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Information security — Key management —

Part 3: Mechanisms using asymmetric techniques

Sécurité de l'information — Gestion de clés —

Partie 3: Mécanismes utilisant des techniques asymétriques

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Foreword

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The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of document should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives or www.iec.ch/members_experts/refdocs).

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This document was prepared by Joint Technical Committee ISO/IEC JTC 1, *Information technology*, Subcommittee SC 27, *Information security, cybersecurity and privacy protection*.

This fourth edition cancels and replaces the third edition (ISO/IEC 11770-3:2015), which has been technically revised. It also incorporates Technical Corrigenda ISO/IEC 11770-3:2015/Cor1:2016 and ISO/IEC 11770-3:2015/Amd.1:2017.

The main changes compared to the previous edition are as follows:

— the blinded Diffie-Hellman key agreements are added as key agreement mechanism 13 and 14 and examples of the mechanisms are included in Annex E;

— key agreement mechanism 15 is added and the SM9 key agreement protocol as an example of the mechanism is included in Annex F.

A list of all parts in the ISO/IEC 11770 series can be found on the ISO and IEC websites.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at www.iso.org/members.html and www.iec.ch/national-committees.

Introduction

This document describes schemes that can be used for key agreement and schemes that can be used for key transport.

Public key cryptosystems were first proposed in the seminal paper by Diffie and Hellman in 1976. The security of many such cryptosystems is based on the presumed intractability of solving the discrete logarithm problem over certain finite fields. Other public key cryptosystems such as RSA are based on the difficulty of the integer factorization problem.

A third class of public key cryptosystems is based on elliptic curves. The security of such a public key system depends on the difficulty of determining discrete logarithms in the group of points of an elliptic curve. When based on a carefully chosen elliptic curve, this problem is, with current knowledge, much harder than the factorization of integers or the computation of discrete logarithms in a finite field of comparable size. All known general purpose algorithms for determining elliptic curve discrete logarithms take exponential time. Thus, it is possible for elliptic curve based public key systems to use much shorter parameters than the RSA system or the classical discrete logarithm based systems that make use of the multiplicative group of some finite field. This yields significantly shorter digital signatures, as well as system parameters, and allows for computations using smaller integers.

This document includes mechanisms based on the following:

— finite fields;

— elliptic curves;

— bilinear pairings.

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Information security — Key management —

Part 3:
Mechanisms using asymmetric techniques

1 Scope

This document defines key management mechanisms based on asymmetric cryptographic techniques. It specifically addresses the use of asymmetric techniques to achieve the following goals.

a) Establish a shared secret key for use in a symmetric cryptographic technique between two entities *A* and *B* by key agreement. In a secret key agreement mechanism, the secret key is computed as the result of a data exchange between the two entities *A* and *B*. Neither of them is able to predetermine the value of the shared secret key.

b) Establish a shared secret key for use in a symmetric cryptographic technique between two entities *A* and *B* via key transport. In a secret key transport mechanism, the secret key is chosen by one entity *A* and is transferred to another entity *B*, suitably protected by asymmetric techniques.

c) Make an entity's public key available to other entities via key transport. In a public key transport mechanism, the public key of entity *A* is transferred to other entities in an authenticated way, but not requiring secrecy.

Some of the mechanisms of this document are based on the corresponding authentication mechanisms in ISO/IEC 9798-3.

This document does not cover certain aspects of key management, such as:

— key lifecycle management;

— mechanisms to generate or validate asymmetric key pairs; and

— mechanisms to store, archive, delete, destroy, etc., keys.

While this document does not explicitly cover the distribution of an entity's private key (of an asymmetric key pair) from a trusted third party to a requesting entity, the key transport mechanisms described can be used to achieve this. A private key can in all cases be distributed with these mechanisms where an existing, non-compromised key already exists. However, in practice the distribution of private keys is usually a manual process that relies on technological means such as smart cards, etc.

This document does not specify the transformations used in the key management mechanisms.

NOTE To provide origin authentication for key management messages, it is possible to make provisions for authenticity within the key establishment protocol or to use a public key signature system to sign the key exchange messages.