Implementing a Packet Filter using a P4 Programmable Switch

Anaia Prather, Camila Pereira and Caroline Boozer
Advisors: Ali Mazloum and Jose Gomez

Department of Integrated Information Technology
University of South Carolina

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Agenda

• Project Description
• Objectives
• Background on P4
• Experimentation scenario
• Hands-on demo in Netlab
• Lessons Learned
Project Description

• Implementing a packet filter on a programmable switch, using P4
• Block and filter traffic based on certain security policies
• Examples of the security policies are:
  ➢ Blocking packets based on the destination IPv4 address
  ➢ Dropping segments going to an UDP and/or TCP port
  ➢ Restricting ICMP requests to a security zone
  ➢ Applying a combination of security policies to different security zones
Objectives

• Construct a packet filter using a P4-programmable switch
• Implement security policies using the P4 language
• Apply the concept of security zones
• Validate the implementation using open-source tools
Background on P4

- Programming Protocol-independent Packet Processors (P4)
- The P4 language specify how packets are processed through a pipeline
- The pipeline consists of different stages comprising a programmable parser, match-action stages, and a programmable deparser
Experimentation scenario

- The scenario consists of three security zones where hosts h1, h2, and h3 represent the headquarters, the branch office, and the outside zone.
- Switch s1 applies different security policies to each zone.
- The security policies are implemented in P4 using match-action tables.
Hands-on Demo in Netlab

- Demo 1: Filtering packets based on the destination IP address
- Demo 2: Dropping segments going to the TCP port 80
- Demo 3: Restricting ICMP request from Zone 3 (Danger) to Zone 1 (Headquarters) but allowing requests from Zone 2 (Branch Office)
Lessons Learned

• Learned how to implement a packet filter using P4
• Leveraged match-action tables to implement security policies
• Applied the concept of security zones using a P4 switch
• Validated the implementation of the security policies in the Netlab environment
• Understood the flexibility of P4 programmable switches on implementing security features
THANK YOU!