. The setting does not modify how the authentication sequence works but instead require certain behaviors in applications that use the SSPI.

The possible values for the Network security: Minimum session security for NTLM SSP based (including secure RPC) servers setting are:

- Require message confidentiality. This option is only available in Windows XP and Windows Server 2003, the connection will fail if encryption is not negotiated. Encryption converts data into a form that is not readable until decrypted.
- Require message integrity. This option is only available in Windows XP and Windows Server 2003, the connection will fail if message integrity is not negotiated. The integrity of a message can be assessed through message signing. Message signing proves that the message has not been tampered with; it attaches a cryptographic signature that identifies the sender and is a numeric representation of the contents of the message.
- Require 128-bit encryption. The connection will fail if strong encryption (128-bit) is not negotiated.
- Require NTLMv2 session security. The connection will fail if the NTLMv2 protocol is not negotiated.
- Not Defined.

The recommended state for this setting is: Require NTLMv2 session security, Require 128-bit encryption.

Rationale:

You can enable all of the options for this policy setting to help protect network traffic that uses the NTLM Security Support Provider (NTLM SSP) from being exposed or tampered with by an attacker who has gained access to the same network. That is, these options help protect against man-in-the-middle attacks.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Control\Lsa\MSV1_0:NTLMMinServerSec
```

Remediation:

To implement the recommended configuration state, set the following Group Policy setting to Require NTLMv2 session security, Require 128-bit encryption:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Network security: Minimum session security for NTLM SSP based (including secure RPC) servers
```

Impact:

Server applications that are enforcing these settings will be unable to communicate with older servers that do not support them. This setting could impact Windows Clustering when applied to servers running Windows Server 2003, see Microsoft Knowledge Base articles 891597: [How to apply more restrictive security settings on a Windows Server 2003-based cluster server](#) and 890761: [You receive an "Error 0x8007042b" error message when you add or join a node to a cluster if you use NTLM version 2 in Windows Server 2003](#) for more information on possible issues and how to resolve them.

Default Value:

No minimum

References:

1. CCE-37835-6

2.3.12 Recovery console

This section contains recommendations related to the recovery console.

2.3.12.1 (L1) Set 'Recovery console: Allow automatic administrative logon' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

The recovery console is a command-line environment that is used to recover from system problems. If you enable this policy setting, the administrator account is automatically logged on to the recovery console when it is invoked during startup.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Disabled`.

Rationale:

The Recovery Console can be very useful when you need to troubleshoot and repair computers that do not start. However, it is dangerous to allow automatic logon to the console. Anyone could walk up to the server, disconnect the power to shut it down, restart it, select Recover Console from the Restart menu, and then assume full control of the server.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows  
NT\CurrentVersion\Setup\RecoveryConsole:securitylevel
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Disabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local  
Policies\Security Options\Recovery console: Allow automatic administrative logon
```

Impact:

Users will have to enter a user name and password to access the Recovery Console.

Default Value:

Disabled

References:

1. CCE-37624-4

2.3.12.2 (L1) Set 'Recovery console: Allow floppy copy and access to all drives and all folders' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting makes the Recovery Console SET command available, which allows you to set the following recovery console environment variables:

- AllowWildCards . Enables wildcard support for some commands (such as the DEL command).
- AllowAllPaths . Allows access to all files and folders on the computer.
- AllowRemovableMedia . Allows files to be copied to removable media, such as a floppy disk.
- NoCopyPrompt . Does not prompt when overwriting an existing file.

The recommended state for this setting is: Disabled.

Rationale:

An attacker who can cause the system to restart into the Recovery Console could steal sensitive data and leave no audit or access trail.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows  
NT\CurrentVersion\Setup\RecoveryConsole:setcommand
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Disabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local  
Policies\Security Options\Recovery console: Allow floppy copy and access to all drives  
and all folders
```

Impact:

Users who have started a server through the Recovery Console and logged in with the built-in Administrator account will not be able to copy files and folders to a floppy disk.

Default Value:

Disabled

References:

1. CCE-37307-6

2.3.13 Shutdown

This section contains recommendations related to the Windows shutdown functionality.

2.3.13.1 (L1) Set 'Shutdown: Allow system to be shut down without having to log on' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines whether a computer can be shut down when a user is not logged on. If this policy setting is enabled, the shutdown command is available on the Windows logon screen. It is recommended to disable this policy setting to restrict the ability to shut down the computer to users with credentials on the system.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Disabled`.

Rationale:

Users who can access the console locally could shut down the computer.

Attackers could also walk to the local console and restart the server, which would cause a temporary DoS condition. Attackers could also shut down the server and leave all of its applications and services unavailable.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Policies\System:ShutdownWithoutLogon
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Disabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\Shutdown: Allow system to be shut down without having to log on
```

Impact:

Operators will have to log on to servers to shut them down or restart them.

Default Value:

Disabled

References:

1. CCE-36788-8

2.3.14 System cryptography

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

2.3.15 System objects

This section contains recommendations related to system objects.

2.3.15.1 (L1) Set 'System objects: Require case insensitivity for non-Windows subsystems' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines whether case insensitivity is enforced for all subsystems. The Microsoft Win32' subsystem is case insensitive. However, the kernel supports case sensitivity for other subsystems, such as the Portable Operating System Interface for UNIX (POSIX). Because Windows is case insensitive (but the POSIX subsystem will support case sensitivity), failure to enforce this policy setting makes it possible for a user of the POSIX subsystem to create a file with the same name as another file by using mixed case to label it. Such a situation can block access to these files by another user who uses typical Win32 tools, because only one of the files will be available.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

Because Windows is case-insensitive but the POSIX subsystem will support case sensitivity, failure to enable this policy setting would make it possible for a user of that subsystem to create a file with the same name as another file but with a different mix of upper and lower case letters. Such a situation could potentially confuse users when they try to access such files from normal Win32 tools because only one of the files will be available.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Control\Session  
Manager\Kernel:ObCaseInsensitive
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local  
Policies\Security Options\System objects: Require case insensitivity for non-Windows  
subsystems
```

Impact:

All subsystems will be forced to observe case insensitivity. This configuration may confuse users who are familiar with any UNIX-based operating systems that is case-sensitive.

Default Value:

Enabled

References:

1. CCE-37885-1

2.3.15.2 (L1) Set 'System objects: Strengthen default permissions of internal system objects (e.g. Symbolic Links)' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines the strength of the default discretionary access control list (DACL) for objects. The setting helps secure objects that can be located and shared among processes and its default configuration strengthens the DACL, because it allows users who are not administrators to read shared objects but does not allow them to modify any that they did not create.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

This setting determines the strength of the default DACL for objects. Windows Server 2003 maintains a global list of shared computer resources so that objects can be located and shared among processes. Each type of object is created with a default DACL that specifies who can access the objects and with what permissions. If you enable this setting, the default DACL is strengthened because non-administrator users are allowed to read shared objects but not modify shared objects that they did not create.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Control\Session Manager:ProtectionMode
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\System objects: Strengthen default permissions of internal system objects (e.g. Symbolic Links)
```

Impact:

None. This is the default configuration.

Default Value:

Enabled

References:

1. CCE-37644-2

2.3.16 System settings

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

2.3.17 User Account Control

This section contains recommendations related to User Account Control.

2.3.17.1 (L1) Set 'User Account Control: Admin Approval Mode for the Built-in Administrator account' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting controls the behavior of Admin Approval Mode for the built-in Administrator account.

The options are:

- Enabled: The built-in Administrator account uses Admin Approval Mode. By default, any operation that requires elevation of privilege will prompt the user to approve the operation.
- Disabled: (Default) The built-in Administrator account runs all applications with full administrative privilege.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

One of the risks that the User Account Control feature introduced with Windows Vista is trying to mitigate is that of malicious software running under elevated credentials without the user or administrator being aware of its activity. An attack vector for these programs was to discover the password of the account named "Administrator" because that user account was created for all installations of Windows. To address this risk, in Windows Vista the built-in Administrator account is disabled. In a default installation of a new computer, accounts with administrative control over the computer are initially set up in one of two ways:

- If the computer is not joined to a domain, the first user account you create has the equivalent permissions as a local administrator.
- If the computer is joined to a domain, no local administrator accounts are created. The Enterprise or Domain Administrator must log on to the computer and create one if a local administrator account is warranted.

Once Windows Vista is installed, the built-in Administrator account may be enabled, but we strongly recommend that this account remain disabled.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Policies\System:FilterAdministratorToken
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\User Account Control: Admin Approval Mode for the Built-in Administrator account
```

Impact:

Users that log on using the local Administrator account will be prompted for consent whenever a program requests an elevation in privilege.

Default Value:

Disabled

References:

1. CCE-36494-3

2.3.17.2 (L1) Set 'User Account Control: Allow UIAccess applications to prompt for elevation without using the secure desktop' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting controls whether User Interface Accessibility (UIAccess or UIA) programs can automatically disable the secure desktop for elevation prompts used by a standard user.

- Enabled: UIA programs, including Windows Remote Assistance, automatically disable the secure desktop for elevation prompts. If you do not disable the "User Account Control: Switch to the secure desktop when prompting for elevation" policy setting, the prompts appear on the interactive user's desktop instead of the secure desktop.

- Disabled: (Default) The secure desktop can be disabled only by the user of the interactive desktop or by disabling the "User Account Control: Switch to the secure desktop when prompting for elevation" policy setting.

The recommended state for this setting is: *Disabled*.

Rationale:

One of the risks that the UAC feature introduced with Windows Vista is trying to mitigate is that of malicious software running under elevated credentials without the user or administrator being aware of its activity. This setting allows the administrator to perform operations that require elevated privileges while connected via Remote Assistance. This increases security in that organizations can use UAC even when end user support is provided remotely. However, it also reduces security by adding the risk that an administrator might allow an unprivileged user to share elevated privileges for an application that the administrator needs to use during the Remote Desktop session.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Policies\System:EnableUIADesktopToggle
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Disabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\User Account Control: Allow UIAccess applications to prompt for elevation without using the secure desktop
```

Impact:

If you enable this setting, ("User Account Control: Allow UIAccess applications to prompt for elevation without using the secure desktop), requests for elevation are automatically sent to the interactive desktop (not the secure desktop) and also appear on the remote administrator's view of the desktop during a Windows Remote Assistance session, and the remote administrator is able to provide the appropriate credentials for elevation. This setting does not change the behavior of the UAC elevation prompt for administrators.

Default Value:

Disabled

References:

1. CCE-36863-9

2.3.17.3 (L1) Set 'User Account Control: Behavior of the elevation prompt for administrators in Admin Approval Mode' to 'Prompt for consent on the secure desktop' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting controls the behavior of the elevation prompt for administrators.

The options are:

- Elevate without prompting: Allows privileged accounts to perform an operation that requires elevation without requiring consent or credentials. Note: Use this option only in the most constrained environments.
- Prompt for credentials on the secure desktop: When an operation requires elevation of privilege, the user is prompted on the secure desktop to enter a privileged user name and password. If the user enters valid credentials, the operation continues with the user's highest available privilege.
- Prompt for consent on the secure desktop: When an operation requires elevation of privilege, the user is prompted on the secure desktop to select either Permit or Deny. If the user selects Permit, the operation continues with the user's highest available privilege.
- Prompt for credentials: When an operation requires elevation of privilege, the user is prompted to enter an administrative user name and password. If the user enters valid credentials, the operation continues with the applicable privilege.
- Prompt for consent: When an operation requires elevation of privilege, the user is prompted to select either Permit or Deny. If the user selects Permit, the operation continues with the user's highest available privilege.
- Prompt for consent for non-Windows binaries: (Default) When an operation for a non-Microsoft application requires elevation of privilege, the user is prompted on the secure desktop to select either Permit or Deny. If the user selects Permit, the operation continues with the user's highest available privilege.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Prompt for consent on the secure desktop`.

Rationale:

One of the risks that the UAC feature introduced with Windows Vista is trying to mitigate is that of malicious software running under elevated credentials without the user or administrator being aware of its activity. This setting raises awareness to the administrator of elevated privilege operations and permits the administrator to prevent a malicious program from elevating its privilege when the program attempts to do so.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Policies\System:ConsentPr  
omptBehaviorAdmin
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Prompt for consent on the secure desktop`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local  
Policies\Security Options\User Account Control: Behavior of the elevation prompt for  
administrators in Admin Approval Mode
```

Impact:

This policy setting controls the behavior of the elevation prompt for administrators.

Default Value:

Prompt for consent for non-Windows binaries

References:

1. CCE-37029-6

2.3.17.4 (L1) Set 'User Account Control: Behavior of the elevation prompt for standard users' to 'Automatically deny elevation requests' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting controls the behavior of the elevation prompt for standard users. The options are:

- Prompt for credentials: When an operation requires elevation of privilege, the user is prompted to enter an administrative user name and password. If the user enters valid credentials, the operation continues with the applicable privilege.
- Automatically deny elevation requests: When an operation requires elevation of privilege, a configurable access denied error message is displayed. An enterprise that is running desktops as standard user may choose this setting to reduce help desk calls.
- Prompt for credentials on the secure desktop: (Default) When an operation requires elevation of privilege, the user is prompted on the secure desktop to enter a different user name and password. If the user enters valid credentials, the operation continues with the applicable privilege. Note that this option was introduced in Windows 7 and it is not applicable to computers running Windows Vista or Windows Server 2008.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Automatically deny elevation requests`.

Rationale:

One of the risks that the User Account Control feature introduced with Windows Vista is trying to mitigate is that of malicious programs running under elevated credentials without the user or administrator being aware of their activity. This setting raises awareness to the user that a program requires the use of elevated privilege operations and requires that the user be able to supply administrative credentials in order for the program to run.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Policies\System:ConsentPromptBehaviorUser
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Automatically deny elevation requests:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\User Account Control: Behavior of the elevation prompt for standard users
```

Impact:

Users will need to provide administrative passwords to be able to run programs with elevated privileges. This could cause an increased load on IT staff while the programs that are impacted are identified and standard operating procedures are modified to support least privilege operations.

Default Value:

Prompt for credentials

References:

1. CCE-36864-7

2.3.17.5 (L1) Set 'User Account Control: Detect application installations and prompt for elevation' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting controls the behavior of application installation detection for the computer.

The options are:

- Enabled: (Default for home) When an application installation package is detected that requires elevation of privilege, the user is prompted to enter an administrative user name and password. If the user enters valid credentials, the operation continues with the applicable privilege.
- Disabled: (Default for enterprise) Application installation packages are not detected and prompted for elevation. Enterprises that are running standard user desktops and use delegated installation technologies such as Group Policy Software Installation or Systems Management Server (SMS) should disable this policy setting. In this case, installer detection is unnecessary.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

Some malicious software will attempt to install itself after being given permission to run. For example, malicious software with a trusted application shell. The user may have given permission for the program to run because the program is trusted, but if they are then prompted for installation of an unknown component this provides another way of trapping the software before it can do damage

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Policies\System:EnableInstallerDetection
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local  
Policies\Security Options\User Account Control: Detect application installations and  
prompt for elevation
```

Impact:

Users will need to provide administrative passwords to be able to install programs.

Default Value:

Enabled

References:

1. CCE-36533-8

2.3.17.6 (L1) Set 'User Account Control: Only elevate UIAccess applications that are installed in secure locations' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting controls whether applications that request to run with a User Interface Accessibility (UIAccess) integrity level must reside in a secure location in the file system. Secure locations are limited to the following:

- ...\\Program Files\\, including subfolders
- ...\\Windows\\system32\\
- ...\\Program Files (x86)\\, including subfolders for 64-bit versions of Windows

Note: Windows enforces a public key infrastructure (PKI) signature check on any interactive application that requests to run with a UIAccess integrity level regardless of the state of this security setting.

The options are:

- Enabled: (Default) If an application resides in a secure location in the file system, it runs only with UIAccess integrity.
- Disabled: An application runs with UIAccess integrity even if it does not reside in a secure location in the file system.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

UIAccess Integrity allows an application to bypass User Interface Privilege Isolation (UIPI) restrictions when an application is elevated in privilege from a standard user to an administrator. This is required to support accessibility features such as screen readers that are transmitting user interfaces to alternative forms. A process that is started with UIAccess rights has the following abilities:

- To set the foreground window.
- To drive any application window using SendInput function.
- To use read input for all integrity levels using low-level hooks, raw input, GetKeyState, GetAsyncKeyState, and GetKeyboardInput.
- To set journal hooks.
- To uses AttachThreadInput to attach a thread to a higher integrity input queue.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Policies\System:EnableSecureUIAPaths
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\User Account Control: Only elevate UIAccess applications that are installed in secure locations
```

Impact:

If the application that requests UIAccess meets the UIAccess setting requirements, Windows Vista starts the application with the ability to bypass most of the UIPI restrictions. If the application does not meet the security restrictions, the application will be started without UIAccess rights and can interact only with applications at the same or lower privilege level.

Default Value:

Enabled

References:

1. CCE-37057-7

2.3.17.7 (L1) Set 'User Account Control: Run all administrators in Admin Approval Mode' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting controls the behavior of all User Account Control (UAC) policy settings for the computer. If you change this policy setting, you must restart your computer.

The options are:

- Enabled: (Default) Admin Approval Mode is enabled. This policy must be enabled and related UAC policy settings must also be set appropriately to allow the built-in Administrator account and all other users who are members of the Administrators group to run in Admin Approval Mode.
- Disabled: Admin Approval Mode and all related UAC policy settings are disabled. Note: If this policy setting is disabled, the Security Center notifies you that the overall security of the operating system has been reduced.

The recommended state for this setting is: Enabled.

Rationale:

This is the setting that turns on or off UAC. If this setting is disabled, UAC will not be used and any security benefits and risk mitigations that are dependent on UAC will not be present on the system.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Policies\System:EnableLUA
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local  
Policies\Security Options\User Account Control: Run all administrators in Admin  
Approval Mode
```

Impact:

Users and administrators will need to learn to work with UAC prompts and adjust their work habits to use least privilege operations.

Default Value:

Enabled

References:

1. CCE-36869-6

2.3.17.8 (L1) Set 'User Account Control: Switch to the secure desktop when prompting for elevation' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting controls whether the elevation request prompt is displayed on the interactive user's desktop or the secure desktop.

The options are:

- Enabled: (Default) All elevation requests go to the secure desktop regardless of prompt behavior policy settings for administrators and standard users.
- Disabled: All elevation requests go to the interactive user's desktop. Prompt behavior policy settings for administrators and standard users are used.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

Elevation prompt dialog boxes can be spoofed, causing users to disclose their passwords to malicious software.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Policies\System:PromptOnSecureDesktop
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\User Account Control: Switch to the secure desktop when prompting for elevation
```

Impact:

None. This is the default configuration.

Default Value:

Enabled

References:

1. CCE-36866-2

2.3.17.9 (L1) Set 'User Account Control: Virtualize file and registry write failures to per-user locations' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting controls whether application write failures are redirected to defined registry and file system locations. This policy setting mitigates applications that run as administrator and write run-time application data to %ProgramFiles%, %Windir%, %Windir%\system32, or HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software.

The options are:

- Enabled: (Default) Application write failures are redirected at run time to defined user locations for both the file system and registry.
- Disabled: Applications that write data to protected locations fail.

The recommended state for this setting is: Enabled.

Rationale:

This setting reduces vulnerabilities by ensuring that legacy applications only write data to permitted locations.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Policies\System:EnableVirtualization
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Local Policies\Security Options\User Account Control: Virtualize file and registry write failures to per-user locations
```

Impact:

None. This is the default configuration.

Default Value:

Enabled

References:

1. CCE-37064-3

3 Event Log

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

4 Restricted Groups

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

5 System Services

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

6 Registry

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

7 File System

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

8 Wired Network (IEEE 802.3) Policies

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

9 Windows Firewall With Advanced Security

This section contains recommendations for configuring the Windows Firewall.

9.1 Domain Profile

This section contains recommendations for the Domain Profile of the Windows Firewall.

9.1.1 (L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Domain: Firewall state' to 'On (recommended)' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

Select On (recommended) to have Windows Firewall with Advanced Security use the settings for this profile to filter network traffic. If you select Off, Windows Firewall with Advanced Security will not use any of the firewall rules or connection security rules for this profile.

The recommended state for this setting is: On (recommended).

Rationale:

If the firewall is turned off all traffic will be able to access the system and an attacker may be more easily able to remotely exploit a weakness in a network service.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\WindowsFirewall\DomainProfile\EnableFirewall
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to On (recommended):

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall Properties\Domain Profile\Firewall state
```

Impact:

None, this is the default configuration.

Default Value:

On

References:

1. CCE-36062-8

9.1.2 (L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Domain: Inbound connections' to 'Block (default)' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This setting determines the behavior for inbound connections that do not match an inbound firewall rule. The default behavior is to block connections unless there are firewall rules to allow the connection.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Block (default)`.

Rationale:

If the firewall allows all traffic to access the system then an attacker may be more easily able to remotely exploit a weakness in a network service.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\WindowsFirewall\DomainProfile\DefaultInboundAction
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Block (default)`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall Properties\Domain Profile\Inbound connections
```

Impact:

None, this is the default configuration.

Default Value:

Block

References:

1. CCE-38117-8

9.1.3 (L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Domain: Outbound connections' to 'Allow (default)' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This setting determines the behavior for outbound connections that do not match an outbound firewall rule. In Windows Vista / Server 2008 and above, the default behavior is to allow connections unless there are firewall rules that block the connection.

The recommended state for this setting is: Allow (default).

Rationale:

Some people believe that it is prudent to block all outbound connections except those specifically approved by the user or administrator. Microsoft disagrees with this opinion, blocking outbound connections by default will force users to deal with a large number of dialog boxes prompting them to authorize or block applications such as their web browser or instant messaging software. Additionally, blocking outbound traffic has little value because if an attacker has compromised the system they can reconfigure the firewall anyway.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\WindowsFirewall\DomainProfile\DefaultOutboundAction
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Allow (default):

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall Properties\Domain Profile\Outbound connections
```

Impact:

None, this is the default configuration.

Default Value:

Allow

References:

1. CCE-36146-9

9.1.4 (L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Domain: Settings: Display a notification' to 'Yes' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

Select this option to have Windows Firewall with Advanced Security display notifications to the user when a program is blocked from receiving inbound connections.

Note: When the Apply local firewall rules setting is configured to `No`, it's recommended to also configure the `Display a notification` setting to `No`. Otherwise, users will continue to receive messages that ask if they want to unblock a restricted inbound connection, but the user's response will be ignored.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Yes`.

Rationale:

Some organizations may prefer to avoid alarming users when firewall rules block certain types of network activity. However, notifications can be helpful when troubleshooting network issues involving the firewall.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\WindowsFirewall\DomainProfile\DisableNotifications
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Yes`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall Properties\Domain Profile\Settings Customize\Display a notification
```

Impact:

If you configure this policy setting to Yes, Windows Firewall will display these notifications.

Default Value:

Yes

References:

1. CCE-38041-0

9.1.5 (L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Domain: Settings: Allow unicast response' to 'No' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This option is useful if you need to control whether this computer receives unicast responses to its outgoing multicast or broadcast messages.

The recommended state for this setting is: No.

Rationale:

An attacker could respond to broadcast or multicast message with malicious payloads.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\WindowsFirewall\DomainProfile\DisableUnicastResponsesToMulticastBroadcast
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to No:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall Properties\Domain Profile\Settings Customize\Allow unicast response
```

Impact:

If you enable this setting and this computer sends multicast or broadcast messages to other computers, Windows Firewall with Advanced Security waits as long as three seconds for unicast responses from the other computers and then blocks all later responses. If you disable this setting and this computer sends a multicast or broadcast message to other computers, Windows Firewall with Advanced Security blocks the unicast responses sent by those other computers.

Default Value:

Yes

References:

1. CCE-37859-6

9.1.6 (L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Domain: Settings: Apply local firewall rules' to 'Yes (default)' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This setting controls whether local administrators are allowed to create local firewall rules that apply together with firewall rules configured by Group Policy.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Yes (default)`.

Rationale:

Users with administrative privileges might create firewall rules that expose the system to remote attack.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\WindowsFirewall\DomainProfile\AllowLocalPolicyMerge
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Yes (default)`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall Properties\Domain Profile\Settings Customize\Apply local firewall rules
```

Impact:

If you configure this setting to No, administrators can still create firewall rules, but the rules will not be applied. This setting is available only when configuring the policy through Group Policy.

Default Value:

Yes

References:

1. CCE-37860-4

9.1.7 (L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Domain: Settings: Apply local connection security rules' to 'Yes (default)' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This setting controls whether local administrators are allowed to create connection security rules that apply together with connection security rules configured by Group Policy.

The recommended state for this setting is: Yes (default).

Rationale:

Users with administrative privileges might create firewall rules that expose the system to remote attack.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\WindowsFirewall\DomainProfile\AllowLocalIPsecPolicyMerge
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Yes (default):

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall Properties\Domain Profile\Settings Customize\Apply local connection security rules
```

Impact:

If you configure this setting to No, administrators can still create firewall rules, but the rules will not be applied. This setting is available only when configuring the policy through Group Policy.

Default Value:

Yes

References:

1. CCE-38040-2

9.1.8 (L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Domain: Logging: Name' to '%SYSTEMROOT%\System32\logfiles\firewall\domainfw.log' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

Use this option to specify the path and name of the file in which Windows Firewall will write its log information.

The recommended state for this setting is:

%SYSTEMROOT%\System32\logfiles\firewall\domainfw.log.

Rationale:

If events are not recorded it may be difficult or impossible to determine the root cause of system problems or the unauthorized activities of malicious users.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\WindowsFirewall\DomainProfile\Logging\LogFilePath
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to

%SYSTEMROOT%\System32\logfiles\firewall\domainfw.log:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall Properties\Domain Profile\Logging Customize\Name
```

Impact:

The log file will be stored in the specified file.

Default Value:

Not configured

References:

1. CCE-37482-7

9.1.9 (L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Domain: Logging: Size limit (KB)' to '16,384 KB or greater' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

Use this option to specify the size limit of the file in which Windows Firewall will write its log information.

The recommended state for this setting is: 16,384 KB or greater.

Rationale:

If events are not recorded it may be difficult or impossible to determine the root cause of system problems or the unauthorized activities of malicious users.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\WindowsFirewall\DomainProfile\Logging\LogFileSize
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to 16,384 KB or greater:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall Properties\Domain Profile\Logging Customize\Size limit (KB)
```

Impact:

The log file size will be limited to the specified size, old events will be overwritten by newer ones when the limit is reached.

Default Value:

Not configured

References:

1. CCE-36088-3

9.1.10 (L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Domain: Logging: Log dropped packets' to 'Yes' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

Use this option to log when Windows Firewall with Advanced Security discards an inbound packet for any reason. The log records why and when the packet was dropped. Look for entries with the word DROP in the action column of the log.

The recommended state for this setting is: Yes.

Rationale:

If events are not recorded it may be difficult or impossible to determine the root cause of system problems or the unauthorized activities of malicious users.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\WindowsFirewall\DomainProfile\Logging\LogDroppedPackets
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Yes:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall Properties\Domain Profile\Logging Customize\Log dropped packets
```

Impact:

Information about dropped packets will be recorded in the firewall log file.

Default Value:

Not configured

References:

1. CCE-37523-8

9.1.11 (L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Domain: Logging: Log successful connections' to 'Yes' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

Use this option to log when Windows Firewall with Advanced Security allows an inbound connection. The log records why and when the connection was formed. Look for entries with the word ALLOW in the action column of the log.

The recommended state for this setting is: Yes.

Rationale:

If events are not recorded it may be difficult or impossible to determine the root cause of system problems or the unauthorized activities of malicious users.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\WindowsFirewall\DomainProfile\Logging\LogSuccessfulConnections
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Yes:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall Properties\Domain Profile\Logging Customize\Log successful connections
```

Impact:

Information about successful connections will be recorded in the firewall log file.

Default Value:

Not configured

References:

1. CCE-36393-7

9.2 Private Profile

This section contains recommendations for the Private Profile of the Windows Firewall.

9.2.1 (L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Private: Firewall state' to 'On (recommended)' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

Select On (recommended) to have Windows Firewall with Advanced Security use the settings for this profile to filter network traffic. If you select Off, Windows Firewall with Advanced Security will not use any of the firewall rules or connection security rules for this profile.

The recommended state for this setting is: On (recommended).

Rationale:

If the firewall is turned off all traffic will be able to access the system and an attacker may be more easily able to remotely exploit a weakness in a network service.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\WindowsFirewall\PrivateProfile\EnableFirewall
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to On (recommended):

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall Properties\Private Profile\Firewall state
```

Impact:

None, this is the default configuration.

Default Value:

On

References:

1. CCE-38239-0

9.2.2 (L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Private: Inbound connections' to 'Block (default)' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This setting determines the behavior for inbound connections that do not match an inbound firewall rule. The default behavior is to block connections unless there are firewall rules to allow the connection.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Block (default)`.

Rationale:

If the firewall allows all traffic to access the system then an attacker may be more easily able to remotely exploit a weakness in a network service.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\WindowsFirewall\PrivateProfile\DefaultInboundAction
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Block (default)`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall Properties\Private Profile\Inbound connections
```

Impact:

None, this is the default configuration.

Default Value:

Block

References:

1. CCE-38042-8

9.2.3 (L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Private: Outbound connections' to 'Allow (default)' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This setting determines the behavior for outbound connections that do not match an outbound firewall rule. The default behavior is to allow connections unless there are firewall rules that block the connection.

Important: If you set Outbound connections to Block and then deploy the firewall policy by using a GPO, computers that receive the GPO settings cannot receive subsequent Group Policy updates unless you create and deploy an outbound rule that enables Group Policy to work. Predefined rules for Core Networking include outbound rules that enable Group Policy to work. Ensure that these outbound rules are active, and thoroughly test firewall profiles before deploying.

The recommended state for this setting is: Allow (default).

Rationale:

Some people believe that it is prudent to block all outbound connections except those specifically approved by the user or administrator. Microsoft disagrees with this opinion, blocking outbound connections by default will force users to deal with a large number of dialog boxes prompting them to authorize or block applications such as their web browser or instant messaging software. Additionally, blocking outbound traffic has little value because if an attacker has compromised the system they can reconfigure the firewall anyway.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\WindowsFirewall\PrivateProfile\DefaultOutboundAction
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Allow (default):

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall Properties\Private Profile\Outbound connections
```

Impact:

None, this is the default configuration.

Default Value:

Allow

References:

1. CCE-38332-3

9.2.4 (L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Private: Settings: Display a notification' to 'Yes' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

Select this option to have Windows Firewall with Advanced Security display notifications to the user when a program is blocked from receiving inbound connections.

Note: When the `Apply local firewall rules` setting is configured to `No`, it's recommended to also also configure the `Display a notification` setting to `No`. Otherwise, users will continue to receive messages that ask if they want to unblock a restricted inbound connection, but the user's response will be ignored.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Yes`.

Rationale:

Some organizations may prefer to avoid alarming users when firewall rules block certain types of network activity. However, notifications can be helpful when troubleshooting network issues involving the firewall.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\WindowsFirewall\PrivateProfile\DisableNotifications
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Yes`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall Properties\Private Profile\Settings Customize\Display a notification
```

Impact:

If you configure this policy setting to `Yes`, Windows Firewall will display these notifications.

Default Value:

Yes

References:

1. CCE-37621-0

9.2.5 (L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Private: Settings: Allow unicast response' to 'No' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This option is useful if you need to control whether this computer receives unicast responses to its outgoing multicast or broadcast messages.

The recommended state for this setting is: No.

Rationale:

An attacker could respond to broadcast or multicast message with malicious payloads.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\WindowsFirewall\PrivateProfile\DisableUnicastResponsesToMulticastBroadcast
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to No:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall Properties\Private Profile\Settings Customize\Allow unicast response
```

Impact:

If you enable this setting and this computer sends multicast or broadcast messages to other computers, Windows Firewall with Advanced Security waits as long as three seconds for unicast responses from the other computers and then blocks all later responses. If you disable this setting and this computer sends a multicast or broadcast message to other computers, Windows Firewall with Advanced Security blocks the unicast responses sent by those other computers.

Default Value:

Yes

References:

1. CCE-37134-4

9.2.6 (L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Private: Settings: Apply local firewall rules' to 'Yes (default)' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This setting controls whether local administrators are allowed to create local firewall rules that apply together with firewall rules configured by Group Policy.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Yes (default)`.

Rationale:

Users with administrative privileges might create firewall rules that expose the system to remote attack.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\WindowsFirewall\PrivateProfile\AllowLocalPolicyMerge
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Yes (default)`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall Properties\Private Profile\Settings Customize\Apply local firewall rules
```

Impact:

If you configure this setting to No, administrators can still create firewall rules, but the rules will not be applied. This setting is available only when configuring the policy through Group Policy.

Default Value:

Yes

References:

1. CCE-37438-9

9.2.7 (L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Private: Settings: Apply local connection security rules' to 'Yes (default)' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This setting controls whether local administrators are allowed to create connection security rules that apply together with connection security rules configured by Group Policy.

The recommended state for this setting is: Yes (default).

Rationale:

Users with administrative privileges might create firewall rules that expose the system to remote attack.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\WindowsFirewall\PrivateProfile\AllowLocalIPsecPolicyMerge
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Yes (default):

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall Properties\Private Profile\Settings Customize\Apply local connection security rules
```

Impact:

If you configure this setting to No, administrators can still create firewall rules, but the rules will not be applied. This setting is available only when configuring the policy through Group Policy.

Default Value:

Yes

References:

1. CCE-36063-6

9.2.8 (L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Private: Logging: Name' to '%SYSTEMROOT%\System32\logfiles\firewall\privatefw.log' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

Use this option to specify the path and name of the file in which Windows Firewall will write its log information.

The recommended state for this setting is:

```
%SYSTEMROOT%\System32\logfiles\firewall\privatefw.log.
```

Rationale:

If events are not recorded it may be difficult or impossible to determine the root cause of system problems or the unauthorized activities of malicious users.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\WindowsFirewall\PrivateProfile\Logging\LogFilePath
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to

```
%SYSTEMROOT%\System32\logfiles\firewall\privatefw.log:
```

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall Properties\Private Profile\Logging Customize\Name
```

Impact:

The log file will be stored in the specified file.

Default Value:

Not configured

References:

1. CCE-37569-1

9.2.9 (L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Private: Logging: Size limit (KB)' to '16,384 KB or greater' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

Use this option to specify the size limit of the file in which Windows Firewall will write its log information.

The recommended state for this setting is: 16,384 KB or greater.

Rationale:

If events are not recorded it may be difficult or impossible to determine the root cause of system problems or the unauthorized activities of malicious users.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\WindowsFirewall\PrivateProfile\Logging\LogFileSize
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to 16,384 KB or greater:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall Properties\Private Profile\Logging Customize\Size limit (KB)
```

Impact:

The log file size will be limited to the specified size, old events will be overwritten by newer ones when the limit is reached.

Default Value:

Not configured

References:

1. CCE-38178-0

9.2.10 (L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Private: Logging: Log dropped packets' to 'Yes' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

Use this option to log when Windows Firewall with Advanced Security discards an inbound packet for any reason. The log records why and when the packet was dropped. Look for entries with the word DROP in the action column of the log.

The recommended state for this setting is: Yes.

Rationale:

If events are not recorded it may be difficult or impossible to determine the root cause of system problems or the unauthorized activities of malicious users.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\WindowsFirewall\PrivateProfile\Logging\LogDroppedPackets
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Yes:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall Properties\Private Profile\Logging Customize\Log dropped packets
```

Impact:

Information about dropped packets will be recorded in the firewall log file.

Default Value:

Not configured

References:

1. CCE-35972-9

9.2.11 (L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Private: Logging: Log successful connections' to 'Yes' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

Use this option to log when Windows Firewall with Advanced Security allows an inbound connection. The log records why and when the connection was formed. Look for entries with the word ALLOW in the action column of the log.

The recommended state for this setting is: Yes.

Rationale:

If events are not recorded it may be difficult or impossible to determine the root cause of system problems or the unauthorized activities of malicious users.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\WindowsFirewall\PrivateProfile\Logging\LogSuccessfulConnections
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Yes:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall Properties\Private Profile\Logging Customize\Log successful connections
```

Impact:

Information about successful connections will be recorded in the firewall log file.

Default Value:

Not configured

References:

1. CCE-37387-8

9.3 Public Profile

This section contains recommendations for the Public Profile of the Windows Firewall.

9.3.1 (L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Public: Firewall state' to 'On (recommended)' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

Select On (recommended) to have Windows Firewall with Advanced Security use the settings for this profile to filter network traffic. If you select Off, Windows Firewall with Advanced Security will not use any of the firewall rules or connection security rules for this profile.

The recommended state for this setting is: On (recommended).

Rationale:

If the firewall is turned off all traffic will be able to access the system and an attacker may be more easily able to remotely exploit a weakness in a network service.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\WindowsFirewall\PublicProfile\EnableFirewall
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to On (recommended) :

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall Properties\Public Profile\Firewall state
```

Impact:

None, this is the default configuration.

Default Value:

On

References:

1. CCE-37862-0

9.3.2 (L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Public: Inbound connections' to 'Block (default)' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This setting determines the behavior for inbound connections that do not match an inbound firewall rule. The default behavior is to block connections unless there are firewall rules to allow the connection.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Block (default)`.

Rationale:

If the firewall allows all traffic to access the system then an attacker may be more easily able to remotely exploit a weakness in a network service.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\WindowsFirewall\PublicProfile\DefaultInboundAction
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Block (default)`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall Properties\Public Profile\Inbound connections
```

Impact:

None, this is the default configuration.

Default Value:

Block

References:

1. CCE-36057-8

9.3.3 (L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Public: Outbound connections' to 'Allow (default)' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This setting determines the behavior for outbound connections that do not match an outbound firewall rule. The default behavior is to allow connections unless there are firewall rules that block the connection.

Important: If you set Outbound connections to Block and then deploy the firewall policy by using a GPO, computers that receive the GPO settings cannot receive subsequent Group Policy updates unless you create and deploy an outbound rule that enables Group Policy to work. Predefined rules for Core Networking include outbound rules that enable Group Policy to work. Ensure that these outbound rules are active, and thoroughly test firewall profiles before deploying.

The recommended state for this setting is: Allow (default).

Rationale:

Some people believe that it is prudent to block all outbound connections except those specifically approved by the user or administrator. Microsoft disagrees with this opinion, blocking outbound connections by default will force users to deal with a large number of dialog boxes prompting them to authorize or block applications such as their web browser or instant messaging software. Additionally, blocking outbound traffic has little value because if an attacker has compromised the system they can reconfigure the firewall anyway.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\WindowsFirewall\PublicProfile\DefaultOutboundAction
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Allow (default):

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall Properties\Public Profile\Outbound connections
```

Impact:

None, this is the default configuration.

Default Value:

Allow

References:

1. CCE-37434-8

9.3.4 (L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Public: Display a notification' to 'Yes' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

Select this option to have Windows Firewall with Advanced Security display notifications to the user when a program is blocked from receiving inbound connections.

Note: When the `Apply local firewall rules` setting is configured to `Yes`, it is also recommended to also configure the `Display a notification` setting to `Yes`. Otherwise, users will not receive messages that ask if they want to unblock a restricted inbound connection.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Yes`.

Rationale:

Some organizations may prefer to avoid alarming users when firewall rules block certain types of network activity. However, notifications can be helpful when troubleshooting network issues involving the firewall.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\WindowsFirewall\PublicProfile\DisableNotifications
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Yes`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall Properties\Public Profile\Settings Customize\Display a notification
```

Impact:

If you configure this policy setting to No, Windows Firewall will not display these notifications.

Default Value:

Yes

References:

1. CCE-38043-6

9.3.5 (L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Public: Allow unicast response' to 'No' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This option is useful if you need to control whether this computer receives unicast responses to its outgoing multicast or broadcast messages.

The recommended state for this setting is: No.

Rationale:

An attacker could respond to broadcast or multicast message with malicious payloads.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\WindowsFirewall\PublicProfile\DisableUnicastResponsesToMulticastBroadcast
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to No:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall Properties\Public Profile\Settings Customize\Allow unicast response
```

Impact:

If you enable this setting and this computer sends multicast or broadcast messages to other computers, Windows Firewall with Advanced Security waits as long as three seconds for unicast responses from the other computers and then blocks all later responses. If you disable this setting and this computer sends a multicast or broadcast message to other computers, Windows Firewall with Advanced Security blocks the unicast responses sent by those other computers.

Default Value:

Yes

References:

1. CCE-36324-2

9.3.6 (L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Public: Apply local firewall rules' to 'Yes (default)' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This setting controls whether local administrators are allowed to create local firewall rules that apply together with firewall rules configured by Group Policy.

The recommended state for this setting is: Yes (default).

Rationale:

Users with administrative privileges might create firewall rules that expose the system to remote attack.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\WindowsFirewall\PublicProfile\AllowLocalPolicyMerge
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Yes (default):

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall Properties\Public Profile\Settings Customize\Apply local firewall rules
```

Impact:

If you configure this setting to No, administrators can still create firewall rules, but the rules will not be applied. This setting is available only when configuring the policy through Group Policy.

Default Value:

Yes

References:

1. CCE-37861-2

9.3.7 (L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Public: Apply local connection security rules' to 'No' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This setting controls whether local administrators are allowed to create connection security rules that apply together with connection security rules configured by Group Policy.

The recommended state for this setting is: No.

Rationale:

Users with administrative privileges might create firewall rules that expose the system to remote attack.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\WindowsFirewall\PublicProfile\AllowLocalIPsecPolicyMerge
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to No:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall Properties\Public Profile\Settings Customize\Apply local connection security rules
```

Impact:

If you configure this setting to No, administrators can still create firewall rules, but the rules will not be applied. This setting is available only when configuring the policy through Group Policy.

Default Value:

Yes

References:

1. CCE-36268-1

9.3.8 (L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Public: Logging: Name' to '%SYSTEMROOT%\System32\logfiles\firewall\publicfw.log' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

Use this option to specify the path and name of the file in which Windows Firewall will write its log information.

The recommended state for this setting is:

%SYSTEMROOT%\System32\logfiles\firewall\publicfw.log.

Rationale:

If events are not recorded it may be difficult or impossible to determine the root cause of system problems or the unauthorized activities of malicious users.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\WindowsFirewall\PublicProfile\Logging\LogFilePath
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to

%SYSTEMROOT%\System32\logfiles\firewall\publicfw.log:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall Properties\Public Profile\Logging Customize\Name
```

Impact:

The log file will be stored in the specified file.

Default Value:

Not configured

References:

1. CCE-37266-4

9.3.9 (L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Public: Logging: Size limit (KB)' to '16,384 KB or greater' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

Use this option to specify the size limit of the file in which Windows Firewall will write its log information.

The recommended state for this setting is: 16,384 KB or greater.

Rationale:

If events are not recorded it may be difficult or impossible to determine the root cause of system problems or the unauthorized activities of malicious users.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\WindowsFirewall\PublicProfile\Logging\LogFileSize
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to 16,384 KB or greater:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall Properties\Public Profile\Logging Customize\Size limit (KB)
```

Impact:

The log file size will be limited to the specified size, old events will be overwritten by newer ones when the limit is reached.

Default Value:

Not configured

References:

1. CCE-36395-2

9.3.10 (L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Public: Logging: Log dropped packets' to 'Yes' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

Use this option to log when Windows Firewall with Advanced Security discards an inbound packet for any reason. The log records why and when the packet was dropped. Look for entries with the word DROP in the action column of the log.

The recommended state for this setting is: Yes.

Rationale:

If events are not recorded it may be difficult or impossible to determine the root cause of system problems or the unauthorized activities of malicious users.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\WindowsFirewall\PublicProfile\Logging\LogDroppedPackets
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Yes:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall Properties\Public Profile\Logging Customize\Log dropped packets
```

Impact:

Information about dropped packets will be recorded in the firewall log file.

Default Value:

Not configured

References:

1. CCE-37265-6

9.3.11 (L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Public: Logging: Log successful connections' to 'Yes' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

Use this option to log when Windows Firewall with Advanced Security allows an inbound connection. The log records why and when the connection was formed. Look for entries with the word ALLOW in the action column of the log.

The recommended state for this setting is: Yes.

Rationale:

If events are not recorded it may be difficult or impossible to determine the root cause of system problems or the unauthorized activities of malicious users.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\WindowsFirewall\PublicProfile\Logging\LogSuccessfulConnections
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Yes:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall with Advanced Security\Windows Firewall Properties\Public Profile\Logging Customize\Log successful connections
```

Impact:

Information about successful connections will be recorded in the firewall log file.

Default Value:

Not configured

References:

1. CCE-36394-5

10 Network List Manager Policies

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

11 Wireless Network (IEEE 802.11) Policies

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

12 Public Key Policies

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

13 Software Restriction Policies

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

14 Network Access Protection NAP Client Configuration

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

15 Application Control Policies

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

16 IP Security Policies

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

17 Advanced Audit Policy Configuration

This section contains recommendations for configuring the Windows audit facilities.

17.1 Account Logon

This section contains recommendations for configuring the Account Logon audit policy.

17.1.1 (L1) Set 'Audit Credential Validation' to 'Success and Failure' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This subcategory reports the results of validation tests on credentials submitted for a user account logon request. These events occur on the computer that is authoritative for the credentials. For domain accounts, the domain controller is authoritative, whereas for local accounts, the local computer is authoritative. In domain environments, most of the Account Logon events occur in the Security log of the domain controllers that are authoritative for the domain accounts. However, these events can occur on other computers in the organization when local accounts are used to log on. Events for this subcategory include:

- 4774: An account was mapped for logon.
- 4775: An account could not be mapped for logon.
- 4776: The domain controller attempted to validate the credentials for an account.
- 4777: The domain controller failed to validate the credentials for an account.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Success and Failure`.

Rationale:

Auditing these events may be useful when investigating a security incident.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Success` and `Failure`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Advanced Audit Policy Configuration\Audit Policies\Account Logon\Audit Credential Validation
```

Impact:

If no audit settings are configured, or if audit settings are too lax on the computers in your organization, security incidents might not be detected or not enough evidence will be available for network forensic analysis after security incidents occur. However, if audit settings are too severe, critically important entries in the Security log may be obscured by all of the meaningless entries and computer performance and the available amount of data storage may be seriously affected. Companies that operate in certain regulated industries may have legal obligations to log certain events or activities.

Default Value:

No auditing

References:

1. CCE-37741-6

17.2 Account Management

This section contains recommendations for configuring the Account Management audit policy.

17.2.1 (L1) Set 'Audit Application Group Management' to 'Success and Failure' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows you to audit events generated by changes to application groups such as the following:

- Application group is created, changed, or deleted.
- Member is added or removed from an application group.

Application groups are utilized by Windows Authorization Manager, which is a flexible framework created by Microsoft for integrating role-based access control (RBAC) into applications. More information on Windows Authorization Manager is available at [MSDN - Windows Authorization Manager](#).

The recommended state for this setting is: `Success and Failure`.

Rationale:

Auditing events in this category may be useful when investigating an incident.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Success` and `Failure`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Advanced Audit Policy Configuration\Audit Policies\Account Management\Audit Application Group Management
```

Impact:

If no audit settings are configured, or if audit settings are too lax on the computers in your organization, security incidents might not be detected or not enough evidence will be available for network forensic analysis after security incidents occur. However, if audit settings are too severe, critically important entries in the Security log may be obscured by all of the meaningless entries and computer performance and the available amount of data storage may be seriously affected. Companies that operate in certain regulated industries may have legal obligations to log certain events or activities.

Default Value:

No Auditing

References:

1. CCE-38329-9

17.2.2 (L1) Set 'Audit Computer Account Management' to 'Success and Failure' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This subcategory reports each event of computer account management, such as when a computer account is created, changed, deleted, renamed, disabled, or enabled. Events for this subcategory include:

- 4741: A computer account was created.
- 4742: A computer account was changed.
- 4743: A computer account was deleted.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Success and Failure`.

Rationale:

Auditing events in this category may be useful when investigating an incident.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Success and Failure`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Advanced Audit Policy Configuration\Audit Policies\Account Management\Audit Computer Account Management
```

Impact:

If no audit settings are configured, or if audit settings are too lax on the computers in your organization, security incidents might not be detected or not enough evidence will be available for network forensic analysis after security incidents occur. However, if audit settings are too severe, critically important entries in the Security log may be obscured by all of the meaningless entries and computer performance and the available amount of data storage may be seriously affected. Companies that operate in certain regulated industries may have legal obligations to log certain events or activities.

Default Value:

Success

References:

1. CCE-38004-8

17.2.3 (L1) Set 'Audit Distribution Group Management' to 'Success and Failure' (DC only) (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller

Description:

This subcategory reports each event of distribution group management, such as when a distribution group is created, changed, or deleted or when a member is added to or removed from a distribution group. If you enable this Audit policy setting, administrators can track events to detect malicious, accidental, and authorized creation of group accounts. Events for this subcategory include:

- 4744: A security-disabled local group was created.
- 4745: A security-disabled local group was changed.
- 4746: A member was added to a security-disabled local group.
- 4747: A member was removed from a security-disabled local group.
- 4748: A security-disabled local group was deleted.
- 4749: A security-disabled global group was created.
- 4750: A security-disabled global group was changed.
- 4751: A member was added to a security-disabled global group.
- 4752: A member was removed from a security-disabled global group.
- 4753: A security-disabled global group was deleted.
- 4759: A security-disabled universal group was created.
- 4760: A security-disabled universal group was changed.
- 4761: A member was added to a security-disabled universal group.
- 4762: A member was removed from a security-disabled universal group.
- 4763: A security-disabled universal group was deleted.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Success and Failure`.

Rationale:

Auditing these events may provide an organization with insight when investigating an incident. For example, when a given unauthorized user was added to a sensitive distribution group.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Success` and `Failure`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Advanced Audit Policy Configuration\Audit Policies\Account Management\Audit Distribution Group Management
```

Impact:

If no audit settings are configured, or if audit settings are too lax on the computers in your organization, security incidents might not be detected or not enough evidence will be available for network forensic analysis after security incidents occur. However, if audit settings are too severe, critically important entries in the Security log may be obscured by all of the meaningless entries and computer performance and the available amount of data storage may be seriously affected. Companies that operate in certain regulated industries may have legal obligations to log certain events or activities.

Default Value:

No auditing

References:

1. CCE-36265-7

17.2.4 (L1) Set 'Audit Other Account Management Events' to 'Success and Failure' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This subcategory reports other account management events. Events for this subcategory include:

- 4782: The password hash an account was accessed.
- 4793: The Password Policy Checking API was called.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Success and Failure`.

Rationale:

Auditing these events may be useful when investigating a security incident.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Success and Failure`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Advanced Audit Policy Configuration\Audit Policies\Account Management\Audit Other Account Management Events
```

Impact:

If no audit settings are configured, or if audit settings are too lax on the computers in your organization, security incidents might not be detected or not enough evidence will be available for network forensic analysis after security incidents occur. However, if audit settings are too severe, critically important entries in the Security log may be obscured by all of the meaningless entries and computer performance and the available amount of data storage may be seriously affected. Companies that operate in certain regulated industries may have legal obligations to log certain events or activities.

Default Value:

No auditing

References:

1. CCE-37855-4

17.2.5 (L1) Set 'Audit Security Group Management' to 'Success and Failure' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This subcategory reports each event of security group management, such as when a security group is created, changed, or deleted or when a member is added to or removed from a security group. If you enable this Audit policy setting, administrators can track events to detect malicious, accidental, and authorized creation of security group accounts. Events for this subcategory include:

- 4727: A security-enabled global group was created.
- 4728: A member was added to a security-enabled global group.
- 4729: A member was removed from a security-enabled global group.
- 4730: A security-enabled global group was deleted.
- 4731: A security-enabled local group was created.
- 4732: A member was added to a security-enabled local group.
- 4733: A member was removed from a security-enabled local group.
- 4734: A security-enabled local group was deleted.
- 4735: A security-enabled local group was changed.
- 4737: A security-enabled global group was changed.
- 4754: A security-enabled universal group was created.
- 4755: A security-enabled universal group was changed.
- 4756: A member was added to a security-enabled universal group.
- 4757: A member was removed from a security-enabled universal group.
- 4758: A security-enabled universal group was deleted.
- 4764: A group's type was changed.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Success and Failure`.

Rationale:

Auditing these events may be useful when investigating a security incident.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Success` and `Failure`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Advanced Audit Policy Configuration\Audit Policies\Account Management\Audit Security Group Management
```

Impact:

If no audit settings are configured, or if audit settings are too lax on the computers in your organization, security incidents might not be detected or not enough evidence will be available for network forensic analysis after security incidents occur. However, if audit settings are too severe, critically important entries in the Security log may be obscured by all of the meaningless entries and computer performance and the available amount of data storage may be seriously affected. Companies that operate in certain regulated industries may have legal obligations to log certain events or activities.

Default Value:

Success

References:

1. CCE-38034-5

17.2.6 (L1) Set 'Audit User Account Management' to 'Success and Failure' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This subcategory reports each event of user account management, such as when a user account is created, changed, or deleted; a user account is renamed, disabled, or enabled; or a password is set or changed. If you enable this Audit policy setting, administrators can track events to detect malicious, accidental, and authorized creation of user accounts.

Events for this subcategory include:

- 4720: A user account was created.
- 4722: A user account was enabled.
- 4723: An attempt was made to change an account's password.
- 4724: An attempt was made to reset an account's password.
- 4725: A user account was disabled.
- 4726: A user account was deleted.
- 4738: A user account was changed.
- 4740: A user account was locked out.
- 4765: SID History was added to an account.
- 4766: An attempt to add SID History to an account failed.
- 4767: A user account was unlocked.
- 4780: The ACL was set on accounts which are members of administrators groups.
- 4781: The name of an account was changed.
- 4794: An attempt was made to set the Directory Services Restore Mode.
- 5376: Credential Manager credentials were backed up.
- 5377: Credential Manager credentials were restored from a backup.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Success and Failure`.

Rationale:

Auditing these events may be useful when investigating a security incident.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Success` and `Failure`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Advanced Audit Policy Configuration\Audit Policies\Account Management\Audit User Account Management
```

Impact:

If no audit settings are configured, or if audit settings are too lax on the computers in your organization, security incidents might not be detected or not enough evidence will be available for network forensic analysis after security incidents occur. However, if audit settings are too severe, critically important entries in the Security log may be obscured by all of the meaningless entries and computer performance and the available amount of data storage may be seriously affected. Companies that operate in certain regulated industries may have legal obligations to log certain events or activities.

Default Value:

Success

References:

1. CCE-37856-2

17.3 Detailed Tracking

This section contains recommendations for configuring the Detailed Tracking audit policy.

17.3.1 (L1) Set 'Audit Process Creation' to 'Success' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This subcategory reports the creation of a process and the name of the program or user that created it. Events for this subcategory include:

- 4688: A new process has been created.
- 4696: A primary token was assigned to process.

Refer to Microsoft Knowledge Base article 947226: [Description of security events in Windows Vista and in Windows Server 2008](#) for the most recent information about this setting.

The recommended state for this setting is: *Success*.

Rationale:

Auditing these events may be useful when investigating a security incident.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to *Success*:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Advanced Audit Policy Configuration\Audit Policies\Detailed Tracking\Audit Process Creation
```

Impact:

If no audit settings are configured, or if audit settings are too lax on the computers in your organization, security incidents might not be detected or not enough evidence will be available for network forensic analysis after security incidents occur. However, if audit settings are too severe, critically important entries in the Security log may be obscured by all of the meaningless entries and computer performance and the available amount of data storage may be seriously affected. Companies that operate in certain regulated industries may have legal obligations to log certain events or activities.

Default Value:

No auditing

References:

1. CCE-36059-4

17.4 DS Access

This section contains recommendations for configuring the Directory Services Access audit policy.

17.4.1 (L1) Set 'Audit Directory Service Access' to 'Success and Failure' (DC only) (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller

Description:

This subcategory reports when an AD DS object is accessed. Only objects with SACLs cause audit events to be generated, and only when they are accessed in a manner that matches their SACL. These events are similar to the directory service access events in previous versions of Windows Server. This subcategory applies only to domain controllers. Events for this subcategory include:

- 4662 : An operation was performed on an object.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Success and Failure`.

Rationale:

Auditing these events may be useful when investigating a security incident.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Success and Failure`:

Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Advanced Audit Policy Configuration\Audit Policies\DS Access\Audit Directory Service Access

Impact:

If no audit settings are configured, or if audit settings are too lax on the computers in your organization, security incidents might not be detected or not enough evidence will be available for network forensic analysis after security incidents occur. However, if audit settings are too severe, critically important entries in the Security log may be obscured by all of the meaningless entries and computer performance and the available amount of data storage may be seriously affected. Companies that operate in certain regulated industries may have legal obligations to log certain events or activities.

Default Value:

No auditing

References:

1. CCE-37433-0

17.4.2 (L1) Set 'Audit Directory Service Changes' to 'Success and Failure' (DC only) (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller

Description:

This subcategory reports changes to objects in Active Directory Domain Services (AD DS). The types of changes that are reported are create, modify, move, and undelete operations that are performed on an object. DS Change auditing, where appropriate, indicates the old and new values of the changed properties of the objects that were changed. Only objects with SACLs cause audit events to be generated, and only when they are accessed in a manner that matches their SACL. Some objects and properties do not cause audit events to be generated due to settings on the object class in the schema. This subcategory applies only to domain controllers. Events for this subcategory include:

- 5136 : A directory service object was modified.
- 5137 : A directory service object was created.
- 5138 : A directory service object was undeleted.
- 5139 : A directory service object was moved.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Success and Failure`.

Rationale:

Auditing these events may be useful when investigating a security incident.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Success and Failure`.

`Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Advanced Audit Policy Configuration\Audit Policies\DS Access\Audit Directory Service Changes`

Impact:

If no audit settings are configured, or if audit settings are too lax on the computers in your organization, security incidents might not be detected or not enough evidence will be available for network forensic analysis after security incidents occur. However, if audit settings are too severe, critically important entries in the Security log may be obscured by all of the meaningless entries and computer performance and the available amount of data storage may be seriously affected. Companies that operate in certain regulated industries may have legal obligations to log certain events or activities.

Default Value:

No auditing

References:

1. CCE-37616-0

17.5 Logon/Logoff

This section contains recommendations for configuring the Logon/Logoff audit policy.

17.5.1 (L1) Set 'Audit Account Lockout' to 'Success' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This subcategory reports when a user's account is locked out as a result of too many failed logon attempts. Events for this subcategory include:

- 4625: An account failed to log on.

The recommended state for this setting is: *Success*.

Rationale:

Auditing these events may be useful when investigating a security incident.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to *Success*:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Advanced Audit Policy Configuration\Audit Policies\Logon/Logoff\Audit Account Lockout
```

Impact:

If no audit settings are configured, or if audit settings are too lax on the computers in your organization, security incidents might not be detected or not enough evidence will be available for network forensic analysis after security incidents occur. However, if audit settings are too severe, critically important entries in the Security log may be obscured by all of the meaningless entries and computer performance and the available amount of data storage may be seriously affected. Companies that operate in certain regulated industries may have legal obligations to log certain events or activities.

Default Value:

Success

References:

1. CCE-37133-6

17.5.2 (L1) Set 'Audit Logoff' to 'Success' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This subcategory reports when a user logs off from the system. These events occur on the accessed computer. For interactive logons, the generation of these events occurs on the computer that is logged on to. If a network logon takes place to access a share, these events generate on the computer that hosts the accessed resource. If you configure this setting to No auditing, it is difficult or impossible to determine which user has accessed or attempted to access organization computers. Events for this subcategory include:

- 4634: An account was logged off.
- 4647: User initiated logoff.

The recommended state for this setting is: *Success*.

Rationale:

Auditing these events may be useful when investigating a security incident.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to *Success*:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Advanced Audit Policy Configuration\Audit Policies\Logon/Logoff\Audit Logoff
```

Impact:

If no audit settings are configured, or if audit settings are too lax on the computers in your organization, security incidents might not be detected or not enough evidence will be available for network forensic analysis after security incidents occur. However, if audit settings are too severe, critically important entries in the Security log may be obscured by all of the meaningless entries and computer performance and the available amount of data storage may be seriously affected. Companies that operate in certain regulated industries may have legal obligations to log certain events or activities.

Default Value:

Success

References:

1. CCE-38237-4

17.5.3 (L1) Set 'Audit Logon' to 'Success and Failure' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This subcategory reports when a user attempts to log on to the system. These events occur on the accessed computer. For interactive logons, the generation of these events occurs on the computer that is logged on to. If a network logon takes place to access a share, these events generate on the computer that hosts the accessed resource. If you configure this setting to No auditing, it is difficult or impossible to determine which user has accessed or attempted to access organization computers. Events for this subcategory include:

- 4624: An account was successfully logged on.
- 4625: An account failed to log on.
- 4648: A logon was attempted using explicit credentials.
- 4675: SIDs were filtered.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Success and Failure`.

Rationale:

Auditing these events may be useful when investigating a security incident.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Success and Failure`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Advanced Audit Policy Configuration\Audit Policies\Logon/Logoff\Audit Logon
```

Impact:

If no audit settings are configured, or if audit settings are too lax on the computers in your organization, security incidents might not be detected or not enough evidence will be available for network forensic analysis after security incidents occur. However, if audit settings are too severe, critically important entries in the Security log may be obscured by all of the meaningless entries and computer performance and the available amount of data storage may be seriously affected. Companies that operate in certain regulated industries may have legal obligations to log certain events or activities.

Default Value:

Success

References:

1. CCE-38036-0

17.5.4 (L1) Set 'Audit Other Logon/Logoff Events' to 'Success and Failure' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This subcategory reports other logon/logoff-related events, such as Terminal Services session disconnects and reconnects, using RunAs to run processes under a different account, and locking and unlocking a workstation. Events for this subcategory include:

- 4649: A replay attack was detected.
- 4778: A session was reconnected to a Window Station.
- 4779: A session was disconnected from a Window Station.
- 4800: The workstation was locked.
- 4801: The workstation was unlocked.
- 4802: The screen saver was invoked.
- 4803: The screen saver was dismissed.
- 5378: The requested credentials delegation was disallowed by policy.
- 5632: A request was made to authenticate to a wireless network.
- 5633: A request was made to authenticate to a wired network.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Success and Failure`.

Rationale:

Auditing these events may be useful when investigating a security incident.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Success and Failure`:

Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Advanced Audit Policy Configuration\Audit Policies\Logon/Logoff\Audit Other Logon/Logoff Events
--

Impact:

If no audit settings are configured, or if audit settings are too lax on the computers in your organization, security incidents might not be detected or not enough evidence will be available for network forensic analysis after security incidents occur. However, if audit settings are too severe, critically important entries in the Security log may be obscured by all of the meaningless entries and computer performance and the available amount of data storage may be seriously affected. Companies that operate in certain regulated industries may have legal obligations to log certain events or activities.

Default Value:

No auditing

References:

1. CCE-36322-6

17.5.5 (L1) Set 'Audit Special Logon' to 'Success' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This subcategory reports when a special logon is used. A special logon is a logon that has administrator-equivalent privileges and can be used to elevate a process to a higher level. Events for this subcategory include:

- 4964 : Special groups have been assigned to a new logon.

The recommended state for this setting is: *Success*.

Rationale:

Auditing these events may be useful when investigating a security incident.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to *Success*:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Advanced Audit Policy Configuration\Audit Policies\Logon/Logoff\Audit Special Logon
```

Impact:

If no audit settings are configured, or if audit settings are too lax on the computers in your organization, security incidents might not be detected or not enough evidence will be available for network forensic analysis after security incidents occur. However, if audit settings are too severe, critically important entries in the Security log may be obscured by all of the meaningless entries and computer performance and the available amount of data storage may be seriously affected. Companies that operate in certain regulated industries may have legal obligations to log certain events or activities.

Default Value:

Success

References:

1. CCE-36266-5

17.6 Object Access

This section contains recommendations for configuring the Object Access audit policy.

17.6.1 (L1) Set 'Audit Removable Storage' to 'Success and Failure' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows you to audit user attempts to access file system objects on a removable storage device. A security audit event is generated only for all objects for all types of access requested. If you configure this policy setting, an audit event is generated each time an account accesses a file system object on a removable storage. Success audits record successful attempts and Failure audits record unsuccessful attempts. If you do not configure this policy setting, no audit event is generated when an account accesses a file system object on a removable storage.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Success and Failure`.

Rationale:

Auditing removable storage may be useful when investigating an incident. For example, if an individual is suspected of copying sensitive information onto a USB drive.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Success and Failure`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Advanced Audit Policy Configuration\Audit Policies\Object Access\Audit Removable Storage
```

Impact:

If no audit settings are configured, or if audit settings are too lax on the computers in your organization, security incidents might not be detected or not enough evidence will be available for network forensic analysis after security incidents occur. However, if audit settings are too severe, critically important entries in the Security log may be obscured by all of the meaningless entries and computer performance and the available amount of data storage may be seriously affected. Companies that operate in certain regulated industries may have legal obligations to log certain events or activities.

Default Value:

No auditing

References:

1. CCE-37617-8

17.7 Policy Change

This section contains recommendations for configuring the Policy Change audit policy.

17.7.1 (L1) Set 'Audit Audit Policy Change' to 'Success and Failure' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This subcategory reports changes in audit policy including SACL changes. Events for this subcategory include:

- 4715: The audit policy (SACL) on an object was changed.
- 4719: System audit policy was changed.
- 4902: The Per-user audit policy table was created.
- 4904: An attempt was made to register a security event source.
- 4905: An attempt was made to unregister a security event source.
- 4906: The CrashOnAuditFail value has changed.
- 4907: Auditing settings on object were changed.
- 4908: Special Groups Logon table modified.
- 4912: Per User Audit Policy was changed.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Success and Failure`.

Rationale:

Auditing these events may be useful when investigating a security incident.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Success` and `Failure`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Advanced Audit Policy Configuration\Audit Policies\Policy Change\Audit Audit Policy Change
```

Impact:

If no audit settings are configured, or if audit settings are too lax on the computers in your organization, security incidents might not be detected or not enough evidence will be available for network forensic analysis after security incidents occur. However, if audit settings are too severe, critically important entries in the Security log may be obscured by all of the meaningless entries and computer performance and the available amount of data storage may be seriously affected. Companies that operate in certain regulated industries may have legal obligations to log certain events or activities.

Default Value:

Success

References:

1. CCE-38028-7

17.7.2 (L1) Set 'Audit Authentication Policy Change' to 'Success' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This subcategory reports changes in authentication policy. Events for this subcategory include:

- 4706: A new trust was created to a domain.
- 4707: A trust to a domain was removed.
- 4713: Kerberos policy was changed.
- 4716: Trusted domain information was modified.
- 4717: System security access was granted to an account.
- 4718: System security access was removed from an account.
- 4739: Domain Policy was changed.
- 4864: A namespace collision was detected.
- 4865: A trusted forest information entry was added.
- 4866: A trusted forest information entry was removed.
- 4867: A trusted forest information entry was modified.

The recommended state for this setting is: *Success*.

Rationale:

Auditing these events may be useful when investigating a security incident.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to *Success*:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Advanced Audit Policy Configuration\Audit Policies\Policy Change\Audit Authentication Policy Change
```

Impact:

If no audit settings are configured, or if audit settings are too lax on the computers in your organization, security incidents might not be detected or not enough evidence will be available for network forensic analysis after security incidents occur. However, if audit settings are too severe, critically important entries in the Security log may be obscured by all of the meaningless entries and computer performance and the available amount of data storage may be seriously affected. Companies that operate in certain regulated industries may have legal obligations to log certain events or activities.

Default Value:

Success

References:

1. CCE-38327-3

17.8 Privilege Use

This section contains recommendations for configuring the Privilege Use audit policy.

17.8.1 (L1) Set 'Audit Sensitive Privilege Use' to 'Success and Failure' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This subcategory reports when a user account or service uses a sensitive privilege. A sensitive privilege includes the following user rights: Act as part of the operating system, Back up files and directories, Create a token object, Debug programs, Enable computer and user accounts to be trusted for delegation, Generate security audits, Impersonate a client after authentication, Load and unload device drivers, Manage auditing and security log, Modify firmware environment values, Replace a process-level token, Restore files and directories, and Take ownership of files or other objects. Auditing this subcategory will create a high volume of events. Events for this subcategory include:

- 4672: Special privileges assigned to new logon.
- 4673: A privileged service was called.
- 4674: An operation was attempted on a privileged object.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Success and Failure`.

Rationale:

Auditing these events may be useful when investigating a security incident.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Success` and `Failure`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Advanced Audit Policy Configuration\Audit Policies\Privilege Use\Audit Sensitive Privilege Use
```

Impact:

If no audit settings are configured, or if audit settings are too lax on the computers in your organization, security incidents might not be detected or not enough evidence will be available for network forensic analysis after security incidents occur. However, if audit settings are too severe, critically important entries in the Security log may be obscured by all of the meaningless entries and computer performance and the available amount of data storage may be seriously affected. Companies that operate in certain regulated industries may have legal obligations to log certain events or activities.

Default Value:

No auditing

References:

1. CCE-36267-3

17.9 System

This section contains recommendations for configuring the System audit policy.

17.9.1 (L1) Set 'Audit IPsec Driver' to 'Success and Failure' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This subcategory reports on the activities of the Internet Protocol security (IPsec) driver. Events for this subcategory include:

- 4960: IPsec dropped an inbound packet that failed an integrity check. If this problem persists, it could indicate a network issue or that packets are being modified in transit to this computer. Verify that the packets sent from the remote computer are the same as those received by this computer. This error might also indicate interoperability problems with other IPsec implementations.
- 4961: IPsec dropped an inbound packet that failed a replay check. If this problem persists, it could indicate a replay attack against this computer.
- 4962: IPsec dropped an inbound packet that failed a replay check. The inbound packet had too low a sequence number to ensure it was not a replay.
- 4963: IPsec dropped an inbound clear text packet that should have been secured. This is usually due to the remote computer changing its IPsec policy without informing this computer. This could also be a spoofing attack attempt.
- 4965: IPsec received a packet from a remote computer with an incorrect Security Parameter Index (SPI). This is usually caused by malfunctioning hardware that is corrupting packets. If these errors persist, verify that the packets sent from the remote computer are the same as those received by this computer. This error may also indicate interoperability problems with other IPsec implementations. In that case, if connectivity is not impeded, then these events can be ignored.
- 5478: IPsec Services has started successfully.
- 5479: IPsec Services has been shut down successfully. The shutdown of IPsec Services can put the computer at greater risk of network attack or expose the computer to potential security risks.
- 5480: IPsec Services failed to get the complete list of network interfaces on the computer. This poses a potential security risk because some of the network interfaces may not get the protection provided by the applied IPsec filters. Use the IP Security Monitor snap-in to diagnose the problem.
- 5483: IPsec Services failed to initialize RPC server. IPsec Services could not be started.

- 5484: IPsec Services has experienced a critical failure and has been shut down. The shutdown of IPsec Services can put the computer at greater risk of network attack or expose the computer to potential security risks.
- 5485: IPsec Services failed to process some IPsec filters on a plug-and-play event for network interfaces. This poses a potential security risk because some of the network interfaces may not get the protection provided by the applied IPsec filters. Use the IP Security Monitor snap-in to diagnose the problem.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Success` and `Failure`.

Rationale:

Auditing these events may be useful when investigating a security incident.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Success` and `Failure`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Advanced Audit Policy Configuration\Audit Policies\System\Audit IPsec Driver
```

Impact:

If no audit settings are configured, or if audit settings are too lax on the computers in your organization, security incidents might not be detected or not enough evidence will be available for network forensic analysis after security incidents occur. However, if audit settings are too severe, critically important entries in the Security log may be obscured by all of the meaningless entries and computer performance and the available amount of data storage may be seriously affected. Companies that operate in certain regulated industries may have legal obligations to log certain events or activities.

Default Value:

No auditing

References:

1. CCE-37853-9

17.9.2 (L1) Set 'Audit Other System Events' to 'Success and Failure' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This subcategory reports on other system events. Events for this subcategory include:

- 5024 : The Windows Firewall Service has started successfully.
- 5025 : The Windows Firewall Service has been stopped.
- 5027 : The Windows Firewall Service was unable to retrieve the security policy from the local storage. The service will continue enforcing the current policy.
- 5028 : The Windows Firewall Service was unable to parse the new security policy. The service will continue with currently enforced policy.
- 5029: The Windows Firewall Service failed to initialize the driver. The service will continue to enforce the current policy.
- 5030: The Windows Firewall Service failed to start.
- 5032: Windows Firewall was unable to notify the user that it blocked an application from accepting incoming connections on the network.
- 5033 : The Windows Firewall Driver has started successfully.
- 5034 : The Windows Firewall Driver has been stopped.
- 5035 : The Windows Firewall Driver failed to start.
- 5037 : The Windows Firewall Driver detected critical runtime error. Terminating.
- 5058: Key file operation.
- 5059: Key migration operation.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Success and Failure`.

Rationale:

Capturing these audit events may be useful for identifying when the Windows Firewall is not performing as expected.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Success` and `Failure`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Advanced Audit Policy Configuration\Audit Policies\System\Audit Other System Events
```

Impact:

If no audit settings are configured, or if audit settings are too lax on the computers in your organization, security incidents might not be detected or not enough evidence will be available for network forensic analysis after security incidents occur. However, if audit settings are too severe, critically important entries in the Security log may be obscured by all of the meaningless entries and computer performance and the available amount of data storage may be seriously affected. Companies that operate in certain regulated industries may have legal obligations to log certain events or activities.

Default Value:

Success and Failure

References:

1. CCE-38030-3

17.9.3 (L1) Set 'Audit Security State Change' to 'Success and Failure' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This subcategory reports changes in security state of the system, such as when the security subsystem starts and stops. Events for this subcategory include:

- 4608: Windows is starting up.
- 4609: Windows is shutting down.
- 4616: The system time was changed.
- 4621: Administrator recovered system from CrashOnAuditFail. Users who are not administrators will now be allowed to log on. Some auditable activity might not have been recorded.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Success and Failure`.

Rationale:

Auditing these events may be useful when investigating a security incident.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Success and Failure`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Advanced Audit Policy Configuration\Audit Policies\System\Audit Security State Change
```

Impact:

If no audit settings are configured, or if audit settings are too lax on the computers in your organization, security incidents might not be detected or not enough evidence will be available for network forensic analysis after security incidents occur. However, if audit settings are too severe, critically important entries in the Security log may be obscured by all of the meaningless entries and computer performance and the available amount of data storage may be seriously affected. Companies that operate in certain regulated industries may have legal obligations to log certain events or activities.

Default Value:

Success

References:

1. CCE-38114-5

17.9.4 (L1) Set 'Audit Security System Extension' to 'Success and Failure' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This subcategory reports the loading of extension code such as authentication packages by the security subsystem. Events for this subcategory include:

- 4610: An authentication package has been loaded by the Local Security Authority.
- 4611: A trusted logon process has been registered with the Local Security Authority.
- 4614: A notification package has been loaded by the Security Account Manager.
- 4622: A security package has been loaded by the Local Security Authority.
- 4697: A service was installed in the system.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Success and Failure`.

Rationale:

Auditing these events may be useful when investigating a security incident.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Success and Failure`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Advanced Audit Policy Configuration\Audit Policies\System\Audit Security System Extension
```

Impact:

If no audit settings are configured, or if audit settings are too lax on the computers in your organization, security incidents might not be detected or not enough evidence will be available for network forensic analysis after security incidents occur. However, if audit settings are too severe, critically important entries in the Security log may be obscured by all of the meaningless entries and computer performance and the available amount of data storage may be seriously affected. Companies that operate in certain regulated industries may have legal obligations to log certain events or activities.

Default Value:

No auditing

References:

1. CCE-36144-4

17.9.5 (L1) Set 'Audit System Integrity' to 'Success and Failure' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This subcategory reports on violations of integrity of the security subsystem. Events for this subcategory include:

- 4612 : Internal resources allocated for the queuing of audit messages have been exhausted, leading to the loss of some audits.
- 4615 : Invalid use of LPC port.
- 4618 : A monitored security event pattern has occurred.
- 4816 : RPC detected an integrity violation while decrypting an incoming message.
- 5038 : Code integrity determined that the image hash of a file is not valid. The file could be corrupt due to unauthorized modification or the invalid hash could indicate a potential disk device error.
- 5056: A cryptographic self test was performed.
- 5057: A cryptographic primitive operation failed.
- 5060: Verification operation failed.
- 5061: Cryptographic operation.
- 5062: A kernel-mode cryptographic self test was performed.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Success and Failure`.

Rationale:

Auditing these events may be useful when investigating a security incident.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Success and Failure`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Windows Settings\Security Settings\Advanced Audit Policy Configuration\Audit Policies\System\Audit System Integrity
```

Impact:

If no audit settings are configured, or if audit settings are too lax on the computers in your organization, security incidents might not be detected or not enough evidence will be available for network forensic analysis after security incidents occur. However, if audit settings are too severe, critically important entries in the Security log may be obscured by all of the meaningless entries and computer performance and the available amount of data storage may be seriously affected. Companies that operate in certain regulated industries may have legal obligations to log certain events or activities.

Default Value:

Success and Failure

References:

1. CCE-37132-8

18 Administrative Templates (Computer)

This section contains recommendations for computer-based administrative templates.

18.1 Control Panel

This section contains recommendations for Control Panel settings.

18.1.1 Personalization

This section contains recommendations for control panel personalization settings.

18.1.1.1 (L1) Set 'Prevent enabling lock screen camera' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

Disables the lock screen camera toggle switch in PC Settings and prevents a camera from being invoked on the lock screen.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

Disabling the lock screen camera extends the protection afforded by the lock screen to camera features.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\Personalization\NoLockScreenCamera
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Control  
Panel\Personalization\Prevent enabling lock screen camera
```

Impact:

If you enable this setting, users will no longer be able to enable or disable lock screen camera access in PC Settings, and the camera cannot be invoked on the lock screen.

Default Value:

By default, users can enable invocation of an available camera on the lock screen.

References:

1. CCE-38347-1

18.1.1.2 (L1) Set 'Prevent enabling lock screen slide show' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

Disables the lock screen slide show settings in PC Settings and prevents a slide show from playing on the lock screen.

The recommended state for this setting is: Enabled.

Rationale:

Disabling the lock screen slide show extends the protection afforded by the lock screen to slide show contents.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\Personalization\NoLockScreenSlideshow
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Control Panel\Personalization\Prevent enabling lock screen slide show
```

Impact:

If you enable this setting, users will no longer be able to modify slide show settings in PC Settings, and no slide show will ever start.

Default Value:

By default, users can enable a slide show that will run after they lock the machine.

References:

1. CCE-38348-9

18.2 LAPS

This section contains recommendations for configuring Microsoft Local Administrator Password Solution (LAPS).

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "AdmPwd.admx/adml" that is included with LAPS.

18.2.1 (L1) Ensure LAPS AdmPwd GPO Extension / CSE is installed (MS only) (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

In May 2015, Microsoft released the Local Administrator Password Solution (LAPS) tool, which is free and supported software that allows an organization to automatically set randomized and unique local Administrator account passwords on domain-attached workstations and member servers. The passwords are stored in a confidential attribute of the domain computer account and can be retrieved from Active Directory by approved Sysadmins when needed.

The LAPS tool requires a small Active Directory Schema update in order to implement, as well as installation of a Group Policy Client Side Extension (CSE) on targeted computers. Please see the LAPS documentation for details.

LAPS supports Windows Vista or newer workstation OSes, and Server 2003 or newer server OSes. LAPS does not support standalone computers - they must be joined to a domain.

Note: Organizations that utilize 3rd-party commercial software to manage unique & complex local Administrator passwords on domain members may opt to disregard these LAPS recommendations.

Rationale:

Due to the difficulty in managing local Administrator passwords, many organizations choose to use the same password on all workstations and/or member servers when deploying them. This poses a serious attack surface security risk because if an attacker manages to compromise one system and learn the password to its local Administrator account, then they can leverage that account to instantly gain access to all other computers that also use that password for their local Administrator account.

Audit:

The LAPS AdmPwd GPO Extension / CSE can be verified to be installed by the presence of the following registry value:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows  
NT\CurrentVersion\Winlogon\GPExtensions\{D76B9641-3288-4f75-942D-087DE603E3EA}:DllName
```

Remediation:

In order to utilize LAPS, a minor Active Directory Schema update is required, and a Group Policy Client Side Extension (CSE) must be installed on each managed computer. When LAPS is installed, the file `AdmPwd.dll` must be present in the following location and registered in Windows (the LAPS AdmPwd GPO Extension / CSE installation does this for you):

```
C:\Program Files\LAPS\CSE\AdmPwd.dll
```

Impact:

No impact. When installed and registered properly, `AdmPwd.dll` takes no action unless given appropriate GPO commands during Group Policy refresh. It is not a memory-resident agent or service.

In a disaster recovery scenario where Active Directory is not available, the local Administrator password will not be retrievable and a local password reset using a tool (such as Microsoft's Disaster and Recovery Toolset (DaRT) Recovery Image) may be necessary.

Default Value:

Not Configured

18.2.2 (L1) Set 'Do not allow password expiration time longer than required by policy' to 'Enabled' (MS only) (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

In May 2015, Microsoft released the Local Administrator Password Solution (LAPS) tool, which is free and supported software that allows an organization to automatically set randomized and unique local Administrator account passwords on domain-attached workstations and member servers. The passwords are stored in a confidential attribute of the domain computer account and can be retrieved from Active Directory by approved Sysadmins when needed.

The LAPS tool requires a small Active Directory Schema update in order to implement, as well as installation of a Group Policy Client Side Extension (CSE) on targeted computers. Please see the LAPS documentation for details.

LAPS supports Windows Vista or newer workstation OSes, and Server 2003 or newer server OSes. LAPS does not support standalone computers - they must be joined to a domain.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Note: Organizations that utilize 3rd-party commercial software to manage unique & complex local Administrator passwords on domain members may opt to disregard these LAPS recommendations.

Rationale:

Due to the difficulty in managing local Administrator passwords, many organizations choose to use the same password on all workstations and/or member servers when deploying them. This poses a serious attack surface security risk because if an attacker manages to compromise one system and learn the password to its local Administrator account, then they can leverage that account to instantly gain access to all other computers that also use that password for their local Administrator account.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Policies\Microsoft  
Services\AdmPwd:PwdExpirationProtectionEnabled
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\LAPS\Enable Local Admin  
Password Management
```

Note: This Group Policy path does not exist by default. An additional Group Policy template (AdmPwd.admx/adml) is required - it is included with Microsoft Local Administrator Password Solution (LAPS).

Impact:

When you enable this setting, planned password expiration longer than password age dictated by "Password Settings" policy is NOT allowed.

Default Value:

Not Configured

18.2.3 (L1) Set 'Enable Local Admin Password Management' to 'Enabled' (MS only) (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

In May 2015, Microsoft released the Local Administrator Password Solution (LAPS) tool, which is free and supported software that allows an organization to automatically set randomized and unique local Administrator account passwords on domain-attached workstations and member servers. The passwords are stored in a confidential attribute of the domain computer account and can be retrieved from Active Directory by approved Sysadmins when needed.

The LAPS tool requires a small Active Directory Schema update in order to implement, as well as installation of a Group Policy Client Side Extension (CSE) on targeted computers. Please see the LAPS documentation for details.

LAPS supports Windows Vista or newer workstation OSes, and Server 2003 or newer server OSes. LAPS does not support standalone computers - they must be joined to a domain.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Note: Organizations that utilize 3rd-party commercial software to manage unique & complex local Administrator passwords on domain members may opt to disregard these LAPS recommendations.

Rationale:

Due to the difficulty in managing local Administrator passwords, many organizations choose to use the same password on all workstations and/or member servers when deploying them. This poses a serious attack surface security risk because if an attacker manages to compromise one system and learn the password to its local Administrator account, then they can leverage that account to instantly gain access to all other computers that also use that password for their local Administrator account.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Policies\Microsoft Services\AdmPwd:AdmPwdEnabled
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\LAPS\Enable Local Administrator Password Management
```

Note: This Group Policy path does not exist by default. An additional Group Policy template (AdmPwd.admx/adml) is required - it is included with Microsoft Local Administrator Password Solution (LAPS).

Impact:

If you enable this setting, local administrator password is managed. If you disable or not configure this setting, local administrator password is NOT managed.

In a disaster recovery scenario where Active Directory is not available, the local Administrator password will not be retrievable and a local password reset using a tool (such as Microsoft's Disaster and Recovery Toolset (DaRT) Recovery Image) may be necessary.

Default Value:

Not Configured

18.2.4 (L1) Set 'Password Settings: Password Complexity' to 'Enabled: Large letters + small letters + numbers + special characters' (MS only) (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

In May 2015, Microsoft released the Local Administrator Password Solution (LAPS) tool, which is free and supported software that allows an organization to automatically set randomized and unique local Administrator account passwords on domain-attached workstations and member servers. The passwords are stored in a confidential attribute of the domain computer account and can be retrieved from Active Directory by approved Sysadmins when needed.

The LAPS tool requires a small Active Directory Schema update in order to implement, as well as installation of a Group Policy Client Side Extension (CSE) on targeted computers. Please see the LAPS documentation for details.

LAPS supports Windows Vista or newer workstation OSes, and Server 2003 or newer server OSes. LAPS does not support standalone computers - they must be joined to a domain.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled: Large letters + small letters + numbers + special characters.`

Note: Organizations that utilize 3rd-party commercial software to manage unique & complex local Administrator passwords on domain members may opt to disregard these LAPS recommendations.

Rationale:

Due to the difficulty in managing local Administrator passwords, many organizations choose to use the same password on all workstations and/or member servers when deploying them. This poses a serious attack surface security risk because if an attacker manages to compromise one system and learn the password to its local Administrator account, then they can leverage that account to instantly gain access to all other computers that also use that password for their local Administrator account.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Policies\Microsoft Services\AdmPwd>PasswordComplexity
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`, and configure the `Password Complexity` option to `Large letters + small letters + numbers + special characters`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\LAPS>Password Settings
```

Note: This Group Policy path does not exist by default. An additional Group Policy template (`AdmPwd.admx/adml`) is required - it is included with Microsoft Local Administrator Password Solution (LAPS).

Impact:

Requires password to contain large letters + small letters + numbers + special characters

Default Value:

Not Configured

18.2.5 (L1) Set 'Password Settings: Password Length' to 'Enabled: 15 or more' (MS only) (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

In May 2015, Microsoft released the Local Administrator Password Solution (LAPS) tool, which is free and supported software that allows an organization to automatically set randomized and unique local Administrator account passwords on domain-attached workstations and member servers. The passwords are stored in a confidential attribute of the domain computer account and can be retrieved from Active Directory by approved Sysadmins when needed.

The LAPS tool requires a small Active Directory Schema update in order to implement, as well as installation of a Group Policy Client Side Extension (CSE) on targeted computers. Please see the LAPS documentation for details.

LAPS supports Windows Vista or newer workstation OSes, and Server 2003 or newer server OSes. LAPS does not support standalone computers - they must be joined to a domain.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled: 15 or more`.

Note: Organizations that utilize 3rd-party commercial software to manage unique & complex local Administrator passwords on domain members may opt to disregard these LAPS recommendations.

Rationale:

Due to the difficulty in managing local Administrator passwords, many organizations choose to use the same password on all workstations and/or member servers when deploying them. This poses a serious attack surface security risk because if an attacker manages to compromise one system and learn the password to its local Administrator account, then they can leverage that account to instantly gain access to all other computers that also use that password for their local Administrator account.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Policies\Microsoft Services\AdmPwd>PasswordLength
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`, and configure the `Password Length` option to `15` or more:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\LAPS>Password Settings
```

Note: This Group Policy path does not exist by default. An additional Group Policy template (`AdmPwd.admx/adml`) is required - it is included with Microsoft Local Administrator Password Solution (LAPS).

Impact:

Requires the password to have a length of a minimum of 15 characters .

Default Value:

Not Configured

18.2.6 (L1) Set 'Password Settings: Password Age (Days)' to 'Enabled: 30 or fewer' (MS only) (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

In May 2015, Microsoft released the Local Administrator Password Solution (LAPS) tool, which is free and supported software that allows an organization to automatically set randomized and unique local Administrator account passwords on domain-attached workstations and member servers. The passwords are stored in a confidential attribute of the domain computer account and can be retrieved from Active Directory by approved Sysadmins when needed.

The LAPS tool requires a small Active Directory Schema update in order to implement, as well as installation of a Group Policy Client Side Extension (CSE) on targeted computers. Please see the LAPS documentation for details.

LAPS supports Windows Vista or newer workstation OSes, and Server 2003 or newer server OSes. LAPS does not support standalone computers - they must be joined to a domain.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled: 30 or fewer`.

Note: Organizations that utilize 3rd-party commercial software to manage unique & complex local Administrator passwords on domain members may opt to disregard these LAPS recommendations.

Rationale:

Due to the difficulty in managing local Administrator passwords, many organizations choose to use the same password on all workstations and/or member servers when deploying them. This poses a serious attack surface security risk because if an attacker manages to compromise one system and learn the password to its local Administrator account, then they can leverage that account to instantly gain access to all other computers that also use that password for their local Administrator account.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Policies\Microsoft Services\AdmPwd>PasswordAgeDays
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`, and configure the `Password Age (Days)` option to `30` or fewer:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\LAPS>Password Settings
```

Note: This Group Policy path does not exist by default. An additional Group Policy template (`AdmPwd.admx/adml`) is required - it is included with Microsoft Local Administrator Password Solution (LAPS).

Impact:

Requires a maximum password age of 30 days or less.

Default Value:

Not Configured

18.3 MSS (Legacy)

This section contains recommendations for the Microsoft Solutions for Security (MSS) settings.

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "MSS-legacy.admx/adml" that is included with Microsoft Security Compliance Manager (SCM).

18.3.1 (L1) Set 'MSS: (AutoAdminLogon) Enable Automatic Logon (not recommended)' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This setting is separate from the Welcome screen feature in Windows XP and Windows Vista; if that feature is disabled, this setting is not disabled. If you configure a computer for automatic logon, anyone who can physically gain access to the computer can also gain access to everything that is on the computer, including any network or networks to which the computer is connected. Also, if you enable automatic logon, the password is stored in the registry in plaintext, and the specific registry key that stores this value is remotely readable by the Authenticated Users group.

For additional information, see Microsoft Knowledge Base article 324737: [How to turn on automatic logon in Windows](#).

The recommended state for this setting is: `Disabled`.

Rationale:

If you configure a computer for automatic logon, anyone who can physically gain access to the computer can also gain access to everything that is on the computer, including any network or networks that the computer is connected to. Also, if you enable automatic logon, the password is stored in the registry in plaintext. The specific registry key that stores this setting is remotely readable by the Authenticated Users group. As a result, this entry is appropriate only if the computer is physically secured and if you ensure that untrusted users cannot remotely see the registry.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows  
NT\CurrentVersion\Winlogon\AutoAdminLogon
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Disabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\MSS (Legacy)\MSS:  
(AutoAdminLogon) Enable Automatic Logon (not recommended)
```

Note: This Group Policy path does not exist by default. An additional Group Policy template (MSS-legacy.admx/adml) is required - it is included with Microsoft Security Compliance Manager (SCM).

Impact:

None. By default this entry is not enabled.

Default Value:

Not defined

References:

1. CCE-37067-6

18.3.2 (L1) Set 'MSS: (DisableIPSourceRouting IPv6) IP source routing protection level (protects against packet spoofing)' to 'Enabled: Highest protection, source routing is completely disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

IP source routing is a mechanism that allows the sender to determine the IP route that a datagram should follow through the network.

The recommended state for this setting is: Enabled: Highest protection, source routing is completely disabled.

Rationale:

An attacker could use source routed packets to obscure their identity and location. Source routing allows a computer that sends a packet to specify the route that the packet takes.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Services\Tcpip6\Parameters\DisableIPSourceRouting
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled: Highest protection, source routing is completely disabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\MSS (Legacy)\MSS:  
(DisableIPSourceRouting IPv6) IP source routing protection level (protects against  
packet spoofing)
```

Note: This Group Policy path does not exist by default. An additional Group Policy template (MSS-legacy.admx/adml) is required - it is included with Microsoft Security Compliance Manager (SCM).

Impact:

All incoming source routed packets will be dropped.

Default Value:

Not defined

References:

1. CCE-36871-2

18.3.3 (L1) Set 'MSS: (DisableIPSourceRouting) IP source routing protection level (protects against packet spoofing)' to 'Enabled: Highest protection, source routing is completely disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

IP source routing is a mechanism that allows the sender to determine the IP route that a datagram should take through the network. It is recommended to configure this setting to Not Defined for enterprise environments and to Highest Protection for high security environments to completely disable source routing.

The recommended state for this setting is: Enabled: Highest protection, source routing is completely disabled.

Rationale:

An attacker could use source routed packets to obscure their identity and location. Source routing allows a computer that sends a packet to specify the route that the packet takes.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Services\Tcpip\Parameters\DisableIPSourceRouting
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled: Highest protection, source routing is completely disabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\MSS (Legacy)\MSS: (DisableIPSourceRouting) IP source routing protection level (protects against packet spoofing)
```

Note: This Group Policy path does not exist by default. An additional Group Policy template (MSS-legacy.admx/adml) is required - it is included with Microsoft Security Compliance Manager (SCM).

Impact:

All incoming source routed packets will be dropped.

Default Value:

Not defined

References:

1. CCE-36535-3

18.3.4 (L1) Set 'MSS: (EnableICMPRedirect) Allow ICMP redirects to override OSPF generated routes' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

Internet Control Message Protocol (ICMP) redirects cause the IPv4 stack to plumb host routes. These routes override the Open Shortest Path First (OSPF) generated routes.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Disabled`.

Rationale:

This behavior is expected. The problem is that the 10 minute time-out period for the ICMP redirect-plumbed routes temporarily creates a network situation in which traffic will no longer be routed properly for the affected host. Ignoring such ICMP redirects will limit the system's exposure to attacks that will impact its ability to participate on the network.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed for your organization. This group policy object is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Services\Tcpip\Parameters:EnableICMPRedirect
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Disabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\MSS (Legacy)\MSS:  
(EnableICMPRedirect) Allow ICMP redirects to override OSPF generated routes
```

Note: This Group Policy path does not exist by default. An additional Group Policy template (`MSS-legacy.admx/adml`) is required - it is included with Microsoft Security Compliance Manager (SCM).

Impact:

When Routing and Remote Access Service (RRAS) is configured as an autonomous system boundary router (ASBR), it does not correctly import connected interface subnet routes. Instead, this router injects host routes into the OSPF routes. However, the OSPF router cannot be used as an ASBR router, and when connected interface subnet routes are imported into OSPF the result is confusing routing tables with strange routing paths.

Default Value:

Enabled

References:

1. CCE-37988-3

18.3.5 (L2) Set 'MSS: (KeepAliveTime) How often keep-alive packets are sent in milliseconds' to 'Enabled: 300,000 or 5 minutes (recommended)' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 2 - Domain Controller
- Level 2 - Member Server

Description:

This value controls how often TCP attempts to verify that an idle connection is still intact by sending a keep-alive packet. If the remote computer is still reachable, it acknowledges the keep-alive packet.

The recommended state for this setting is: Enabled: 300,000 or 5 minutes (recommended).

Rationale:

An attacker who is able to connect to network applications could establish numerous connections to cause a DoS condition.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Services\Tcpip\Parameters:KeepAliveTime
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled: 300,000 or 5 minutes (recommended):

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\MSS (Legacy)\MSS:  
(KeepAliveTime) How often keep-alive packets are sent in milliseconds
```

Note: This Group Policy path does not exist by default. An additional Group Policy template (MSS-legacy.admx/adml) is required - it is included with Microsoft Security Compliance Manager (SCM).

Impact:

Keep-alive packets are not sent by default by Windows. However, some applications may configure the TCP stack flag that requests keep-alive packets. For such configurations, you can lower this value from the default setting of two hours to five minutes to disconnect inactive sessions more quickly.

Default Value:

Not Configured

References:

1. CCE-36868-8

18.3.6 (L1) Set 'MSS: (NoNameReleaseOnDemand) Allow the computer to ignore NetBIOS name release requests except from WINS servers' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

NetBIOS over TCP/IP is a network protocol that among other things provides a way to easily resolve NetBIOS names that are registered on Windows-based systems to the IP addresses that are configured on those systems. This setting determines whether the computer releases its NetBIOS name when it receives a name-release request.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

The NetBT protocol is designed not to use authentication, and is therefore vulnerable to spoofing. Spoofing makes a transmission appear to come from a user other than the user who performed the action. A malicious user could exploit the unauthenticated nature of the protocol to send a name-conflict datagram to a target computer, which would cause the computer to relinquish its name and not respond to queries.

The result of such an attack could be to cause intermittent connectivity issues on the target computer, or even to prevent the use of Network Neighborhood, domain logons, the NET SEND command, or additional NetBIOS name resolution.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Services\NetBT\Parameters:nonamereleaseonDemand
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\MSS (Legacy)\MSS:  
(NoNameReleaseOnDemand) Allow the computer to ignore NetBIOS name release requests  
except from WINS servers
```

Note: This Group Policy path does not exist by default. An additional Group Policy template (MSS-legacy.admx/adml) is required - it is included with Microsoft Security Compliance Manager (SCM).

Impact:

An attacker could send a request over the network and query a computer to release its NetBIOS name. As with any change that could affect applications, it is recommended that you test this change in a non-production environment before you change the production environment.

Default Value:

Not Configured

References:

1. CCE-36879-5

18.3.7 (L2) Set 'MSS: (PerformRouterDiscovery) Allow IRDP to detect and configure Default Gateway addresses (could lead to DoS)' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 2 - Domain Controller
- Level 2 - Member Server

Description:

This setting is used to enable or disable the Internet Router Discovery Protocol (IRDP), which allows the system to detect and configure default gateway addresses automatically as described in RFC 1256 on a per-interface basis.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Disabled`.

Rationale:

An attacker who has gained control of a computer on the same network segment could configure a computer on the network to impersonate a router. Other computers with IRDP enabled would then attempt to route their traffic through the already compromised computer.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Services\Tcpip\Parameters:PerformRouterDiscovery
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Disabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\MSS (Legacy)\MSS:  
(PerformRouterDiscovery) Allow IRDP to detect and configure Default Gateway addresses  
(could lead to DoS)
```

Note: This Group Policy path does not exist by default. An additional Group Policy template (`MSS-legacy.admx/adml`) is required - it is included with Microsoft Security Compliance Manager (SCM).

Impact:

If you disable this entry, Windows Server 2003 (which supports the IRDP) cannot automatically detect and configure default gateway addresses on the computer.

Default Value:

Not Configured

References:

1. CCE-38065-9

18.3.8 (L1) Set 'MSS: (SafeDllSearchMode) Enable Safe DLL search mode (recommended)' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

The DLL search order can be configured to search for DLLs that are requested by running processes in one of two ways:

- Search folders specified in the system path first, and then search the current working folder.
- Search current working folder first, and then search the folders specified in the system path.

When enabled, the registry value is set to 1. With a setting of 1, the system first searches the folders that are specified in the system path and then searches the current working folder. When disabled the registry value is set to 0 and the system first searches the current working folder and then searches the folders that are specified in the system path.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

If a user unknowingly executes hostile code that was packaged with additional files that include modified versions of system DLLs, the hostile code could load its own versions of those DLLs and potentially increase the type and degree of damage the code can render.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Control\Session Manager\SafeDllSearchMode
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\MSS (Legacy)\MSS:  
(SafeDllSearchMode) Enable Safe DLL search mode (recommended)
```

Note: This Group Policy path does not exist by default. An additional Group Policy template (`MSS-legacy.admx/adml`) is required - it is included with Microsoft Security Compliance Manager (SCM).

Impact:

Applications will be forced to search for DLLs in the system path first. For applications that require unique versions of these DLLs that are included with the application, this entry could cause performance or stability problems.

Default Value:

Not defined

References:

1. CCE-36351-5

18.3.9 (L1) Set 'MSS: (ScreenSaverGracePeriod) The time in seconds before the screen saver grace period expires (0 recommended)' to 'Enabled: 5 or fewer seconds' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

Windows includes a grace period between when the screen saver is launched and when the console is actually locked automatically when screen saver locking is enabled.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled: 5 or fewer seconds`.

Rationale:

The default grace period that is allowed for user movement before the screen saver lock takes effect is five seconds. If you leave the default grace period configuration, your computer is vulnerable to a potential attack from someone who could approach the console and attempt to log on to the computer before the lock takes effect. An entry to the registry can be made to adjust the length of the grace period.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows  
NT\CurrentVersion\Winlogon\ScreenSaverGracePeriod
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled: 5 or fewer seconds`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\MSS (Legacy)\MSS:  
(ScreenSaverGracePeriod) The time in seconds before the screen saver grace period  
expires (0 recommended)
```

Note: This Group Policy path does not exist by default. An additional Group Policy template (`MSS-legacy.admx/adml`) is required - it is included with Microsoft Security Compliance Manager (SCM).

Impact:

Users will have to enter their passwords to resume their console sessions as soon as the screen saver activates.

Default Value:

5 seconds

References:

1. CCE-37993-3

18.3.10 (L2) Set 'MSS: (TcpMaxDataRetransmissions IPv6) How many times unacknowledged data is retransmitted' to 'Enabled: 3' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 2 - Domain Controller
- Level 2 - Member Server

Description:

This setting controls the number of times that TCP retransmits an individual data segment (non-connect segment) before the connection is aborted. The retransmission time-out is doubled with each successive retransmission on a connection. It is reset when responses resume. The base time-out value is dynamically determined by the measured round-trip time on the connection.

The recommended state for this setting is: Enabled: 3.

Rationale:

A malicious user could exhaust a target computer's resources if it never sent any acknowledgment messages for data that was transmitted by the target computer.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Services\TCPIP6\Parameters:tcpmaxdataretransmissions
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled: 3:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\MSS (Legacy)\MSS:(TcpMaxDataRetransmissions IPv6) How many times unacknowledged data is retransmitted
```

Note: This Group Policy path does not exist by default. An additional Group Policy template (MSS-legacy.admx/adml) is required - it is included with Microsoft Security Compliance Manager (SCM).

Impact:

TCP starts a retransmission timer when each outbound segment is passed to the IP. If no acknowledgment is received for the data in a given segment before the timer expires, then the segment is retransmitted up to three times.

Default Value:

Not Configured

References:

1. CCE-37846-3

18.3.11 (L2) Set 'MSS: (TcpMaxDataRetransmissions) How many times unacknowledged data is retransmitted' to 'Enabled: 3' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 2 - Domain Controller
- Level 2 - Member Server

Description:

This setting controls the number of times that TCP retransmits an individual data segment (non-connect segment) before the connection is aborted. The retransmission time-out is doubled with each successive retransmission on a connection. It is reset when responses resume. The base time-out value is dynamically determined by the measured round-trip time on the connection.

The recommended state for this setting is: Enabled: 3.

Rationale:

A malicious user could exhaust a target computer's resources if it never sent any acknowledgment messages for data that was transmitted by the target computer.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Services\Tcpip\Parameters:tcpmaxdataretransmissions
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled: 3:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\MSS (Legacy)\MSS:(TcpMaxDataRetransmissions) How many times unacknowledged data is retransmitted
```

Note: This Group Policy path does not exist by default. An additional Group Policy template (MSS-legacy.admx/adml) is required - it is included with Microsoft Security Compliance Manager (SCM).

Impact:

TCP starts a retransmission timer when each outbound segment is passed to the IP. If no acknowledgment is received for the data in a given segment before the timer expires, then the segment is retransmitted up to three times.

Default Value:

Not Configured

References:

1. CCE-36051-1

18.3.12 (L1) Set 'MSS: (WarningLevel) Percentage threshold for the security event log at which the system will generate a warning' to 'Enabled: 90% or less' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This setting can generate a security audit in the Security event log when the log reaches a user-defined threshold.

Note: If log settings are configured to Overwrite events as needed or Overwrite events older than x days, this event will not be generated.

The recommended state for this setting is: Enabled: 90% or less.

Rationale:

If the Security log reaches 90 percent of its capacity and the computer has not been configured to overwrite events as needed, more recent events will not be written to the log. If the log reaches its capacity and the computer has been configured to shut down when it can no longer record events to the Security log, the computer will shut down and will no longer be available to provide network services.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Services\Eventlog\Security\WarningLevel
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:
90% or less:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\MSS (Legacy)\MSS:  
(WarningLevel) Percentage threshold for the security event log at which the system  
will generate a warning
```

Note: This Group Policy path does not exist by default. An additional Group Policy template (`MSS-legacy.admx/adml`) is required - it is included with Microsoft Security Compliance Manager (SCM).

Impact:

This setting will generate an audit event when the Security log reaches the 90 percent-full threshold unless the log is configured to overwrite events as needed.

Default Value:

Not defined

References:

1. CCE-36880-3

18.4 Network

This section contains recommendations for network settings.

18.4.1 Background Intelligent Transfer Service (BITS)

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.4.2 BranchCache

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.4.3 DirectAccess Client Experience Settings

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.4.4 DNS Client

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.4.5 Hotspot Authentication

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.4.6 Lanman Server

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.4.7 Lanman Workstation

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "`lanmanworkstation.admx/adml`" that is included with the Microsoft Windows 10 Administrative Templates.

18.4.8 Link-Layer Topology Discovery

This section contains recommendations for Link-Layer Topology Discovery settings.

18.4.8.1 (L2) Set 'Turn on Mapper I/O (LLTDIO) driver' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 2 - Domain Controller
- Level 2 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting changes the operational behavior of the Mapper I/O network protocol driver.

LLTDIO allows a computer to discover the topology of a network it's connected to. It also allows a computer to initiate Quality-of-Service requests such as bandwidth estimation and network health analysis.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Disabled`.

Rationale:

To help protect from potentially discovering and connecting to unauthorized devices, We are recommending that this setting be disabled to guarantee the prevention of responding to network traffic for network topology discovery.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\LLTD:AllowLLTDIOOnDomain  
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\LLTD:AllowLLTDIOOnPublicNet  
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\LLTD:EnableLLTDIO  
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\LLTD:ProhibitLLTDIOOnPrivateNet
```

Remediation:

To implement the recommended configuration state, set the following Group Policy setting to Disabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Network\Link-Layer Topology  
Discovery\Turn on Mapper I/O (LLTDIO) driver
```

Impact:

If you disable or do not configure this policy setting, the default behavior of LLTDIO will apply.

Default Value:

Not Configured.

References:

1. CCE-38170-7

18.4.8.2 (L2) Set 'Turn on Responder (RSPNDR) driver' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 2 - Domain Controller
- Level 2 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting changes the operational behavior of the Responder network protocol driver.

The Responder allows a computer to participate in Link Layer Topology Discovery requests so that it can be discovered and located on the network. It also allows a computer to participate in Quality-of-Service activities such as bandwidth estimation and network health analysis.

The recommended state for this setting is: Disabled.

Rationale:

To help protect from potentially discovering and connecting to unauthorized devices, We are recommending that this setting be disabled to guarantee the prevention of responding to network traffic for network topology discovery.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\LLTD:AllowRspndrOnDomain  
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\LLTD:AllowRspndrOnPublicNet  
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\LLTD:EnableRspndr  
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\LLTD:ProhibitRspndrOnPrivateNet
```

Remediation:

To implement the recommended configuration state, set the following Group Policy setting to Disabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Network\Link-Layer Topology  
Discovery\Turn on Responder (RSPNDR) driver
```

Impact:

If you disable or do not configure this policy setting, the default behavior of RSPNDR will apply.

Default Value:

Not Configured.

References:

1. CCE-37959-4

18.4.9 Microsoft Peer-to-Peer Networking Services

This section contains recommendations for Microsoft Peer-to-Peer Networking Services settings.

18.4.9.1 Peer Name Resolution Protocol

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.4.9.2 (L2) Set 'Turn off Microsoft Peer-to-Peer Networking Services' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 2 - Domain Controller
- Level 2 - Member Server

Description:

The Peer Name Resolution Protocol (PNRP) allows for distributed resolution of a name to an IPV6 address and port number. The protocol operates in the context of *clouds*. A cloud is a set of peer computers that can communicate with each other by using the same IPv6 scope.

Peer-to-Peer protocols allow for applications in the areas of RTC, collaboration, content distribution and distributed processing.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

This setting enhances the security of the environment and reduces the overall risk exposure related to peer-to-peer networking.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Peernet:Disabled
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Network\Microsoft Peer-to-Peer Networking Services\Turn off Microsoft Peer-to-Peer Networking Services
```

Impact:

If you enable this setting, peer-to-peer protocols will be turned off.

If you disable this setting or do not configure it, the peer-to-peer protocols will be turned on.

This setting turns off Microsoft Peer-to-Peer Networking Services in its entirety, and will cause all dependent applications to stop working.

Default Value:

The default setting is do not configure which is the same as disabled.

References:

1. CCE-37699-6

18.4.10 Network Connections

This section contains recommendations for Network Connections settings.

18.4.10.1 Windows Firewall

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.4.10.2 (L1) Set 'Prohibit installation and configuration of Network Bridge on your DNS domain network' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

You can use this procedure to enable or disable the user's ability to install and configure a network bridge.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

Allowing users to create a network bridge increases the risk and attack surface from the bridged network.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\Network  
Connections:NC_AllowNetBridge_NLA
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Network\Network  
Connections\Prohibit installation and configuration of Network Bridge on your DNS  
domain network
```

Impact:

The Network Bridge setting, if enabled, allows users to create a Layer 2 Media Access Control (MAC) bridge, enabling them to connect two or more physical network segments together. A network bridge thus allows a computer that has connections to two different networks to share data between those networks.

In an enterprise environment, where there is a need to control network traffic to only authorized paths, you can disable the Network Bridge setting on a computer. If you disable Network Bridge on a computer, users cannot create or configure a network bridge. Membership in the local Administrators group, or equivalent, is the minimum required to complete this procedure.

Default Value:

By default, this setting is not configured.

References:

1. CCE-38002-2

18.4.10.3 (L1) Set 'Require domain users to elevate when setting a network's location' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines whether to require domain users to elevate when setting a network's location.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

Allowing regular users to set a network location increases the risk and attack surface.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\Network  
Connections:NC_StdDomainUserSetLocation
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Network\Network  
Connections\Require domain users to elevate when setting a network's location
```

Impact:

If you enable this policy setting domain users must elevate when setting a network's location. If you disable or do not configure this policy setting domain users can set a network's location without elevating.

Default Value:

By default, this setting is not configured.

References:

1. CCE-38188-9

18.4.11 Network Connectivity Status Indicator

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.4.12 Network Isolation

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.4.13 Network Provider

This section contains recommendations for Network Provider settings.

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "NetworkProvider.admx/adml" that is included with MS15-011 / KB3000483 and the Microsoft Windows 10 Administrative Templates.

18.4.13.1 (L1) Set 'Hardened UNC Paths' to 'Enabled, with "Require Mutual Authentication" and "Require Integrity" set for all NETLOGON and SYSVOL shares' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting configures secure access to UNC paths.

The recommended state for this setting is: Enabled, with "Require Mutual Authentication" and "Require Integrity" set for all NETLOGON and SYSVOL shares.

Note: If the environment exclusively contains Windows 8.0 / Server 2012 or higher systems, then the "Privacy" setting may (optionally) also be set to enable SMB encryption. However, using SMB encryption will render the targeted share paths completely inaccessible by older OSes, so only use this additional option with caution and thorough testing.

Rationale:

In February 2015, Microsoft released a new control mechanism to mitigate a security risk in Group Policy as part of [MS15-011](#) / [MSKB 3000483](#). This mechanism requires both the installation of the new security update and also the deployment of specific group policy settings to all computers on the domain from Vista/Server 2008 or higher (the associated security patch to enable this feature was not released for Server 2003). A new group policy template (`NetworkProvider.admx/adml`) was also provided with the security update.

Once the new GPO template is in place, the following are the minimum requirements to remediate the Group Policy security risk:

```
\\*\NETLOGON RequireMutualAuthentication=1, RequireIntegrity=1
```

```
\\*\SYSVOL RequireMutualAuthentication=1, RequireIntegrity=1
```

Note: A reboot may be required after the setting is applied to a client machine to access the above paths.

Additional guidance on the deployment of this security setting is available from the Microsoft Premier Field Engineering (PFE) Platforms TechNet Blog here: [Guidance on Deployment of MS15-011 and MS15-014](#).

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry locations:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\NetworkProvider\HardenedPaths:\*\NETLOGON
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\NetworkProvider\HardenedPaths:\*\SYSVOL
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled` with the following paths configured, at a minimum:

```
\\*\NETLOGON RequireMutualAuthentication=1, RequireIntegrity=1
```

```
\\*\SYSVOL RequireMutualAuthentication=1, RequireIntegrity=1
```

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Network\Network Provider\Hardened UNC Paths
```

Note: This Group Policy path does not exist by default. An additional Group Policy template (`NetworkProvider.admx/adml`) is required - it is included with KB3000483 or with the Microsoft Windows 10 Administrative Templates.

Impact:

If you enable this policy, Windows only allows access to the specified UNC paths after fulfilling additional security requirements.

Default Value:

Not Configured

18.4.14 Offline Files

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.4.15 QoS Packet Scheduler

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.4.16 SNMP

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.4.17 SSL Configuration Settings

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.4.18 TCPIP Settings

This section contains TCP/IP configuration settings.

18.4.18.1 IPv6 Transition Technologies

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.4.18.2 Parameters

This section contains TCP/IP parameter configuration settings.

18.4.18.2.1 (L2) Disable IPv6 (Set TCPIP6 Parameter 'DisabledComponents' to '0xff (255)') (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 2 - Domain Controller
- Level 2 - Member Server

Description:

Internet Protocol version 6 (IPv6) is a set of protocols that computers use to exchange information over the Internet and over home and business networks. IPv6 allows for many more IP addresses to be assigned than IPv4 did. Older networking, hosts and operating systems may not support IPv6 natively.

The recommended state for this setting is: `DisabledComponents - 0xff (255)`

Rationale:

Since the vast majority of private corporate networks have no need to utilize IPv6 (because they have access to private IPv4 addressing), disabling IPv6 components reduces a possible attack surface that is also harder to monitor the traffic on. As a result, we recommend configuring IPv6 to a Disabled state when it is not needed.

Audit:

Navigate to the Registry path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration, set the following Registry value to `0xff` (255) (DWORD):

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Services\TCPIP6\Parameters\DisabledComponents
```

Note: Although Microsoft does not provide an ADMX template to configure this registry value, a custom .ADM template (`Disable-IPv6-Components-KB929852.adm`) is provided in the CIS Benchmark Remediation Kit to facilitate its configuration. Be aware though that simply turning off the group policy setting in the .ADM template will not "undo" the change once applied. Instead, the opposite setting must be applied to change the registry value to the opposite state.

Impact:

Connectivity to other systems using IPv6 will no longer operate, and software that depends on IPv6 will cease to function. Examples of Microsoft applications that may use IPv6 include: Remote Assistance, HomeGroup, DirectAccess, Windows Mail.

This registry change is documented in Microsoft Knowledge Base article 929852: [How to disable IPv6 or its components in Windows](#).

Note: This registry change does not take effect until the next reboot.

Default Value:

Not Configured

18.4.19 Windows Connect Now

This section contains recommendations for Windows Connect Now settings.

18.4.19.1 (L2) Set 'Configuration of wireless settings using Windows Connect Now' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 2 - Domain Controller
- Level 2 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows the configuration of wireless settings using Windows Connect Now (WCN). The WCN Registrar enables the discovery and configuration of devices over Ethernet (UPnP) over In-band 802.11 Wi-Fi through the Windows Portable Device API (WPD) and via USB Flash drives. Additional options are available to allow discovery and configuration over a specific medium.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Disabled`.

Rationale:

This setting enhances the security of the environment and reduces the overall risk exposure related to user configuration of wireless settings.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\WCN\Registrars:EnableRegistrars
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\WCN\Registrars:DisableUPnPRegis
trar
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\WCN\Registrars:DisableInBand802
DOT11Registrar
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\WCN\Registrars:DisableFlashConf
igRegistrar
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\WCN\Registrars:DisableWPDRegist
rar
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Disabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Network\Windows Connect Now\Configuration of wireless settings using Windows Connect Now
```

Impact:

If you enable this policy setting additional choices are available to turn off the operations over a specific medium. If you disable this policy setting operations are disabled over all media. If you do not configure this policy setting operations are enabled over all media.

Default Value:

The default for this policy setting allows operations over all media.

References:

1. CCE-37481-9

18.4.19.2 (L2) Set 'Prohibit access of the Windows Connect Now wizards' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 2 - Domain Controller
- Level 2 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting prohibits access to Windows Connect Now (WCN) wizards.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

Allowing standard users to access the Windows Connect Now wizard increases the risk and attack surface.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\WCN\UI:DisableWcnUi
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Network\Network\Windows Connect Now\Prohibit access of the Windows Connect Now wizards
```

Impact:

If you enable this policy setting the wizards are turned off and users have no access to any of the wizard tasks. All the configuration related tasks including "Set up a wireless router or access point" and "Add a wireless device" are disabled. If you disable or do not configure this policy setting users can access the wizard tasks including "Set up a wireless router or access point" and "Add a wireless device."

Default Value:

The default for this policy setting allows users to access all WCN wizards.

References:

1. CCE-36109-7

18.4.20 Windows Connection Manager

This section contains recommendations for Windows Connection Manager settings.

18.4.20.1 (L2) Set 'Prohibit connection to non-domain networks when connected to domain authenticated network' to 'Enabled' (MS only) (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 2 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting prevents computers from connecting to both a domain based network and a non-domain based network at the same time.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

The potential concern is that a user would unknowingly allow network traffic to flow between the insecure public network and the managed corporate network.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\WcmSvc\GroupPolicy:fBlockNonDomain
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Network\Windows Connection Manager\Prohibit connection to non-domain networks when connected to domain authenticated network
```

Impact:

If this policy setting is enabled, the computer responds to automatic and manual network connection attempts based on the following circumstances.

- Automatic connection attempts

- When the computer is already connected to a domain based network, all automatic connection attempts to non-domain networks are blocked.

- When the computer is already connected to a non-domain based network, automatic connection attempts to domain based networks are blocked.

- Manual connection attempts

- When the computer is already connected to either a non-domain based network or a domain based network over media other than Ethernet, and a user attempts to create a manual connection to an additional network in violation of this policy setting, the existing network connection is disconnected and the manual connection is allowed.

- When the computer is already connected to either a non-domain based network or a domain based network over Ethernet, and a user attempts to create a manual connection to an additional network in violation of this policy setting, the existing Ethernet connection is maintained and the manual connection attempt is blocked.

Default Value:

Not Configured. If this policy setting is not configured or is disabled, computers are allowed to connect simultaneously to both domain and non-domain networks.

References:

1. CCE-37627-7

18.5 Printers

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.6 SCM: Pass the Hash Mitigations

This section contains recommendations for mitigating Pass-the-Hash attacks.

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "PtH.admx/adml" that is included with Microsoft Security Compliance Manager (SCM).

18.6.1 (L1) Set 'Apply UAC restrictions to local accounts on network logons' to 'Enabled' (MS only) (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This setting controls whether local accounts can be used for remote administration via network logon (e.g., NET USE, connecting to C\$, etc.). Local accounts are at high risk for credential theft when the same account and password is configured on multiple systems. Enabling this policy significantly reduces that risk.

Enabled: Applies UAC token-filtering to local accounts on network logons. Membership in powerful group such as Administrators is disabled and powerful privileges are removed from the resulting access token. This configures the `LocalAccountTokenFilterPolicy` registry value to 0. This is the default behavior for Windows.

Disabled: Allows local accounts to have full administrative rights when authenticating via network logon, by configuring the `LocalAccountTokenFilterPolicy` registry value to 1.

For more information about local accounts and credential theft, review the "[Mitigating Pass-the-Hash \(PtH\) Attacks and Other Credential Theft Techniques](#)" documents.

For more information about `LocalAccountTokenFilterPolicy`, see Microsoft Knowledge Base article 951016: [Description of User Account Control and remote restrictions in Windows Vista](#).

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

Local accounts are at high risk for credential theft when the same account and password is configured on multiple systems. Ensuring this policy is Enabled significantly reduces that risk.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Policies\System\LocalAccountTokenFilterPolicy
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\SCM: Pass the Hash Mitigations\Apply UAC restrictions to local accounts on network logons
```

Note: This Group Policy path does not exist by default. An additional Group Policy template (PtH.admx/adml) is required - it is included with Microsoft Security Compliance Manager (SCM).

Impact:

None - this is the default behavior.

Default Value:

Enabled

References:

1. CCE-37069-2

18.6.2 (L1) Set 'WDigest Authentication' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

When WDigest authentication is enabled, Lsass.exe retains a copy of the user's plaintext password in memory, where it can be at risk of theft. If this setting is not configured, WDigest authentication is disabled in Windows 8.1 and in Windows Server 2012 R2; it is enabled by default in earlier versions of Windows and Windows Server.

For more information about local accounts and credential theft, review the "[Mitigating Pass-the-Hash \(PtH\) Attacks and Other Credential Theft Techniques](#)" documents.

For more information about `UseLogonCredential`, see Microsoft Knowledge Base article 2871997: [Microsoft Security Advisory Update to improve credentials protection and management May 13, 2014](#).

The recommended state for this setting is: `Disabled`.

Rationale:

Preventing the plaintext storage of credentials in memory may reduce opportunity for credential theft.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Control\SecurityProviders\WDigest\UseLogonCredential
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Disabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\SCM: Pass the Hash Mitigations\WDigest Authentication (disabling may require KB2871997)
```

Note: This Group Policy path does not exist by default. An additional Group Policy template (`PtH.admx/adml`) is required - it is included with Microsoft Security Compliance Manager (SCM).

Impact:

None - this is the default behavior for Windows 8.1 and Server 2012 R2.

References:

1. CCE-38444-6

18.7 SCM: Wi-Fi Sense

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "Wi-Fi Sense.admx/adml" that is included with Microsoft Security Compliance Manager (SCM).

18.8 Start Menu and Taskbar

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.9 System

This section contains recommendations for System settings.

18.9.1 Access-Denied Assistance

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.9.2 Audit Process Creation

This section contains settings related to auditing of process creation events.

18.9.2.1 (L1) Set 'Include command line in process creation events' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting determines what information is logged in security audit events when a new process has been created.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Disabled`.

Rationale:

When this policy setting is enabled, any user who has read access to the security events can read the command-line arguments for any successfully created process. Command-line arguments may contain sensitive or private information such as passwords or user data.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Policies\System\Audit:ProcessCreationIncludeCmdLine_Enabled
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Disabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\System\Audit Process  
Creation\Include command line in process creation events
```

Impact:

If you disable or do not configure this policy setting, the process's command line information will not be included in Audit Process Creation events.

Default Value:

Not Configured.

References:

1. CCE-36925-6

18.9.3 Credentials Delegation

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.9.4 Device Guard

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "deviceguard.admx/adml" that is included with the Microsoft Windows 10 Administrative Templates.

18.9.5 Device Installation

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.9.6 Device Redirection

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "DeviceRedirection.admx/adml" that is included with the Microsoft Windows 7/2008R2, 8/2012, 8.1/2012R2 and Windows 10 Administrative Templates.

18.9.7 Disk NV Cache

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.9.8 Disk Quotas

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.9.9 Distributed COM

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.9.10 Driver Installation

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.9.11 Early Launch Antimalware

This section contains recommendations for configuring boot-start driver initialization settings.

18.9.11.1 (L1) Set 'Boot-Start Driver Initialization Policy' to 'Enabled: Good, unknown and bad but critical' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows you to specify which boot-start drivers are initialized based on a classification determined by an Early Launch Antimalware boot-start driver. The Early Launch Antimalware boot-start driver can return the following classifications for each boot-start driver:

- **Good:** The driver has been signed and has not been tampered with.
- **Bad:** The driver has been identified as malware. It is recommended that you do not allow known bad drivers to be initialized.
- **Bad, but required for boot:** The driver has been identified as malware, but the computer cannot successfully boot without loading this driver.
- **Unknown:** This driver has not been attested to by your malware detection application and has not been classified by the Early Launch Antimalware boot-start driver.

If you enable this policy setting you will be able to choose which boot-start drivers to initialize the next time the computer is started.

If you disable or do not configure this policy setting, the boot start drivers determined to be Good, Unknown or Bad but Boot Critical are initialized and the initialization of drivers determined to be Bad is skipped.

If your malware detection application does not include an Early Launch Antimalware boot-start driver or if your Early Launch Antimalware boot-start driver has been disabled, this setting has no effect and all boot-start drivers are initialized.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled: Good, unknown and bad but critical`.

Rationale:

This policy setting helps reduce the impact of malware that has already infected your system.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Policies\EarlyLaunch\DriverLoadPolicy
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled: Good, unknown and bad but critical:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\System\Early Launch  
Antimalware\Boot-Start Driver Initialization Policy
```

Impact:

None - this is the default behavior.

Default Value:

Not configured

References:

1. CCE-37912-3

18.9.12 Enhanced Storage Access

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "EnhancedStorage.admx/adml" that is included with the Microsoft Windows 7/2008R2, 8/2012, 8.1/2012R2 and Windows 10 Administrative Templates.

18.9.13 File Classification Infrastructure

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.9.14 File Share Shadow Copy Agent

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "FileServerVSSAgent.admx/adml" that is included with the Microsoft Windows 8/2012, 8.1/2012R2 and Windows 10 Administrative Templates.

18.9.15 File Share Shadow Copy Provider

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.9.16 Filesystem

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.9.17 Folder Redirection

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.9.18 Group Policy

This section contains recommendations for configuring group policy-related settings.

18.9.18.1 Logging and tracing

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.9.18.2 (L1) Set 'Configure registry policy processing: Do not apply during periodic background processing' to 'Enabled: FALSE' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

The "Do not apply during periodic background processing" option prevents the system from updating affected policies in the background while the computer is in use. When background updates are disabled, policy changes will not take effect until the next user logon or system restart.

The recommended state for this setting is: Enabled: FALSE (unchecked).

Rationale:

Setting this option to false (unchecked) will ensure that domain policy changes take effect more quickly, as compared to waiting until the next user logon or system restart.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\Group Policy\{35378EAC-683F-11D2-A89A-00C04FBBCFA2}\NoBackgroundPolicy
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`, then set the `Do not apply during periodic background processing` option to `FALSE` (unchecked):

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\System\Group Policy\Configure registry policy processing
```

Impact:

Group Policies will be reapplied every time they are refreshed, which could have a slight impact on performance.

Default Value:

Not configured

References:

1. CCE-36169-1

18.9.18.3 (L1) Set 'Configure registry policy processing: Process even if the Group Policy objects have not changed' to 'Enabled: TRUE' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

The "Process even if the Group Policy objects have not changed" option updates and reapplies policies even if the policies have not changed.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled: TRUE` (checked).

Rationale:

Setting this option to true (checked) will ensure unauthorized changes that might have been configured locally are forced to match the domain-based Group Policy settings again.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\Group Policy\{35378EAC-683F-11D2-A89A-00C04FBBCFA2}\NoGPListChanges
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`, then set the `Process even if the Group Policy objects have not changed` option to `TRUE` (checked):

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\System\Group Policy\Configure registry policy processing
```

Impact:

Group Policies will be reapplied every time they are refreshed, which could have a slight impact on performance.

References:

1. CCE-36169-1

18.9.18.4 (L1) Set 'Turn off background refresh of Group Policy' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting prevents Group Policy from being updated while the computer is in use. This policy setting applies to Group Policy for computers, users and domain controllers.

The recommended state for this setting is: Disabled.

Rationale:

Setting this option to false (unchecked) will ensure that group policy changes take effect more quickly, as compared to waiting until the next user logon or system restart.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is in effect when the following registry location does not exist:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Policies\System:DisableBkGndGroupPolicy
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Disabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\System\Group Policy\Turn off background refresh of Group Policy
```

Impact:

None - this is the default behavior.

If you enable this policy setting the system waits until the current user logs off the system before updating the computer and user settings. If you disable or do not configure this policy setting updates can be applied while users are working.

The frequency of updates is determined by the "Set Group Policy refresh interval for computers" and "Set Group Policy refresh interval for users" policy settings.

Note: If you make changes to this policy setting you must restart your computer for it to take effect.

Default Value:

The default value is Not Configured which is equivalent to Disabled.

References:

1. CCE-37712-7

18.9.19 Internet Communication Management

This section contains recommendations related to Internet Communication Management.

18.9.19.1 Internet Communication settings

This section contains recommendations related to Internet Communication settings.

18.9.19.1.1 (L2) Set 'Turn off downloading of print drivers over HTTP' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 2 - Domain Controller
- Level 2 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting controls whether the computer can download print driver packages over HTTP. To set up HTTP printing, printer drivers that are not available in the standard operating system installation might need to be downloaded over HTTP.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

Users might download drivers that include malicious code.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows  
NT\Printers\DisableWebPnPDownload
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\System\Internet Communication  
Management\Internet Communication settings\Turn off downloading of print drivers over  
HTTP
```

Impact:

This policy setting does not prevent the client computer from printing to printers on the intranet or the Internet over HTTP. It only prohibits drivers that are not already installed locally from downloading.

Default Value:

Not configured

References:

1. CCE-36625-2

18.9.19.1.2 (L2) Set 'Turn off handwriting personalization data sharing' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 2 - Domain Controller
- Level 2 - Member Server

Description:

This setting turns off data sharing from the handwriting recognition personalization tool.

The handwriting recognition personalization tool enables Tablet PC users to adapt handwriting recognition to their own writing style by providing writing samples. The tool can optionally share user writing samples with Microsoft to improve handwriting recognition in future versions of Windows. The tool generates reports and transmits them to Microsoft over a secure connection.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

A person's handwriting is Personally Identifiable Information (PII), especially when it comes to your signature. As such, it is unacceptable in many environments to automatically upload PII to a website without explicit approval by the user.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\TabletPC:PreventHandwritingDataSharing
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\System\Internet Communication Management\Internet Communication settings\Turn off handwriting personalization data sharing
```

Note: This Group Policy setting is provided by the Group Policy template "ShapeCollector.admx/adml" that is included with the Microsoft Windows 7/2008R2, 8/2012, 8.1/2012R2 and Windows 10 Administrative Templates.

Impact:

If you enable this policy, Tablet PC users cannot choose to share writing samples from the handwriting recognition personalization tool with Microsoft.

Default Value:

Not Configured. If you do not configure this policy, Tablet PC users can choose whether or not they want to share their writing samples from the handwriting recognition personalization tool with Microsoft.

References:

1. CCE-37911-5

18.9.19.1.3 (L2) Set 'Turn off handwriting recognition error reporting' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 2 - Domain Controller
- Level 2 - Member Server

Description:

Turns off the handwriting recognition error reporting tool.

The handwriting recognition error reporting tool enables users to report errors encountered in Tablet PC Input Panel. The tool generates error reports and transmits them to Microsoft over a secure connection. Microsoft uses these error reports to improve handwriting recognition in future versions of Windows.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

A person's handwriting is Personally Identifiable Information (PII), especially when it comes to your signature. As such, it is unacceptable in many environments to automatically upload PII to a website without explicit approval by the user.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\HandwritingErrorReports:PreventHandwritingErrorReports
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\System\Internet Communication Management\Internet Communication settings\Turn off handwriting recognition error reporting
```

Impact:

If you enable this policy, users cannot start the handwriting recognition error reporting tool or send error reports to Microsoft.

Default Value:

Not Configured. If you do not configure this policy Tablet PC users can report handwriting recognition errors to Microsoft.

References:

1. CCE-36203-8

18.9.19.1.4 (L2) Set 'Turn off Internet Connection Wizard if URL connection is referring to Microsoft.com' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 2 - Domain Controller
- Level 2 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting specifies whether the Internet Connection Wizard can connect to Microsoft to download a list of Internet Service Providers (ISPs).

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

In an Enterprise environment we want to lower the risk of a user unknowingly exposing sensitive data.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\Internet Connection Wizard:ExitOnMSICW
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\System\Internet Communication Management\Internet Communication settings\Turn off Internet Connection Wizard if URL connection is referring to Microsoft.com
```

Impact:

If you enable this policy setting, the "Choose a list of Internet Service Providers" path in the Internet Connection Wizard causes the wizard to exit. This prevents users from retrieving the list of ISPs, which resides on Microsoft servers.

Default Value:

Not Configured. If you disable or do not configure this policy setting, users can connect to Microsoft to download a list of ISPs for their area.

References:

1. CCE-37163-3

18.9.19.1.5 (L2) Set 'Turn off Internet download for Web publishing and online ordering wizards' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 2 - Domain Controller
- Level 2 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting controls whether Windows will download a list of providers for the Web publishing and online ordering wizards.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

Although the risk is minimal, enabling this setting will reduce the possibility of a user unknowingly downloading malicious content through this feature.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Policies\Explorer\NoWebServices
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\System\Internet Communication Management\Internet Communication settings\Turn off Internet download for Web publishing and online ordering wizards
```

Impact:

If this policy setting is enabled, Windows is prevented from downloading providers; only the service providers cached in the local registry will display.

Default Value:

Not configured

References:

1. CCE-36096-6

18.9.19.1.6 (L2) Set 'Turn off printing over HTTP' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 2 - Domain Controller
- Level 2 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows you to disable the client computer's ability to print over HTTP, which allows the computer to print to printers on the intranet as well as the Internet.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

Information that is transmitted over HTTP through this capability is not protected and can be intercepted by malicious users. For this reason, it is not often used in enterprise environments.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows NT\Printers\DisableHTTPPrinting
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\System\Internet Communication Management\Internet Communication settings\Turn off printing over HTTP
```

Impact:

If you enable this policy setting, the client computer will not be able to print to Internet printers over HTTP. This policy setting affects the client side of Internet printing only. Regardless of how it is configured, a computer could act as an Internet Printing server and make its shared printers available through HTTP.

Default Value:

Not configured

References:

1. CCE-36920-7

18.9.19.1.7 (L2) Set 'Turn off Registration if URL connection is referring to Microsoft.com' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 2 - Domain Controller
- Level 2 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting specifies whether the Windows Registration Wizard connects to Microsoft.com for online registration.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

Users in a corporate environment should not be registering their own copies of Windows, providing their own PII in the process.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\Registration Wizard  
Control:NoRegistration
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\System\Internet Communication  
Management\Internet Communication settings\Turn off Registration if URL connection is  
referring to Microsoft.com
```

Impact:

If you enable this policy setting, it blocks users from connecting to Microsoft.com for online registration and users cannot register their copy of Windows online.

Default Value:

Not Configured. If you disable or do not configure this policy setting, users can connect to Microsoft.com to complete the online Windows Registration.

References:

1. CCE-36352-3

18.9.19.1.8 (L2) Set 'Turn off Search Companion content file updates' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 2 - Domain Controller
- Level 2 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting specifies whether Search Companion should automatically download content updates during local and Internet searches.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

There is a small risk that users will unknowingly reveal sensitive information because of the topics they are searching for. This risk is very low because even if this setting is enabled users still must submit search queries to the desired search engine in order to perform searches.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\SearchCompanion\DisableContentFileUpdates
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\System\Internet Communication Management\Internet Communication settings\Turn off Search Companion content file updates
```

Impact:

Internet searches will still send the search text and information about the search to Microsoft and the chosen search provider. If you select Classic Search, the Search Companion feature will be unavailable. You can select Classic Search by clicking Start, Search, Change Preferences, and then Change Internet Search Behavior.

Default Value:

Not configured

References:

1. CCE-36884-5

18.9.19.1.9 (L2) Set 'Turn off the "Order Prints" picture task' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 2 - Domain Controller
- Level 2 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting specifies whether the "Order Prints Online" task is available from Picture Tasks in Windows folders.

The Order Prints Online Wizard is used to download a list of providers and allow users to order prints online.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

In an Enterprise environment we want to lower the risk of a user unknowingly exposing sensitive data.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Policies\Explorer:NoOnlinePrintsWizard
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\System\Internet Communication Management\Internet Communication settings\Turn off the "Order Prints" picture task
```

Impact:

If you enable this policy setting, the task "Order Prints Online" is removed from Picture Tasks in File Explorer folders.

Default Value:

Not Configured. If you disable or do not configure this policy setting, the task is displayed.

References:

1. CCE-38275-4

18.9.19.1.10 (L2) Set 'Turn off the "Publish to Web" task for files and folders' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 2 - Domain Controller
- Level 2 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting specifies whether the tasks Publish this file to the Web, Publish this folder to the Web, and Publish the selected items to the Web are available from File and Folder Tasks in Windows folders.

The recommended state for this setting is: Enabled.

Rationale:

Users may publish confidential or sensitive information to a public service outside of the control of the organization.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Policies\Explorer\NoPublishingWizard
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\System\Internet Communication Management\Internet Communication settings\Turn off the "Publish to Web" task for files and folders
```

Impact:

The Web Publishing wizard is used to download a list of providers and allow users to publish content to the Web.

Default Value:

Not configured

References:

1. CCE-37090-8

18.9.19.1.11 (L2) Set 'Turn off the Windows Messenger Customer Experience Improvement Program' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 2 - Domain Controller
- Level 2 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting specifies whether Windows Messenger can collect anonymous information about how the Windows Messenger software and service is used.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

Large enterprise environments may not want to have information collected from managed client computers.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Messenger\Client\CEIP
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\System\Internet Communication Management\Internet Communication settings\Turn off the Windows Messenger Customer Experience Improvement Program
```

Impact:

Microsoft uses information collected through the Customer Experience Improvement Program to detect software flaws so that they can be corrected more quickly, enabling this setting will reduce the amount of data Microsoft is able to gather for this purpose.

Default Value:

Not configured

References:

1. CCE-36628-6

18.9.19.1.12 (L2) Set 'Turn off Windows Customer Experience Improvement Program' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 2 - Domain Controller
- Level 2 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting specifies whether Windows Messenger can collect anonymous information about how the Windows Messenger software and service is used.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

Large enterprise environments may not want to have information collected from managed client computers.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\SQMClient\Windows:CEIPEnable
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\System\Internet Communication Management\Internet Communication settings\Turn off Windows Customer Experience Improvement Program
```

Impact:

Microsoft uses information collected through the Customer Experience Improvement Program to detect software flaws so that they can be corrected more quickly, enabling this setting will reduce the amount of data Microsoft is able to gather for this purpose.

Default Value:

Not Configured If you do not configure this policy setting, users have the choice to opt in and allow information to be collected.

References:

1. CCE-36174-1

18.9.19.1.13 (L2) Set 'Turn off Windows Error Reporting' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 2 - Domain Controller
- Level 2 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting controls whether or not errors are reported to Microsoft.

Error Reporting is used to report information about a system or application that has failed or has stopped responding and is used to improve the quality of the product.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

If a Windows Error occurs in a secure, managed corporate environment, the error should be reported directly to IT staff for troubleshooting and remediation. There is no benefit to the corporation to report these errors directly to Microsoft, and there is some risk of unknowingly exposing sensitive data as part of the error.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\Windows Error Reporting:Disabled
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\System\Internet Communication Management\Internet Communication settings\Turn off Windows Error Reporting
```

Impact:

If you enable this policy setting, users are not given the option to report errors.

Default Value:

Not Configured. If you disable or do not configure this policy setting, the errors may be reported to Microsoft via the Internet or to a corporate file share.

References:

1. CCE-35964-6

18.9.20 iSCSI

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.9.21 KDC

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.9.22 Kerberos

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.9.23 Locale Services

This section contains recommendations for Locale Services settings.

18.9.23.1 (L2) Set 'Disallow copying of user input methods to the system account for sign-in' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 2 - Domain Controller
- Level 2 - Member Server

Description:

This policy prevents automatic copying of user input methods to the system account for use on the sign-in screen. The user is restricted to the set of input methods that are enabled in the system account.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

This is a way to increase the security of the system account.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Control  
Panel\International\BlockUserInputMethodsForSignIn
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\System\Locale  
Services\Disallow copying of user input methods to the system account for sign-in
```

Impact:

If the policy is `Enabled`, then the user will get input methods enabled for the system account on the sign-in page.

Default Value:

Not Configured. If the policy is Disabled or Not Configured, then the user will be able to use input methods enabled for their user account on the sign-in page.

References:

1. CCE-36343-2

18.9.24 Logon

This section contains recommendations related to the logon process and lock screen.

18.9.24.1 (L1) Set 'Do not display network selection UI' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows you to control whether anyone can interact with available networks UI on the logon screen.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

An unauthorized user could disconnect the PC from the network or can connect the PC to other available networks without signing into Windows.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\System\DontDisplayNetworkSelectionUI
```

Remediation:

To implement the recommended configuration state, set the following Group Policy setting to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\System\Logon\Do not display network selection UI
```

Impact:

If you enable this policy setting, the PC's network connectivity state cannot be changed without signing into Windows.

If you disable or don't configure this policy setting, any user can disconnect the PC from the network or can connect the PC to other available networks without signing into Windows.

References:

1. CCE-38353-9

18.9.24.2 (L1) Set 'Do not enumerate connected users on domain-joined computers' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting prevents connected users from being enumerated on domain-joined computers.

If you enable this policy setting, the Logon UI will not enumerate any connected users on domain-joined computers.

If you disable or do not configure this policy setting, connected users will be enumerated on domain-joined computers.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

A malicious user could use this feature to gather account names of other users, that information could then be used in conjunction with other types of attacks such as guessing passwords or social engineering. The value of this countermeasure is small because a user with domain credentials could gather the same account information using other methods.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\System\DontEnumerateConnectedUsers
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\System\Logon\Do not enumerate connected users on domain-joined computers
```

Impact:

The Logon UI will not enumerate any connected users on domain-joined computers.

Default Value:

Not configured

References:

1. CCE-37838-0

18.9.24.3 (L1) Set 'Enumerate local users on domain-joined computers' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows local users to be enumerated on domain-joined computers.

If you enable this policy setting, Logon UI will enumerate all local users on domain-joined computers.

If you disable or do not configure this policy setting, the Logon UI will not enumerate local users on domain-joined computers.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Disabled`.

Rationale:

A malicious user could use this feature to gather account names of other users, that information could then be used in conjunction with other types of attacks such as guessing passwords or social engineering. The value of this countermeasure is small because a user with domain credentials could gather the same account information using other methods.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\System\EnumerateLocalUsers
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Disabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\System\Logon\Enumerate local users on domain-joined computers
```

Impact:

None - this is the default behavior.

Default Value:

Not configured

References:

1. CCE-35894-5

18.9.24.4 (L1) Set 'Turn off app notifications on the lock screen' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows you to prevent app notifications from appearing on the lock screen.

If you enable this policy setting, no app notifications are displayed on the lock screen.

If you disable or do not configure this policy setting, users can choose which apps display notifications on the lock screen.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

App notifications might display sensitive business or personal data.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\System:DisableLockScreenAppNotifications
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\System\Logon\Turn off app notifications on the lock screen
```

Impact:

If you enable this policy setting, no app notifications are displayed on the lock screen.

If you disable or do not configure this policy setting, users can choose which apps display notifications on the lock screen.

Default Value:

Not configured

References:

1. CCE-35893-7

18.9.24.5 (L1) Set 'Turn on PIN sign-in' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows you to control whether a domain user can sign in using a PIN.

If you enable this policy setting, a domain user can set up and sign in with a PIN.

If you disable or don't configure this policy setting, a domain user can't set up and use a PIN.

Note that the user's domain password will be cached in the system vault when using this feature.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Disabled`.

Rationale:

A PIN is created from a much smaller selection of characters than a password, so in most cases a PIN will be much less robust than a password.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\System\AllowDomainPINLogon
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Disabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\System\Logon\Turn on PIN sign-in
```

Impact:

None - this is the default behavior.

Default Value:

Not configured

References:

1. CCE-37528-7

18.9.25 Mitigation Options

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "GroupPolicy.admx/adml" that is included with the Microsoft Windows 10 Administrative Templates.

18.9.26 Net Logon

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.9.27 Performance Control Panel

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "PerfCenterCPL.admx/adml" that is included with the Microsoft Windows Vista, 2008, 7/2008R2 & 2012 Administrative Templates.

18.9.28 Power Management

This section contains recommendations for Power Management settings.

18.9.28.1 Button Settings

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.9.28.2 Hard Disk Settings

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.9.28.3 Notification Settings

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.9.28.4 Sleep Settings

This section contains recommendations related to Power Management Sleep mode.

18.9.28.4.1 (L2) Set 'Require a password when a computer wakes (on battery)' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 2 - Domain Controller
- Level 2 - Member Server

Description:

Specifies whether or not the user is prompted for a password when the system resumes from sleep.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

Enabling this setting ensures that anyone who wakes an unattended computer from sleep state will have to provide logon credentials before they can access the system.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Power\PowerSettings\0e796bdb-100d-47d6-a2d5-f7d2daa51f51\DCSettingIndex
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\System\Power Management\Sleep Settings\Require a password when a computer wakes (on battery)
```

Impact:

If you enable this policy, or if it is not configured, the user is prompted for a password when the system resumes from sleep.

If you disable this policy, the user is not prompted for a password when the system resumes from sleep.

Default Value:

Not configured

References:

1. CCE-36881-1

18.9.28.4.2 (L2) Set 'Require a password when a computer wakes (plugged in)' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 2 - Domain Controller
- Level 2 - Member Server

Description:

Specifies whether or not the user is prompted for a password when the system resumes from sleep.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

Enabling this setting ensures that anyone who wakes an unattended computer from sleep state will have to provide logon credentials before they can access the system.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Power\PowerSettings\0e796bdb-100d-47d6-a2d5-f7d2daa51f51\ACSettingIndex
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\System\Power Management\Sleep Settings\Require a password when a computer wakes (plugged in)
```

Impact:

If you enable this policy, or if it is not configured, the user is prompted for a password when the system resumes from sleep.

If you disable this policy, the user is not prompted for a password when the system resumes from sleep.

Default Value:

Not configured

References:

1. CCE-37066-8

18.9.29 Recovery

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.9.30 Remote Assistance

This section provides recommendation for configuring Remote Assistance settings.

18.9.30.1 (L1) Set 'Configure Offer Remote Assistance' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows you to turn on or turn off Offer (Unsolicited) Remote Assistance on this computer.

If you enable this policy setting, users on this computer can get help from their corporate technical support staff using Offer (Unsolicited) Remote Assistance.

If you disable this policy setting, users on this computer cannot get help from their corporate technical support staff using Offer (Unsolicited) Remote Assistance.

If you do not configure this policy setting, users on this computer cannot get help from their corporate technical support staff using Offer (Unsolicited) Remote Assistance.

If you enable this policy setting, you have two ways to allow helpers to provide Remote Assistance: "Allow helpers to only view the computer" or "Allow helpers to remotely control the computer." When you configure this policy setting, you also specify the list of users or user groups that are allowed to offer remote assistance.

To configure the list of helpers, click "Show." In the window that opens, you can enter the names of the helpers. Add each user or group one by one. When you enter the name of the helper user or user groups, use the following format:

<Domain Name>\<User Name> or

<Domain Name>\<Group Name>

If you enable this policy setting, you should also enable firewall exceptions to allow Remote Assistance communications. The firewall exceptions required for Offer (Unsolicited) Remote Assistance depend on the version of Windows you are running.

Windows Vista and later

Enable the Remote Assistance exception for the domain profile. The exception must contain:

Port 135:TCP

%WINDIR%\System32\msra.exe

%WINDIR%\System32\raserver.exe

Windows XP with Service Pack 2 (SP2) and Windows XP Professional x64 Edition with Service Pack 1 (SP1)

Port 135:TCP

%WINDIR%\PCHealth\HelpCtr\Binaries\Helpsvc.exe

%WINDIR%\PCHealth\HelpCtr\Binaries\Helpctr.exe

%WINDIR%\System32\Sessmgr.exe

For computers running Windows Server 2003 with Service Pack 1 (SP1)

Port 135:TCP

%WINDIR%\PCHealth\HelpCtr\Binaries\Helpsvc.exe

%WINDIR%\PCHealth\HelpCtr\Binaries\Helpctr.exe

Allow Remote Desktop Exception

The recommended state for this setting is: `Disabled`.

Rationale:

A user might be tricked and accept an unsolicited Remote Assistance offer from a malicious user.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\policies\Microsoft\Windows NT\Terminal Services\AllowUnsolicited
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Disabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\System\Remote  
Assistance\Configure Offer Remote Assistance
```

Impact:

Help desk and support personnel will not be able to proactively offer assistance, although they can still respond to user assistance requests.

Default Value:

Not configured

References:

1. CCE-36388-7

18.9.30.2 (L1) Set 'Configure Solicited Remote Assistance' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows you to turn on or turn off Solicited (Ask for) Remote Assistance on this computer.

If you enable this policy setting, users on this computer can use email or file transfer to ask someone for help. Also, users can use instant messaging programs to allow connections to this computer, and you can configure additional Remote Assistance settings.

If you disable this policy setting, users on this computer cannot use email or file transfer to ask someone for help. Also, users cannot use instant messaging programs to allow connections to this computer.

If you do not configure this policy setting, users can turn on or turn off Solicited (Ask for) Remote Assistance themselves in System Properties in Control Panel. Users can also configure Remote Assistance settings.

If you enable this policy setting, you have two ways to allow helpers to provide Remote Assistance: "Allow helpers to only view the computer" or "Allow helpers to remotely control the computer."

The "Maximum ticket time" policy setting sets a limit on the amount of time that a Remote Assistance invitation created by using email or file transfer can remain open.

The "Select the method for sending email invitations" setting specifies which email standard to use to send Remote Assistance invitations. Depending on your email program, you can use either the Mailto standard (the invitation recipient connects through an Internet link) or the SMAPI (Simple MAPI) standard (the invitation is attached to your email message). This policy setting is not available in Windows Vista since SMAPI is the only method supported.

If you enable this policy setting you should also enable appropriate firewall exceptions to allow Remote Assistance communications.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Disabled`.

Rationale:

There is slight risk that a rogue administrator will gain access to another user's desktop session, however, they cannot connect to a user's computer unannounced or control it without permission from the user. When an expert tries to connect, the user can still choose to deny the connection or give the expert view-only privileges. The user must explicitly click the Yes button to allow the expert to remotely control the workstation.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\policies\Microsoft\Windows NT\Terminal  
Services\AllowToGetHelp
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Disabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\System\Remote  
Assistance\Configure Solicited Remote Assistance
```

Impact:

If you enable this policy, users on this computer can use e-mail or file transfer to ask someone for help. Also, users can use instant messaging programs to allow connections to this computer, and you can configure additional Remote Assistance settings.

If you disable this policy, users on this computer cannot use e-mail or file transfer to ask someone for help. Also, users cannot use instant messaging programs to allow connections to this computer.

If you don't configure this policy, users can enable or disable Solicited (Ask for) Remote Assistance themselves in System Properties in Control Panel. Users can also configure Remote Assistance settings.

Default Value:

Not configured

References:

1. CCE-37281-3

18.9.31 Remote Procedure Call

This section contains recommendations related to Remote Procedure Call.

18.9.31.1 (L1) Set 'Enable RPC Endpoint Mapper Client Authentication' to 'Enabled' (MS only) (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting controls whether RPC clients authenticate with the Endpoint Mapper Service when the call they are making contains authentication information. The Endpoint Mapper Service on computers running Windows NT4 (all service packs) cannot process authentication information supplied in this manner. This policy setting can cause a specific issue with *1-way* forest trusts if it is applied to the *trusting* domain DCs (see Microsoft [KB3073942](#)), so we do not recommend applying it to domain controllers.

If you disable this policy setting, RPC clients will not authenticate to the Endpoint Mapper Service, but they will be able to communicate with the Endpoint Mapper Service on Windows NT4 Server.

If you enable this policy setting, RPC clients will authenticate to the Endpoint Mapper Service for calls that contain authentication information. Clients making such calls will not be able to communicate with the Windows NT4 Server Endpoint Mapper Service.

If you do not configure this policy setting, it remains disabled. RPC clients will not authenticate to the Endpoint Mapper Service, but they will be able to communicate with the Windows NT4 Server Endpoint Mapper Service.

Note: This policy will not be applied until the system is rebooted.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

Anonymous access to RPC services could result in accidental disclosure of information to unauthenticated users.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows NT\Rpc\EnableAuthEpResolution
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\System\Remote Procedure Call\Enable RPC Endpoint Mapper Client Authentication
```

Impact:

RPC clients will authenticate to the Endpoint Mapper Service for calls that contain authentication information. Clients making such calls will not be able to communicate with the Windows NT4 Server Endpoint Mapper Service.

Default Value:

Not configured

References:

1. CCE-37346-4

18.9.31.2 (L2) Set 'Restrict Unauthenticated RPC clients' to 'Enabled: Authenticated' (MS only) (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 2 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting controls how the RPC server runtime handles unauthenticated RPC clients connecting to RPC servers.

This policy setting impacts all RPC applications. In a domain environment this policy setting should be used with caution as it can impact a wide range of functionality including group policy processing itself. Reverting a change to this policy setting can require manual intervention on each affected machine. **This policy setting should never be applied to a domain controller.**

If you disable this policy setting, the RPC server runtime uses the value of "Authenticated" on Windows Client, and the value of "None" on Windows Server versions that support this policy setting.

If you do not configure this policy setting, it remains disabled. The RPC server runtime will behave as though it was enabled with the value of "Authenticated" used for Windows Client and the value of "None" used for Server SKUs that support this policy setting.

If you enable this policy setting, it directs the RPC server runtime to restrict unauthenticated RPC clients connecting to RPC servers running on a machine. A client will be considered an authenticated client if it uses a named pipe to communicate with the server or if it uses RPC Security. RPC Interfaces that have specifically requested to be accessible by unauthenticated clients may be exempt from this restriction, depending on the selected value for this policy setting.

-- "**None**" allows all RPC clients to connect to RPC Servers running on the machine on which the policy setting is applied.

-- "**Authenticated**" allows only authenticated RPC Clients (per the definition above) to connect to RPC Servers running on the machine on which the policy setting is applied. Exemptions are granted to interfaces that have requested them.

-- "**Authenticated without exceptions**" allows only authenticated RPC Clients (per the definition above) to connect to RPC Servers running on the machine on which the policy

setting is applied. No exceptions are allowed. **This value has the potential to cause serious problems and is not recommended.**

Note: This policy setting will not be applied until the system is rebooted.

The recommended state for this setting is: Enabled: Authenticated.

Rationale:

Unauthenticated RPC communication can create a security vulnerability.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows NT\Rpc\RestrictRemoteClients
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled: Authenticated:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\System\Remote Procedure Call\Restrict Unauthenticated RPC clients
```

Impact:

Only authenticated RPC Clients will be allowed to connect to RPC Servers running on the machine on which the policy setting is applied. Exemptions are granted to interfaces that have requested them.

Default Value:

Not configured

References:

1. CCE-36559-3

18.9.32 Removable Storage Access

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.9.33 Scripts

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.9.34 Server Manager

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.9.35 Shutdown

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.9.36 Shutdown Options

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.9.37 System Restore

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.9.38 Troubleshooting and Diagnostics

This section contains recommendations related to Troubleshooting and Diagnostics.

18.9.38.1 Application Compatibility Diagnostics

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.9.38.2 Corrupted File Recovery

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.9.38.3 Disk Diagnostic

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.9.38.4 Fault Tolerant Heap

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.9.38.5 Microsoft Support Diagnostic Tool

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.9.38.6 MSI Corrupted File Recovery

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.9.38.7 Scheduled Maintenance

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "sdiagschd.admx/adml" that is included with the Microsoft Windows 7/2008R2, 8/2012, 8.1/2012R2 and Windows 10 Administrative Templates.

18.9.38.8 Scripted Diagnostics

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.9.38.9 Windows Boot Performance Diagnostics

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.9.38.10 Windows Memory Leak Diagnosis

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.9.38.11 Windows Performance PerfTrack

This section contains recommendations related to Windows Performance PerfTrack.

18.9.38.11.1 (L2) Set 'Enable/Disable PerfTrack' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 2 - Domain Controller
- Level 2 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting specifies whether to enable or disable tracking of responsiveness events.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Disabled`.

Rationale:

When enabled the aggregated data of a given event will be transmitted to Microsoft. The option exists to restrict this feature for a specific user, set the consent level, and designate specific programs for which error reports could be sent. However, centrally restricting the ability to execute PerfTrack to limit the potential for unauthorized or undesired usage, data leakage, or unintentional communications is highly recommended.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\WDI\{9c5a40da-b965-4fc3-8781-88dd50a6299d}:ScenarioExecutionEnabled
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Disabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\System\Troubleshooting and Diagnostics\Windows Performance PerfTrack\Enable/Disable PerfTrack
```

Impact:

If you disable this policy setting, responsiveness events are not processed.

Default Value:

If you do not configure this policy setting, the DPS will enable Windows Performance PerfTrack by default.

References:

1. CCE-36648-4

18.9.39 Trusted Platform Module Services

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.9.40 User Profiles

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.9.41 Windows File Protection

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.9.42 Windows HotStart

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "HotStart.admx/adml" that is included with the Microsoft Windows Vista, 2008, 7/2008R2 & 8/2012 Administrative Templates.

18.9.43 Windows Time Service

This section contains recommendations related to the Windows Time Service.

18.9.43.1 Time Providers

This section contains recommendations related to Time Providers.

18.9.43.1.1 (L2) Set 'Enable Windows NTP Client' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 2 - Domain Controller
- Level 2 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting specifies whether the Windows NTP Client is enabled. Enabling the Windows NTP Client allows your computer to synchronize its computer clock with other NTP servers. You might want to disable this service if you decide to use a third-party time provider.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

A reliable and accurate account of time is important for a number of services and security requirements, including but not limited to distributed applications, authentication services, multi-user databases and logging services. The use of an NTP client (with secure operation) establishes functional accuracy and is a focal point when reviewing security relevant events

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Policies\Microsoft\W32Time\TimeProviders\NtpClient:Enabled
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\System\Windows Time  
Service\Time Providers\Enable Windows NTP Client
```

Impact:

If you enable this policy setting, you can set the local computer clock to synchronize time with NTP servers.

Default Value:

Not Configured, the local computer clock does not synchronize time with NTP servers.

References:

1. CCE-37843-0

18.9.43.1.2 (L2) Set 'Enable Windows NTP Server' to 'Disabled' (MS only) (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 2 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows you to specify whether the Windows NTP Server is enabled.

The recommended state for this setting is: Disabled.

Rationale:

The configuration of proper time synchronization is critically important in a corporate environment both due to the sensitivity of Kerberos authentication timestamps and also to ensure accurate security logging.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Policies\Microsoft\W32Time\TimeProviders\NtpServer:Enabled
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Disabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\System\Windows Time Service\Time Providers\Enable Windows NTP Server
```

Impact:

If you disable or do not configure this policy setting, your computer cannot service NTP requests from other computers.

Default Value:

Not Configured

References:

1. CCE-37319-1

18.10 Windows Components

This section contains recommendations for Windows Component settings.

18.10.1 Active Directory Federation Services

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "adfs.admx/adml" that is included with the Microsoft Windows Vista, 2008, 7/2008R2 & 8/2012 Administrative Templates.

18.10.2 ActiveX Installer Service

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.3 Add features to Windows 8 / 8.1 / 10

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "WindowsAnytimeUpgrade.admx/adml" that is included with the Microsoft Windows 8/2012, 8.1/2012R2 and Windows 10 Administrative Templates.

18.10.4 App Package Deployment

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.5 App runtime

This section contains recommendations for App runtime settings.

18.10.5.1 (L1) Set 'Allow Microsoft accounts to be optional' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting lets you control whether Microsoft accounts are optional for Windows Store apps that require an account to sign in. This policy only affects Windows Store apps that support it. If you enable this policy setting, Windows Store apps that typically require a Microsoft account to sign in will allow users to sign in with an enterprise account instead. If you disable or do not configure this policy setting, users will need to sign in with a Microsoft account.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

Enabling this setting allows an organization to their enterprise user accounts vice Microsoft accounts when accessing Windows store apps. This provides the organization with greater control over relevant credentials. Microsoft accounts cannot be centrally managed and as such enterprise credential security policies cannot be applied to them, which could put any information accessed by using Microsoft accounts at risk.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Policies\System:MSAOptional
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\App  
runtime\Allow Microsoft accounts to be optional
```

Impact:

Windows Store apps that typically require a Microsoft account to sign in will allow users to sign in with an enterprise account instead.

References:

1. CCE-38354-7

18.10.6 Application Compatibility

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.7 AutoPlay Policies

This section contains recommendations for AutoPlay policies.

18.10.7.1 (L1) Set 'Disallow Autoplay for non-volume devices' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting disallows AutoPlay for MTP devices like cameras or phones.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

An attacker could use this feature to launch a program to damage a client computer or data on the computer.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\Explorer:NoAutoplayfornonVolume
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\AutoPlay Policies\Disallow Autoplay for non-volume devices
```

Impact:

If you enable this policy setting, AutoPlay is not allowed for MTP devices like cameras or phones.

Default Value:

Not Configured. If you disable or do not configure this policy setting, AutoPlay is enabled for non-volume devices.

References:

1. CCE-37636-8

18.10.7.2 (L1) Set 'Set the default behavior for AutoRun' to 'Enabled: Do not execute any autorun commands' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting sets the default behavior for Autorun commands. Autorun commands are generally stored in autorun.inf files. They often launch the installation program or other routines.

The recommended state for this setting is: Enabled: Do not execute any autorun commands.

Rationale:

Prior to Windows Vista, when media containing an autorun command is inserted, the system will automatically execute the program without user intervention. This creates a major security concern as code may be executed without user's knowledge. The default behavior starting with Windows Vista is to prompt the user whether autorun command is to be run. The autorun command is represented as a handler in the Autoplay dialog.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Policies\Explorer:NoAutorun
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled: Do not execute any autorun commands:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\AutoPlay Policies\Set the default behavior for AutoRun
```

Impact:

If you enable this policy setting, an Administrator can change the default Windows Vista or later behavior for autorun to:

- a) Completely disable autorun commands, or
- b) Revert back to pre-Windows Vista behavior of automatically executing the autorun command.

Default Value:

Not Configured

References:

1. CCE-38217-6

18.10.7.3 (L1) Set 'Turn off Autoplay' to 'Enabled: All drives' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

Autoplay starts to read from a drive as soon as you insert media in the drive, which causes the setup file for programs or audio media to start immediately. An attacker could use this feature to launch a program to damage the computer or data on the computer. You can enable the Turn off Autoplay setting to disable the Autoplay feature. Autoplay is disabled by default on some removable drive types, such as floppy disk and network drives, but not on CD-ROM drives.

Note You cannot use this policy setting to enable Autoplay on computer drives in which it is disabled by default, such as floppy disk and network drives.

The recommended state for this setting is: Enabled: All drives.

Rationale:

An attacker could use this feature to launch a program to damage a client computer or data on the computer.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Policies\Explorer\NoDriveTypeAutoRun
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled: All drives:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\AutoPlay Policies\Turn off Autoplay
```

Impact:

Users will have to manually launch setup or installation programs that are provided on removable media.

Default Value:

Not configured

References:

1. CCE-36875-3

18.10.8 Backup

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "WindowsBackup.admx/adml" that is included with the Microsoft Windows Vista, 2008, 7/2008R2, 8/2012 and 8.1/2012R2 Administrative Templates, or the Group Policy template "UserDataBackup.admx/adml" included with the Microsoft Windows 10 Administrative Templates.

18.10.9 Biometrics

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.10 BitLocker Drive Encryption

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.11 Credential User Interface

This section contains recommendations related to the Credential User Interface.

18.10.11.1 (L1) Set 'Do not display the password reveal button' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows you to configure the display of the password reveal button in password entry user experiences.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

This is a useful feature when entering a long and complex password, especially when using a touchscreen. The potential risk is that someone else may see your password while surreptitiously observing your screen.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\CredUI:DisablePasswordReveal
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\Credential User Interface\Do not display the password reveal button
```

Impact:

If you enable this policy setting the password reveal button will not be displayed after a user types a password in the password entry text box. If you disable or do not configure this policy setting the password reveal button will be displayed after a user types a password in the password entry text box. The policy applies to all Windows components and applications that use the Windows system controls including Internet Explorer.

Default Value:

By default the password reveal button is displayed after a user types a password in the password entry text box. To display the password click the password reveal button.

References:

1. CCE-37534-5

18.10.11.2 (L1) Set 'Enumerate administrator accounts on elevation' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

By default, all administrator accounts are displayed when you attempt to elevate a running application.

The recommended state for this setting is: Disabled.

Rationale:

Users could see the list of administrator accounts, making it slightly easier for a malicious user who has logged onto a console session to try to crack the passwords of those accounts.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Policies\CredUI\Enumerate Administrators
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Disabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\Credential User Interface\Enumerate administrator accounts on elevation
```

Impact:

If you enable this policy setting, all local administrator accounts on the machine will be displayed so the user can choose one and enter the correct password. If you disable this policy setting, users will be required to always type in a username and password to elevate.

Default Value:

Disabled

References:

1. CCE-36512-2

18.10.11.3 (L2) Set 'Require trusted path for credential entry' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 2 - Domain Controller
- Level 2 - Member Server

Description:

If you enable this policy setting, users are required to enter Windows credentials on the Secure Desktop by means of the trusted path mechanism. This means that before entering account and password information to authorize an elevation request, a user first need to press CTRL+ALT+DEL.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

Requiring the use of a trusted path helps prevent a Trojan horse or other types of malicious code from stealing the user's Windows credentials.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Policies\CredUi:EnableSecureCredentialPrompting
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\Credential User Interface\Require trusted path for credential entry
```

Impact:

If you disable or do not configure this policy setting, users can enter Windows credentials within the user's desktop session, potentially allowing malicious code access to the user's Windows credentials.

NOTE: Enabling this setting prevents users on Windows Vista / Windows Server 2008 or newer OSes from making a Remote Desktop Protocol (RDP) connection to a Windows XP or Windows Server 2003 computer, as the older OSes do not support Credential Security Service Provider (CredSSP). For additional information, see Microsoft Knowledge Base article 947224: [Error message when you try to connect to a computer that is running Windows XP or Windows Server 2003 through a RDP connection from a Windows Vista-based computer: "the remote computer you want to connect to cannot recognize credentials"](#).

Default Value:

Not Configured. If you disable or do not configure this policy setting, users will enter Windows credentials within the user's desktop session, potentially allowing malicious code access to the user's Windows credentials.

References:

1. CCE-37059-3

18.10.12 Data Collection and Preview Builds

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy templates "allowbuildpreview.admx/adml" and "datacollection.admx/adml" that are included with the Microsoft Windows 10 Administrative Templates.

18.10.13 Delivery Optimization

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "DeliveryOptimization.admx/adml" that is included with the Microsoft Windows 10 Administrative Templates.

18.10.14 Desktop Gadgets

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.15 Desktop Window Manager

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.16 Device and Driver Compatibility

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.17 Device Registration (formerly Workplace Join)

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "`WorkplaceJoin.admx/adml`" that is included with the Microsoft Windows 10 Administrative Templates.

18.10.18 Digital Locker

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.19 Edge UI

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.20 EMET

This section contains recommendations for configuring Microsoft Enhanced Mitigation Experience Toolkit (EMET).

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "EMET.admx/adml" that is included with Microsoft EMET.

18.10.20.1 (L1) Ensure EMET is installed (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

The Enhanced Mitigation Experience Toolkit (EMET) is free, supported, software developed by Microsoft that allows an enterprise to apply exploit mitigations to applications that run on Windows.

Rationale:

EMET mitigations help reduce the reliability of exploits that target vulnerable software running on Windows

Audit:

Navigate to `Control Panel\Program\Programs and Features` and confirm "EMET 5.2" or higher is listed in the `Name` column.

Remediation:

Install EMET 5.2 or higher.

18.10.20.2 (L1) Set 'Default Protections for Internet Explorer' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This settings determine if EMET mitigations are applied to Internet Explorer.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

Applying EMET mitigations to Internet Explorer will help reduce the reliability of exploits that target it.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

`HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\EMET\Defaults\IE`

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows  
Components\EMET\Default Protections for Internet Explorer
```

Note: This Group Policy path does not exist by default. An additional Group Policy template (`EMET.admx/adml`) is required - it is included with Microsoft Enhanced Mitigation Experience Toolkit (EMET).

References:

1. CCE-38428-9

18.10.20.3 (L1) Set 'Default Protections for Popular Software' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This settings determine if EMET mitigations are applied to other popular software.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

Applying EMET mitigations to popular software packages will help reduce the reliability of exploits that target them.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by many registry keys (for the various popular software that EMET supports) under the following registry location:

HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\EMET\Defaults

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows  
Components\EMET\Default Protections for Popular Explorer
```

Note: This Group Policy path does not exist by default. An additional Group Policy template (`EMET.admx/adml`) is required - it is included with Microsoft Enhanced Mitigation Experience Toolkit (EMET).

18.10.20.4 (L1) Set 'Default Protections for Recommended Software' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This settings determine if recommended EMET mitigations are applied to WordPad, applications that are part of the Microsoft Office suite, Adobe Acrobat, Adobe Reader, and Oracle Java.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

Applying EMET mitigations to Internet Explorer will help reduce the reliability of exploits that target it.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by many registry keys (for the various recommended software that EMET supports) under the following registry location:

`HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\EMET\Defaults`

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows  
Components\EMET\Default Protections for Recommended Software
```

Note: This Group Policy path does not exist by default. An additional Group Policy template (`EMET.admx/adml`) is required - it is included with Microsoft Enhanced Mitigation Experience Toolkit (EMET).

18.10.20.5 (L1) Set 'System ASLR' to 'Enabled: Application Opt-In' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This setting determines how applications become enrolled in address space layout randomization (ASLR).

The recommended state for this setting is: Enabled: Application Opt-In.

Rationale:

ASLR reduces the predictability of process memory, which in-turn helps reduce the reliability of exploits targeting memory corruption vulnerabilities.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\EMET\SysSettings\ASLR
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled: Application Opt-In:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows  
Components\EMET\System ASLR
```

Note: This Group Policy path does not exist by default. An additional Group Policy template (EMET.admx/adml) is required - it is included with Microsoft Enhanced Mitigation Experience Toolkit (EMET).

References:

1. CCE-38437-0

18.10.20.6 (L1) Set 'System DEP' to 'Enabled: Application Opt-Out' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This setting determines how applications become enrolled in data execution protection (DEP).

The recommended state for this setting is: Enabled: Application Opt-Out.

Rationale:

DEP marks pages of application memory as non-executable, which reduces a given exploit's ability to run attacker-controlled code.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\EMET\SysSettings\DEP
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled: Application Opt-Out:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows  
Components\EMET\System DEP
```

Note: This Group Policy path does not exist by default. An additional Group Policy template (EMET.admx/adml) is required - it is included with Microsoft Enhanced Mitigation Experience Toolkit (EMET).

References:

1. CCE-38438-8

18.10.20.7 (L1) Set 'System SEHOP' to 'Enabled: Application Opt-Out' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This setting determines how applications become enrolled in structured exception handler overwrite protection (SEHOP).

The recommended state for this setting is: Enabled: Application Opt-Out.

Rationale:

When a software component suffers from a memory corruption vulnerability, an exploit may be able to overwrite memory that contains data structures that control how the software handles exceptions. By corrupting these structures in a controlled manner, an exploit may be able to execute arbitrary code. SEHOP verifies the integrity of those structures before they are used to handle exceptions, which reduces the reliability of exploits that leverage structured exception handler overwrites.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\EMET\SysSettings\SEHOP
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled: Application Opt-Out:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\EMET\System SEHOP
```

Note: This Group Policy path does not exist by default. An additional Group Policy template (EMET.admx/adml) is required - it is included with Microsoft Enhanced Mitigation Experience Toolkit (EMET).

References:

1. CCE-38439-6

18.10.21 Event Forwarding

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.22 Event Log Service

This section contains recommendations for configuring the Event Log Service.

18.10.22.1 Application

This section contains recommendations for configuring the Application Event Log.

18.10.22.1.1 (L1) Set 'Application: Control Event Log behavior when the log file reaches its maximum size' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting controls Event Log behavior when the log file reaches its maximum size. If you enable this policy setting and a log file reaches its maximum size, new events are not written to the log and are lost. If you disable or do not configure this policy setting and a log file reaches its maximum size, new events overwrite old events.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Disabled`.

Note: Old events may or may not be retained according to the "Backup log automatically when full" policy setting.

Rationale:

If new events are not recorded it may be difficult or impossible to determine the root cause of system problems or the unauthorized activities of malicious users.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\EventLog\Application\Retention
```

Remediation:

To implement the recommended configuration state, set the following Group Policy setting to Disabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\Event Log Service\Application\Control Event Log behavior when the log file reaches its maximum size
```

Impact:

If you enable this policy setting and a log file reaches its maximum size, new events are not written to the log and are lost.

If you disable or do not configure this policy setting and a log file reaches its maximum size, new events overwrite old events.

Default Value:

Disabled

References:

1. CCE-37775-4

18.10.22.1.2 (L1) Set 'Application: Specify the maximum log file size (KB)' to 'Enabled: 32,768 or greater' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting specifies the maximum size of the log file in kilobytes. If you enable this policy setting, you can configure the maximum log file size to be between 1 megabyte (1,024 kilobytes) and 2 terabytes (2,147,483,647 kilobytes) in kilobyte increments. If you disable or do not configure this policy setting, the maximum size of the log file will be set to the locally configured value. This value can be changed by the local administrator using the Log Properties dialog and it defaults to 20 megabytes.

The recommended state for this setting is: Enabled: 32,768 or greater.

Rationale:

If events are not recorded it may be difficult or impossible to determine the root cause of system problems or the unauthorized activities of malicious users.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\EventLog\Application\MaxSize
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following Group Policy setting to Enabled: 32,768 or greater:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\Event Log Service\Application\Specify the maximum log file size (KB)
```


Impact:

When event logs fill to capacity, they will stop recording information unless the retention method for each is set so that the computer will overwrite the oldest entries with the most recent ones. To mitigate the risk of loss of recent data, you can configure the retention method so that older events are overwritten as needed.

The consequence of this configuration is that older events will be removed from the logs. Attackers can take advantage of such a configuration, because they can generate a large number of extraneous events to overwrite any evidence of their attack. These risks can be somewhat reduced if you automate the archival and backup of event log data.

Ideally, all specifically monitored events should be sent to a server that uses Microsoft System Center Operations Manager (SCOM) or some other automated monitoring tool. Such a configuration is particularly important because an attacker who successfully compromises a server could clear the Security log. If all events are sent to a monitoring server, then you will be able to gather forensic information about the attacker's activities.

Default Value:

20,480 KB

References:

1. CCE-37948-7

18.10.22.2 Security

This section contains recommendations for configuring the Security Event Log.

18.10.22.2.1 (L1) Set 'Security: Control Event Log behavior when the log file reaches its maximum size' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting controls Event Log behavior when the log file reaches its maximum size. If you enable this policy setting and a log file reaches its maximum size, new events are not written to the log and are lost. If you disable or do not configure this policy setting and a log file reaches its maximum size, new events overwrite old events.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Disabled`.

Note: Old events may or may not be retained according to the "Backup log automatically when full" policy setting.

Rationale:

If new events are not recorded it may be difficult or impossible to determine the root cause of system problems or the unauthorized activities of malicious users.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\EventLog\Security\Retention
```

Remediation:

To implement the recommended configuration state, set the following Group Policy setting to `Disabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\Event Log Service\Security\Control Event Log behavior when the log file reaches its maximum size
```

Impact:

If you enable this policy setting and a log file reaches its maximum size, new events are not written to the log and are lost.

If you disable or do not configure this policy setting and a log file reaches its maximum size, new events overwrite old events.

Default Value:

Disabled

References:

1. CCE-37145-0

18.10.22.2.2 (L1) Set 'Security: Specify the maximum log file size (KB)' to 'Enabled: 196,608 or greater' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting specifies the maximum size of the log file in kilobytes. If you enable this policy setting, you can configure the maximum log file size to be between 1 megabyte (1,024 kilobytes) and 2 terabytes (2,147,483,647 kilobytes) in kilobyte increments. If you disable or do not configure this policy setting, the maximum size of the log file will be set to the locally configured value. This value can be changed by the local administrator using the Log Properties dialog and it defaults to 20 megabytes.

The recommended state for this setting is: Enabled: 196,608 or greater.

Rationale:

If events are not recorded it may be difficult or impossible to determine the root cause of system problems or the unauthorized activities of malicious users.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\EventLog\Security\MaxSize
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following Group Policy setting to Enabled: 196,608 or greater:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\Event Log Service\Security\Specify the maximum log file size (KB)
```

Impact:

When event logs fill to capacity, they will stop recording information unless the retention method for each is set so that the computer will overwrite the oldest entries with the most recent ones. To mitigate the risk of loss of recent data, you can configure the retention method so that older events are overwritten as needed.

The consequence of this configuration is that older events will be removed from the logs. Attackers can take advantage of such a configuration, because they can generate a large number of extraneous events to overwrite any evidence of their attack. These risks can be somewhat reduced if you automate the archival and backup of event log data.

Ideally, all specifically monitored events should be sent to a server that uses Microsoft System Center Operations Manager (SCOM) or some other automated monitoring tool. Such a configuration is particularly important because an attacker who successfully compromises a server could clear the Security log. If all events are sent to a monitoring server, then you will be able to gather forensic information about the attacker's activities.

Default Value:

20,480 KB

References:

1. CCE-37695-4

18.10.22.3 Setup

This section contains recommendations for configuring the Setup Event Log.

18.10.22.3.1 (L1) Set 'Setup: Control Event Log behavior when the log file reaches its maximum size' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting controls Event Log behavior when the log file reaches its maximum size.

If you enable this policy setting and a log file reaches its maximum size, new events are not written to the log and are lost.

If you disable or do not configure this policy setting and a log file reaches its maximum size, new events overwrite old events.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Disabled`.

Note: Old events may or may not be retained according to the "Backup log automatically when full" policy setting.

Rationale:

If new events are not recorded it may be difficult or impossible to determine the root cause of system problems or the unauthorized activities of malicious users.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\EventLog\Setup\Retention
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following Group Policy setting to Disabled:

Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\Event Log Service\Setup\Control Event Log behavior when the log file reaches its maximum size

Impact:

If you enable this policy setting and a log file reaches its maximum size, new events are not written to the log and are lost.

If you disable or do not configure this policy setting and a log file reaches its maximum size, new events overwrite old events.

Default Value:

Disabled

References:

1. CCE-38276-2

18.10.22.3.2 (L1) Set 'Setup: Specify the maximum log file size (KB)' to 'Enabled: 32,768 or greater' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting specifies the maximum size of the log file in kilobytes. If you enable this policy setting, you can configure the maximum log file size to be between 1 megabyte (1,024 kilobytes) and 2 terabytes (2,147,483,647 kilobytes) in kilobyte increments. If you disable or do not configure this policy setting, the maximum size of the log file will be set to the locally configured value. This value can be changed by the local administrator using the Log Properties dialog and it defaults to 20 megabytes.

The recommended state for this setting is: Enabled: 32,768 or greater.

Rationale:

If events are not recorded it may be difficult or impossible to determine the root cause of system problems or the unauthorized activities of malicious users

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\EventLog\Setup\MaxSize
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following Group Policy setting to Enabled: 32,768 or greater:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\Event Log Service\Setup\Specify the maximum log file size (KB)
```


Impact:

When event logs fill to capacity, they will stop recording information unless the retention method for each is set so that the computer will overwrite the oldest entries with the most recent ones. To mitigate the risk of loss of recent data, you can configure the retention method so that older events are overwritten as needed.

The consequence of this configuration is that older events will be removed from the logs. Attackers can take advantage of such a configuration, because they can generate a large number of extraneous events to overwrite any evidence of their attack. These risks can be somewhat reduced if you automate the archival and backup of event log data.

Ideally, all specifically monitored events should be sent to a server that uses Microsoft System Center Operations Manager (SCOM) or some other automated monitoring tool. Such a configuration is particularly important because an attacker who successfully compromises a server could clear the Security log. If all events are sent to a monitoring server, then you will be able to gather forensic information about the attacker's activities.

Default Value:

20,480 KB

References:

1. CCE-37526-1

18.10.22.4 System

This section contains recommendations for configuring the System Event Log.

18.10.22.4.1 (L1) Set 'System: Control Event Log behavior when the log file reaches its maximum size' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting controls Event Log behavior when the log file reaches its maximum size. If you enable this policy setting and a log file reaches its maximum size, new events are not written to the log and are lost. If you disable or do not configure this policy setting and a log file reaches its maximum size, new events overwrite old events.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Disabled`.

Note: Old events may or may not be retained according to the "Backup log automatically when full" policy setting.

Rationale:

If new events are not recorded it may be difficult or impossible to determine the root cause of system problems or the unauthorized activities of malicious users.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\EventLog\System\Retention
```

Remediation:

To implement the recommended configuration state, set the following Group Policy setting to `Disabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\Event Log Service\System\Control Event Log behavior when the log file reaches its maximum size
```

Impact:

If you enable this policy setting and a log file reaches its maximum size, new events are not written to the log and are lost.

If you disable or do not configure this policy setting and a log file reaches its maximum size, new events overwrite old events.

Default Value:

Disabled

References:

1. CCE-36160-0

18.10.22.4.2 (L1) Set 'System: Specify the maximum log file size (KB)' to 'Enabled: 32,768 or greater' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting specifies the maximum size of the log file in kilobytes. If you enable this policy setting, you can configure the maximum log file size to be between 1 megabyte (1,024 kilobytes) and 2 terabytes (2,147,483,647 kilobytes) in kilobyte increments. If you disable or do not configure this policy setting, the maximum size of the log file will be set to the locally configured value. This value can be changed by the local administrator using the Log Properties dialog and it defaults to 20 megabytes.

The recommended state for this setting is: Enabled: 32,768 or greater.

Rationale:

If events are not recorded it may be difficult or impossible to determine the root cause of system problems or the unauthorized activities of malicious users

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\EventLog\System\MaxSize
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following Group Policy setting to Enabled: 32,768 or greater:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\Event Log Service\System\Specify the maximum log file size (KB)
```

Impact:

When event logs fill to capacity, they will stop recording information unless the retention method for each is set so that the computer will overwrite the oldest entries with the most recent ones. To mitigate the risk of loss of recent data, you can configure the retention method so that older events are overwritten as needed.

The consequence of this configuration is that older events will be removed from the logs. Attackers can take advantage of such a configuration, because they can generate a large number of extraneous events to overwrite any evidence of their attack. These risks can be somewhat reduced if you automate the archival and backup of event log data.

Ideally, all specifically monitored events should be sent to a server that uses Microsoft System Center Operations Manager (SCOM) or some other automated monitoring tool. Such a configuration is particularly important because an attacker who successfully compromises a server could clear the Security log. If all events are sent to a monitoring server, then you will be able to gather forensic information about the attacker's activities.

Default Value:

20,480 KB

References:

1. CCE-36092-5

18.10.23 Event Logging

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "eventlogging.admx/adml" that is included with the Microsoft Windows 10 Administrative Templates.

18.10.24 Event Viewer

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.25 Family Safety

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.26 File Explorer

This section contains recommendations to control the availability of options such as menu items and tabs in dialog boxes.

18.10.26.1 Previous Versions

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.26.2 (L1) Set 'Configure Windows SmartScreen' to 'Enabled: Require approval from an administrator before running downloaded unknown software' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows you to manage the behavior of Windows SmartScreen. Windows SmartScreen helps keep PCs safer by warning users before running unrecognized programs downloaded from the Internet. Some information is sent to Microsoft about files and programs run on PCs with this feature enabled.

If you enable this policy setting, Windows SmartScreen behavior may be controlled by setting one of the following options:

- Require approval from an administrator before running downloaded unknown software
- Give user a warning before running downloaded unknown software
- Turn off SmartScreen

If you disable or do not configure this policy setting, Windows SmartScreen behavior is managed by administrators on the PC by using Windows SmartScreen Settings in Action Center.

The recommended state for this setting is: Enabled: Require approval from an administrator before running downloaded unknown software.

Rationale:

Windows SmartScreen helps keep PCs safer by warning users before running unrecognized programs downloaded from the Internet. However, due to the fact that some information is sent to Microsoft about files and programs run on PCs some organizations may prefer to disable it.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\System\EnableSmartScreen
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following Group Policy setting to Enabled: Require approval from an administrator before running downloaded unknown software:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\File Explorer\Configure Windows SmartScreen
```

Impact:

Only administrators will be able to run unrecognized programs downloaded from the Internet. If users with a standard account try, they won't be able to unless they get an administrator to authorize it.

Default Value:

Not configured

References:

1. CCE-35859-8

18.10.26.3 (L1) Set 'Turn off Data Execution Prevention for Explorer' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

Disabling data execution prevention can allow certain legacy plug-in applications to function without terminating Explorer.

The recommended state for this setting is: Disabled.

Rationale:

Data Execution Prevention is an important security feature supported by Explorer that helps to limit the impact of certain types of malware.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\Explorer\NoDataExecutionPrevention
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following Group Policy setting to Disabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\File Explorer\Turn off Data Execution Prevention for Explorer
```

Impact:

Enabling this policy setting may allow certain legacy plug-in applications to function. Disabling this policy setting will ensure that Data Execution Prevention blocks certain types of malware from exploiting Explorer.

Default Value:

Not configured

References:

1. CCE-37809-1

18.10.26.4 (L1) Set 'Turn off heap termination on corruption' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

Legacy plug-in applications may continue to function when a File Explorer session has become corrupt. Disabling this feature will prevent this.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Disabled`.

Rationale:

Allowing an application to function after its session has become corrupt increases the risk posture to the system.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\Explorer:NoHeapTerminationOnCorruption
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following Group Policy setting to `Disabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\File Explorer\Turn off heap termination on corruption
```

Impact:

Disabling heap termination on corruption can allow certain legacy plug-in applications to function without terminating Explorer immediately although Explorer may still terminate unexpectedly later.

Default Value:

Default value is not configured.

References:

1. CCE-36660-9

18.10.26.5 (L1) Set 'Turn off shell protocol protected mode' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows you to configure the amount of functionality that the shell protocol can have. When using the full functionality of this protocol applications can open folders and launch files. The protected mode reduces the functionality of this protocol allowing applications to only open a limited set of folders. Applications are not able to open files with this protocol when it is in the protected mode. It is recommended to leave this protocol in the protected mode to increase the security of Windows.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Disabled`.

Rationale:

Limiting the opening of files and folders to a limited set reduces the attack surface of the system.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Policies\Explorer:PreXPSP2ShellProtocolBehavior
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following Group Policy setting to `Disabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\File Explorer\Turn off shell protocol protected mode
```

Impact:

If you enable this policy setting the protocol is fully enabled allowing the opening of folders and files. If you disable this policy setting the protocol is in the protected mode allowing applications to only open a limited set of folders.

Default Value:

If you do not configure this policy setting the protocol is in the protected mode allowing applications to only open a limited set of folders.

References:

1. CCE-36809-2

18.10.27 File History

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.28 Game Explorer

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.29 HomeGroup

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.30 Import Video

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "CaptureWizard.admx/adml" that is included with the Microsoft Windows Vista & 2008 Administrative Templates.

18.10.31 Internet Explorer

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.32 Internet Information Services

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.33 Location and Sensors

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.34 Maintenance Scheduler

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.35 Microsoft Edge

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "`microsoftedge.admx/adml`" that is included with the Microsoft Windows 10 Administrative Templates.

18.10.36 Microsoft Passport for Work

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "`passport.admx/adml`" that is included with the Microsoft Windows 10 Administrative Templates.

18.10.37 NetMeeting

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.38 Network Access Protection

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "NAPXPQec.admx/adml" that is included with the Microsoft Windows 2008, 7/2008R2, 8/2012 & 8.1/2012R2 Administrative Templates.

18.10.39 Network Projector

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.40 OneDrive (formerly SkyDrive)

This section contains recommendations related to OneDrive (formerly SkyDrive).

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "SkyDrive.admx/adml" that is included with the Microsoft Windows 8.1/2012R2 and Windows 10 Administrative Templates.

18.10.40.1 (L1) Set 'Prevent the usage of OneDrive for file storage' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting lets you prevent apps and features from working with files on OneDrive.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

Enabling this setting prevents users from accidentally uploading confidential or sensitive corporate information to OneDrive cloud service.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\Skydrive:DisableFileSync
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following Group Policy setting to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\OneDrive\Prevent the usage of OneDrive for file storage
```

Note: This Group Policy path does not exist by default. An additional Group Policy template (SkyDrive.admx/adml) is required - it is included with the Microsoft Windows 8.1/2012R2 and Windows 10 Administrative Templates.

Impact:

If you enable this policy setting: Users can't access OneDrive from the OneDrive app and file picker. Windows Store apps can't access OneDrive using the WinRT API. OneDrive doesn't appear in the navigation pane in File Explorer. OneDrive files aren't kept in sync with the cloud. Users can't automatically upload photos and videos from the camera roll folder. If you disable or do not configure this policy setting apps and features can work with OneDrive file storage.

Default Value:

The default value is not configured which the same as disable.

References:

1. CCE-36939-7

18.10.41 Online Assistance

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.42 Password Synchronization

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "PswdSync.admx/adml" that is included with the Microsoft Windows Vista, 2008, 7/2008R2, 8/2012 & 8.1/2012R2 Administrative Templates.

18.10.43 Portable Operating System

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.44 Presentation Settings

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.45 Remote Desktop Services (formerly Terminal Services)

This section contains recommendations related to Remote Desktop Services (formerly Terminal Services).

18.10.45.1 RD Licensing

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.45.2 Remote Desktop Connection Client

This section contains recommendations for the Remote Desktop Connection Client.

18.10.45.2.1 RemoteFX USB Device Redirection

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.45.2.2 (L1) Set 'Do not allow passwords to be saved' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting helps prevent Remote Desktop Services / Terminal Services clients from saving passwords on a computer. Note If this policy setting was previously configured as Disabled or Not configured, any previously saved passwords will be deleted the first time a Terminal Services client disconnects from any server.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

An attacker with physical access to the computer may be able to break the protection guarding saved passwords. An attacker who compromises a user's account and connects to their computer could use saved passwords to gain access to additional hosts.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Policies\Microsoft\Windows NT\Terminal  
Services\DisablePasswordSaving
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following Group Policy setting to Enabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\Remote  
Desktop Services\Remote Desktop Connection Client\Do not allow passwords to be saved
```

Impact:

If you enable this policy setting, the password saving checkbox is disabled for Remote Desktop Services / Terminal Services clients and users will not be able to save passwords.

Default Value:

Disabled

References:

1. CCE-36223-6

18.10.45.3 Remote Desktop Session Host

This section contains recommendations for the Remote Desktop Session Host.

18.10.45.3.1 Application Compatibility

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.45.3.2 Connections

This section contains recommendations for Connections to the Remote Desktop Session Host.

18.10.45.3.2.1 (L2) Set 'Restrict Remote Desktop Services users to a single Remote Desktop Services session' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 2 - Domain Controller
- Level 2 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows you to restrict users to a single Remote Desktop Services session.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

This setting ensures that users & administrators who Remote Desktop to a server will continue to use the same session - if they disconnect and reconnect, they will go back to the same session they were using before, preventing the creation of a second simultaneous session. This both prevents unnecessary resource usage by having the server host unnecessary additional sessions (which would put extra load on the server) and also ensures a consistency of experience for the user.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows NT\Terminal Services:  
fSingleSessionPerUser
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\Remote  
Desktop Services\Remote Desktop Session Host\Connections\Restrict Remote Desktop  
Services users to a single Remote Desktop Services session
```

Impact:

If you enable this policy setting, users who log on remotely by using Remote Desktop Services will be restricted to a single session (either active or disconnected) on that server. If the user leaves the session in a disconnected state, the user automatically reconnects to that session at the next logon.

If you disable this policy setting, users are allowed to make unlimited simultaneous remote connections by using Remote Desktop Services.

Default Value:

If you do not configure this policy setting, this policy setting is not specified at the Group Policy level.

References:

1. CCE-37708-5

18.10.45.3.3 Device and Resource Redirection

This section contains recommendations related to Remote Desktop Session Host Device and Resource Redirection.

18.10.45.3.3.1 (L2) Set 'Do not allow COM port redirection' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 2 - Domain Controller
- Level 2 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting specifies whether to prevent the redirection of data to client COM ports from the remote computer in a Remote Desktop Services session.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

In a more security-sensitive environment, it is desirable to reduce the possible attack surface. The need for COM port redirection within a Remote Desktop session is very rare, so makes sense to reduce the number of unexpected avenues for data exfiltration and/or malicious code transfer.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Policies\Microsoft\Windows NT\Terminal  
Services:fDisableCcm
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\Remote  
Desktop Services\Remote Desktop Session Host\Device and Resource Redirection\Do not  
allow COM port redirection
```

Impact:

If you enable this policy setting, users cannot redirect server data to the local COM port.

Default Value:

If you do not configure this policy setting, COM port redirection is not specified at the Group Policy level.

References:

1. CCE-37696-2

18.10.45.3.3.2 (L1) Set 'Do not allow drive redirection' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting prevents users from sharing the local drives on their client computers to Terminal Servers that they access. Mapped drives appear in the session folder tree in Windows Explorer in the following format:

```
\\TSClient\<<driveletter>$
```

If local drives are shared they are left vulnerable to intruders who want to exploit the data that is stored on them.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

Data could be forwarded from the user's Terminal Server session to the user's local computer without any direct user interaction.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Policies\Microsoft\Windows NT\Terminal  
Services\fdisableCdm
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\Remote  
Desktop Services\Remote Desktop Session Host\Device and Resource Redirection\Do not  
allow drive redirection
```

Impact:

Drive redirection will not be possible. In most cases, traditional network drive mapping to file shares (including administrative shares) will serve as a capable substitute to still allow file transfers when needed.

Default Value:

Disabled

References:

1. CCE-36509-8

18.10.45.3.3.3 (L2) Set 'Do not allow LPT port redirection' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 2 - Domain Controller
- Level 2 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting specifies whether to prevent the redirection of data to client LPT ports during a Remote Desktop Services session.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

In a more security-sensitive environment, it is desirable to reduce the possible attack surface. The need for LPT port redirection within a Remote Desktop session is very rare, so makes sense to reduce the number of unexpected avenues for data exfiltration and/or malicious code transfer.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Policies\Microsoft\Windows NT\Terminal  
Services:fDisableLPT
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\Remote  
Desktop Services\Remote Desktop Session Host\Device and Resource Redirection\Do not  
allow LPT port redirection
```

Impact:

If you enable this policy setting, users in a Remote Desktop Services session cannot redirect server data to the local LPT port.

Default Value:

By default, Remote Desktop Services allows LPT port redirection.

References:

1. CCE-37778-8

18.10.45.3.3.4 (L2) Set 'Do not allow supported Plug and Play device redirection' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 2 - Domain Controller
- Level 2 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows you to control the redirection of supported Plug and Play devices, such as Windows Portable Devices, to the remote computer in a Remote Desktop Services session.

The recommended state for this setting is: Enabled.

Rationale:

In a more security-sensitive environment, it is desirable to reduce the possible attack surface. The need for Plug and Play device redirection within a Remote Desktop session is very rare, so makes sense to reduce the number of unexpected avenues for data exfiltration and/or malicious code transfer.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Policies\Microsoft\Windows NT\Terminal Services:fDisablePNPRedir
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\Remote Desktop Services\Remote Desktop Session Host\Device and Resource Redirection\Do not allow supported Plug and Play device redirection
```

Impact:

If you enable this policy setting, users cannot redirect their supported Plug and Play devices to the remote computer

Default Value:

By default, Remote Desktop Services allows redirection of supported Plug and Play devices

References:

1. CCE-37477-7

18.10.45.3.4 Licensing

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.45.3.5 Printer Redirection

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.45.3.6 Profiles

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.45.3.7 RD Connection Broker

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.45.3.8 Remote Session Environment

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.45.3.9 Security

This section contains recommendations related to Remote Desktop Session Host Security.

18.10.45.3.9.1 (L1) Set 'Always prompt for password upon connection' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting specifies whether Terminal Services always prompts the client computer for a password upon connection. You can use this policy setting to enforce a password prompt for users who log on to Terminal Services, even if they already provided the password in the Remote Desktop Connection client. By default, Terminal Services allows users to automatically log on if they enter a password in the Remote Desktop Connection client.

Note If you do not configure this policy setting, the local computer administrator can use the Terminal Services Configuration tool to either allow or prevent passwords from being automatically sent.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

Users have the option to store both their username and password when they create a new Remote Desktop connection shortcut. If the server that runs Terminal Services allows users who have used this feature to log on to the server but not enter their password, then it is possible that an attacker who has gained physical access to the user's computer could connect to a Terminal Server through the Remote Desktop connection shortcut, even though they may not know the user's password.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Policies\Microsoft\Windows NT\Terminal  
Services\fpromptforpassword
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\Remote  
Desktop Services\Remote Desktop Session Host\Security\Always prompt for password upon  
connection
```

Impact:

Users will always have to enter their password when they establish new Terminal Server sessions.

Default Value:

Not configured

References:

1. CCE-37929-7

18.10.45.3.9.2 (L1) Set 'Require secure RPC communication' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows you to specify whether a terminal server requires secure remote procedure call (RPC) communication with all clients or allows unsecured communication.

You can use this policy setting to strengthen the security of RPC communication with clients by allowing only authenticated and encrypted requests.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

Allowing unsecure RPC communication can expose the server to man in the middle attacks and data disclosure attacks.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows NT\Terminal  
Services:fEncryptRPCTraffic
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\Remote  
Desktop Services\Remote Desktop Session Host\Security\Require secure RPC communication
```

Impact:

If you enable this policy setting, the terminal server accepts requests from RPC clients that support secure requests, and does not allow unsecured communication with untrusted clients.

Default Value:

Not Configured. If you do not configure this policy setting, unsecured communication is allowed.

References:

1. CCE-37567-5

18.10.45.3.9.3 (L1) Set 'Set client connection encryption level' to 'Enabled: High Level' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting specifies whether the computer that is about to host the remote connection will enforce an encryption level for all data sent between it and the client computer for the remote session.

The recommended state for this setting is `Enabled: High Level`.

Rationale:

If Terminal Server client connections are allowed that use low level encryption, it is more likely that an attacker will be able to decrypt any captured Terminal Services network traffic.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Policies\Microsoft\Windows NT\Terminal  
Services\MinEncryptionLevel
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled: High Level`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\Remote  
Desktop Services\Remote Desktop Session Host\Security\Set client connection encryption  
level
```

Impact:

Clients that do not support 128-bit encryption will be unable to establish Terminal Server sessions.

Default Value:

Not configured

References:

1. CCE-36627-8

18.10.45.3.10 Session Time Limits

This section contains recommendations related to Remote Desktop Session Host Session Time Limits.

18.10.45.3.10.1 (L2) Set 'Set time limit for active but idle Remote Desktop Services sessions' to 'Enabled: 15 minutes or less' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 2 - Domain Controller
- Level 2 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows you to specify the maximum amount of time that an active Remote Desktop Services session can be idle (without user input) before it is automatically disconnected.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled: 15 minutes or less.`

Rationale:

This setting helps to prevent active Remote Desktop sessions from tying up the computer for long periods of time while not in use, preventing computing resources from being consumed by large numbers of inactive sessions. In addition, old, forgotten Remote Desktops session that are still active can cause password lockouts if the user's password has changed but the old session is still running. For systems that limit the number of connected users (e.g. servers in the default Administrative mode - 2 sessions only), other users' old but still active sessions can prevent another user from connecting, resulting in an effective denial of service.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Policies\Microsoft\Windows NT\Terminal  
Services:MaxIdleTime
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:
15 minutes or less:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\Remote Desktop Services\Remote Desktop Session Host\Session Time Limits\Set time limit for active but idle Remote Desktop Services sessions
```

Impact:

If you enable this policy setting, you must select the desired time limit in the Idle session limit list. Remote Desktop Services will automatically disconnect active but idle sessions after the specified amount of time. The user receives a warning two minutes before the session disconnects, which allows the user to press a key or move the mouse to keep the session active. If you have a console session, idle session time limits do not apply.

Default Value:

By default, Remote Desktop Services allows sessions to remain active but idle for an unlimited amount of time.

References:

1. CCE-37562-6

18.10.45.3.10.2 (L2) Set 'Set time limit for disconnected sessions' to 'Enabled: 1 minute' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 2 - Domain Controller
- Level 2 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows you to configure a time limit for disconnected Remote Desktop Services sessions.

The recommended state for this setting is: Enabled: 1 minute.

Rationale:

This setting helps to prevent active Remote Desktop sessions from tying up the computer for long periods of time while not in use, preventing computing resources from being consumed by large numbers of disconnected but still active sessions. In addition, old, forgotten Remote Desktops session that are still active can cause password lockouts if the user's password has changed but the old session is still running. For systems that limit the number of connected users (e.g. servers in the default Administrative mode - 2 sessions only), other users' old but still active sessions can prevent another user from connecting, resulting in an effective denial of service. This setting is important to ensure a disconnected session is properly terminated.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Policies\Microsoft\Windows NT\Terminal Services:MaxDisconnectionTime
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled: 1 minute:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\Remote Desktop Services\Remote Desktop Session Host\Session Time Limits\Set time limit for disconnected sessions
```

Impact:

If you enable this policy setting, disconnected sessions are deleted from the server after the specified amount of time. To enforce the default behavior that disconnected sessions are maintained for an unlimited time, select Never. If you have a console session, disconnected session time limits do not apply.

Default Value:

By default, Remote Desktop Services allows users to disconnect from a Remote Desktop Services session without logging off and ending the session.

References:

1. CCE-37949-5

18.10.45.3.11 Temporary folders

This section contains recommendations related to Remote Desktop Session Host Session Temporary folders.

18.10.45.3.11.1 (L1) Set 'Do not use temporary folders per session' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

By default, Remote Desktop Services creates a separate temporary folder on the RD Session Host server for each active session that a user maintains on the RD Session Host server. The temporary folder is created on the RD Session Host server in a Temp folder under the user's profile folder and is named with the "sessionid." This temporary folder is used to store individual temporary files.

To reclaim disk space, the temporary folder is deleted when the user logs off from a session.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Disabled`.

Rationale:

By Disabling this setting you are keeping the cached data independent for each session, both reducing the chance of problems from shared cached data between sessions, and keeping possibly sensitive data separate to each user session.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows NT\Terminal  
Services:PerSessionTempDir
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Disabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\Remote Desktop Services\Remote Desktop Session Host\Temporary Folders\Do not use temporary folders per session
```

Impact:

If this setting is enabled, only one temporary folder is used for all remote sessions. If a communal temporary folder is used, it might be possible for users to access other users temporary folders.

Default Value:

Default value is not configured which is the same as Disabled that allows the use of temporary folders.

References:

1. CCE-38180-6

18.10.46 RSS Feeds

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.47 Search

This section contains recommendations for Search settings.

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "Search.admx/adml" that is included with the Microsoft Windows Vista, 2008, 7/2008R2, 8/2012, 8.1/2012R2 and Windows 10 Administrative Templates.

18.10.47.1 OCR

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "SearchOCR.admx/adml" that is included with the Microsoft Windows 7/2008R2, 8/2012, 8.1/2012R2 and Windows 10 Administrative Templates.

18.10.47.2 (L1) Set 'Allow indexing of encrypted files' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows encrypted items to be indexed. If you enable this policy setting, indexing will attempt to decrypt and index the content (access restrictions will still apply). If you disable this policy setting, the search service components (including non-Microsoft components) are expected not to index encrypted items or encrypted stores. This policy setting is not configured by default. If you do not configure this policy setting, the local setting, configured through Control Panel, will be used. By default, the Control Panel setting is set to not index encrypted content. When this setting is enabled or disabled, the index is rebuilt completely. Full volume encryption (such as BitLocker Drive Encryption or a non-Microsoft solution) must be used for the location of the index to maintain security for encrypted files.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Disabled`.

Rationale:

Indexing and allowing users to search encrypted files could potentially reveal confidential data stored within the encrypted files.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\Windows  
Search\AllowIndexingEncryptedStoresOrItems
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Disabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows  
Components\Search\Allow indexing of encrypted files
```

Note: This Group Policy path does not exist by default. An additional Group Policy template (Search.admx/adml) is required - it is included with the Microsoft Windows Vista, 2008, 7/2008R2, 8/2012, 8.1/2012R2 and Windows 10 Administrative Templates.

Impact:

The search service components (including non-Microsoft components) will not encrypted items or encrypted stores.

References:

1. CCE-38277-0

18.10.47.3 (L2) Set 'Set what information is shared in Search' to 'Enabled: Anonymous info' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 2 - Domain Controller
- Level 2 - Member Server

Description:

Various levels of information can be shared with Bing in Search, to include user information and location. Configuring this setting prevents users from selecting the level of information shared and enables the most restrictive selection.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled: Anonymous info`.

Rationale:

Limiting the search information shared with Bing enhances the privacy and security.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\Windows  
Search:ConnectedSearchPrivacy
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled: Anonymous info`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\Search\Set  
what information is shared in Search
```

Note: This Group Policy path does not exist by default. An additional Group Policy template (`Search.admx/adml`) is required - it is included with the Microsoft Windows Vista, 2008, 7/2008R2, 8/2012, 8.1/2012R2 and Windows 10 Administrative Templates.

Impact:

This setting may impact the end user search experience and results when using Bing search.

Default Value:

Default value is not configured which is the same as Disabled.

References:

1. CCE-36937-1

18.10.48 Security Center

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.49 Server for NIS

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "Snis.admx/adml" that is included with the Microsoft Windows Vista, 2008, 7/2008R2, 8/2012 & 8.1/2012R2 Administrative Templates.

18.10.50 Shutdown Options

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.51 Smart Card

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.52 Software Protection Platform

This section contains recommendations related to the Software Protection Platform.

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "avsvvalidationgp.admx/adml" that is included with the Microsoft Windows 10 Administrative Templates.

18.10.52.1 (L2) Set 'Turn off KMS Client Online AVS Validation' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 2 - Domain Controller
- Level 2 - Member Server

Description:

The Key Management Service (KMS) is a Microsoft license activation method that entails setting up a local server that stores the licenses. The server itself needs to connect to Microsoft to activate the KMS service, but subsequent on-network clients can activate Microsoft Windows OS and/or their Microsoft Office via the KMS server instead of connecting directly to Microsoft. This policy setting lets you opt-out of sending KMS client activation data to Microsoft automatically.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

Even though the KMS licensing method does not *require* a connection to Microsoft, the clients using KMS licensing still send KMS client activation state data to Microsoft automatically. Preventing this information from being sent can help reduce privacy concerns.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Policies\Microsoft\Windows NT\CurrentVersion\Software Protection Platform:NoGenTicket
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\Software Protection Platform\Turn off KMS Client Online AVS Validation
```

Note: This Group Policy setting is provided by the Group Policy template "avsvvalidationgp.admx/adml" that is included with the Microsoft Windows 10 Administrative Templates.

Impact:

Enabling this setting prevents this computer from sending data to Microsoft regarding its activation state.

Default Value:

Not Configured

18.10.53 Sound Recorder

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.54 Store

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "WinStoreUI.admx/adml" that is included with the Microsoft Windows 8/2012 & 8.1/2012R2 Administrative Templates.

18.10.55 Sync your settings

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.56 Tablet PC

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.57 Task Scheduler

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.58 Text Input

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "textinput.admx/adml" that is included with the Microsoft Windows 10 Administrative Templates.

18.10.59 Windows Calendar

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.60 Windows Color System

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.61 Windows Customer Experience Improvement Program

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.62 Windows Defender

This section contains recommendations related to Windows Defender.

18.10.62.1 Client Interface

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.62.2 Exclusions

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.62.3 MAPS

This section contains recommendations related to Microsoft MAPS.

18.10.62.3.1 (L2) Set 'Join Microsoft MAPS' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 2 - Domain Controller
- Level 2 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows you to join Microsoft MAPS. Microsoft MAPS is the online community that helps you choose how to respond to potential threats. The community also helps stop the spread of new malicious software infections. You can choose to send basic or additional information about detected software. Additional information helps Microsoft create new definitions and help it to protect your computer.

Possible options are:(0x0) Disabled (default)(0x1) Basic membership(0x2) Advanced membership Basic membership will send basic information to Microsoft about software that has been detected including where the software came from the actions that you apply or that are applied automatically and whether the actions were successful. Advanced membership in addition to basic information will send more information to Microsoft about malicious software spyware and potentially unwanted software including the location of the software file names how the software operates and how it has impacted your computer.

The recommended state for this setting is: Disabled.

Rationale:

This information can include things like location of detected items on your computer if harmful software was removed. The information will be automatically collected and sent. In some instances personal information might unintentionally be sent to Microsoft. However Microsoft will not use this information to identify you or contact you.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is in effect when the following registry value does not exist, or when it exists with a value of 0:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Policies\Microsoft\Windows Defender\Spynet:SpynetReporting
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Disabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\Windows Defender\MAPS\Join Microsoft MAPS
```

Impact:

If you enable this setting you will join Microsoft MAPS with the membership specified. If you disable or do not configure this setting you will not join Microsoft MAPS.

Default Value:

Default value is not configured which is the same as disabled.

18.10.63 Windows Error Reporting

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.64 Windows Game Recording and Broadcasting

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "gamedvr.admx/adml" that is included with the Microsoft Windows 10 Administrative Templates.

18.10.65 Windows Installer

This section contains recommendations related to Windows Installer.

18.10.65.1 (L1) Set 'Always install with elevated privileges' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

Directs Windows Installer to use system permissions when it installs any program on the system.

This setting extends elevated privileges to all programs. These privileges are usually reserved for programs that have been assigned to the user (offered on the desktop), assigned to the computer (installed automatically), or made available in Add or Remove Programs in Control Panel. This setting lets users install programs that require access to directories that the user might not have permission to view or change, including directories on highly restricted computers.

If you disable this setting or do not configure it, the system applies the current user's permissions when it installs programs that a system administrator does not distribute or offer.

Note: This setting appears both in the Computer Configuration and User Configuration folders. To make this setting effective, you must enable the setting in both folders.

Caution: Skilled users can take advantage of the permissions this setting grants to change their privileges and gain permanent access to restricted files and folders. Note that the User Configuration version of this setting is not guaranteed to be secure.

The recommended state for this setting is: *Disabled*.

Rationale:

Users with limited privileges can exploit this feature by creating a Windows Installer installation package that creates a new local account that belongs to the local built-in Administrators group, adds their current account to the local built-in Administrators group, installs malicious software, or performs other unauthorized activities.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\Installer\AlwaysInstallElevated
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Disabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\Windows Installer\Always install with elevated privileges
```

Impact:

Windows Installer will apply the current user's permissions when it installs programs, this will prevent standard users from installing applications that affect system-wide configuration items.

Default Value:

Not configured

References:

1. CCE-36919-9

18.10.65.2 (L2) Set 'Prevent Internet Explorer security prompt for Windows Installer scripts' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 2 - Domain Controller
- Level 2 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows Web-based programs to install software on the computer without notifying the user.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Disabled`.

Rationale:

Suppressing the system warning can pose a security risk and increase the attack surface on the system.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\Installer:SafeForScripting
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Disabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\Windows Installer\Prevent Internet Explorer security prompt for Windows Installer scripts
```

Impact:

If you disable or do not configure this policy setting by default when a script hosted by an Internet browser tries to install a program on the system the system warns users and allows them to select or refuse the installation. If you enable this policy setting the warning is suppressed and allows the installation to proceed. This policy setting is designed for enterprises that use Web-based tools to distribute programs to their employees. However because this policy setting can pose a security risk it should be applied cautiously.

Default Value:

Default value is not configured which is the same as Disable.

References:

1. CCE-37524-6

18.10.66 Windows Logon Options

This section contains recommendations related to Windows Logon Options.

18.10.66.1 (L1) Set 'Sign-in last interactive user automatically after a system-initiated restart' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting controls whether a device will automatically sign-in the last interactive user after Windows Update restarts the system. If you enable or do not configure this policy setting the device securely saves the user's credentials (including the user name domain and encrypted password) to configure automatic sign-in after a Windows Update restart. After the Windows Update restart the user is automatically signed-in and the session is automatically locked with all the lock screen apps configured for that user. If you disable this policy setting the device does not store the user's credentials for automatic sign-in after a Windows Update restart. The users' lock screen apps are not restarted after the system restarts.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Disabled`.

Rationale:

Disabling this feature will prevent the caching of user's credentials and unauthorized use of the device, and also ensure the user is aware of the restart.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed.

This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Policies\System:DisableAutomaticRestartSignOn
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Disabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\Windows Logon Options\Sign-in last interactive user automatically after a system-initiated restart
```

Impact:

The user is required to present the logon credentials in order to proceed after restart.

Default Value:

Not configured

References:

1. CCE-36977-7

18.10.67 Windows Mail

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.68 Windows Media Center

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.69 Windows Media Digital Rights Management

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.70 Windows Media Player

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.71 Windows Meeting Space

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "WindowsCollaboration.admx/adml" that is included with the Microsoft Windows Vista & 2008 Administrative Templates.

18.10.72 Windows Messenger

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.73 Windows Mobility Center

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.74 Windows Movie Maker

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "MovieMaker.admx/adml" that is included with the Microsoft Windows Vista & 2008 Administrative Templates.

18.10.75 Windows PowerShell

This section contains recommendations related to Windows PowerShell.

18.10.75.1 (L1) Set 'Turn on PowerShell Script Block Logging' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting enables logging of all PowerShell script input to the Microsoft-Windows-PowerShell/Operational event log.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Disabled`.

Rationale:

Due to the potential risks of capturing passwords in the logs. This setting should only be needed for debugging purposes, and not in normal operation, it is important to ensure this is set to `Disabled`.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\PowerShell\ScriptBlockLogging:EnableScriptBlockLogging
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following Group Policy setting to `Disabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\Windows PowerShell\Turn on PowerShell Script Block Logging
```

Note: This Group Policy path does not exist by default. A newer version of the "powershellexecutionpolicy.admx/adml" Administrative Template is required - it is included with the Microsoft Windows 10 Administrative Templates.

Impact:

If you disable this policy setting, logging of PowerShell script input is disabled.

Default Value:

Not Configured

18.10.75.2 (L1) Set 'Turn on PowerShell Transcription' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This Policy setting lets you capture the input and output of Windows PowerShell commands into text-based transcripts.

The recommended state for this setting is: Disabled.

Rationale:

If this setting is enabled there is a risk that passwords could get stored in plain text in the PowerShell_transcript output file.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\PowerShell\Transcription:Enable  
Transcripting
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following Group Policy setting to Disabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\Windows  
PowerShell\Turn on PowerShell Transcription
```

Note: This Group Policy path does not exist by default. A newer version of the "powershellexecutionpolicy.admx/adml" Administrative Template is required - it is included with the Microsoft Windows 10 Administrative Templates.

Impact:

If you disable this policy setting, transcribing of PowerShell-based applications is disabled by default, although transcribing can still be enabled through the Start-Transcript cmdlet.

Default Value:

Not Configured

18.10.76 Windows Reliability Analysis

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.77 Windows Remote Management (WinRM)

This section contains recommendations related to Windows Remote Management (WinRM).

18.10.77.1 WinRM Client

This section contains recommendations related to the WinRM client.

18.10.77.1.1 (L1) Set 'Allow Basic authentication' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows you to manage whether the Windows Remote Management (WinRM) client uses Basic authentication.

If you enable this policy setting, the WinRM client will use Basic authentication. If WinRM is configured to use HTTP transport, then the user name and password are sent over the network as clear text.

If you disable or do not configure this policy setting, then the WinRM client will not use Basic authentication.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Disabled`.

Rationale:

Basic authentication is less robust than other authentication methods available in WinRM because credentials including passwords are transmitted in plain text. An attacker who is able to capture packets on the network where WinRM is running may be able to determine the credentials used for accessing remote hosts via WinRM.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\WinRM\Client\AllowBasic
```


Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Disabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\Windows Remote Management (WinRM)\WinRM Client\Allow Basic authentication
```

Impact:

None - this is the default behavior.

Default Value:

Not configured

References:

1. CCE-36310-1

18.10.77.1.2 (L1) Set 'Allow unencrypted traffic' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows you to manage whether the Windows Remote Management (WinRM) client sends and receives unencrypted messages over the network.

If you enable this policy setting, the WinRM client sends and receives unencrypted messages over the network.

If you disable or do not configure this policy setting, the WinRM client sends or receives only encrypted messages over the network.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Disabled`.

Rationale:

Encrypting WinRM network traffic reduces the risk of an attacker viewing or modifying WinRM messages as they transit the network.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\WinRM\Client\AllowUnencryptedTraffic
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Disabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\Windows Remote Management (WinRM)\WinRM Client\Allow unencrypted traffic
```

Impact:

None - this is the default behavior.

Default Value:

Not configured

References:

1. CCE-37726-7

18.10.77.1.3 (L1) Set 'Disallow Digest authentication' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows you to manage whether the Windows Remote Management (WinRM) client will not use Digest authentication.

If you enable this policy setting, the WinRM client will not use Digest authentication.

If you disable or do not configure this policy setting, the WinRM client will use Digest authentication.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

Digest authentication is less robust than other authentication methods available in WinRM, an attacker who is able to capture packets on the network where WinRM is running may be able to determine the credentials used for accessing remote hosts via WinRM.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\WinRM\Client\AllowDigest
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\Windows Remote Management (WinRM)\WinRM Client\Disallow Digest authentication
```

Impact:

The WinRM client will not use Digest authentication.

Default Value:

Not configured

References:

1. CCE-38318-2

18.10.77.2 WinRM Service

This section contains recommendations related to the WinRM service.

18.10.77.2.1 (L1) Set 'Allow Basic authentication' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows you to manage whether the Windows Remote Management (WinRM) service accepts Basic authentication from a remote client.

If you enable this policy setting, the WinRM service will accept Basic authentication from a remote client.

If you disable or do not configure this policy setting, the WinRM service will not accept Basic authentication from a remote client.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Disabled`.

Rationale:

Basic authentication is less robust than other authentication methods available in WinRM because credentials including passwords are transmitted in plain text. An attacker who is able to capture packets on the network where WinRM is running may be able to determine the credentials used for accessing remote hosts via WinRM.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\WinRM\Service\AllowBasic
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Disabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\Windows Remote Management (WinRM)\WinRM Service\Allow Basic authentication
```

Impact:

None - this is the default behavior.

Default Value:

Not configured

References:

1. CCE-36254-1

18.10.77.2.2 (L1) Set 'Allow unencrypted traffic' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows you to manage whether the Windows Remote Management (WinRM) service sends and receives unencrypted messages over the network.

If you enable this policy setting, the WinRM client sends and receives unencrypted messages over the network.

If you disable or do not configure this policy setting, the WinRM client sends or receives only encrypted messages over the network.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Disabled`.

Rationale:

Encrypting WinRM network traffic reduces the risk of an attacker viewing or modifying WinRM messages as they transit the network.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\WinRM\Service\AllowUnencryptedTraffic
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Disabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\Windows Remote Management (WinRM)\WinRM Service\Allow unencrypted traffic
```

Impact:

None - this is the default behavior.

Default Value:

Not configured

References:

1. CCE-38223-4

18.10.77.2.3 (L1) Set 'Disallow WinRM from storing RunAs credentials' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows you to manage whether the Windows Remote Management (WinRM) service will not allow RunAs credentials to be stored for any plug-ins.

If you enable this policy setting, the WinRM service will not allow the RunAsUser or RunAsPassword configuration values to be set for any plug-ins. If a plug-in has already set the RunAsUser and RunAsPassword configuration values, the RunAsPassword configuration value will be erased from the credential store on this computer.

If you disable or do not configure this policy setting, the WinRM service will allow the RunAsUser and RunAsPassword configuration values to be set for plug-ins and the RunAsPassword value will be stored securely.

If you enable and then disable this policy setting, any values that were previously configured for RunAsPassword will need to be reset.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

Although the ability to store RunAs credentials is a convenient feature it increases the risk of account compromise slightly. For example, if you forget to lock your desktop before leaving it unattended for a few minutes another person could access not only the desktop of your computer but also any hosts you manage via WinRM with cached RunAs credentials.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\WinRM\Service\DisableRunAs
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\Windows Remote Management (WinRM)\WinRM Service\Disallow WinRM from storing RunAs credentials
```

Impact:

The WinRM service will not allow the RunAsUser or RunAsPassword configuration values to be set for any plug-ins. If a plug-in has already set the RunAsUser and RunAsPassword configuration values, the RunAsPassword configuration value will be erased from the credential store on this computer.

If this setting is later Disabled again, any values that were previously configured for RunAsPassword will need to be reset.

Default Value:

Not configured

References:

1. CCE-36000-8

18.10.78 Windows Remote Shell

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

18.10.79 Windows SideShow

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "`Sideshow.admx/adml`" that is included with the Microsoft Windows Vista, 2008, 7/2008R2 & 8/2012 Administrative Templates.

18.10.80 Windows System Resource Manager

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "`SystemResourceManager.admx/adml`" that is included with the Microsoft Windows Vista, 2008, 7/2008R2 & 8/2012 Administrative Templates.

18.10.81 Windows Update

This section contains recommendations related to Windows Update.

18.10.81.1 (L1) Set 'Configure Automatic Updates' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting specifies whether computers in your environment will receive security updates from Windows Update or WSUS. If you configure this policy setting to Enabled, the operating system will recognize when a network connection is available and then use the network connection to search Windows Update or your designated intranet site for updates that apply to them.

After you configure this policy setting to Enabled, select one of the following three options in the Configure Automatic Updates Properties dialog box to specify how the service will work:

- Notify before downloading any updates and notify again before installing them.
- Download the updates automatically and notify when they are ready to be installed. (Default setting)
- Automatically download updates and install them on the schedule specified below.

If you disable this policy setting, you will need to download and manually install any available updates from Windows Update.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

Although each version of Windows is thoroughly tested before release, it is possible that problems will be discovered after the products are shipped. The Configure Automatic Updates setting can help you ensure that the computers in your environment will always have the most recent critical operating system updates and service packs installed.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\WindowsUpdate\AU\NoAutoUpdate
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\Windows Update\Configure Automatic Updates
```

Impact:

Critical operating system updates and service packs will automatically download and install at 3:00 A.M. daily.

Default Value:

Download the updates automatically and notify when they are ready to be installed

References:

1. CCE-36172-5

18.10.81.2 (L1) Set 'Configure Automatic Updates: Scheduled install day' to '0 - Every day' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting specifies whether computers in your environment will receive security updates from Windows Update or WSUS. If you configure this policy setting to Enabled, the operating system will recognize when a network connection is available and then use the network connection to search Windows Update or your designated intranet site for updates that apply to them.

After you configure this policy setting to Enabled, select one of the following three options in the Configure Automatic Updates Properties dialog box to specify how the service will work:

- Notify before downloading any updates and notify again before installing them.
- Download the updates automatically and notify when they are ready to be installed. (Default setting)
- Automatically download updates and install them on the schedule specified below.

If you disable this policy setting, you will need to download and manually install any available updates from Windows Update.

The recommended state for this setting is: 0 - Every day.

Rationale:

Although each version of Windows is thoroughly tested before release, it is possible that problems will be discovered after the products are shipped. The Configure Automatic Updates setting can help you ensure that the computers in your environment will always have the most recent critical operating system updates and service packs installed.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\WindowsUpdate\AU\ScheduledInstallDay
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to 0 - Every day:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\Windows Update\Configure Automatic Updates: Scheduled install day
```

Impact:

Critical operating system updates and service packs will automatically download and install at 3:00 A.M. daily.

Default Value:

Not Defined

References:

1. CCE-36172-5

18.10.81.3 (L1) Set 'No auto-restart with logged on users for scheduled automatic updates installations' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting specifies that Automatic Updates will wait for computers to be restarted by the users who are logged on to them to complete a scheduled installation.

If you enable the No auto-restart for scheduled Automatic Updates installations setting, Automatic Updates does not restart computers automatically during scheduled installations. Instead, Automatic Updates notifies users to restart their computers to complete the installations. You should note that Automatic Updates will not be able to detect future updates until restarts occur on the affected computers. If you disable or do not configure this setting, Automatic Updates will notify users that their computers will automatically restart in 5 minutes to complete the installations.

The possible values for the No auto-restart for scheduled Automatic Updates installations setting are:

- Enabled
- Disabled
- Not Configured

Note: This setting applies only when you configure Automatic Updates to perform scheduled update installations. If you configure the Configure Automatic Updates setting to Disabled, this setting has no effect.

The recommended state for this setting is: *Disabled*.

Rationale:

Sometimes updates require updated computers to be restarted to complete an installation. If the computer cannot restart automatically, then the most recent update will not completely install and no new updates will download to the computer until it is restarted.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\WindowsUpdate\AU\NoAutoRebootWithLoggedOnUsers
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Disabled:

```
Computer Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\Windows Update\No auto-restart with logged on users for scheduled automatic updates installations
```

Impact:

If you enable this policy setting, the operating systems on the servers in your environment will restart themselves automatically. For critical servers this could lead to a temporary denial of service (DoS) condition.

Default Value:

Enabled

References:

1. CCE-37027-0

19 Administrative Templates (User)

This section contains recommendations for user-based administrative templates.

19.1 Control Panel

This section contains recommendations for Control Panel settings.

19.1.1 Add or Remove Programs

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

19.1.2 Display

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

19.1.3 Personalization

This section contains recommendations for personalization settings.

19.1.3.1 (L1) Set 'Enable screen saver' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows you to manage whether or not screen savers run. If the Screen Saver setting is disabled screen savers do not run and the screen saver section of the Screen Saver tab in Display in Control Panel is disabled. If this setting is enabled a screen saver will run if the following two conditions are met: first, that a valid screen saver is specified on the client via the Screen Saver Executable Name group policy setting or Control Panel on the client. Second, the screensaver timeout is set to a value greater than zero via the Screen Saver Timeout group policy setting or Control Panel on the client.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

If a user forgets to lock their computer when they walk away its possible that a passerby will hijack it.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_USERS\<SID>\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\Control  
Panel\Desktop\ScreenSaveActive
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
User Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Control  
Panel\Personalization\Enable screen saver
```

Impact:

The screen saver will automatically activate when the computer has been unattended for the amount of time specified by the Screen Saver timeout setting. The impact should be minimal since the screen saver is enabled by default.

Default Value:

Not Configured

References:

1. CCE-37970-1

19.1.3.2 (L1) Set 'Force specific screen saver: Screen saver executable name' to 'Enabled: scrnsave.scr' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows you to manage whether or not screen savers run. If the Screen Saver setting is disabled screen savers do not run and the screen saver section of the Screen Saver tab in Display in Control Panel is disabled. If this setting is enabled a screen saver will run if the following two conditions are met: first, that a valid screen saver is specified on the client via the Screen Saver Executable Name group policy setting or Control Panel on the client. Second, the screensaver timeout is set to a value greater than zero via the Screen Saver Timeout group policy setting or Control Panel on the client.

The recommended state for this setting is: Enabled: scrnsave.scr.

Rationale:

If a user forgets to lock their computer when they walk away its possible that a passerby will hijack it.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_USERS\<SID>\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\Control  
Panel\Desktop\SCRNSAVE.EXE
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled: scrnsave.scr:

```
User Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Control  
Panel\Personalization\Force specific screen saver
```

Impact:

The screen saver will automatically activate when the computer has been unattended for the amount of time specified by the Screen Saver timeout setting.

Default Value:

Not Configured

References:

1. CCE-37907-3

19.1.3.3 (L1) Set 'Password protect the screen saver' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

If the Password protect the screen saver setting is enabled, then all screen savers are password protected, if it is disabled then password protection cannot be set on any screen saver.

The recommended state for this setting is: Enabled.

Rationale:

If a user forgets to lock their computer when they walk away its possible that a passerby will hijack it.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_USERS\<SID>\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\Control  
Panel\Desktop\ScreenSaverIsSecure
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled:

```
User Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Control  
Panel\Personalization>Password protect the screen saver
```

Impact:

Users will have to provide their logon credentials when they want to access their locked desktop session.

Default Value:

Not Configured

References:

1. CCE-37658-2

19.1.3.4 (L1) Set 'Screen saver timeout' to 'Enabled: 900 seconds or fewer, but not 0' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

If the Screen Saver Timeout setting is enabled, then the screen saver will be launched when the specified amount of time has passed since the last user action. Valid values range from 1 to 89,400 seconds (24 hours). The setting has no effect if the wait time is set to zero or no screen saver has been specified.

The recommended state for this setting is: Enabled: 900 seconds or fewer, but not 0.

Rationale:

If a user forgets to lock their computer when they walk away its possible that a passerby will hijack it.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_USERS\<SID>\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\Control  
Panel\Desktop\ScreenSaveTimeout
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Enabled: 900 or fewer, but not 0:

```
User Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Control  
Panel\Personalization\Screen saver timeout
```

Impact:

The screen saver will automatically activate when the computer has been unattended for the amount of time specified. The impact should be minimal since the screen saver is enabled by default.

Default Value:

Not Configured

References:

1. CCE-37908-1

19.2 Desktop

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

19.3 Network

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

19.4 Shared Folders

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

19.5 Start Menu and Taskbar

This section contains recommendations for Start Menu and Taskbar settings.

19.5.1 Notifications

This section contains recommendations for Notification settings.

19.5.1.1 (L1) Set 'Turn off toast notifications on the lock screen' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting turns off toast notifications on the lock screen. If you enable this policy setting, applications will not be able to raise toast notifications on the lock screen. If you disable or do not configure this policy setting, toast notifications on the lock screen are enabled and can be turned off by the administrator or user. No reboots or service restarts are required for this policy setting to take effect.

The recommended state for this setting is `Enabled`.

Rationale:

While this feature can be handy for users applications that provide toast notifications might display sensitive personal or business data while the device is unattended.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_USERS\<SID>\SOFTWARE\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\PushNotifications\NoToastApplicationNotificationOnLockScreen
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
User Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Start Menu and  
Taskbar\Notifications\Turn off toast notifications on the lock screen
```

Impact:

By turning off this feature, applications will not be able to raise toast notifications on the lock screen, and user will not be able to access the information.

References:

1. CCE-36332-5

19.6 System

This section contains recommendations for System settings.

19.6.1 Ctrl+Alt+Del Options

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

19.6.2 Driver Installation

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

19.6.3 Folder Redirection

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

19.6.4 Group Policy

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

19.6.5 Internet Communication Management

This section contains recommendations related to Internet Communication Management.

19.6.5.1 Internet Communication settings

This section contains recommendations related to Internet Communication settings.

19.6.5.1.1 (L2) Set 'Turn off Help Experience Improvement Program' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 2 - Domain Controller
- Level 2 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting specifies whether users can participate in the Help Experience Improvement program. The Help Experience Improvement program collects information about how customers use Windows Help so that Microsoft can improve it.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

Large enterprise environments may not want to have information collected from managed client computers.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_USERS\[USER  
SID]\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Assistance\Client\1.0:NoImplicitFeedback
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
User Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\System\Internet Communication  
Management\Internet Communication Settings\Turn off Help Experience Improvement  
Program
```

Impact:

If you enable this policy setting, users cannot participate in the Help Experience Improvement program.

Default Value:

Not Configured

References:

1. CCE-37542-8

19.7 Windows Components

This section contains recommendations for Windows Component settings.

19.7.1 Add features to Windows 8 / 8.1 / 10

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "WindowsAnytimeUpgrade.admx/adml" that is included with the Microsoft Windows 8/2012, 8.1/2012R2 and Windows 10 Administrative Templates.

19.7.2 App runtime

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

19.7.3 Application Compatibility

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

19.7.4 Attachment Manager

This section contains recommendations related to Attachment Manager.

19.7.4.1 (L1) Set 'Do not preserve zone information in file attachments' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting allows you to manage whether Windows marks file attachments from Internet Explorer or Microsoft Outlook Express with information about their zone of origin (such as restricted, Internet, intranet, or local). This policy setting requires that files be downloaded to NTFS disk partitions to function correctly. If zone information is not preserved, Windows cannot make proper risk assessments based on the zone where the attachment came from.

If the `Do not preserve zone information in file attachments` setting is enabled, file attachments are not marked with their zone information. If this policy setting is disabled, Windows is forced to store file attachments with their zone information.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Disabled`.

Rationale:

A file that is downloaded from a computer in the Internet or Restricted Sites zone may be moved to a location that makes it appear safe, like an intranet file share, and executed by an unsuspecting user.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_USERS\<SID>\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Policies\Attachments\SaveZoneInformation
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Disabled:

```
User Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\Attachment  
Manager\Do not preserve zone information in file attachments
```

Impact:

None, this is the default configuration.

Default Value:

Disabled

References:

1. CCE-37424-9

19.7.4.2 (L1) Set 'Notify antivirus programs when opening attachments' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

Antivirus programs are mandatory in many environments and provide a strong defense against attack.

The Notify antivirus programs when opening attachments setting allows you to manage how registered antivirus programs are notified. When enabled, this policy setting configures Windows to call the registered antivirus program and have it scan file attachments when they are opened by users. If the antivirus scan fails, the attachments are blocked from being opened. If this policy setting is disabled, Windows does not call the registered antivirus program when file attachments are opened.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Note: An updated antivirus program must be installed for this policy setting to function properly.

Rationale:

Antivirus programs that do not perform on-access checks may not be able to scan downloaded files.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_USERS\<SID>\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Policies\Attachments\ScanWithAntiVirus
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
User Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\Attachment Manager\Notify antivirus programs when opening attachments
```

Impact:

When the Notify antivirus programs when opening attachments setting is Enabled, every downloaded file or e-mail attachment that the user opens will be scanned.

Default Value:

Disabled

References:

1. CCE-36622-9

19.7.5 AutoPlay Policies

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

19.7.6 Backup

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "WindowsBackup.admx/adml" that is included with the Microsoft Windows Vista, 2008, 7/2008R2, 8/2012 and 8.1/2012R2 Administrative Templates, or the Group Policy template "UserDataBackup.admx/adml" included with the Microsoft Windows 10 Administrative Templates.

19.7.7 Credential User Interface

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

19.7.8 Desktop Gadgets

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

19.7.9 Desktop Windows Manager

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

19.7.10 Digital Locker

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

19.7.11 Edge UI

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

19.7.12 EMET

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "EMET.admx/adml" that is included with Microsoft Enhanced Mitigation Experience Toolkit (EMET).

19.7.13 File Explorer

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

19.7.14 File Revocation

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

19.7.15 IME

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

19.7.16 Import Video

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "CaptureWizard.admx/adml" that is included with the Microsoft Windows Vista & 2008 Administrative Templates.

19.7.17 Instant Search

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

19.7.18 Internet Explorer

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

19.7.19 Location and Sensors

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

19.7.20 Microsoft Edge

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "microsoftedge.admx/adml" that is included with the Microsoft Windows 10 Administrative Templates.

19.7.21 Microsoft Management Console

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

19.7.22 Microsoft Passport for Work

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "`passport.admx/adml`" that is included with the Microsoft Windows 10 Administrative Templates.

19.7.23 NetMeeting

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

19.7.24 Network Projector

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

19.7.25 Network Sharing

This section contains recommendations related to Network Sharing.

19.7.25.1 (L1) Set 'Prevent users from sharing files within their profile.' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

This policy setting specifies whether users can share files within their profile. By default users are allowed to share files within their profile to other users on their network after an administrator opts in the computer. An administrator can opt in the computer by using the sharing wizard to share a file within their profile.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

If not properly controlled a user could accidentally share sensitive data with unauthorized users. In a corporate environment, the company should provide a managed location for file sharing, such as a file server or SharePoint.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_USERS\[USER  
SID]\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Policies\Explorer:NoInplaceSharing
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
User Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\Network  
Sharing\Prevent users from sharing files within their profile.
```

Impact:

If you enable this policy setting, users cannot share files within their profile using the sharing wizard. Also, the sharing wizard cannot create a share at %root%\users and can only be used to create SMB shares on folders.

Default Value:

Not Configured, By default users are allowed to share files within their profile to other users on their network after an administrator opts in the computer.

References:

1. CCE-38070-9

19.7.26 Presentation Settings

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

19.7.27 Remote Desktop Services

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

19.7.28 RSS Feeds

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

19.7.29 Search

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "Search.admx/adml" that is included with the Microsoft Windows Vista, 2008, 7/2008R2, 8/2012, 8.1/2012R2 and Windows 10 Administrative Templates.

19.7.30 Sound Recorder

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

19.7.31 Store

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

The Group Policy settings contained within this section are provided by the Group Policy template "WinStoreUI.admx/adml" that is included with the Microsoft Windows 8/2012 & 8.1/2012R2 Administrative Templates.

19.7.32 Tablet PC

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

19.7.33 Task Scheduler

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

19.7.34 Windows Calendar

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

19.7.35 Windows Color System

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

19.7.36 Windows Error Reporting

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

19.7.37 Windows Installer

This section contains recommendations related to Windows Installer.

19.7.37.1 (L1) Set 'Always install with elevated privileges' to 'Disabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 1 - Domain Controller
- Level 1 - Member Server

Description:

Directs Windows Installer to use system permissions when it installs any program on the system.

This setting extends elevated privileges to all programs. These privileges are usually reserved for programs that have been assigned to the user (offered on the desktop), assigned to the computer (installed automatically), or made available in Add or Remove Programs in Control Panel. This setting lets users install programs that require access to directories that the user might not have permission to view or change, including directories on highly restricted computers.

If you disable this setting or do not configure it, the system applies the current user's permissions when it installs programs that a system administrator does not distribute or offer.

Note: This setting appears both in the Computer Configuration and User Configuration folders. To make this setting effective, you must enable the setting in both folders.

Caution: Skilled users can take advantage of the permissions this setting grants to change their privileges and gain permanent access to restricted files and folders. Note that the User Configuration version of this setting is not guaranteed to be secure.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Disabled`.

Rationale:

Users with limited privileges can exploit this feature by creating a Windows Installer installation package that creates a new local account that belongs to the local built-in Administrators group, adds their current account to the local built-in Administrators group, installs malicious software, or performs other unauthorized activities.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_USERS\<SID>\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Windows\Installer\AlwaysInstallElevated
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to Disabled:

```
User Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\Windows Installer\Always install with elevated privileges
```

Impact:

Windows Installer will apply the current user's permissions when it installs programs, this will prevent standard users from installing applications that affect system-wide configuration items.

Default Value:

Not configured

References:

1. CCE-37490-0

19.7.38 Windows Logon Options

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

19.7.39 Windows Mail

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

19.7.40 Windows Media Center

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

19.7.41 Windows Media Player

This section contains recommendations related to Windows Media Player.

19.7.41.1 Networking

This section is intentionally blank and exists to ensure the structure of Windows benchmarks is consistent.

19.7.41.2 Playback

This section contains recommendations related to Windows Media Player Playback.

19.7.41.2.1 (L2) Set 'Prevent Codec Download' to 'Enabled' (Scored)

Profile Applicability:

- Level 2 - Domain Controller
- Level 2 - Member Server

Description:

This setting controls whether Windows Media Player is allowed to download additional codecs for decoding media files it does not already understand.

The recommended state for this setting is: `Enabled`.

Rationale:

This has some potential for risk if a malicious data file is opened in Media Player that requires an additional codec to be installed. If a special codec is required for a necessary job function, then that codec should be tested and supplied by the IT department in the organization.

Audit:

Navigate to the UI Path articulated in the Remediation section and confirm it is set as prescribed. This group policy setting is backed by the following registry location:

```
HKEY_USERS\[USER  
SID]\Software\Policies\Microsoft\WindowsMediaPlayer:PreventCodecDownload
```

Remediation:

To establish the recommended configuration via GP, set the following UI path to `Enabled`:

```
User Configuration\Policies\Administrative Templates\Windows Components\Windows Media Player\Playback\Prevent Codec Download
```

Impact:

If you enable this policy setting, the Player is prevented from automatically downloading codecs to your computer. In addition, the Download codecs automatically check box on the Player tab in the Player is not available.

Default Value:

Not Configured

References:

1. CCE-37445-4

Control		Set Correctly	
		Yes	No
1	Account Policies		
1.1	Password Policy		
1.1.1	(L1) Set 'Enforce password history' to '24 or more password(s)' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.1.2	(L1) Set 'Maximum password age' to '60 or fewer days, but not 0' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.1.3	(L1) Set 'Minimum password age' to '1 or more day(s)' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.1.4	(L1) Set 'Minimum password length' to '14 or more character(s)' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.1.5	(L1) Set 'Password must meet complexity requirements' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.1.6	(L1) Set 'Store passwords using reversible encryption' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.2	Account Lockout Policy		
1.2.1	(L1) Set 'Account lockout duration' to '15 or more minute(s)' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.2.2	(L1) Set 'Account lockout threshold' to '10 or fewer invalid logon attempt(s), but not 0' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.2.3	(L1) Set 'Reset account lockout counter after' to '15 or more minute(s)' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Local Policies		
2.1	Audit Policy		
2.2	User Rights Assignment		
2.2.1	(L1) Set 'Access Credential Manager as a trusted caller' to 'No One' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2.2	(L1) Configure 'Access this computer from the network' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2.3	(L1) Set 'Act as part of the operating system' to 'No One' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2.4	(L1) Set 'Add workstations to domain' to 'Administrators' (DC only) (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2.5	(L1) Set 'Adjust memory quotas for a process' to 'Administrators, LOCAL SERVICE, NETWORK SERVICE' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2.6	(L1) Configure 'Allow log on locally' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2.7	(L1) Configure 'Allow log on through Remote Desktop Services' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2.8	(L1) Set 'Back up files and directories' to 'Administrators' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2.9	(L1) Set 'Change the system time' to 'Administrators, LOCAL SERVICE' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2.10	(L1) Set 'Change the time zone' to 'Administrators, LOCAL SERVICE' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Control		Set Correctly	
		Yes	No
2.2.11	(L1) Set 'Create a pagefile' to 'Administrators' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2.12	(L1) Set 'Create a token object' to 'No One' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2.13	(L1) Set 'Create global objects' to 'Administrators, LOCAL SERVICE, NETWORK SERVICE, SERVICE' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2.14	(L1) Set 'Create permanent shared objects' to 'No One' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2.15	(L1) Configure 'Create symbolic links' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2.16	(L1) Set 'Debug programs' to 'Administrators' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2.17	(L1) Configure 'Deny access to this computer from the network' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2.18	(L1) Set 'Deny log on as a batch job' to include 'Guests' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2.19	(L1) Set 'Deny log on as a service' to include 'Guests' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2.20	(L1) Set 'Deny log on locally' to include 'Guests' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2.21	(L1) Set 'Deny log on through Remote Desktop Services' to include 'Guests, Local account' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2.22	(L1) Configure 'Enable computer and user accounts to be trusted for delegation' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2.23	(L1) Set 'Force shutdown from a remote system' to 'Administrators' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2.24	(L1) Set 'Generate security audits' to 'LOCAL SERVICE, NETWORK SERVICE' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2.25	(L1) Configure 'Impersonate a client after authentication' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2.26	(L1) Set 'Increase scheduling priority' to 'Administrators' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2.27	(L1) Set 'Load and unload device drivers' to 'Administrators' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2.28	(L1) Set 'Lock pages in memory' to 'No One' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2.29	(L1) Configure 'Manage auditing and security log' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2.30	(L1) Set 'Modify an object label' to 'No One' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2.31	(L1) Set 'Modify firmware environment values' to 'Administrators' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2.32	(L1) Set 'Perform volume maintenance tasks' to 'Administrators' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2.33	(L1) Set 'Profile single process' to 'Administrators' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2.34	(L1) Set 'Profile system performance' to 'Administrators, NT SERVICE\WdiServiceHost' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2.35	(L1) Set 'Replace a process level token' to 'LOCAL SERVICE, NETWORK SERVICE' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2.36	(L1) Set 'Restore files and directories' to 'Administrators' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2.37	(L1) Set 'Shut down the system' to 'Administrators' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2.38	(L1) Set 'Synchronize directory service data' to 'No One' (DC only)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Control		Set Correctly	
		Yes	No
	(Scored)		
2.2.39	(L1) Set 'Take ownership of files or other objects' to 'Administrators' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3	Security Options		
2.3.1	Accounts		
2.3.1.1	(L1) Set 'Accounts: Administrator account status' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.1.2	(L1) Set 'Accounts: Block Microsoft accounts' to 'Users can't add or log on with Microsoft accounts' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.1.3	(L1) Set 'Accounts: Guest account status' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.1.4	(L1) Set 'Accounts: Limit local account use of blank passwords to console logon only' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.1.5	(L1) Configure 'Accounts: Rename administrator account' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.1.6	(L1) Configure 'Accounts: Rename guest account' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.2	Audit		
2.3.2.1	(L1) Set 'Audit: Force audit policy subcategory settings (Windows Vista or later) to override audit policy category settings' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.2.2	(L1) Set 'Audit: Shut down system immediately if unable to log security audits' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.3	DCOM		
2.3.4	Devices		
2.3.4.1	(L1) Set 'Devices: Allowed to format and eject removable media' to 'Administrators' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.4.2	(L1) Set 'Devices: Prevent users from installing printer drivers' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.5	Domain controller		
2.3.5.1	(L1) Set 'Domain controller: Allow server operators to schedule tasks' to 'Disabled' (DC only) (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.5.2	(L1) Set 'Domain controller: LDAP server signing requirements' to 'Require signing' (DC only) (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.5.3	(L1) Set 'Domain controller: Refuse machine account password changes' to 'Disabled' (DC only) (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.6	Domain member		
2.3.6.1	(L1) Set 'Domain member: Digitally encrypt or sign secure channel data (always)' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.6.2	(L1) Set 'Domain member: Digitally encrypt secure channel data (when possible)' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.6.3	(L1) Set 'Domain member: Digitally sign secure channel data (when possible)' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Control		Set Correctly	
		Yes	No
2.3.6.4	(L1) Set 'Domain member: Disable machine account password changes' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.6.5	(L1) Set 'Domain member: Maximum machine account password age' to '30 or fewer days, but not 0' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.6.6	(L1) Set 'Domain member: Require strong (Windows 2000 or later) session key' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.7	Interactive logon		
2.3.7.1	(L1) Set 'Interactive logon: Do not display last user name' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.7.2	(L1) Set 'Interactive logon: Do not require CTRL+ALT+DEL' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.7.3	(L1) Set 'Interactive logon: Machine inactivity limit' to '900 or fewer second(s), but not 0' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.7.4	(L1) Configure 'Interactive logon: Message text for users attempting to log on' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.7.5	(L1) Configure 'Interactive logon: Message title for users attempting to log on' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.7.6	(L1) Set 'Interactive logon: Number of previous logons to cache (in case domain controller is not available)' to '4 or fewer logon(s)' (MS only) (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.7.7	(L1) Set 'Interactive logon: Prompt user to change password before expiration' to 'between 5 and 14 days' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.7.8	(L1) Set 'Interactive logon: Require Domain Controller Authentication to unlock workstation' to 'Enabled' (MS only) (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.7.9	(L1) Set 'Interactive logon: Smart card removal behavior' to 'Lock Workstation' or higher (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.8	Microsoft network client		
2.3.8.1	(L1) Set 'Microsoft network client: Digitally sign communications (always)' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.8.2	(L1) Set 'Microsoft network client: Digitally sign communications (if server agrees)' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.8.3	(L1) Set 'Microsoft network client: Send unencrypted password to third-party SMB servers' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.9	Microsoft network server		
2.3.9.1	(L1) Set 'Microsoft network server: Amount of idle time required before suspending session' to '15 or fewer minute(s), but not 0' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.9.2	(L1) Set 'Microsoft network server: Digitally sign communications (always)' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.9.3	(L1) Set 'Microsoft network server: Digitally sign communications	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Control		Set Correctly	
		Yes	No
	(if client agrees)' to 'Enabled' (Scored)		
2.3.9.4	(L1) Set 'Microsoft network server: Disconnect clients when logon hours expire' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.9.5	(L1) Set 'Microsoft network server: Server SPN target name validation level' to 'Accept if provided by client' or higher (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.10	Network access		
2.3.10.1	(L1) Set 'Network access: Allow anonymous SID/Name translation' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.10.2	(L1) Set 'Network access: Do not allow anonymous enumeration of SAM accounts' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.10.3	(L1) Set 'Network access: Do not allow anonymous enumeration of SAM accounts and shares' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.10.4	(L2) Set 'Network access: Do not allow storage of passwords and credentials for network authentication' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.10.5	(L1) Set 'Network access: Let Everyone permissions apply to anonymous users' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.10.6	(L1) Configure 'Network access: Named Pipes that can be accessed anonymously' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.10.7	(L1) Set 'Network access: Remotely accessible registry paths' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.10.8	(L1) Set 'Network access: Remotely accessible registry paths and sub-paths' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.10.9	(L1) Set 'Network access: Restrict anonymous access to Named Pipes and Shares' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.10.10	(L1) Set 'Network access: Shares that can be accessed anonymously' to 'None' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.10.11	(L1) Set 'Network access: Sharing and security model for local accounts' to 'Classic - local users authenticate as themselves' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.11	Network security		
2.3.11.1	(L1) Set 'Network security: Allow Local System to use computer identity for NTLM' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.11.2	(L1) Set 'Network security: Allow LocalSystem NULL session fallback' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.11.3	(L1) Set 'Network Security: Allow PKU2U authentication requests to this computer to use online identities' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.11.4	(L1) Set 'Network Security: Configure encryption types allowed for Kerberos' to 'RC4_HMAC_MD5, AES128_HMAC_SHA1, AES256_HMAC_SHA1, Future encryption types' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.11.5	(L1) Set 'Network security: Do not store LAN Manager hash value on next password change' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Control		Set Correctly	
		Yes	No
2.3.11.6	(L1) Set 'Network security: Force logoff when logon hours expire' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.11.7	(L1) Set 'Network security: LAN Manager authentication level' to 'Send NTLMv2 response only. Refuse LM & NTLM' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.11.8	(L1) Set 'Network security: LDAP client signing requirements' to 'Negotiate signing or higher' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.11.9	(L1) Set 'Network security: Minimum session security for NTLM SSP based (including secure RPC) clients' to 'Require NTLMv2 session security, Require 128-bit encryption' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.11.10	(L1) Set 'Network security: Minimum session security for NTLM SSP based (including secure RPC) servers' to 'Require NTLMv2 session security, Require 128-bit encryption' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.12	Recovery console		
2.3.12.1	(L1) Set 'Recovery console: Allow automatic administrative logon' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.12.2	(L1) Set 'Recovery console: Allow floppy copy and access to all drives and all folders' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.13	Shutdown		
2.3.13.1	(L1) Set 'Shutdown: Allow system to be shut down without having to log on' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.14	System cryptography		
2.3.15	System objects		
2.3.15.1	(L1) Set 'System objects: Require case insensitivity for non-Windows subsystems' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.15.2	(L1) Set 'System objects: Strengthen default permissions of internal system objects (e.g. Symbolic Links)' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.16	System settings		
2.3.17	User Account Control		
2.3.17.1	(L1) Set 'User Account Control: Admin Approval Mode for the Built-in Administrator account' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.17.2	(L1) Set 'User Account Control: Allow UIAccess applications to prompt for elevation without using the secure desktop' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.17.3	(L1) Set 'User Account Control: Behavior of the elevation prompt for administrators in Admin Approval Mode' to 'Prompt for consent on the secure desktop' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.17.4	(L1) Set 'User Account Control: Behavior of the elevation prompt for standard users' to 'Automatically deny elevation requests' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.17.5	(L1) Set 'User Account Control: Detect application installations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Control		Set Correctly	
		Yes	No
	and prompt for elevation' to 'Enabled' (Scored)		
2.3.17.6	(L1) Set 'User Account Control: Only elevate UIAccess applications that are installed in secure locations' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.17.7	(L1) Set 'User Account Control: Run all administrators in Admin Approval Mode' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.17.8	(L1) Set 'User Account Control: Switch to the secure desktop when prompting for elevation' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.17.9	(L1) Set 'User Account Control: Virtualize file and registry write failures to per-user locations' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Event Log		
4	Restricted Groups		
5	System Services		
6	Registry		
7	File System		
8	Wired Network (IEEE 802.3) Policies		
9	Windows Firewall With Advanced Security		
9.1	Domain Profile		
9.1.1	(L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Domain: Firewall state' to 'On (recommended)' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.1.2	(L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Domain: Inbound connections' to 'Block (default)' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.1.3	(L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Domain: Outbound connections' to 'Allow (default)' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.1.4	(L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Domain: Settings: Display a notification' to 'Yes' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.1.5	(L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Domain: Settings: Allow unicast response' to 'No' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.1.6	(L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Domain: Settings: Apply local firewall rules' to 'Yes (default)' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.1.7	(L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Domain: Settings: Apply local connection security rules' to 'Yes (default)' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.1.8	(L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Domain: Logging: Name' to '%SYSTEMROOT%\System32\logfiles\firewall\domainfw.log' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.1.9	(L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Domain: Logging: Size limit (KB)' to '16,384 KB or greater' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.1.10	(L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Domain: Logging: Log dropped packets' to 'Yes' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.1.11	(L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Domain: Logging: Log successful connections' to 'Yes' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.2	Private Profile		

Control		Set Correctly	
		Yes	No
9.2.1	(L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Private: Firewall state' to 'On (recommended)' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.2.2	(L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Private: Inbound connections' to 'Block (default)' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.2.3	(L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Private: Outbound connections' to 'Allow (default)' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.2.4	(L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Private: Settings: Display a notification' to 'Yes' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.2.5	(L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Private: Settings: Allow unicast response' to 'No' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.2.6	(L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Private: Settings: Apply local firewall rules' to 'Yes (default)' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.2.7	(L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Private: Settings: Apply local connection security rules' to 'Yes (default)' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.2.8	(L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Private: Logging: Name' to '%SYSTEMROOT%\System32\logfiles\firewall\privatefw.log' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.2.9	(L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Private: Logging: Size limit (KB)' to '16,384 KB or greater' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.2.10	(L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Private: Logging: Log dropped packets' to 'Yes' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.2.11	(L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Private: Logging: Log successful connections' to 'Yes' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.3	Public Profile		
9.3.1	(L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Public: Firewall state' to 'On (recommended)' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.3.2	(L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Public: Inbound connections' to 'Block (default)' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.3.3	(L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Public: Outbound connections' to 'Allow (default)' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.3.4	(L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Public: Display a notification' to 'Yes' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.3.5	(L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Public: Allow unicast response' to 'No' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.3.6	(L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Public: Apply local firewall rules' to 'Yes (default)' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.3.7	(L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Public: Apply local connection security rules' to 'No' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.3.8	(L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Public: Logging: Name' to '%SYSTEMROOT%\System32\logfiles\firewall\publicfw.log' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Control		Set Correctly	
		Yes	No
9.3.9	(L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Public: Logging: Size limit (KB)' to '16,384 KB or greater' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.3.10	(L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Public: Logging: Log dropped packets' to 'Yes' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.3.11	(L1) Set 'Windows Firewall: Public: Logging: Log successful connections' to 'Yes' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Network List Manager Policies		
11	Wireless Network (IEEE 802.11) Policies		
12	Public Key Policies		
13	Software Restriction Policies		
14	Network Access Protection NAP Client Configuration		
15	Application Control Policies		
16	IP Security Policies		
17	Advanced Audit Policy Configuration		
17.1	Account Logon		
17.1.1	(L1) Set 'Audit Credential Validation' to 'Success and Failure' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17.2	Account Management		
17.2.1	(L1) Set 'Audit Application Group Management' to 'Success and Failure' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17.2.2	(L1) Set 'Audit Computer Account Management' to 'Success and Failure' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17.2.3	(L1) Set 'Audit Distribution Group Management' to 'Success and Failure' (DC only) (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17.2.4	(L1) Set 'Audit Other Account Management Events' to 'Success and Failure' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17.2.5	(L1) Set 'Audit Security Group Management' to 'Success and Failure' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17.2.6	(L1) Set 'Audit User Account Management' to 'Success and Failure' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17.3	Detailed Tracking		
17.3.1	(L1) Set 'Audit Process Creation' to 'Success' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17.4	DS Access		
17.4.1	(L1) Set 'Audit Directory Service Access' to 'Success and Failure' (DC only) (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17.4.2	(L1) Set 'Audit Directory Service Changes' to 'Success and Failure' (DC only) (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17.5	Logon/Logoff		
17.5.1	(L1) Set 'Audit Account Lockout' to 'Success' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17.5.2	(L1) Set 'Audit Logoff' to 'Success' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Control		Set Correctly	
		Yes	No
17.5.3	(L1) Set 'Audit Logon' to 'Success and Failure' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17.5.4	(L1) Set 'Audit Other Logon/Logoff Events' to 'Success and Failure' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17.5.5	(L1) Set 'Audit Special Logon' to 'Success' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17.6	Object Access		
17.6.1	(L1) Set 'Audit Removable Storage' to 'Success and Failure' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17.7	Policy Change		
17.7.1	(L1) Set 'Audit Audit Policy Change' to 'Success and Failure' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17.7.2	(L1) Set 'Audit Authentication Policy Change' to 'Success' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17.8	Privilege Use		
17.8.1	(L1) Set 'Audit Sensitive Privilege Use' to 'Success and Failure' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17.9	System		
17.9.1	(L1) Set 'Audit IPsec Driver' to 'Success and Failure' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17.9.2	(L1) Set 'Audit Other System Events' to 'Success and Failure' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17.9.3	(L1) Set 'Audit Security State Change' to 'Success and Failure' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17.9.4	(L1) Set 'Audit Security System Extension' to 'Success and Failure' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17.9.5	(L1) Set 'Audit System Integrity' to 'Success and Failure' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18	Administrative Templates (Computer)		
18.1	Control Panel		
18.1.1	Personalization		
18.1.1.1	(L1) Set 'Prevent enabling lock screen camera' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.1.1.2	(L1) Set 'Prevent enabling lock screen slide show' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.2	LAPS		
18.2.1	(L1) Ensure LAPS AdmPwd GPO Extension / CSE is installed (MS only) (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.2.2	(L1) Set 'Do not allow password expiration time longer than required by policy' to 'Enabled' (MS only) (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.2.3	(L1) Set 'Enable Local Admin Password Management' to 'Enabled' (MS only) (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.2.4	(L1) Set 'Password Settings: Password Complexity' to 'Enabled: Large letters + small letters + numbers + special characters' (MS only) (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Control		Set Correctly	
		Yes	No
18.2.5	(L1) Set 'Password Settings: Password Length' to 'Enabled: 15 or more' (MS only) (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.2.6	(L1) Set 'Password Settings: Password Age (Days)' to 'Enabled: 30 or fewer' (MS only) (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.3	MSS (Legacy)		
18.3.1	(L1) Set 'MSS: (AutoAdminLogon) Enable Automatic Logon (not recommended)' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.3.2	(L1) Set 'MSS: (DisableIPSourceRouting IPv6) IP source routing protection level (protects against packet spoofing)' to 'Enabled: Highest protection, source routing is completely disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.3.3	(L1) Set 'MSS: (DisableIPSourceRouting) IP source routing protection level (protects against packet spoofing)' to 'Enabled: Highest protection, source routing is completely disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.3.4	(L1) Set 'MSS: (EnableICMPRedirect) Allow ICMP redirects to override OSPF generated routes' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.3.5	(L2) Set 'MSS: (KeepAliveTime) How often keep-alive packets are sent in milliseconds' to 'Enabled: 300,000 or 5 minutes (recommended)' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.3.6	(L1) Set 'MSS: (NoNameReleaseOnDemand) Allow the computer to ignore NetBIOS name release requests except from WINS servers' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.3.7	(L2) Set 'MSS: (PerformRouterDiscovery) Allow IRDP to detect and configure Default Gateway addresses (could lead to DoS)' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.3.8	(L1) Set 'MSS: (SafeDllSearchMode) Enable Safe DLL search mode (recommended)' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.3.9	(L1) Set 'MSS: (ScreenSaverGracePeriod) The time in seconds before the screen saver grace period expires (0 recommended)' to 'Enabled: 5 or fewer seconds' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.3.10	(L2) Set 'MSS: (TcpMaxDataRetransmissions IPv6) How many times unacknowledged data is retransmitted' to 'Enabled: 3' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.3.11	(L2) Set 'MSS: (TcpMaxDataRetransmissions) How many times unacknowledged data is retransmitted' to 'Enabled: 3' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.3.12	(L1) Set 'MSS: (WarningLevel) Percentage threshold for the security event log at which the system will generate a warning' to 'Enabled: 90% or less' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.4	Network		
18.4.1	Background Intelligent Transfer Service (BITS)		

Control		Set Correctly	
		Yes	No
18.4.2	BranchCache		
18.4.3	DirectAccess Client Experience Settings		
18.4.4	DNS Client		
18.4.5	Hotspot Authentication		
18.4.6	Lanman Server		
18.4.7	Lanman Workstation		
18.4.8	Link-Layer Topology Discovery		
18.4.8.1	(L2) Set 'Turn on Mapper I/O (LLTDIO) driver' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.4.8.2	(L2) Set 'Turn on Responder (RSPNDR) driver' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.4.9	Microsoft Peer-to-Peer Networking Services		
18.4.9.1	Peer Name Resolution Protocol		
18.4.9.2	(L2) Set 'Turn off Microsoft Peer-to-Peer Networking Services' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.4.10	Network Connections		
18.4.10.1	Windows Firewall		
18.4.10.2	(L1) Set 'Prohibit installation and configuration of Network Bridge on your DNS domain network' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.4.10.3	(L1) Set 'Require domain users to elevate when setting a network's location' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.4.11	Network Connectivity Status Indicator		
18.4.12	Network Isolation		
18.4.13	Network Provider		
18.4.13.1	(L1) Set 'Hardened UNC Paths' to 'Enabled, with "Require Mutual Authentication" and "Require Integrity" set for all NETLOGON and SYSVOL shares' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.4.14	Offline Files		
18.4.15	QoS Packet Scheduler		
18.4.16	SNMP		
18.4.17	SSL Configuration Settings		
18.4.18	TCPIP Settings		
18.4.18.1	IPv6 Transition Technologies		
18.4.18.2	Parameters		
18.4.18.2.1	(L2) Disable IPv6 (Set TCPIP6 Parameter 'DisabledComponents' to '0xff (255)') (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.4.19	Windows Connect Now		

Control		Set Correctly	
		Yes	No
18.4.19.1	(L2) Set 'Configuration of wireless settings using Windows Connect Now' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.4.19.2	(L2) Set 'Prohibit access of the Windows Connect Now wizards' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.4.20	Windows Connection Manager		
18.4.20.1	(L2) Set 'Prohibit connection to non-domain networks when connected to domain authenticated network' to 'Enabled' (MS only) (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.5	Printers		
18.6	SCM: Pass the Hash Mitigations		
18.6.1	(L1) Set 'Apply UAC restrictions to local accounts on network logons' to 'Enabled' (MS only) (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.6.2	(L1) Set 'WDigest Authentication' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.7	SCM: Wi-Fi Sense		
18.8	Start Menu and Taskbar		
18.9	System		
18.9.1	Access-Denied Assistance		
18.9.2	Audit Process Creation		
18.9.2.1	(L1) Set 'Include command line in process creation events' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.9.3	Credentials Delegation		
18.9.4	Device Guard		
18.9.5	Device Installation		
18.9.6	Device Redirection		
18.9.7	Disk NV Cache		
18.9.8	Disk Quotas		
18.9.9	Distributed COM		
18.9.10	Driver Installation		
18.9.11	Early Launch Antimalware		
18.9.11.1	(L1) Set 'Boot-Start Driver Initialization Policy' to 'Enabled: Good, unknown and bad but critical' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.9.12	Enhanced Storage Access		
18.9.13	File Classification Infrastructure		
18.9.14	File Share Shadow Copy Agent		
18.9.15	File Share Shadow Copy Provider		
18.9.16	Filesystem		
18.9.17	Folder Redirection		
18.9.18	Group Policy		
18.9.18.1	Logging and tracing		

Control		Set Correctly	
		Yes	No
18.9.18.2	(L1) Set 'Configure registry policy processing: Do not apply during periodic background processing' to 'Enabled: FALSE' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.9.18.3	(L1) Set 'Configure registry policy processing: Process even if the Group Policy objects have not changed' to 'Enabled: TRUE' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.9.18.4	(L1) Set 'Turn off background refresh of Group Policy' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.9.19	Internet Communication Management		
18.9.19.1	Internet Communication settings		
18.9.19.1.1	(L2) Set 'Turn off downloading of print drivers over HTTP' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.9.19.1.2	(L2) Set 'Turn off handwriting personalization data sharing' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.9.19.1.3	(L2) Set 'Turn off handwriting recognition error reporting' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.9.19.1.4	(L2) Set 'Turn off Internet Connection Wizard if URL connection is referring to Microsoft.com' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.9.19.1.5	(L2) Set 'Turn off Internet download for Web publishing and online ordering wizards' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.9.19.1.6	(L2) Set 'Turn off printing over HTTP' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.9.19.1.7	(L2) Set 'Turn off Registration if URL connection is referring to Microsoft.com' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.9.19.1.8	(L2) Set 'Turn off Search Companion content file updates' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.9.19.1.9	(L2) Set 'Turn off the "Order Prints" picture task' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.9.19.1.10	(L2) Set 'Turn off the "Publish to Web" task for files and folders' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.9.19.1.11	(L2) Set 'Turn off the Windows Messenger Customer Experience Improvement Program' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.9.19.1.12	(L2) Set 'Turn off Windows Customer Experience Improvement Program' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.9.19.1.13	(L2) Set 'Turn off Windows Error Reporting' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.9.20	iSCSI		
18.9.21	KDC		
18.9.22	Kerberos		
18.9.23	Locale Services		
18.9.23.1	(L2) Set 'Disallow copying of user input methods to the system	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Control		Set Correctly	
		Yes	No
	account for sign-in' to 'Enabled' (Scored)		
18.9.24	Logon		
18.9.24.1	(L1) Set 'Do not display network selection UI' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.9.24.2	(L1) Set 'Do not enumerate connected users on domain-joined computers' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.9.24.3	(L1) Set 'Enumerate local users on domain-joined computers' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.9.24.4	(L1) Set 'Turn off app notifications on the lock screen' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.9.24.5	(L1) Set 'Turn on PIN sign-in' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.9.25	Mitigation Options		
18.9.26	Net Logon		
18.9.27	Performance Control Panel		
18.9.28	Power Management		
18.9.28.1	Button Settings		
18.9.28.2	Hard Disk Settings		
18.9.28.3	Notification Settings		
18.9.28.4	Sleep Settings		
18.9.28.4.1	(L2) Set 'Require a password when a computer wakes (on battery)' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.9.28.4.2	(L2) Set 'Require a password when a computer wakes (plugged in)' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.9.29	Recovery		
18.9.30	Remote Assistance		
18.9.30.1	(L1) Set 'Configure Offer Remote Assistance' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.9.30.2	(L1) Set 'Configure Solicited Remote Assistance' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.9.31	Remote Procedure Call		
18.9.31.1	(L1) Set 'Enable RPC Endpoint Mapper Client Authentication' to 'Enabled' (MS only) (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.9.31.2	(L2) Set 'Restrict Unauthenticated RPC clients' to 'Enabled: Authenticated' (MS only) (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.9.32	Removable Storage Access		
18.9.33	Scripts		

Control		Set Correctly	
		Yes	No
18.9.34	Server Manager		
18.9.35	Shutdown		
18.9.36	Shutdown Options		
18.9.37	System Restore		
18.9.38	Troubleshooting and Diagnostics		
18.9.38.1	Application Compatibility Diagnostics		
18.9.38.2	Corrupted File Recovery		
18.9.38.3	Disk Diagnostic		
18.9.38.4	Fault Tolerant Heap		
18.9.38.5	Microsoft Support Diagnostic Tool		
18.9.38.6	MSI Corrupted File Recovery		
18.9.38.7	Scheduled Maintenance		
18.9.38.8	Scripted Diagnostics		
18.9.38.9	Windows Boot Performance Diagnostics		
18.9.38.10	Windows Memory Leak Diagnosis		
18.9.38.11	Windows Performance PerfTrack		
18.9.38.1.1	(L2) Set 'Enable/Disable PerfTrack' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.9.39	Trusted Platform Module Services		
18.9.40	User Profiles		
18.9.41	Windows File Protection		
18.9.42	Windows HotStart		
18.9.43	Windows Time Service		
18.9.43.1	Time Providers		
18.9.43.1.1	(L2) Set 'Enable Windows NTP Client' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.9.43.1.2	(L2) Set 'Enable Windows NTP Server' to 'Disabled' (MS only) (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Control		Set Correctly	
		Yes	No
18.10	Windows Components		
18.10.1	Active Directory Federation Services		
18.10.2	ActiveX Installer Service		
18.10.3	Add features to Windows 8 / 8.1 / 10		
18.10.4	App Package Deployment		
18.10.5	App runtime		
18.10.5.1	(L1) Set 'Allow Microsoft accounts to be optional' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.6	Application Compatibility		
18.10.7	AutoPlay Policies		
18.10.7.1	(L1) Set 'Disallow Autoplay for non-volume devices' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.7.2	(L1) Set 'Set the default behavior for AutoRun' to 'Enabled: Do not execute any autorun commands' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.7.3	(L1) Set 'Turn off Autoplay' to 'Enabled: All drives' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.8	Backup		
18.10.9	Biometrics		
18.10.10	BitLocker Drive Encryption		
18.10.11	Credential User Interface		
18.10.11.1	(L1) Set 'Do not display the password reveal button' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.11.2	(L1) Set 'Enumerate administrator accounts on elevation' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.11.3	(L2) Set 'Require trusted path for credential entry' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.12	Data Collection and Preview Builds		
18.10.13	Delivery Optimization		
18.10.14	Desktop Gadgets		
18.10.15	Desktop Window Manager		
18.10.16	Device and Driver Compatibility		
18.10.17	Device Registration (formerly Workplace Join)		
18.10.18	Digital Locker		
18.10.19	Edge UI		
18.10.20	EMET		
18.10.20.1	(L1) Ensure EMET is installed (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.20.2	(L1) Set 'Default Protections for Internet Explorer' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.20.3	(L1) Set 'Default Protections for Popular Software' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Control		Set Correctly	
		Yes	No
18.10.20.4	(L1) Set 'Default Protections for Recommended Software' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.20.5	(L1) Set 'System ASLR' to 'Enabled: Application Opt-In' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.20.6	(L1) Set 'System DEP' to 'Enabled: Application Opt-Out' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.20.7	(L1) Set 'System SEHOP' to 'Enabled: Application Opt-Out' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.21	Event Forwarding		
18.10.22	Event Log Service		
18.10.22.1	Application		
18.10.22.1.1	(L1) Set 'Application: Control Event Log behavior when the log file reaches its maximum size' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.22.1.2	(L1) Set 'Application: Specify the maximum log file size (KB)' to 'Enabled: 32,768 or greater' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.22.2	Security		
18.10.22.2.1	(L1) Set 'Security: Control Event Log behavior when the log file reaches its maximum size' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.22.2.2	(L1) Set 'Security: Specify the maximum log file size (KB)' to 'Enabled: 196,608 or greater' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.22.3	Setup		
18.10.22.3.1	(L1) Set 'Setup: Control Event Log behavior when the log file reaches its maximum size' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.22.3.2	(L1) Set 'Setup: Specify the maximum log file size (KB)' to 'Enabled: 32,768 or greater' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.22.4	System		
18.10.22.4.1	(L1) Set 'System: Control Event Log behavior when the log file reaches its maximum size' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.22.4.2	(L1) Set 'System: Specify the maximum log file size (KB)' to 'Enabled: 32,768 or greater' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.23	Event Logging		
18.10.24	Event Viewer		
18.10.25	Family Safety		
18.10.26	File Explorer		
18.10.26.1	Previous Versions		
18.10.26.	(L1) Set 'Configure Windows SmartScreen' to 'Enabled: Require	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Control		Set Correctly	
		Yes	No
2	approval from an administrator before running downloaded unknown software' (Scored)		
18.10.26.3	(L1) Set 'Turn off Data Execution Prevention for Explorer' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.26.4	(L1) Set 'Turn off heap termination on corruption' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.26.5	(L1) Set 'Turn off shell protocol protected mode' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.27	File History		
18.10.28	Game Explorer		
18.10.29	HomeGroup		
18.10.30	Import Video		
18.10.31	Internet Explorer		
18.10.32	Internet Information Services		
18.10.33	Location and Sensors		
18.10.34	Maintenance Scheduler		
18.10.35	Microsoft Edge		
18.10.36	Microsoft Passport for Work		
18.10.37	NetMeeting		
18.10.38	Network Access Protection		
18.10.39	Network Projector		
18.10.40	OneDrive (formerly SkyDrive)		
18.10.40.1	(L1) Set 'Prevent the usage of OneDrive for file storage' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.41	Online Assistance		
18.10.42	Password Synchronization		
18.10.43	Portable Operating System		
18.10.44	Presentation Settings		
18.10.45	Remote Desktop Services (formerly Terminal Services)		
18.10.45.1	RD Licensing		
18.10.45.2	Remote Desktop Connection Client		
18.10.45.2.1	RemoteFX USB Device Redirection		
18.10.45.2.2	(L1) Set 'Do not allow passwords to be saved' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.45.3	Remote Desktop Session Host		
18.10.45	Application Compatibility		

Control		Set Correctly	
		Yes	No
.3.1			
18.10.45	Connections		
.3.2			
18.10.45. 3.2.1	(L2) Set 'Restrict Remote Desktop Services users to a single Remote Desktop Services session' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.45	Device and Resource Redirection		
.3.3			
18.10.45. 3.3.1	(L2) Set 'Do not allow COM port redirection' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.45. 3.3.2	(L1) Set 'Do not allow drive redirection' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.45. 3.3.3	(L2) Set 'Do not allow LPT port redirection' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.45. 3.3.4	(L2) Set 'Do not allow supported Plug and Play device redirection' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.45	Licensing		
.3.4			
18.10.45	Printer Redirection		
.3.5			
18.10.45	Profiles		
.3.6			
18.10.45	RD Connection Broker		
.3.7			
18.10.45	Remote Session Environment		
.3.8			
18.10.45	Security		
.3.9			
18.10.45. 3.9.1	(L1) Set 'Always prompt for password upon connection' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.45. 3.9.2	(L1) Set 'Require secure RPC communication' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.45. 3.9.3	(L1) Set 'Set client connection encryption level' to 'Enabled: High Level' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.45	Session Time Limits		
.3.10			
18.10.45. 3.10.1	(L2) Set 'Set time limit for active but idle Remote Desktop Services sessions' to 'Enabled: 15 minutes or less' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.45. 3.10.2	(L2) Set 'Set time limit for disconnected sessions' to 'Enabled: 1 minute' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.45	Temporary folders		
.3.11			

Control		Set Correctly	
		Yes	No
18.10.45.3.11.1	(L1) Set 'Do not use temporary folders per session' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.46	RSS Feeds		
18.10.47	Search		
18.10.47.1	OCR		
18.10.47.2	(L1) Set 'Allow indexing of encrypted files' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.47.3	(L2) Set 'Set what information is shared in Search' to 'Enabled: Anonymous info' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.48	Security Center		
18.10.49	Server for NIS		
18.10.50	Shutdown Options		
18.10.51	Smart Card		
18.10.52	Software Protection Platform		
18.10.52.1	(L2) Set 'Turn off KMS Client Online AVS Validation' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.53	Sound Recorder		
18.10.54	Store		
18.10.55	Sync your settings		
18.10.56	Tablet PC		
18.10.57	Task Scheduler		
18.10.58	Text Input		
18.10.59	Windows Calendar		
18.10.60	Windows Color System		
18.10.61	Windows Customer Experience Improvement Program		
18.10.62	Windows Defender		
18.10.62.1	Client Interface		
18.10.62.2	Exclusions		
18.10.62.3	MAPS		
18.10.62.3.1	(L2) Set 'Join Microsoft MAPS' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.63	Windows Error Reporting		
18.10.64	Windows Game Recording and Broadcasting		
18.10.65	Windows Installer		
18.10.65.1	(L1) Set 'Always install with elevated privileges' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Control		Set Correctly	
		Yes	No
18.10.65.2	(L2) Set 'Prevent Internet Explorer security prompt for Windows Installer scripts' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.66	Windows Logon Options		
18.10.66.1	(L1) Set 'Sign-in last interactive user automatically after a system-initiated restart' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.67	Windows Mail		
18.10.68	Windows Media Center		
18.10.69	Windows Media Digital Rights Management		
18.10.70	Windows Media Player		
18.10.71	Windows Meeting Space		
18.10.72	Windows Messenger		
18.10.73	Windows Mobility Center		
18.10.74	Windows Movie Maker		
18.10.75	Windows PowerShell		
18.10.75.1	(L1) Set 'Turn on PowerShell Script Block Logging' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.75.2	(L1) Set 'Turn on PowerShell Transcription' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.76	Windows Reliability Analysis		
18.10.77	Windows Remote Management (WinRM)		
18.10.77.1	WinRM Client		
18.10.77.1.1	(L1) Set 'Allow Basic authentication' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.77.1.2	(L1) Set 'Allow unencrypted traffic' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.77.1.3	(L1) Set 'Disallow Digest authentication' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.77.2	WinRM Service		
18.10.77.2.1	(L1) Set 'Allow Basic authentication' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.77.2.2	(L1) Set 'Allow unencrypted traffic' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.77.2.3	(L1) Set 'Disallow WinRM from storing RunAs credentials' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.78	Windows Remote Shell		
18.10.79	Windows SideShow		
18.10.80	Windows System Resource Manager		
18.10.81	Windows Update		

Control		Set Correctly	
		Yes	No
18.10.81.1	(L1) Set 'Configure Automatic Updates' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.81.2	(L1) Set 'Configure Automatic Updates: Scheduled install day' to '0 - Every day' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.10.81.3	(L1) Set 'No auto-restart with logged on users for scheduled automatic updates installations' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19	Administrative Templates (User)		
19.1	Control Panel		
19.1.1	Add or Remove Programs		
19.1.2	Display		
19.1.3	Personalization		
19.1.3.1	(L1) Set 'Enable screen saver' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19.1.3.2	(L1) Set 'Force specific screen saver: Screen saver executable name' to 'Enabled: scrnsave.scr' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19.1.3.3	(L1) Set 'Password protect the screen saver' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19.1.3.4	(L1) Set 'Screen saver timeout' to 'Enabled: 900 seconds or fewer, but not 0' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19.2	Desktop		
19.3	Network		
19.4	Shared Folders		
19.5	Start Menu and Taskbar		
19.5.1	Notifications		
19.5.1.1	(L1) Set 'Turn off toast notifications on the lock screen' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19.6	System		
19.6.1	Ctrl+Alt+Del Options		
19.6.2	Driver Installation		
19.6.3	Folder Redirection		
19.6.4	Group Policy		
19.6.5	Internet Communication Management		
19.6.5.1	Internet Communication settings		
19.6.5.1.1	(L2) Set 'Turn off Help Experience Improvement Program' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19.7	Windows Components		
19.7.1	Add features to Windows 8 / 8.1 / 10		
19.7.2	App runtime		
19.7.3	Application Compatibility		
19.7.4	Attachment Manager		
19.7.4.1	(L1) Set 'Do not preserve zone information in file attachments' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Control		Set Correctly	
		Yes	No
19.7.4.2	(L1) Set 'Notify antivirus programs when opening attachments' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19.7.5	AutoPlay Policies		
19.7.6	Backup		
19.7.7	Credential User Interface		
19.7.8	Desktop Gadgets		
19.7.9	Desktop Windows Manager		
19.7.10	Digital Locker		
19.7.11	Edge UI		
19.7.12	EMET		
19.7.13	File Explorer		
19.7.14	File Revocation		
19.7.15	IME		
19.7.16	Import Video		
19.7.17	Instant Search		
19.7.18	Internet Explorer		
19.7.19	Location and Sensors		
19.7.20	Microsoft Edge		
19.7.21	Microsoft Management Console		
19.7.22	Microsoft Passport for Work		
19.7.23	NetMeeting		
19.7.24	Network Projector		
19.7.25	Network Sharing		
19.7.25.1	(L1) Set 'Prevent users from sharing files within their profile.' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19.7.26	Presentation Settings		
19.7.27	Remote Desktop Services		
19.7.28	RSS Feeds		
19.7.29	Search		
19.7.30	Sound Recorder		
19.7.31	Store		
19.7.32	Tablet PC		
19.7.33	Task Scheduler		
19.7.34	Windows Calendar		
19.7.35	Windows Color System		
19.7.36	Windows Error Reporting		
19.7.37	Windows Installer		
19.7.37.1	(L1) Set 'Always install with elevated privileges' to 'Disabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19.7.38	Windows Logon Options		

Control		Set Correctly	
		Yes	No
19.7.39	Windows Mail		
19.7.40	Windows Media Center		
19.7.41	Windows Media Player		
19.7.41.1	Networking		
19.7.41.2	Playback		
19.7.41.2.1	(L2) Set 'Prevent Codec Download' to 'Enabled' (Scored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix: Change History

Date	Version	Changes for this version
09-15-2014	1.0.0	Initial Public Release
11-03-2014	1.1.0	Update registry value name delimiter per Tickets #250, 252, 254, 256, 258, 259
11-03-2014	1.1.0	Clarify that more aggressive states are conformant per Tickets #262 and 265
11-03-2014	1.1.0	Recommend 'Named Pipes that can be accessed anonymously' per Ticket #267
11-03-2014	1.1.0	Recommend 'Shares that can be accessed anonymously' per Ticket #269
11-03-2014	1.1.0	Clarify auto update delay per Ticket #271
11-03-2014	1.1.0	Remove 'Clear virtual member pagefile' per Ticket #272
11-03-2014	1.1.0	Remove redundant text from audit recommendations per Ticket #275
11-03-2014	1.1.0	Remove 'Only elevate executables that are signed and validated' per Ticket #277
11-03-2014	1.1.0	Add policy background refresh recommendations per Tickets #278 and 279
11-03-2014	1.1.0	Recommend 'Boot-Start Driver Initialization Policy' per Ticket #280
11-03-2014	1.1.0	Add 'Network Security: Allow PKU2U authentication requests to this computer to use online identities' per Ticket #281
11-03-2014	1.1.0	Recommend allowed kerberos encryption types per Ticket #282
11-03-2014	1.1.0	Recommend UAC elevation behaviors per

		Ticket #283 and 284
11-03-2014	1.1.0	Remove 'No Auditing' recommendations per Tickets #285, #286
11-03-2014	1.1.0	Add rename guest to DC profile per Ticket #244
11-03-2014	1.1.0	Remove 'Server' section per Ticket #310
11-03-2014	1.1.0	Recommend ' Guest account status' per Ticket #240
11-03-2014	1.1.0	Recommend 'Audit Other Logon/Logoff Events' per Ticket #
11-03-2014	1.1.0	Recommend 'Do not allow passwords to be saved' per Ticket #291
11-03-2014	1.1.0	Recommend 'Do not allow drive redirection' per Ticket #292
11-03-2014	1.1.0	Recommend 'Always prompt for password upon connection' per Ticket #293
11-03-2014	1.1.0	Recommend client connection encryption level per Ticket #294
11-03-2014	1.1.0	Add WinRM recommendations per Ticket #295
11-03-2014	1.1.0	Add recommendations to DC profile per Tickets #296 and 297
11-03-2014	1.1.0	Remove toast notification recommendation per Ticket #298
11-03-2014	1.1.0	Add Attachment Manager recommendations per Ticket #299
11-03-2014	1.1.0	Add Internet Communication Management recommendations per Ticket #300
11-03-2014	1.1.0	Recommend 'Audit Other System Events' per

		Ticket #301
11-03-2014	1.1.0	Recommend 'Audit Removable Storage ' per Ticker #302
11-03-2014	1.1.0	Recommend 'Audit Computer Account Management' per Ticket #303
11-03-2014	1.1.0	Clarify 0 is not a conformant state per Tickets #236,#238, #248
11-03-2014	1.1.0	Recommend 'Accounts: Block Microsoft accounts' per Ticket #239
11-03-2014	1.1.0	Recommend 'Audit Account Lockout' per Ticket #287
09-30-2015	2.0.0	(L1) Remove "Interactive logon: Number of previous logons to cache (in case domain controller is not available)" = Enabled from DC profile Ticket #263
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L1) Add "Exchange Servers" group to "Manage auditing and security logs" to DC profile Ticket #320
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L1) Modify "Microsoft network server: Amount of idle time required before suspending session" to disqualify 0 as acceptable value. Ticket #322
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L1) Remove "Apply UAC restrictions to local accounts on network logons" = Enabled from DC profile. Ticket #324
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L1) Add "Accounts: Administrator account status" = Disabled

		Ticket #329
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L1) Add "Do not enumerate connected users on domain-joined computers" = Enabled Ticket #331
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L1) Add "Enumerate local users on domain-joined computers" = Disabled Ticket #332
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L1) Add "Turn on PIN sign-in" = Disabled Ticket #333
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L1) Add "Enumerate administrator accounts on elevation" = Disabled Ticket #334
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L1) Add "Configure Windows SmartScreen" = Enabled:Require approval from an administrator before running downloaded unknown software Ticket #335
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L1) Add "Turn off Data Execution Prevention for Explorer" = Disabled Ticket #336
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L1) Permit stronger values for 'Interactive logon: Smart card removal behavior' Ticket #337
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L1) Add "Interactive logon: Require Domain Controller Authentication to unlock workstations" = Enabled to MS profile Ticket#340
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L1) Add "Hardened UNC Paths" to protect NETLOGON and SYSVOL (MS15-011 /

		KB3000483) Ticket #343
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L2) Add MSS: KeepAliveTime = 3 Ticket #346
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L2) Add MSS: NoNameReleaseOnDemand = Enabled Ticket #348
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L2) Add MSS: PerformRouterDiscovery = Disabled Ticket 350
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L2) Add MSS: TcpMaxDataRetransmission IPv6 = 3 Ticket #352
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L2) Add MSS: TcpMaxDataRetransmission = 3 Ticket #354
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L2) Add "Network access: Do not allow storage of passwords and credentials for network authentication" = Enabled Ticket #356
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L2) Add "Turn off Microsoft Peer-to-Peer Networking Services" = Enabled Ticket #367
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L1) Add "Prohibit installation and configuration of Network Bridge on your DNS domain network" = Enabled Ticket #368
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L1) Add "Require domain users to elevate

		when setting a network's location" = Enabled Ticket #370
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L2) Add "Configuration of wireless settings using Windows Connect Now" = Disabled Ticket #371
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L2) Add "Prohibit Access of the Windows Connect Now wizards" = Enabled Ticket #372
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L1) Add "Turn off background refresh of Group Policy" = Disabled Ticket #374
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L1) Add "Turn off shell protocol protected mode" = Disabled Ticket #375
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L1) Add "Do not use temporary folders per session" = Disabled Ticket #376
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L1) Clarify 'Allow log on through Remote Desktop Services' - listed principals are white listed, not required Ticket #378
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L1) Clarify 'Allow log on through Remote Desktop Services' - listed principals are white listed, not required Ticket #378
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L1) Add "ENTERPRISE DOMAIN CONTROLLERS" to "Allow log on locally" to DC profile for Active Directory Domain Services Role

		Ticket #379
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L2) Add "Require Password When a Computer Wakes" = Enabled (both "On Battery" and "Plugged In") Ticket #382
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L1) Add "Turn off toast notifications on the lock screen" = Enabled Ticket #383
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L1) Permit stronger values for 'Interactive logon: Smart card removal behavior' Ticket #385
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L1) Correct "Always install with elevated privileges" = Disabled remediation and cross-reference Ticket #386
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L2) Add "Restrict Remote Desktop Services users to a single Remote Desktop Services session" = Enabled Ticket #404
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L2) Add "Restrict Unauthenticated RPC clients" = Enabled:Authenticated on Member Servers *only* Ticket #411
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L1) Add "NT VIRTUAL MACHINE\Virtual Machines" to "Create symbolic links" for Hyper-V Role Ticket #426
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L1) Add "System\CurrentControlSet\Services\CertSvc" to "Network access: Remotely accessible"

		registry paths and sub-paths" for ADCS Role Ticket #427
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L1) Add "IIS_USRS" to "Impersonate a client after authentication" for Web Server (IIS) Role with Web Services Role Service Ticket #428
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L1) Add "System\CurrentControlSet\Services\WINS" to "Network access: Remotely accessible registry paths and sub-paths" for WINS Server Feature Ticket #429
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L1) Clarify "Devices: Allowed to format and eject removable media" language Ticket #380
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L1) Add "Do not display the password reveal button" = Enabled Ticket #387
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L2) Add "Turn off heap termination on corruption" = Disabled Ticket #388
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L1) Add "Turn off shell protocol protected mode" = Disabled Ticket #389
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L1) Add "Prevent the usage of OneDrive for file storage" = Enabled Ticket #390
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L2) Add "Set what information is shared in

		Search" = Enabled:Anonymous info Ticket #391
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L2) Add "Set what information is shared in Search" = Enabled:Anonymous info Ticket #391
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L2) Add "Join Microsoft MAPS" = Disabled Ticket #392
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L2) Add "Prevent Internet Explorer security prompt for Windows Installer scripts" = Disabled Ticket #393
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L1) Add "Turn off app notifications on the lock screen" = Enabled Ticket #395
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L2) Add "Enable/Disable PerfTrack" = Disabled Ticket #396
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L2) Add "Enable Windows NTP Client" = Enabled Ticket #397
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L2) Add "Enable Windows NTP Server" = Disabled Ticket #398
9-30-2015	2.0.0	17.2 - Audit Application Group Management Ticket #399
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L2) Add "Disallow Autoplay for non-volume devices" = Enabled

		Ticket #400
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L2) Add "Turn on Mapper I/O (LLTDIO) driver" = Disabled Ticket #401
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L2) Add "Turn on Responder (RSPNDR) driver" = Disabled Ticket #402
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L2) Add "Do not allow COM port redirection" = Enabled Ticket #405
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L2) Add "Do not allow LPT port redirection" = Enabled Ticket #406
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L2) Add "Do not allow supported Plug and Play device redirection" = Enabled Ticket #407
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L1) Add "Require secure RPC communication" = Enabled Ticket #408
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L2) Add "Set time limit for active but idle Remote Desktop Services sessions" = Enabled:15 minutes or less Ticket #409
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L2) Add "Set time limit for disconnected sessions" = Enabled:1 minute or less Ticket #410
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L2) Add Disable IPv6 (via DisabledComponents registry value = 0xff

		(255)) Ticket #412
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L2) Add "Prohibit connection to non-domain networks when connected to domain authenticated network" = Enabled Ticket #413
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L1) Add "Include command line in process creation events" = Disabled Ticket #414
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L2) Add "Turn off handwriting personalization data sharing" = Enabled Ticket #415
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L2) Add "Turn off handwriting recognition error reporting" = Enabled Ticket #416
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L2) Add "Turn off Internet Connection Wizard if URL connection is referring to Microsoft.com" = Enabled Ticket #417
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L2) Add "Turn off Internet File Association service" = Enabled Ticket #418
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L2) Add "Turn off Registration if URL connection is referring to Microsoft.com" = Enabled Ticket #419
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L2) Add "Turn off the "Order Prints" picture task" = Enabled

		Ticket #420
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L2) Add "Turn off Windows Customer Experience Improvement Program" = Enabled Ticket #421
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L2) Add "Turn off Windows Error Reporting" = Enabled Ticket #422
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L1->L2) Move "Turn off Internet download for Web publishing and online ordering wizards" to Level 2 Ticket #423
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L1->L2) Move "Turn off Search Companion content file updates" to Level 2 Ticket #424
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L1->L2) Move "Turn off the Windows Messenger Experience Improvement Program" to Level 2 Ticket #425
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L1) Add "Hardened UNC Paths" to protect NETLOGON and SYSVOL (MS15-011 / KB3000483) Ticket #432
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L2) Add "Turn off Help Experience Improvement Program" = Enabled Ticket #433
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L1) Add "Prevent users from sharing files within their profile." = Enabled Ticket #434

9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L2) Add "Prevent Codec Download" = Enabled Ticket #435
9-30-2015	2.0.0	(L2) Add "Disallow copying of user input methods to the system account for sign-in" = Enabled Ticket #436
10-30-2015	2.1.0	Add "MSS (Legacy)" section from new ADMX template, relocate all MSS items to it and delete old MSS section Ticket #438
10-30-2015	2.1.0	Add "SCM: Wi-Fi Sense" section from new Microsoft ADMX template Ticket #439
10-30-2015	2.1.0	(L2) Remove "Turn off Internet File Association service" recommendation - does not apply Ticket #440
10-30-2015	2.1.0	(L1) Remove "Do not adjust default option to 'Install Updates and Shut Down' in Shut Down Windows dialog box" recommendation - does not apply Ticket #441
10-30-2015	2.1.0	(L1) Remove "Do not display 'Install Updates and Shut Down' option in Shut Down Windows dialog box" recommendation - does not apply Ticket #442
10-30-2015	2.1.0	(L1) Remove "Reschedule Automatic Updates scheduled installations" recommendation - does not apply

		Ticket #443
10-30-2015	2.1.0	(L1) Add "Audit Application Group Management" = Success and Failure Ticket #444
10-30-2015	2.1.0	(L1) Add "MSS: (EnableICMPRedirect) Allow ICMP redirects to override OSPF generated routes" = Disabled Ticket#445
10-30-2015	2.1.0	(L2->L1) Move "MSS: (NoNameReleaseOnDemand) Allow the computer to ignore NetBIOS name release requests except from WINS servers" = Enabled to Level 1 Ticket #446
10-30-2015	2.1.0	(L2->L1) Move "Disallow Autoplay for non-volume devices" = Enabled to Level 1 Ticket #447
10-30-2015	2.1.0	(L2->L1) Move "Turn off heap termination on corruption" = Disabled to Level 1 Ticket #448
10-30-2015	2.1.0	Fix missing/incorrect Common Configuration Enumeration (CCE) IDs Ticket #449
10-30-2015	2.1.0	(L1) Add "Set the default behavior for AutoRun" = "Enabled: Do not execute any autorun commands" Ticket # 450
10-30-2015	2.1.0	(L1) Add LAPS "Enable local admin password management" = "Enabled" Ticket #451

10-30-2015	2.1.0	(L1) Add LAPS "Password Settings: Password Complexity" = "Enabled:Large letters + small letters + numbers + specials" Ticket #452
10-30-2015	2.1.0	(L1) Add LAPS "Password Settings: Password Length" = "Enabled:15 or more" Ticket #453
10-30-2015	2.1.0	(L1) Add LAPS "Password Settings: Password Age (Days)" = "Enabled:30 or fewer" Ticket #454
10-30-2015	2.1.0	(L1) Add LAPS "Do not allow password expiration time longer than required by policy" = "Enabled" Ticket #455
10-30-2015	2.1.0	(L1) Ensure LAPS AdmPwd GPO Extension / CSE is installed Ticket #456
10-30-2015	2.1.0	(L2) Add "Turn off KMS Client Online AVS Validation" = "Enabled" Ticket #457
10-30-2015	2.1.0	(L1) Add "Turn on PowerShell Script Block Logging" = "Disabled" Ticket #458
10-30-2015	2.1.0	(L1) Add "Turn on PowerShell Transcription" = "Disabled Ticket #459
10-30-2015	2.1.0	Change from LGPE GPO paths to GPME GPO paths Ticket #460

10-30-2015	2.1.0	(L1) Remove "Enable RPC Endpoint Mapper Client Authentication" recommendation from DCs Ticket #461
11-02-2015	2.1.0	Improved document formatting – no recommendation changes.