



CYBER; Quantum-Safe Cryptography (QSC); Impact of Quantum Computing on Cryptographic Security Proofs

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Foreword

This Technical Report (TR) has been produced by ETSI Technical Committee Cyber Security (CYBER).

Modal verbs terminology

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Executive summary

There is a common misconception that to make a classically secure cryptosystem quantum-safe, it suffices to replace its underlying computational-hardness assumptions with "quantum-hard" assumptions. However, this is not always the case. The present document provides an overview of the impact of quantum computing on cryptographic security proofs; it illustrates how for certain classes of cryptographic systems the security proofs need to be adapted, for which classes this has already successfully been done, and what the practical implications of these adaptations are.

The present document is meant for cryptographic experts who want to get insight into practical changes that need to be made to existing systems to make those systems quantum-safe, or who want to understand the fundamental challenges in proving security against a quantum adversary.

Introduction

The advent of a cryptographically-relevant quantum computer (or CRQC for short) will severely impact most currently-used cryptographic systems. Notably, a CRQC can factor integers and compute discrete logarithms in polynomial time, thereby breaking systems based on the hardness of these problems.

However, simply replacing these problems by others which are (believed to be) impervious even to a quantum computer does not completely solve the issue. This is due to the fact that many security proofs of cryptographic systems are no longer valid in the presence of a quantum-capable attacker; while this does not automatically imply that the affected systems would be broken by a quantum computer, it does raise questions on the exact security guarantees that the systems can provide.

The present document analyses the impact of quantum computers on cryptographic security proofs, describing the current knowledge on the topic and the expected effects on security.

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1 Scope

The present document is intended to provide an overview of the impact of quantum computing on the security proofs of several cryptographic protocols. It focuses on cryptographic protocols that can be run on classical hardware; further, it discusses which security proofs are invalidated, or otherwise affected, in the presence of an attacker with access to a CRQC, and discusses for each affected system whether:

- a) an alternative proof has been found that does provide security against quantum attacks, but possibly with a reduced security level;
- b) no alternative proof has been found, but security is expected to still hold;
- c) the cryptographic system is expected to be broken by quantum attacks, in a way which is not captured by the classical security proof, although no concrete quantum attack exists yet; or
- d) a concrete quantum attack that breaks security, in a way which is not captured by the classical proof, is available.

In terms of the security proofs and problems under consideration, the present document includes the following:

- 1) The quantum random oracle model, and in particular its usage in:
 - a) The Fiat-Shamir transformation.
 - b) The Fujisaki-Okamoto transformation.
- 2) The rewinding technique for zero-knowledge proof systems.
- 3) The binding property of commitment schemes.
- 4) The universal-composability framework.
- 5) The indifferentiability framework.
- 6) Security proofs of pseudo-random functions.

In addition to presenting the theoretical developments on these topics, the present document elaborates on the practical consequences. In some cases, the security of classically secure schemes is uncertain in the face of a quantum adversary. In other cases, the security of the scheme holds, but the parameters need to be adjusted to retain the same level of security.

NOTE: The present document does not discuss so-called "quantum-annoying" schemes, which still base their security on computational problems that can be solved (relatively) efficiently by a quantum computer, but force such an attack to perform a high number of operations, hence making it impractical for the expected first generation of quantum computers.

2 References

2.1 Normative references

Normative references are not applicable in the present document.

2.2 Informative references

References are either specific (identified by date of publication and/or edition number or version number) or non-specific. For specific references, only the cited version applies. For non-specific references, the latest version of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

NOTE: While any hyperlinks included in this clause were valid at the time of publication ETSI cannot guarantee their long-term validity.

The following referenced documents are not necessary for the application of the present document but they assist the user with regard to a particular subject area.

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