

A Holistic Approach to AWS Organization Management

Insomnihack, 2024

nextthink

Our Mission: To Delight People at Work

We are a software company focused on helping IT to shape smart and productive workplaces. We bring clarity to your IT department through a unique combination of real-time analytics, automations, and employee feedback. We think IT is an ocean of untapped potential, they just need the right solutions. And that's where we come in.

1000+
Nexthinkers
(11 countries)

60
Nationalities

400+ R&D

1000+ Clients

15+ Million
Cloud
Endpoints

10 AWS
Regions

Processing
Trillions of
Events Daily

aws sts get-caller-identity

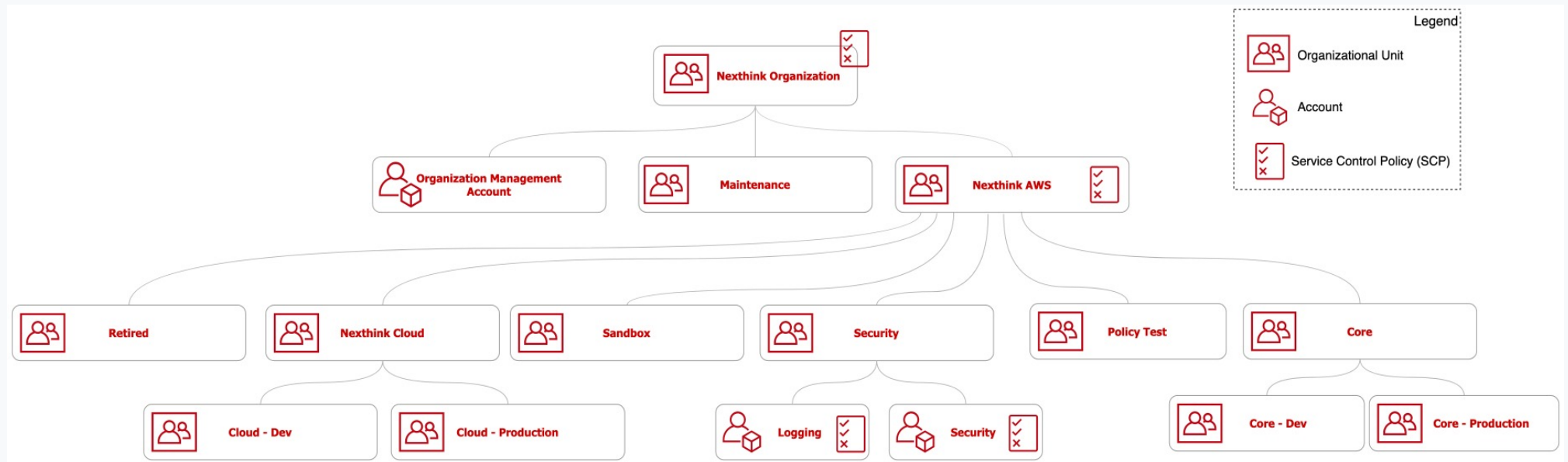
- Bogdan Nicorici (@0xboogy)
- Ex
 - UNIX / Linux Sysadmin
 - Penetration tester
 - CTF Player
- Cloud Security Architect @ Nexthink
- Security enthusiast
- Automation addict
- I love writing code & building security tools



Agenda

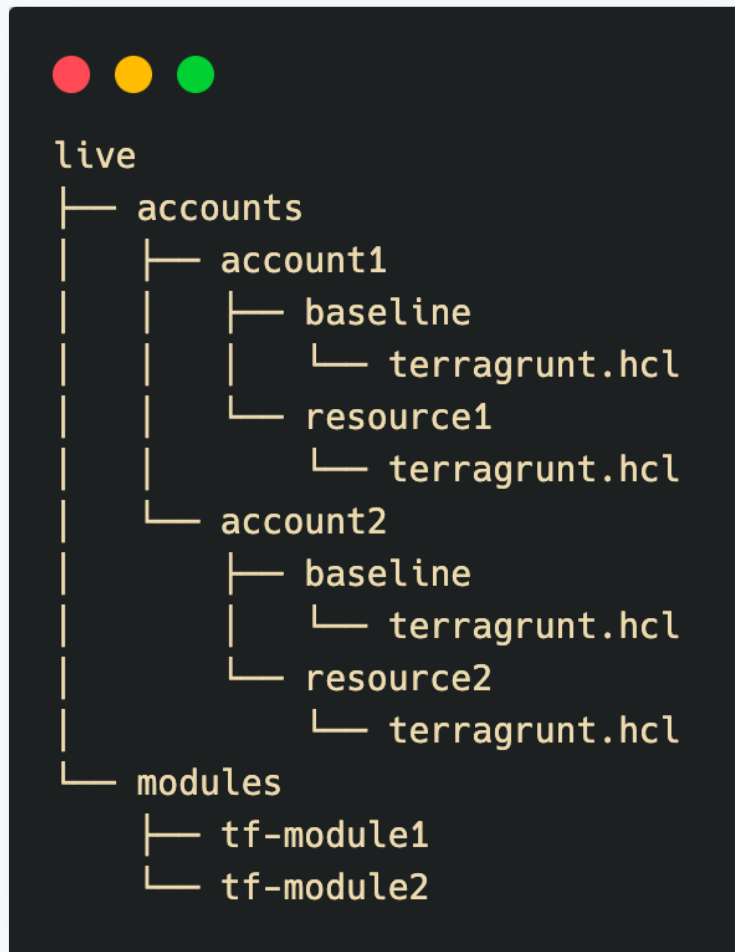
- AWS Organization
 - Structure
 - Services
 - SCPs
- Access and User Management
 - Permanent & Temporary
 - IaC
- Log Centralization
- Backups (Ransomware)
- Configuration Hardening
- Takeaways

AWS Organization



- Fully managed using IaC (terraform + terragrunt)
 - Fast and reproducible deployments, easy roll back, code review and approval for changes, etc.
- 70+ AWS accounts
- GitHub Repository owned by Security (engineering teams can contribute)
- Most Critical Account – Organization Management Account
 - Block all access to this account
 - Delegate all the services to dedicated accounts, ex: Security, etc.
 - Default administrator role created in each member account: **OrganizationAccountAccessRole**

AWS Organization



- A folder per account and per component
- Each component has its own terraform state
- Terragrunt can manage dependencies
- Possible to apply all resources for an account in parallel
- Fast deployment (“smaller plans”)
- Limit blast radius

AWS Organization



- A folder per account and per component
- Each component has its own terraform state
- Terragrunt can manage dependencies
- Possible to apply all resources for an account in parallel
- Fast deployment ("smaller plans")
- Limit blast radius

Security Team deploys only the following resources in the organization:

- IAM Users
- IAM Roles (cross-account, IdP (OIDC), integrations)
- Account baseline (hardening, global configuration)
- IP restriction policies, permission boundaries, etc.
- SCPs

AWS Organization - Services

- Delegated Administrator
 - CloudTrail
 - GuardDuty
 - Security Hub
 - Detective
 - IAM Access Analyzer



AWS services that you can use with AWS Organizations

AWS Organization- Services

- Delegated Administrator
 - CloudTrail
 - GuardDuty
 - Security Hub
 - Detective
 - IAM Access Analyzer
- IAM Identity Center (SSO)
 - One organization instance possible
 - Regional service
 - Possible to have an instance per account
 - Administrator delegation is possible
 - Use SCP to control instance creation

```
{
  "Version": "2012-10-17",
  "Statement": [
    {
      "Sid": "DenyMemberAccountInstances",
      "Effect": "Deny",
      "Action": "sso:CreateInstance",
      "Resource": "*",
      "Condition": {
        "StringNotEquals": {
          "aws:PrincipalAccount": ["<ALLOWED-ACCOUNT-ID>"]
        }
      }
    }
  ]
}
```

AWS Organization SCPs

- What is an SCP 🤔
 - Think of a GPO for active directory applied to an OU or an AD object
- Globally applied SCPs
 - Block root account usage
 - Block creation of root access keys
 - Block dangerous actions
 - › Account leaves organization
 - › Create IAM users and keys outside of `IAM Bastion` account
 - › Remove S3 public access block
 - › Prevent disabling/deleting specific services, components
 - Ensure sensitive IAM roles cannot be tampered with
 - Ensure Lambda function URL requires IAM authentication
 - Region allow-list per environment
- Be mindful about SCP quotas

Policy type	Minimum attached to an entity	Maximum attached to root	Maximum attached per OU	Maximum attached per account
Service control policy	1 — Every entity must have <i>at least</i> one SCP attached at all times. You can't remove the last SCP from an entity.	5	5	5
AI services opt-out policy	0	5	5	5
Backup policy	0	10	10	10
Tag policy	0	10	10	10

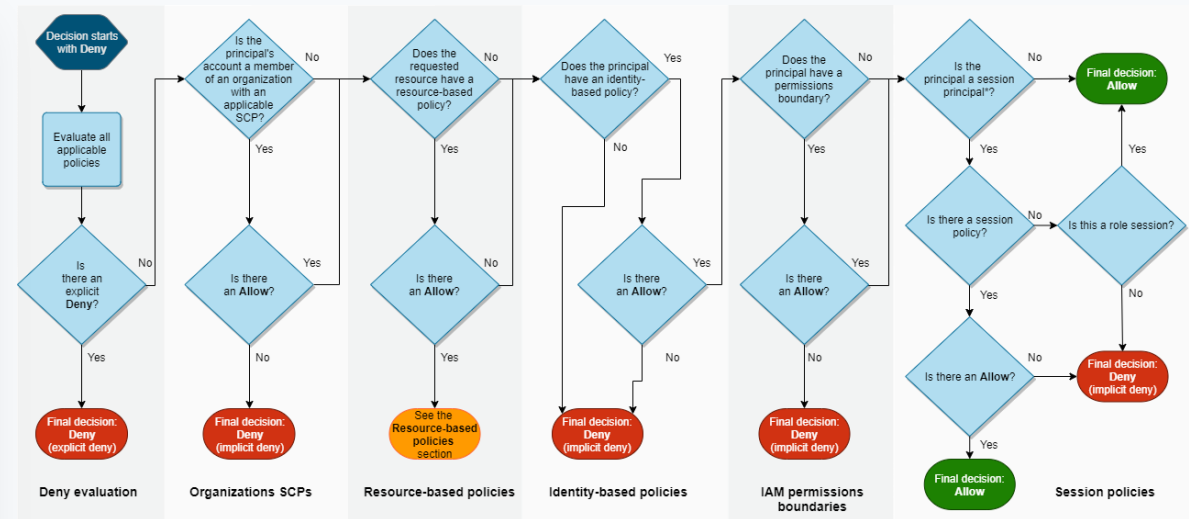
Organization SCPs

- Per account
 - AWS service allow-list
 - VPC peering allow-list
- Services per account
 - Useful for hardening and, compliance is a bonus
 - Reduces attack surface and cost
 - Can be tricky when services have dependencies
 - › Ex: if you only want to use "ec2:*"
 - ec2messages:*
 - autoscaling:*
 - imagebuilder:*
 - ec2-instance-connect:*
- Configuration abstraction as yaml
 - Easy to read, update and understand
 - Single pane of glass for account configuration
 - Easier to track and understand changes
 - Easy to parse (CLI: `yq` = `jq` but for `yaml`)

```
alias: "account-alias"
email: "some-email+account-alias@nexthink.com"
env: "null"
account-env: "prod"
name: "Account Friendly Name"
ou: "Organization OU Name"
owner:
  email: "owner-email@nexthink.com"
  name: "Owner Team Name"
aws_services:
  - ecs
  - ecr
  - fargate
  - lambda
  - dynamodb
  - ec2
  - ssm
  - ssm-guiconnect
  - autoscaling
  - elasticloadbalancing
  - elasticfilesystem
allow_vpc_peerings:
  - src_vpc: "vpc-112233" # vpc id - current account
    dst_vpc: "vpc-009988" # vpc id - remote account
    dst_account_id: "1122334455" # remote account id
  - src_vpc: "vpc-998877"
    dst_vpc: "vpc-112233"
    dst_account_id: "1122334455"
  - src_vpc: "*"
    dst_vpc: "*"
    dst_account_id: "1122334455"
```

Organization SCPs

- SCPs – Deny vs Allow
- Tag accounts
 - security alerts (SIEM, lookup tables...)
 - billing
 - criticality based on environment, owner, workloads



Source: https://docs.aws.amazon.com/IAM/latest/UserGuide/reference_policies_evaluation-logic.html#policy-eval-denyallow

```
alias: "account-alias"
email: "some-email+account-alias@nexthink.com"
env: "null"
account-env: "prod"
name: "Account Friendly Name"
ou: "Organization OU Name"
owner:
  email: "owner-email@nexthink.com"
  name: "Owner Team Name"
```

Organization SCPs

- Block root account usage

```
{
  "Version": "2012-10-17",
  "Statement": [
    {
      "Sid": "BlockRootAccountUsage",
      "Effect": "Deny",
      "Action": "*",
      "Resource": "*",
      "Condition": {
        "StringLike": {
          "aws:PrincipalArn": "arn:aws:iam::*:root"
        }
      }
    }
  ]
}
```

Organization SCPs

- Block root account usage
- Block root key creation

```
{
  "Version": "2012-10-17",
  "Statement": [
    {
      "Sid": "EnsureRootAccessKeysCannotBeCreated",
      "Effect": "Deny",
      "Action": "iam:CreateAccessKey",
      "Resource": "arn:aws:iam::*:root"
    }
  ]
}
```

Organization SCPs

- Block root account usage
- Block root key creation
- Protect sensitive IAM roles
- Apply logic in SCPs using meaningful IAM role paths
 - `arn:aws:iam::*:role/org-admin/...`
 - `arn:aws:iam::*:role/ec2-admin/...`
 - `arn:aws:iam::*:role/eks-admin/...`

```
{ "Version": "2012-10-17",
  "Statement": [
    {
      "Effect": "Deny",
      "Action": [
        "iam:UpdateRoleDescription",
        "iam:UpdateRole",
        "iam:UpdateAssumeRolePolicy",
        "iam:PutRolePolicy",
        "iam:PutRolePermissionsBoundary",
        "iam:DetachRolePolicy",
        "iam>DeleteRolePolicy",
        "iam>DeleteRolePermissionsBoundary",
        "iam>DeleteRole",
        "iam:AttachRolePolicy",
        "iam:TagRole",
        "iam:UntagRole"
      ],
      "Resource": [
        "arn:aws:iam::*:role/OrganizationAccountAccessRole",
        "arn:aws:iam::*:role/org_admin/*",
        "arn:aws:iam::*:role/org-admin/*"
      ],
      "Condition": {
        "ArnNotEquals": { "aws:PrincipalArn": "arn:aws:iam::*:role/OrganizationAccountAccessRole" }
      }
    },
    {
      "Effect": "Deny",
      "Action": [
        "iam:TagPolicy",
        "iam:UntagPolicy",
        "iam:CreatePolicy",
        "iam>DeletePolicy",
        "iam:CreatePolicyVersion",
        "iam>DeletePolicyVersion",
        "iam:SetDefaultPolicyVersion"
      ],
      "Resource": [ "arn:aws:iam::*:policy/org_admin/*", "arn:aws:iam::*:policy/org-admin/*" ],
      "Condition": {
        "ArnNotEquals": { "aws:PrincipalArn": "arn:aws:iam::*:role/OrganizationAccountAccessRole" }
      }
    }
  ]
}
```

Organization SCPs

- Block root account usage
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 - `arn:aws:iam::*:role/org-admin/...`
 - `arn:aws:iam::*:role/ec2-admin/...`
 - `arn:aws:iam::*:role/eks-admin/...`
- Tag everything
 - Define a tagging standard
 - AWS Organization Tag Policies (enforce tags, tag keys and values, case sensitivity)
 - Use a tag policy with an SCP/IAM Role to fully enforce tagging on specific services
 - Use tags for ABAC

```
{
  "tags": {
    "environment": {
      "tag_key": {
        "@@assign": "environment"
      },
      "tag_value": {
        "@@assign": ["sandbox", "development", "staging", "production"]
      }
    },
    "owner-team": {
      "tag_key": {
        "@@assign": "owner-team"
      },
      "tag_value": {
        "@@assign": ["security", "sre", "finance", "marketing"]
      }
    }
  }
}
```

Organization SCPs

- Block root account usage
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 - `arn:aws:iam::*:role/org-admin/...`
 - `arn:aws:iam::*:role/ec2-admin/...`
 - `arn:aws:iam::*:role/eks-admin/...`
- Tag everything
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 - Use a tag policy with an SCP/IAM Role to fully enforce tagging on specific services
 - Use tags for ABAC
- Deny unauthenticated Lambda URLs (stay up to date with AWS services!)

```
{
  "Version": "2012-10-17",
  "Statement": [
    {
      "Sid": "BlockLambdaPublicFunctionURLs",
      "Effect": "Deny",
      "Action": [
        "lambda:UpdateFunctionUrlConfig",
        "lambda:CreateFunctionUrlConfig"
      ],
      "Resource": "arn:aws:lambda:*:*:function:*",
      "Condition": {
        "StringNotEquals": {
          "lambda:FunctionUrlAuthType": "AWS_IAM"
        }
      }
    }
  ]
}
```

Organization SCPs

- Block root account usage
- Block root key creation
- Protect sensitive IAM roles
- Apply logic in SCPs using meaningful IAM role paths
 - `arn:aws:iam::*:role/org-admin/...`
 - `arn:aws:iam::*:role/ec2-admin/...`
 - `arn:aws:iam::*:role/eks-admin/...`
- Tag everything
 - Define a tagging standard
 - AWS Organization Tag Policies (enforce tags, tag keys and values, case sensitivity)
 - Use a tag policy with an SCP/IAM Role to fully enforce tagging on specific services
 - Use tags for ABAC
- Deny unauthenticated Lambda URLs (stay up to date!)
- Block Dangerous Actions
- Sid counts for the SCP size (max: 5120 characters)

```
{
  "Version": "2012-10-17",
  "Statement": [
    {
      "Sid": "EnsureAccountWidePublicAccessBlockCannotBeRemoved",
      "Effect": "Deny",
      "Action": "s3:PutAccountPublicAccessBlock",
      "Resource": "*",
      "Condition": {
        "ArnNotEquals": {
          "aws:PrincipalArn": "arn:aws:iam::*:role/OrganizationAccountAccessRole"
        }
      }
    },
    {
      "Sid": "EnsureChildAccountsCannotLeaveTheOrganization",
      "Action": "organizations:LeaveOrganization",
      "Effect": "Deny",
      "Resource": "*"
    },
    {
      "Sid": "EnsureIAMUsersCannotBeCreatedOutsideIAMBastionAccount",
      "Effect": "Deny",
      "Action": ["iam:CreateUser", "iam:CreateAccessKey"],
      "Resource": "arn:aws:iam::*:user/*",
      "Condition": {
        "ArnNotEquals": {
          "aws:PrincipalArn": "arn:aws:iam::*:role/OrganizationAccountAccessRole"
        },
        "StringNotEquals": {
          "aws:PrincipalAccount": ["111111111111"]
        }
      }
    },
    {
      "Sid": "EnsureDomainNamesCannotBeRegistered",
      "Action": "route53domains:RegisterDomain",
      "Effect": "Deny",
      "Resource": "*"
    }
  ]
}
```

Organization SCPs - IdP

- Block Identity Provider Registrations
 - IdPs can be used for persistence
 - Admin users can register OIDC providers for testing purposes and not remove them or using non approved services
- Monitor OIDC provider
 - Creation
 - Deletion
 - Modification
- Possible to apply restrictions to action: **sts:AssumeRoleWithWebIdentity**
- Not possible to restrict role creation with identity provider trust policies ☹
 - One solution is IAM Access Analyser

```
{
  "Version": "2012-10-17",
  "Statement": [
    {
      "Sid": "IdentityProviders",
      "Effect": "Deny",
      "Action": [
        "iam:CreateOpenIDConnectProvider",
        "iam:AddClientIDToOpenIDConnectProvider",
        "iam>DeleteOpenIDConnectProvider",
        "iam:UpdateOpenIDConnectProviderThumbprint",
        "iam:RemoveClientIDFromOpenIDConnectProvider"
      ],
      "Resource": ["*"],
      "Condition": {
        "StringNotEquals": {"aws:PrincipalOrgID": "o-xxxxxxxxxxxx"},
        "ArnNotLike": {"aws:PrincipalArn": ["arn:aws:iam::*:role/OrganizationAccountAccessRole"]}
      }
    },
    {
      "Sid": "SAMLProviders",
      "Effect": "Deny",
      "Action": [
        "iam:CreateSAMLProvider",
        "iam:UpdateSAMLProvider",
        "iam>DeleteSAMLProvider"
      ],
      "Resource": ["*"],
      "Condition": {
        "StringNotEquals": {"aws:PrincipalOrgID": "o-xxxxxxxxxxxx"},
        "ArnNotLike": {"aws:PrincipalArn": ["arn:aws:iam::*:role/OrganizationAccountAccessRole"]}
      }
    }
  ]
}
```

Organization SCPs - KMS

- Restrict KMS keys to organization principals
- Prevent encryption with foreign KMS keys (ransomware)
- Monitor any **kms:Encrypt** actions performed from accounts not in the organization

```
{
  "Version": "2012-10-17",
  "Statement": [
    {
      "Sid": "RestrictKMSUsageToOrganizationAccounts",
      "Effect": "Deny",
      "Action": ["kms:*"],
      "Resource": "*",
      "Condition": {
        "StringNotEquals": {"aws:PrincipalOrgID": "o-xxxxxxxxxx"},
        "BoolIfExists": {"aws:PrincipalIsAWSService": "false"}
      }
    }
  ]
}
```

Organization SCPs- Regions

- Restrict regions per environment/OU
 - Reduce attack surface
 - Reduce cost
 - Compliance (geographical requirements)
- Ensure global services are allowed
 - IAM
 - CloudFront (us-east-1)
 - S3
 - sts
 - Route53
 - wafv2
 - support

```
{
  "Version": "2012-10-17",
  "Statement": [
    {
      "NotAction": [
        "aws-portal:*",
        "budgets:*",
        "[EDITED]",
        "sts:*",
        "support:*",
        "trustedadvisor:*",
        "waf-regional:*",
        "waf:*",
        "wafv2:*"
      ],
      "Resource": "*",
      "Effect": "Deny",
      "Condition": {
        "ArnNotLike": {
          "aws:PrincipalArn": ["arn:aws:iam:*:role/org-admin/*"]
        },
        "StringNotEquals": {
          "aws:RequestedRegion": [
            "us-east-1",
            "us-east-2",
            "us-west-1",
            "eu-central-1",
            "eu-west-1",
            "eu-west-2"
          ]
        }
      }
    }
  ]
}
```

Organization SCPs – RAM (AWS Resource Access Manager)

- Prevent resource sharing with accounts outside of the organization
 - AWS RAM allows sharing resources across accounts

```
{
  "Version": "2012-10-17",
  "Statement": [
    {
      "Sid": "PreventExternalSharing",
      "Effect": "Deny",
      "Action": ["ram:CreateResourceShare", "ram:UpdateResourceShare"],
      "Resource": "*",
      "Condition": {
        "Bool": {
          "ram:RequestedAllowsExternalPrincipals": "true"
        },
        "ArnNotLike": {
          "aws:PrincipalArn": "arn:aws:iam::*:role/OrganizationAccountAccessRole"
        }
      }
    },
    {
      "Effect": "Deny",
      "Action": ["*"],
      "Resource": "*",
      "Condition": {
        "Bool": {
          "ram:AllowsExternalPrincipals": "true"
        }
      }
    }
  ]
}
```

Organization SCPs - Others

- Restrict regions per environment / OU / account
- Disable S3 bucket ACLs
- Enforce S3 Encryption at rest
- Prevent cross environment actions
- Prevent EBS snapshot public downloads & sharing
- Prevent creation of non-encrypted volumes
- Prevent launching EC2 instances without IMDSv2
- Prevent EC2 instance metadata changes
- Prevent VPCs to get internet access for sensitive workloads
- Prevent resource sharing with accounts outside of the organization
 - AWS RAM allows sharing resources across accounts
- Deny VPC peering
- Deny VPN creation



Access & Configuration

- Cloud Vulnerabilities



Figure 2: Cloud Vulnerabilities – Prevalence versus Sophistication of Exploitation

https://media.defense.gov/2020/Jan/22/2002237484/-1/-1/0/CSI-MITIGATING-CLOUD-VULNERABILITIES_20200121.PDF

Access and User Management

- SSO (IAM Identity Center) only for human access with MFA enforced and IP restrictions
- AWS Access keys will eventually get leaked in configurations, repositories, file(s) on laptops, etc.
- Check out CLI utility **aws-vault** or **granted** (they work with SSO and the OS keychain)

```
updated .gitignore

1 contributor

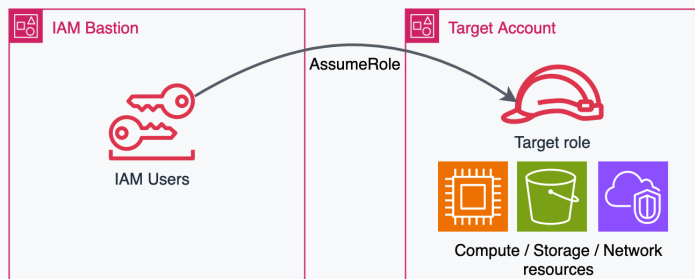
2 lines (2 sloc) | 105 Bytes
1 aws_access_key_id = AKIA[REDACTED]DA
2 aws_secret_access_key = Cu[REDACTED]j1
```

```
186 <string name="all_scoresBtnTxt">All Scores</string>
187 <string name="amazon_app_id">AKIA[REDACTED]JA</string>
188 <string name="amazon_app_key">Yxwz[REDACTED]rLg5W</string>
```



Access and User Management

- Service users (e.g. jenkins) are centralized in IAM Bastion account & credentials managed by HashiCorp Vault and rotated every 8 hours

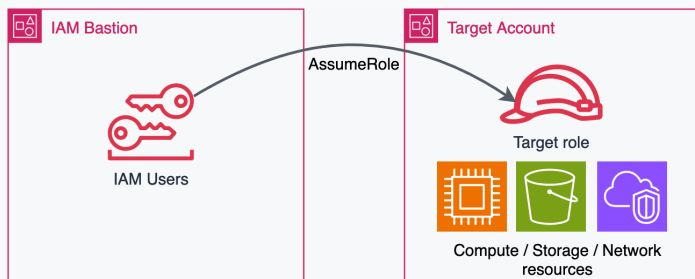


- Permanent access
 - GitHub repo with CODEOWNERS (approvals)

```
---  
#  
# AWS Account - 123456789012 - (Account Friendly Name)  
#  
# owner: Account Owner Name  
# last_reviewed: review-date  
#  
# Ref: AWS Account Inventory Link  
#  
  
Some-role:  
- Team-Name  
  
SomeOther-Role:  
- Team-Name  
- Team-Name.manager  
- Team-Name.engineer  
- Team-Name.lead  
- Team-Name.intern  
- username
```

Access and User Management

- Service users (e.g. jenkins) are centralized in IAM Bastion account & credentials managed by HashiCorp Vault and rotated every 8 hours



- Permanent access
 - GitHub repo with CODEOWNERS (approvals)
- Temporary access
 - SecAWS (in-house Just-In-Time Access tool)
 - Access with approval + time limit
 - IaC managed
 - RBAC for roles ⚠️
- Break Glass process

AWS Account: 123456789012 - Account Name

Access Policy: ReadOnly-Limited

Clusters: cluster1

Additional Users: user.name@nextthink.com

Select AWS Regions: EU eu-west-1, US us-east-1, EU eu-central-1

Start Date: 2024-04-12 17:00

UTC Offset: 2 hours

End Date: 2024-04-14 17:00

Final Start Date: 2024-04-12T17:00:00Z (UTC + 2 hours)

Final End Date: 2024-04-14T17:00:00Z (UTC + 2 hours)

Total Access Time: 2 (days)

Business Reason: My business reason ...

Temporary Access- SecAWS

- FastAPI, React & Jinja2
- Jinja templates allows to have least privileges but in different scenarios

```
{
  "Version": "2012-10-17",
  "Statement": [
    {% include "common/time-restrict.j2" %}
    {% include "common/ip-restrict.j2" %}
    {% include "common/regions-restrict.j2" %}
    {
      "Effect": "Allow",
      "Action": ["ssm:StartSession"],
      "Resource": ["arn:aws:ec2:*:{{ account_id }}:instance/*"],
      "Condition": {
        "StringLike": {
          "ssm:ResourceTag/{{ key | string }}": {{ value | tojson() }}{{ ", " if not (loop.last) else "" }}
        }
      }
    },
    {
      "Effect": "Allow",
      "Action": ["ssm:StartSession"],
      "Resource": [
        "arn:aws:ssm:*:{{ account_id }}:document/AWS-StartSSHSession",
        "arn:aws:ssm:*:{{ account_id }}:document/AWS-StartPortForwardingSessionToRemoteHost"
      ]
    },
    {
      "Effect": "Allow",
      "Action": [
        "ec2:DescribeInstances",
        "ssm:DescribeInstanceInformation",
        "ssm:GetConnectionStatus",
        "ec2:DescribeSecurityGroups",
        "ec2-instance-connect:SendSSHPublicKey"
      ],
      "Resource": "*"
    },
    {
      "Effect": "Allow",
      "Action": ["ssm:TerminateSession", "ssm:ResumeSession"],
      "Resource": ["arn:aws:ssm:*:{{ account_id }}:session/${aws:username}-*"]
    }
  ]
}
```

Temporary Access - SecAWS

- FastAPI, React & Jinja2
- Jinja templates allows to have least privileges but in different scenarios
- All permission sets have inline IAM date condition for start & end date
 - Date format: %Y-%m-%dT%H:%M:%SZ

```
{
  "Sid": "StartDate",
  "Effect": "Deny",
  "Action": "*",
  "Resource": "*",
  "Condition": {
    "DateLessThan": { "aws:CurrentTime": "{{ date_start | string }}" }
  }
},
{
  "Sid": "EndDate",
  "Effect": "Deny",
  "Action": "*",
  "Resource": "*",
  "Condition": {
    "DateGreaterThan": { "aws:CurrentTime": "{{ date_end | string }}" }
  }
}
```

Temporary Access - SecAWS

- FastAPI, React & Jinja2
- Jinja templates allows to have least privileges but in different scenarios
- All permission sets have inline IAM date condition for start & end date
 - Date format: %Y-%m-%dT%H:%M:%SZ
- Region restrictions

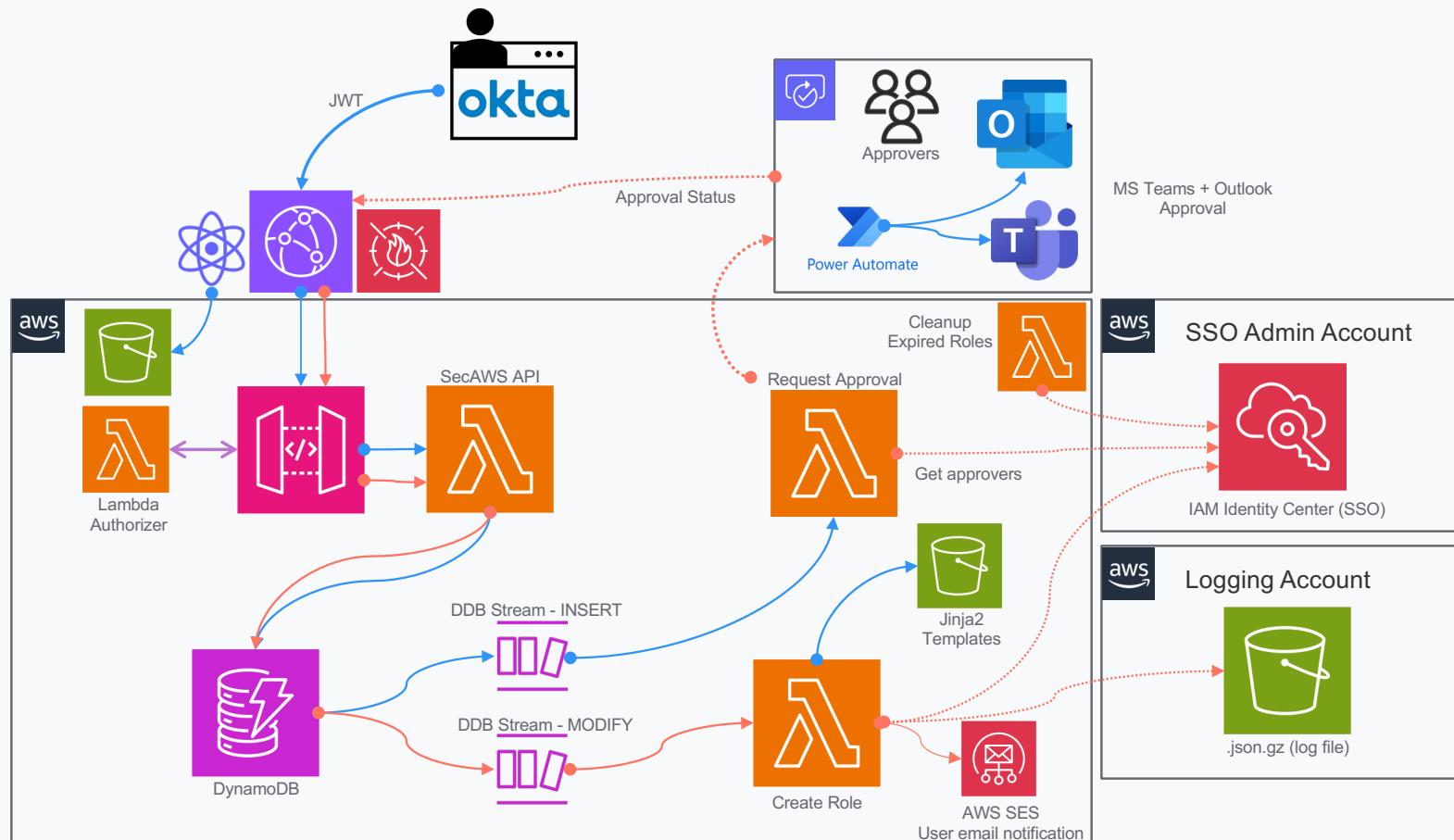
```
{
  "Sid": "RegionRestrictions",
  "Effect": "Deny",
  "Action": "*",
  "Resource": "*",
  "Condition": {
    "StringNotEquals": { "aws:RequestedRegion": [{ regions | tojson }] }
  }
}
```

Temporary Access - SecAWS

- FastAPI, React & Jinja2
- Jinja templates allows to have least privileges but in different scenarios
- All permission sets have inline IAM date condition for start & end date
 - Date format: %Y-%m-%dT%H:%M:%SZ
- Region restrictions
- IP restrictions + always on VPN
- Cleanup for expired roles every 4 hours

```
{
  "Effect": "Deny",
  "NotAction": ["sts:GetCallerIdentity"],
  "Resource": "*",
  "Condition": {
    "NotIpAddress": {
      "aws:SourceIp": "{{ allowed_ips | tojson }}"
    },
    "Bool": { "aws:ViaAWSService": "false" }
  }
}
```

SecAWS - Architecture



SecAWS – Features (+challenges)

- Each request can have up to 6 total users
 - Requester + 5 additional users
 - › reduce approvals
 - › speed up access during support, incidents
- A user can
 - delete their own provisioned role
 - replay an expired or deleted role
- Add specific approvers for a given policy
- Remove approvals for a given accounts or policy
- All requests, changes, replays go through the approval process
- Each policy is time bound and must have region(s)
- Form checks are configured in the backend (regex for fields, allowed values, etc.)
- All actions are logged in JSON format (immutable logs in S3)
 - SIEM Monitoring, etc.

Access and User Management- IaC

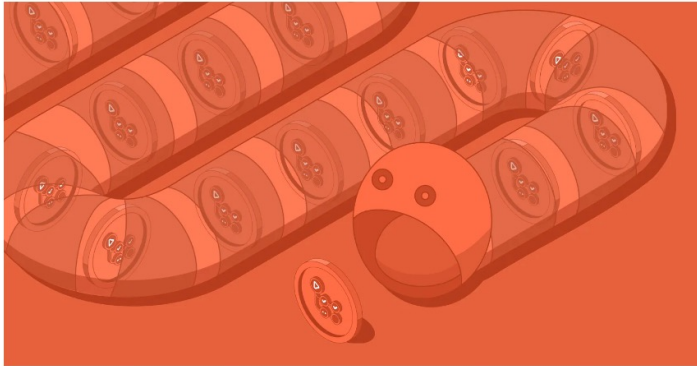
- Migrate IaC from Jenkins to GitHub Actions
 - Special care for approving GH Actions for the GH organization (software supply chain attack, malware, etc..)
- Referencing GH Actions
 - Commit: `actions/checkout@cd7d[...]1a8b017`
 - Branch: `actions/checkout@main`
 - Tag: `actions/checkout@v1`

The GitHub Actions Worm: Compromising GitHub Repositories Through the Actions Dependency Tree

By [Asi Greenholts](#) Sep 14, 2023 16 minutes 497 views

AppSec CI/CD DevOps Research GitHub

Learn how a novel attack vector in GitHub Actions allows attackers to distribute malware across repositories using a technique that exploits the actions dependency tree and puts countless open-source projects and internal repositories at risk. Get an in-depth look at the attack vectors, technical details and a real-world demo in this blog post highlighting our latest research.



As the premier platform for hosting open-source projects, GitHub's popularity has boosted the popularity of its CI/CD platform — GitHub Actions. This popularity, however, extends beyond the DevOps community to attract hackers eager to exploit the platform's expanding attack surface.

<https://www.paloaltonetworks.com/blog/prisma-cloud/github-actions-worm-dependencies/>

Access and User Management - IaC

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 - Special care for approving GH Actions for the GH organization (software supply chain attack, malware, etc..)
- Referencing GH Actions
 - Commit: `actions/checkout@cd7d[...]1a8b017`
 - Branch: `actions/checkout@main`
 - Tag: `actions/checkout@v1`
- OIDC roles
 - No long-lived secrets to manage anymore
 - Can be configured for: pull requests, environment, branch
 - Different roles can be applied based on environment
ReadOnly vs. Admin

```
inputs = {
  openid_connect_provider_url = dependency.baseline.outputs.github_actions_openid_connect_provider_url
  openid_connect_provider_arn = dependency.baseline.outputs.github_actions_openid_connect_provider_arn

  iam_role_name = "my-oidc-role-name"
  iam_role_path = "/org-admin/"

  allowed_sources_condition_operator = "StringLike"
  allowed_sources_complex = {
    ref = {
      "octocat/repo-name-1" = ["*"]
      "octocat/repo-name-2" = ["*"]
      "octocat/repo-name-3" = ["*"]
    }
    pull_request = {
      "octocat/repo-name-1" = ["*"]
      "octocat/repo-name-2" = ["*"]
      "octocat/repo-name-3" = ["*"]
    }
  }
}

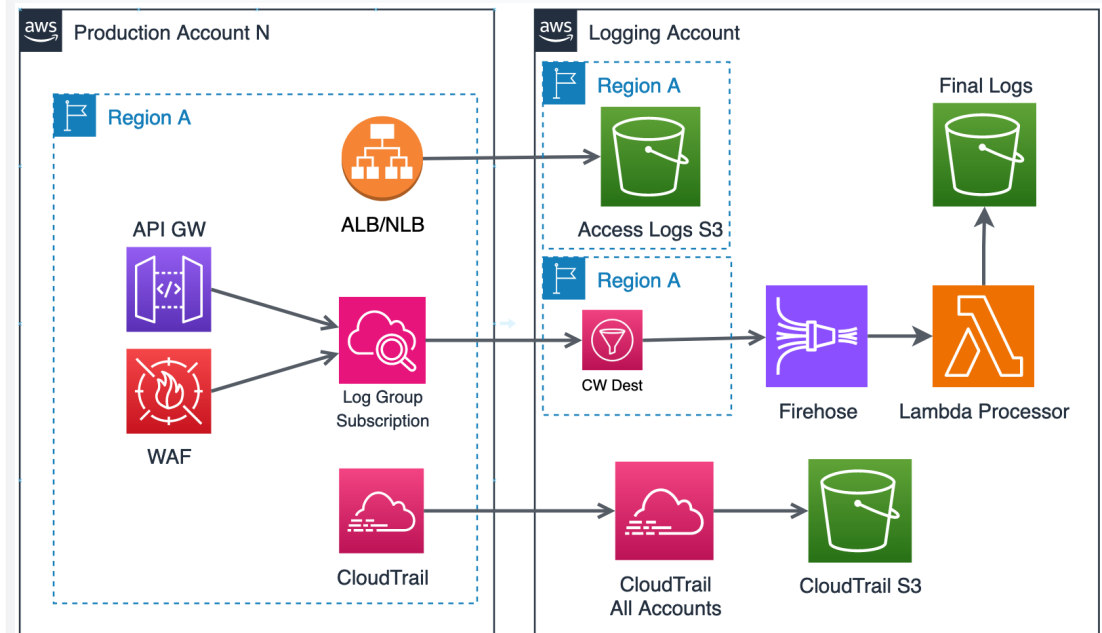
permissions_boundary = "arn:aws:iam::${dependency.accounts.outputs.accounts[local.account_alias].id}:policy/org-admin/permission-boundary"

tags = {
  "owner"    = "owner-email@example.com"
  "component" = "component/application name"
  "env"      = "dev"
  "repo"     = "gh-repo-name"
}

iam_policy_json = {
  random-GitHubActionsPulumiBase = {
    description = "A description for the policy"
    path       = "/org-admin/"
    json = templatefile("./base-policy.json",
      {
        aws_account_id = dependency.accounts.outputs.accounts[local.account_alias].id,
      }
    )
  }
}
```

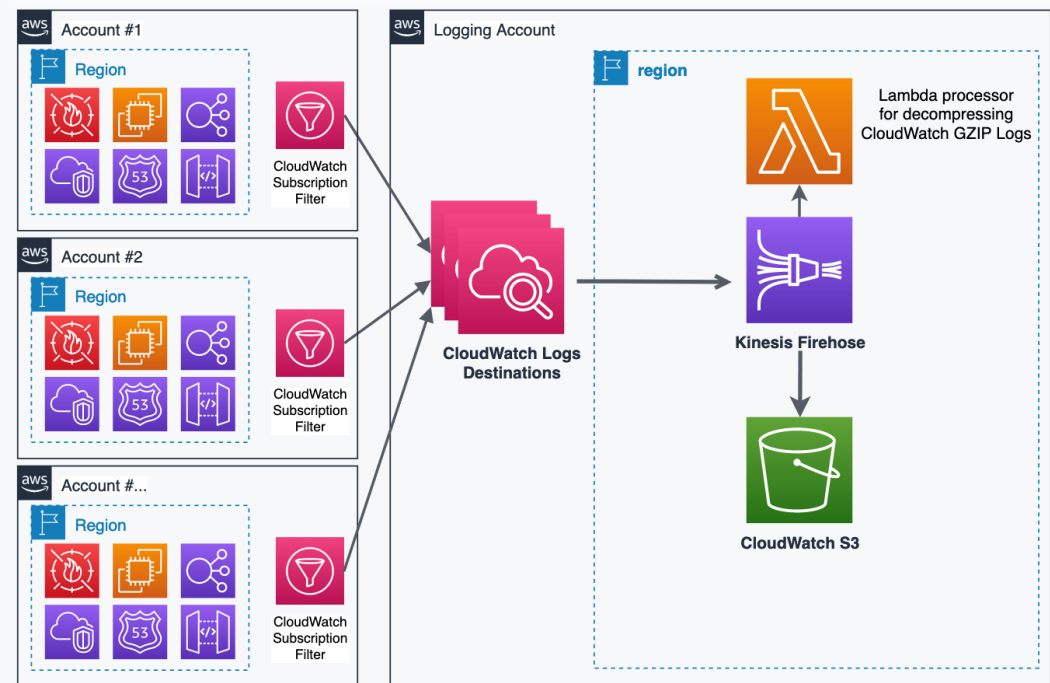
Logs – Centralization & Parsing

- Send all logs into a central account (Logging)
- Direct S3 upload (easier setup & cheaper)
- Services not logging to S3
 - CloudWatch log destinations (CLI only)
- Security relevant logs are sent to SIEM
- Other logs are made queryable using Athena
 - Configuration and table schemas deployed with IaC
 - Saved queries available for easy search
- VPC Flow logs (can be expensive)
 - What size of logs will be generated?
 - Should VPC flow logs be enabled everywhere (north – south traffic)

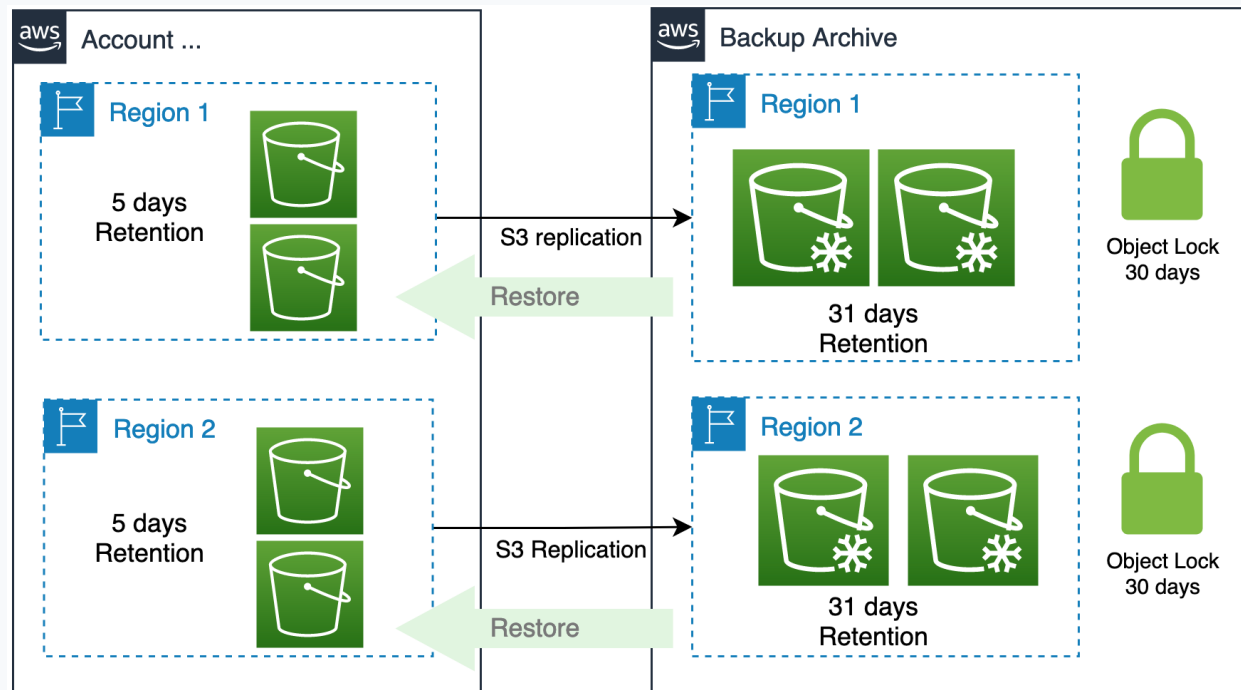


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Backup Protection (Ransomware)




- S3 Object Lock (COMPLIANCE mode)
- Managed through IaC (terraform + terragrunt)
- Source retention based on use-case
- Options per S3 bucket (lifecycle, retention, etc.)

Backup Protection (Ransomware)

```
{
  "Version": "2012-10-17",
  "Id": "SetRetentionLimits",
  "Statement": [
    {
      "Sid": "SetRetentionPeriod",
      "Effect": "Deny",
      "Principal": "*",
      "Action": ["s3:PutObjectRetention"],
      "Resource": "arn:aws:s3:::DOC-EXAMPLE-BUCKET1/*",
      "Condition": {
        "NumericGreaterThan": {
          "s3:object-lock-remaining-retention-days": "10"
        }
      }
    }
  ]
}
```

- S3 Object Lock (COMPLIANCE mode)
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Backup Protection (Ransomware)



```
- {  
  name: "s3-bucket-name",  
  src_account_id: "111111111111",  
  regions: ["eu-west-1", "us-east-1"],  
  mode: "COMPLIANCE",  
  object_lock_days: 30,  
  lifecycle_days: 31, # delete after 31 days  
  storage_class: "GLACIER_IR",  
  restore_allowed_accounts: ["111111111111"],  
}
```

- S3 Object Lock (COMPLIANCE mode)
- Managed through IaC (terraform + terragrunt)
- Source retention based on use-case
- Options per S3 bucket (lifecycle, retention, etc.)
- YAML abstraction for configuration

Backup Protection – Challenges

- S3 Object Lock – GOVERNANCE vs COMPLIANCE
- Noncurrent versions configuration
- Total retention = current version retention + noncurrent version retention
- S3 Replication Time Control (“S3 RTC” can be expensive)
- Replication monitoring
- Object lock required S3 versioning to be enabled
 - ⚠ If an object is changed at the source, the destination will contain multiple versions of that object and they’ll be “locked” for the retention period
- Possible cost reductions depending on the retention applied on the source bucket
- S3 Storage Class (Standard in source vs. Glacier IR in destination)

Current version actions

Day 0

- Objects uploaded



Day 30

- Objects move to Glacier Instant Retrieval



Day 180

- Objects expire

Noncurrent versions actions

Day 0

- Objects become noncurrent

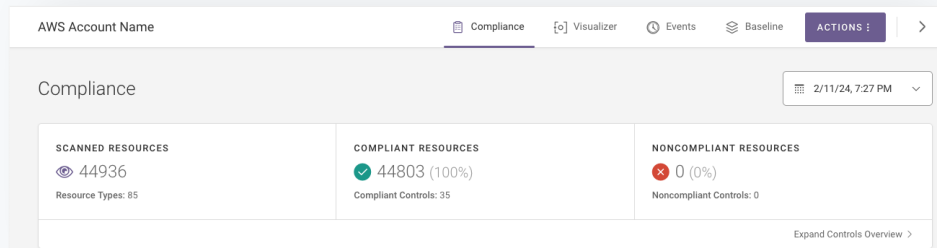


Day 1

- 0 newest noncurrent versions are retained
- All other noncurrent versions are permanently deleted

Configuration Hardening

- CSPM (Cloud Security Posture Management)
 - Scans based on a custom AWS Technical Security Standard for each AWS service used
- CNAPP – all-in-one cloud security tool/service



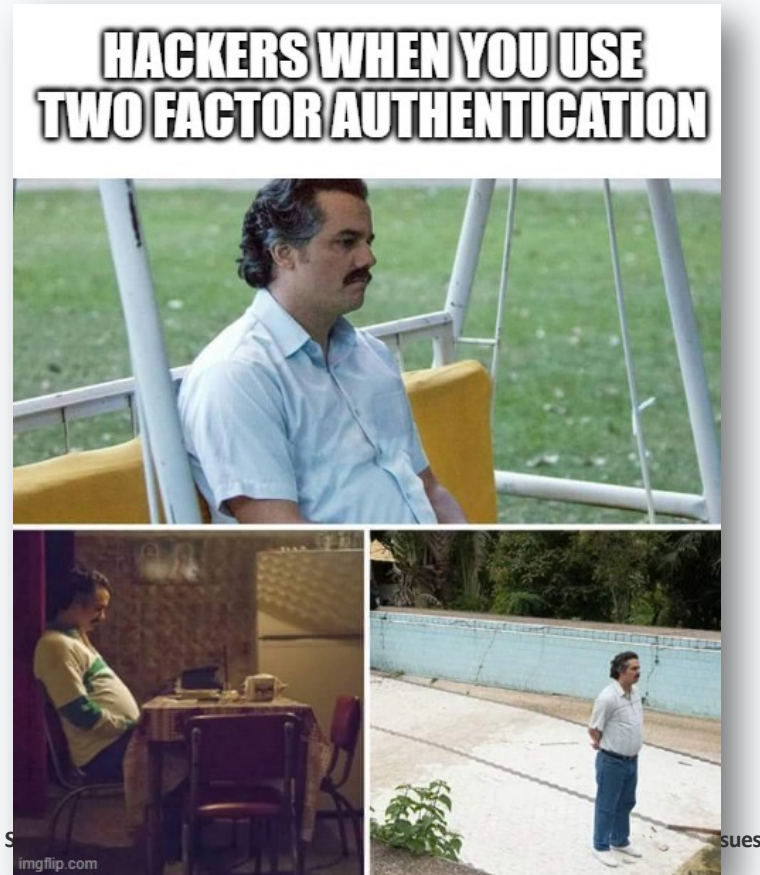
Configuration Hardening



Blog Post - Christophe Tafani-Dereeper
Shifting Cloud Security Left — Scanning Infrastructure as Code for Security Issues

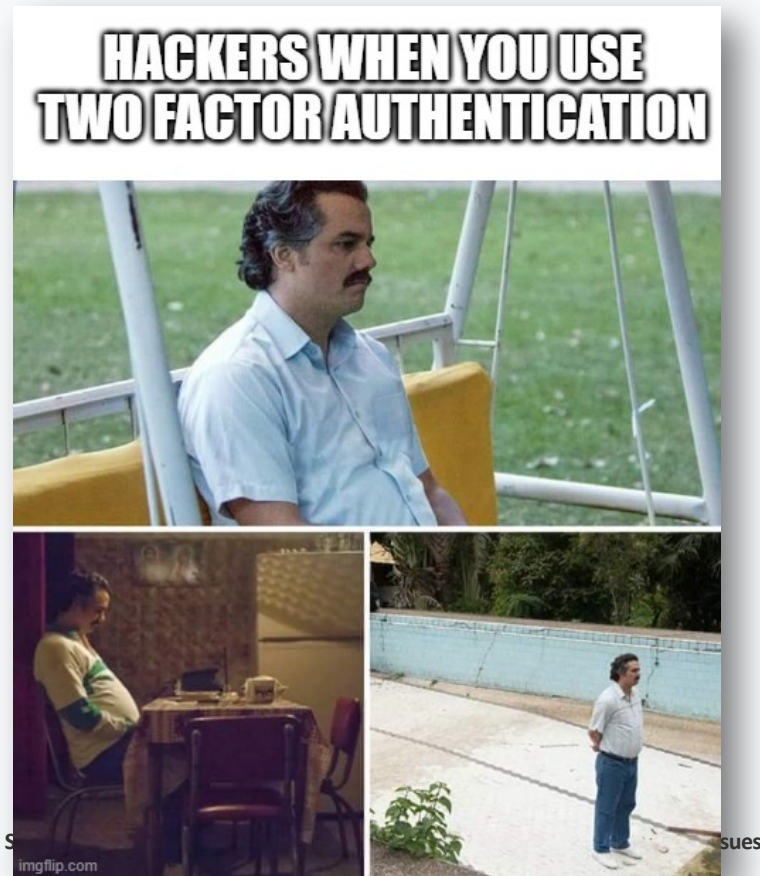
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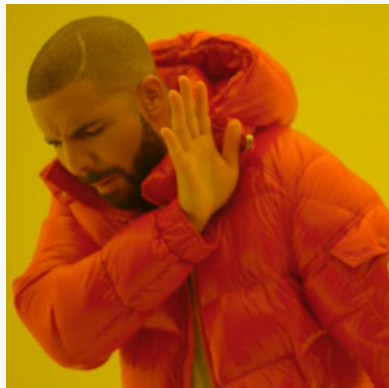
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- IAM policy IP restrictions for actions from within a VPC
 - aws:SourceIp does not apply
 - aws:VpcSourceIp, aws:SourceVpc(e)
- EKS IRSA roles
 - Implement a central repository with approval from appropriate stakeholders including security

Configuration Hardening



**Open
SSH to
internet**



**Bastion
with SSM**

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- EKS IRSA roles
 - Implement a central repository with approval from appropriate stakeholders including security
- Bastion access with SSM (AWS SSM Sessions Manager)
- Use IAM Attribute Based Access Control (ABAC)

Takeaways & Recommendations

- Limit or remove permanent human access to production
 - Use only just-in-time access for production (at least for privileged actions)
- Manage everything as code
 - With versioning
 - Enforce commit signing
 - Enforce approval(s) with pull requests
 - Reject PR if changed after approval
- Avoid AWS access keys as much as possible
 - Delete keys and users if not used for, ex:90 days
- Observability and alerting are crucial for Cloud Security
 - CSPM/CNAPP
 - SIEM
 - CloudQuery (CMDB)
- Weekly security meetings with SRE and Architecture teams are a must
- Thoroughly document security incident playbooks
- Automate incident response actions
- Train, train and retrain everyone on AWS, especially on IAM (roles, resource policies, etc.)

Questions

**ME: I JUST NEED TO HOST
'HELLO WORLD' ON THE CLOUD.**

