Smartphone Malware Forensics — An Introduction

Viktor Schlüter & Janik Besendorf Digital Security Lab - Reporter ohne Grenzen

Who we are and what we do:

Digital Security Lab

• founded 1.5 years ago

- IT security trainings for journalists
- Analysis of digital attacks
- active (re-)search for spyware attacks on journalists

Digital Security Lab







Kaspersky Says New Zero-Day Malware Hit iPhones-Including Its Own

king



October 6, 2023

spyv

Puti

PUBLISHED

Predator Files: Technical deep-dive into Intellexa Alliance's surveillance products

On 5 October 2023, a major global investigation - the "Predator Files" - was published exposing the proliferation of surveillance technologies around the world and the failure of governments and the European Union (EU) to properly regulate the industry. The Security Lab at Amnesty International is a technical partner in the "Predator

Fundamentals

Computer vs. Smartphone Forensics



https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Forensic_disk_imager.jpg https://www.flickr.com/photos/30478819@N08/36059117945

Malware vs. Spyware



Phone malware: The significance of **exploits**

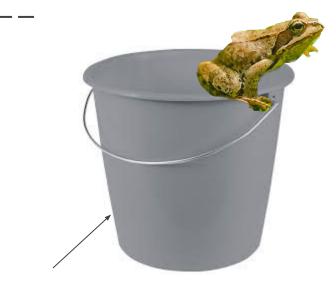


Sandbox

with exploits

without exploits

Phone malware: The significance of exploits



Sandbox

with exploits

without exploits

Exploits in different operating systems

scams / stalkerware <u>without</u> exploits	 no sideloading (yet) limited app permissions jailbreaks sometimes possible 	 sideloading broader app permissions rooting often possible
<mark>spyware</mark> <u>with</u> exploits	 possible to detect very hard to get binary 	 rarely detected little info for analysis

Mobile state actor forensics: An eternal cat and mouse game





Mobile state actor forensics: The eternal cat and mouse game



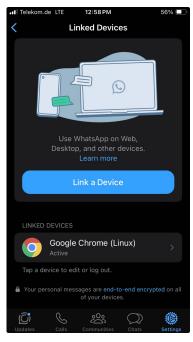
Helpful websites for cyber stalking victims

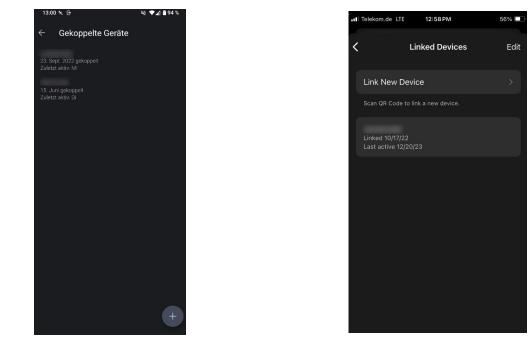
https://antistalking.haecksen.org

<u>https://stopstalkerware.org/information-for-</u> <u>survivors</u>

Methodology

Linked Devices





https://netzpolitik.org/2021/ohne-staatstrojaner-polizei-und-geheimdienste-koennen-whatsapp-mitlesen/

Methodology for **iOS**

0. optional: jailbreak device

- idevicebackup2 -i encryption on
- 2. decrypt mvt Backup _____ mvt-ios decrypt-backup -d <decrypted_dir> <backup_folder>
- 3. analyse data with mvt ------ mvt-ios check-backup -o <mvt_output> <decrypted_dir>
- Look through resulting data, additional analyses



Methodology for Android

- 0. optional: root device
- 1. extract data with mvt mvt-android check-adb --output /path/to/results
- 2. download apk's ______ mvt-android download-apks --output /path/to/folder
- 3.

Look through resulting data, 4. additional analyses



Primary findings vs. secondary findings

Primary findings contain the full chain of evidence:

vendor → infrastructure

- ➔ network traffic
- → smart phone

➔ Proof of execution on phone

(plus ideally the binary)

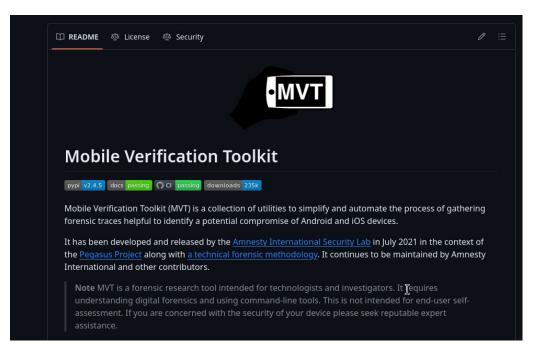
Secondary findings correlate with a primary finding:

- Identifying behaviour is the same:
 - \circ file names
 - process names
 - Same way to "clean up"
 - same traces in logs

Indicators of Compromise (IoC)

- useful for easy secondary finding
- recommended IoC lists
 - https://github.com/AssoEchap/stalkerware-indicators
 - https://github.com/mvt-project/mvt-indicators
 - o <u>https://github.com/AmnestyTech/investigations</u>

Meet the toolbox



or if you're wild, your favourite sqlite parser ;)

Traffic Analysis

- spyware needs to transmit data back to the surveillant
- this traffic can be intercepted and analyzed
- encryption and obfuscation can make this tricky

TinyCheck

- Tool by Kaspersky to analyze traffic in order to find stalkerware
- runs on a raspberry pi (optional)
- opens a dedicated wifi
- generates a report with suspicious connections
- https://tiny-check.com

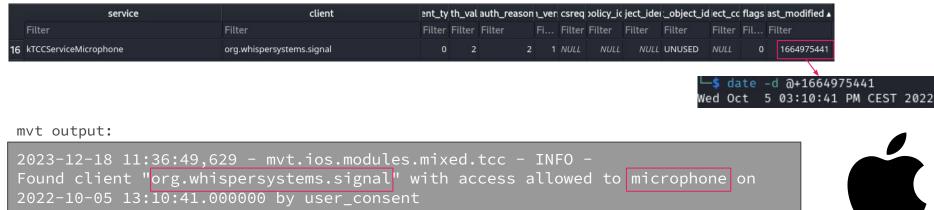


- Since iOS 15.7 no jailbreak
- Stalkerware without jailbreak difficult to impossible
 - \circ $\,$ Has to go through app store $\,$
 - \circ $\,$ Has to comply to app store rules $\,$
 - \circ $\,$ Notifier whan camera / microphone are activated $\,$
 - \circ $\,$ No access to data from other apps
- Sometimes: iCloud data crawling services

TCC (Transparency, Consent, and Control)

- path:/Library/TCC/TCC.db
- Interesting Table: access

in the database:



Data Usage

- Library/Databases/DataUsage.sqlite
- Interesting Table: ZLIVEUSAGE, ZPROCESS

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Easy to remember query: (copied from mvt)	SELECT ZPROCESS.ZFIRSTTIMESTAMP, ZPROCESS.ZPROCNAME, ZPROCESS.ZPROCNAME, ZPROCESS.ZBUNDLENAME, ZPROCESS.Z_PK, ZLIVEUSAGE.ZWIFIIN, ZLIVEUSAGE.ZWIFIOUT, ZLIVEUSAGE.ZWWANNI, ZLIVEUSAGE.ZWWANOUT, ZLIVEUSAGE.ZPK, ZLIVEUSAGE.ZHASPROCESS, ZLIVEUSAGE.ZTIMESTAMP FROM ZLIVEUSAGE LEFT JOIN ZPROCESS ON ZLIVEUSAGE.ZHASPROCESS = ZPROCESS.Z_PK UNION SELECT ZFIRSTTIMESTAMP, ZTIMESTAMP, ZPROCNAME, ZBUNDLENAME, Z_PK, NULL, NULL, NULL, NULL, NULL, NULL
	(SELECT ZHASPROCESS FROM ZLIVEUSAGE);



Data Usage

myt converts this to:

- Library/Databases/DataUsage.sqlite
- Interesting Table: ZLIVEUSAGE, ZPROCESS

"first_isodate": "2022-11-23
17:47:22.267285",
 "isodate": "2022-11-28
17:20:04.212211",
 "proc_name":
"mDNSResponder/ph.telegra.Telegraph",
 "bundle_id": "ph.telegra.Telegraph",
 "proc_id": 131,
 "wifi_in": 0.0,
 "wifi_out": 0.0,
 "wwan_in": 8940.0,
 "wwan_out": 4260.0,
 "live_id": 3110,
 "live_isodate": "2022-11-23
17:47:22.266572"



Installed Applications

• Info.plist

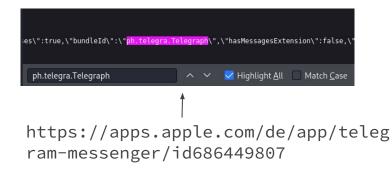
_ __ __

- parse plists with plistutil
- bundle id is contained in apple app store html source:



Installed Applications

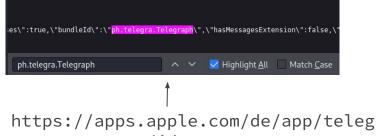
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Installed Applications

- Info.plist
- parse plists with plistutil
- bundle id is contained in apple app store html source:



ram-messenger/id686449807

```
"name": "ph.telegra.Telegraph",
"DeviceBasedVPP": false,
"artistName": "Telegram FZ-LLC",
"bundleShortVersionString": "9.1.1",
"bundleVersion": "24496",
"com.apple.iTunesStore.downloadInfo": {
    "accountInfo": {
        "AltDSID": "001575-08-1f46f614-3fd6-4660-ad8d-1cfaadc37c58",
        "AppleID": "jb@reporter-ohne-grenzen.de",
        "DSPersonID": 20633932829,
        "DownloaderID": 0,
        "FamilyID": 0,
        "PurchaserID": 20633932829
    }.
    "purchaseDate": "2022-11-23T17:47:07Z"
 "gameCenterEnabled": false.
"gameCenterEverEnabled": false,
"genre": "Soziale Netze",
"genreId": 6005.
"hasMessagesExtension": false,
"hasOrEverHasHadIAP": true,
"iad-attribution": "0",
"is-auto-download": false,
"is-purchased-redownload": false.
"isFactoryInstall": false,
"itemId": 686449807,
"itemName": "Telegram Messenger"
"kind": "software",
"launchProhibited": false,
"rating": {
    "label": "17+",
    "rank": 600
"redownload-params": "productType=C&price=0&salableAdamId=6&6449&07&pricingParameters=STDF
"releaseDate": "2013-08-14T07:00:00Z",
"s": 143443.
"sideLoadedDeviceBasedVPP": false,
"softwareVersionBundleId": "ph.telegra.Telegraph",
"softwareVersionExternalIdentifier": 853263055,
"sourceApp": "com.apple.AppStore".
"storeCohort": "10|date=1669224600000&sf=143443&pgtp=Search&pgid=3d990042-1710-4d73-b58f-
c3c9bc8ec008&prpg=Genre 179183&ctxt=Search&issrch=1&imptyp=card&kind=iosSoftware&itpltyp=F
id=4"
```

Stalkerware-indicators (Public)		⊙ Watch 22 - ♀ Fork 37 - ☆ Star 217
양 master → 양 2 Branches ⓒ 0 Tags	Q Go to file • Add file •	<> Code • About
) Te-k and Te-k Updating generated indicator fil	es and README d098613 · last week 🕚	753 Commits
🖿 generated	Updating generated indicator files and README	last week Activity
🖿 tools	Adds tools 1	11 months ago
🖿 vendors	Updating generated indicator files and README	4 months ago v 37 forks
🗋 .flake8	Flake8 checks in scripts	last year Report repository
🗅 .gitignore	Update generation script and add linter	last year Releases
🗋 README.md	Use Wayback Machine URL (#123)	last week No releases published
🖺 ioc.yaml	Updating generated indicator files and README	last month Packages
🖺 quad9_blocklist.txt	Update readme and blocklist	last year No packages published
🗅 rules.yar	Updating generated indicator files and README 1	
🗋 samples.csv	Updating generated indicator files and README	2 weeks ago
🗋 watchware.yaml	Updating generated indicator files and README	3 months ago
		/ =
		Languages

Stalkerware Indicators of Compromise

YARA 51.9% Python 48.19

→ included in mvt

but: false positives are possible

Safari History, redirects (similar for Firefox, Chrome)

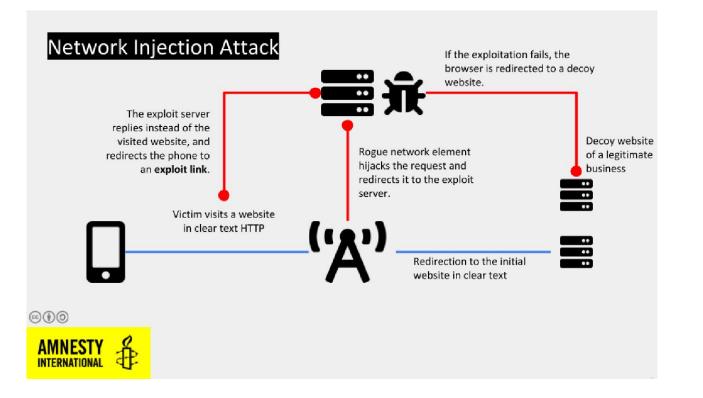
- Library/Safari/History.db
- history_items, history_visits

→ browser redirects quickly after the original request can be an indicator for network injection attacks

→ one click exploit URLs can be found here



Network Injection Attacks



Incomplete Trace Removals in DBs

• Which DB? It depends...

Example: (credit to Citizenlab[1])

- Pegasus deleted data usage entries in ZPROCESS but not in ZLIVEUSAGE in 2021
- By checking for inconsistencies and anomalies you can find indirect malware traces



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    "proc_name":
"mDNSResponder/ph.telegra.Telegraph",
    "bundle_id": 'ph.telegra.Telegraph',
    "proc_id": 131,
    "wifi_in": 0.0,
    "wifi_out": 0.0,
    "wwan_in": 8940.0,
    "wwan_out": 4260.0,
    "live_id": 3110,
    "live_isodate": "2022-11-23
17:47:22.266572"
```



Time stamps of iOS Backups

_ _ _

• decrypt Backup with mvt-ios decrypt-backup



L_\$	ls						5.																
		16	21	2c	37	42	4d	58	63	6e	79	84	8f	9a	a5	bØ	bb	c 6	d1	dc	e6	f1	fc
01	0c	17	22	2d	38	43	4e	59	64	6f	7a	85	90	9b	a6	b1	bc	c7	d2	dd	e7	f2	fd
02	Ød	18	23	2e	39	44	4f	5a	65	70	7b	86	91	9c	a7	b2	bd	c8	d3	de	e8	f3	fe
03	0e	19	24	2f	3a	45	50	5b	66	71	7c	87	92	9d	a8	b3	be	c9	d4	decrypted	e9	f4	ff
04	Øf	1a	25	30	Зb	46	51	5c	67	72	7d	88	93	9e	a9	b 4	bf	са	d5	df	ea	f5	Info.plist
05	10	1b	26	31	Зc	47	52	5d	68	73	7e	89	94	9f	aa	b5	c0	cb	d 6	e0	eb	f6	Manifest.db
06	11	1c	27	32	3d	48	53	5e	69	74	7f	8a	95	a0	ab	b 6	c1	cc	d7	e1	ec	f7	Manifest.plist
07	12	1d	28	33	3e	49	54	5f	6a	75	80	8b	96	a1	ac	b7	c2	cd	d8	e2	ed	f8	Status.plist
08	13	1e	29	34	3f	4a	55	60	6b	76	81	8c	97	a2	ad	b 8	c3	ce	d9	e3	ee	f9	
																				e4	ef	fa	
0a	15	20	2b	36	41	4c	57	62	6d	78	83	8e	99	a4	af	ba	c5	dØ	db	e5	fØ	fb	

Time stamps of iOS Backups

- decrypt Backup with mvt-ios decrypt-backup
- Reconstruct backup to original paths.
 - o https://github.com/inflex/ideviceunback
- In the backup folder, sort by timestamps
 - o find -printf "%TY-%Tm-%Td %TT %p\n" | sort -n
- If you have an interesting time range, look there



Attack artifacts: Crash logs, Attachments

- Library/SMS/Attachments
 - <u>Example:</u> .gif files in FORCEDENTRY exploits[1] (credits to Citizenlab!)
- Crashlogs can also contain interesting artifacts
 - many crashes of the same component in a short timeframe?



Correlation of events (in mvt timeline)

Example from Triangulation Case:

2022-09-13 10:04:11.890351Z Datausage IMTransferAgent/com.apple.datausage.messages (Bundle ID: com.apple.datausage.messages, ID: 127) WIFI IN: 0.0, WIFI OUT: 0.0 - WWAN IN: 76281896.0, WWAN OUT: 100956502.0 2022-09-13 10:04:54.000000Z Manifest Library/SMS/Attachments/65/05 - MediaDomain 2022-09-13 10:05:14.744570Z Datausage BackupAgent (Bundle ID: , ID: 710) WIFI IN: 0.0, WIFI OUT: 0.0 - WWAN IN: 734459.0, WWAN OUT: 287912.0

Source: <u>https://securelist.com/operation-triangulation/109842/</u>, Kaspersky



Attack Vectors: **Zero Click Exploits**

First step: Tracing points of contact

• Zero click exploits:

_ __ __

- \circ Goal of attackers \rightarrow get the device to process complex data
- What are interesting targets?
 - Baseband
 - Messengers
 - Browsers
 - All apps that can be triggered to pull data / invites
 - Bluetooth, WiFi

Attack Vectors: **One Click Exploits**

First step: Tracing points of contact

• One click exploits

_ _ _

- Attackers have to get the victim to interact with them / click a link
- \circ $\;$ How can they reach the victim?
 - Messengers
 - E-mail
 - Content of web pages
- <u>Advantage</u>: Sometimes the victim might remember a "strange/unusual message"

Analysis for Android

→Searching for possible indicators:

- Installed apps and their permissions
 - Accessibility Services
 - \circ Full device management permissions
- Microphone and location indicators
- Root: new permissions
- running processes
- Apks and tier hashes
- check suspicious app installers
- URLs in WhatsApp messages



Analysis for Android: Installed Applications

• adb shell pm list packages -u -i -f

package:/data/app/~~npl4KhTyYF2TUnaa77CbPQ==/info.metadude.android.congress.schedule-riJV6nMV3RctH6dWk9TzDw==/base.apk=info.met adude.android.congress.schedule installer=com.google.android.packageinstaller

- check installer
 - com.google.android.packageinstaller
 - None
 - com.samsung.android.app.omcagent



Analysis for Android: Installed Applications

- adb shell pm list packages
 - \circ -s system packages
 - -3 3rd party packages
 - -d disabled packages



Analysis for Android: Installed Applications

- adb shell dumpsys package com.example.package
 - firstInstallTime=2023-12-28 16:40:13
 - o lastUpdateTime=2023-12-28 16:40:13
 - requested permissions:
 - android.permission.INTERNET
 - o android.permission.ACCESS_NETWORK_STATE
 - o android.permission.ACCESS_WIFI_STATE
 - o android.permission.CHANGE_WIFI_MULTICAST_STATE
 - o android.permission.CHANGE_NETWORK_STATE



Analysis for Android: Intents

- Intents notify apps when certain events occur
- adb shell dumpsys package com.example.package

Action: "androidx.profileinstaller.action.BENCHMARK_OPERATION" android.intent.action.BOOT_COMPLETED:

- android.provider.Telephony.NEW_OUTGOING_SMS
- android.intent.action.DATA_SMS_RECEIVED
- android.intent.action.NEW_OUTGOING_CALL



Analysis for Android: Installed Applications MVT

 mvt-android check-adb --module Packages --output /path/to/results/folder/





Analysis for Android: Download apk

- Get package name
 - adb shell pm list packages
- Get apk path
 - adb shell pm path com.example.package
- pull the apk
 - \circ adb pull

/data/app/~~Ihc8WADRQ_Qi0w2SqZ7-Nw==/org.fdroid.fdroid-ENnqn lo_sh9NYMd7fBbx4A==/base.apk



Analysis for Android: Download apk MVT

- mvt-android download-apks -output /path/to/apks/folder/
- MVT_VT_API_KEY=<key> mvt-android download-apks --output /path/to/folder --virustotal

MVT - Mobile Verification Toolkit <u>https://mvt.re</u> Version: 2.4.5 Indicators updates checked recently, next automatic check in 12 hours											
<pre>17:19:02 INFO [mvt.android.cmd_download_apks] Retrieving list of installed packages 17:20:45 INFO [mvt.android.cmd_download_apks] Third-party package " requested 11 potentially dangerous permissions INFO [mvt.android.cmd_download_apks] Found non-system package with name "info.metadude.android.congress.schedule" installed by "com.google.android.packageinstaller" on 2023-12-28 16:40:58 INFO [mvt.android.cmd_download_apks] Found non-system package with name " installed by "None" on 2022-07-17 01:08:10 INFO [mvt.android.cmd_download_apks] Found non-system package with name "org.fdroid.fdroid" installed by "com.google.android.packageinstaller" on 2023-12-28 16:40:11 Looking up 3 files</pre>											
Package name	File path	Detections									
<pre>info.metadude.android.congress.schedule org.fdroid.fdroid</pre>	/data/app/~~npl4KhTyYF2TUnaa77CbPQ==/info.metadude.android.congress.schedule-riJV6nMV3 /data/app/~~BhAL6PzJV2A-9_hKRSHZsw==/com.sec.provider.mobile.android-aIwm6LjDyavP449XU /data/app/~~Ihc8WADRQ_Qi0w2SqZ7-Nw==/org.fdroid.fdroid-ENnqn1o_sh9NYMd7fBbx4A==/base.a										



Analysis for Android: Accessibility Services

Removing Malware That Uses Accessibility to Prevent Uninstallation

Product/Version includes:Mobile Security For Enterprise , Trend Vision One , View More

Update Date: 2023/03/10

Particle Number: 000292475

- Category: Configure, Troubleshoot

Analysis of a malware exploiting Android accessibility services



Analysis for Android: Accessibility Services

• adb shell dumpsys accessibility

shortcut key:{}

button:{}

button target:{null}

Bound services:{Service[label=AlcoTrack DrunkProtect Hintergrunddienst, fe dbackType[FEEDBACK_SPOKEN, FEEDBACK_HAPTIC, FEEDBACK_AUDIBLE, FEEDBACK_VISUAL, | EEDBACK_GENERIC, FEEDBACK_BRAILLE], capabilities=1, eventTypes=TYPE_WINDOW_CONT| NT_CHANGED, notificationTimeout=100, requestA11yBtn=false]}

Enabled services:{{com.felixheller.alcdroid/com.felixheller.alcdroid.drunk rotect.DrunkProtectAccessibilityService_}}

Binding services:{}
Crashed services:{}
Client list info:{
 Client list callbacks: 18
 Client list killed: false
 Client list broadcasts count: -1
 Registered clients:{



Analysis for Android: Accessibility Services MVT

\$ mvt-android check-adb --module DumpsysAccessibility

INFO [mvt.android.modules.adb.dumpsys_accessibility] Running module
DumpsysAccessibility...

INFO [mvt.android.modules.adb.dumpsys_accessibility] Found installed
accessibility service

"com.samsung.accessibility/.universalswitch.UniversalSwitchService"

INFO [mvt.android.modules.adb.dumpsys_accessibility] Found installed accessibility service

"com.samsung.android.accessibility.talkback/com.samsung.android.marvin.talkba
ck.TalkBackService"

INFO [mvt.android.modules.adb.dumpsys_accessibility] Found installed accessibility service "com.malicious.package/.bad.Service"



Analysis for Android: Running processes

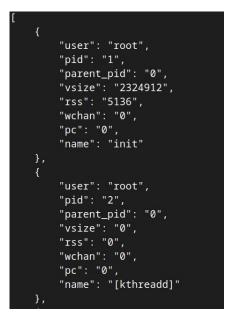
• adb shell ps -A

1001	437	2	ש	U	٥ ٥ ٢ [ext4-isv-conver]	
logd	440	1	10901672	4848	0 O S logd	
lmkd	441	1	10817268	3336	0 0 S lmkd	
system	442	1	10895544	3960	0 0 S servicemanager	
system	443	1	10831408	4212	0 0 S hwservicemanager	
system	444	1	10885112	2384	0 0 S vndservicemanager	
root	445	2	0	0	0 0 S [psimon]	
root	446	2	0	0	0 0 S [sugov:0]	
root	450	2	0	0	0 0 S [sugov:4]	
root	451	2	0	0	0 0 S [sugov:6]	
root	454	1	10779116	1696	0 0 S watchdogd	
root	457	1	10906224	4128	0 0 S vold	
root	458	1	11057356	3540	0 0 S twoshay	



Analysis for Android: Running processes MVT

 mvt-android check-adb --module Processes --output /path/to/results/folder/





Questions ?

Contact:

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@schluevik@chaos.social

janik.besendorf@reporter-ohne-grenzen.de

@besendorf@chaos.social

Workshop: 14:15

Stage H

