

# Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1	Motivation . . . . .	1
1.2	Goals and contributions . . . . .	2
1.3	Thesis outline . . . . .	4
1.4	Background and state of the art . . . . .	5
1.4.1	Information Operations . . . . .	5
1.4.2	Cyberspace Operations . . . . .	7
1.4.3	Intelligence . . . . .	8
1.4.4	Cyber intelligence . . . . .	13
1.4.5	Threat modeling . . . . .	17
1.4.6	Threat actors' categorization . . . . .	19
1.4.7	Threat actors' characterization . . . . .	22
1.4.8	Threat actors' detection . . . . .	26
<b>2</b>	<b>A Taxonomy for Threat Actors' Delivery Techniques</b>	<b>33</b>
2.1	Introduction . . . . .	34
2.2	Background . . . . .	35
2.2.1	Mitre ATT&CK . . . . .	35
2.2.2	Cyber Kill Chain ® . . . . .	37
2.3	Problem Statement . . . . .	38
2.4	Techniques and Limitations . . . . .	39
2.5	Our Proposal . . . . .	44
2.5.1	Mapping to MITRE ATT&CK . . . . .	50
2.5.2	A Practical Example . . . . .	55
2.6	Discussion . . . . .	58
2.7	Conclusions . . . . .	59
<b>3</b>	<b>A Taxonomy for Threat Actors' Persistence Techniques</b>	<b>61</b>
3.1	Introduction . . . . .	62
3.2	Background . . . . .	63
3.3	Problem statement . . . . .	64
3.4	Approaches and limitations . . . . .	65
3.5	Our proposal . . . . .	69
3.5.1	Pre–OS persistence . . . . .	70

3.5.2	OS native persistence . . . . .	72
3.5.3	Server software persistence . . . . .	76
3.5.4	User dependent persistence . . . . .	77
3.5.5	Summary . . . . .	79
3.6	Discussion . . . . .	80
3.7	Conclusions . . . . .	87
<b>4</b>	<b>CNA tactics and techniques: a structure proposal</b>	<b>89</b>
4.1	Introduction . . . . .	90
4.2	Background . . . . .	92
4.2.1	Computer Network Attack . . . . .	92
4.2.2	MITRE ATT&CK . . . . .	93
4.3	The issue . . . . .	94
4.4	Approaches and limitations . . . . .	95
4.5	Proposed Approach: A Novel CNA Tactics Taxonomy . . . . .	99
4.5.1	Degradation . . . . .	101
4.5.2	Destruction . . . . .	104
4.5.3	Manipulation . . . . .	106
4.5.4	Summary . . . . .	107
4.5.5	Mapping to MITRE ATT&CK . . . . .	108
4.5.6	Practical Example . . . . .	113
4.6	Discussion . . . . .	115
4.7	Conclusions . . . . .	116
<b>5</b>	<b>SOC Critical Path: a defensive kill-chain approach</b>	<b>119</b>
5.1	Introduction . . . . .	120
5.2	Background . . . . .	122
5.2.1	SOC concepts . . . . .	122
5.2.2	Kill chain models . . . . .	124
5.3	The Issue: A Lack of Defensive Kill Chain . . . . .	125
5.4	Techniques and limitations . . . . .	127
5.5	Our proposal . . . . .	130
5.5.1	A practical example . . . . .	133
5.6	Discussion . . . . .	136
5.7	Conclusions . . . . .	137
<b>6</b>	<b>Key Requirements for the Detection and Sharing of Behavioral Indicators of Compromise</b>	<b>139</b>
6.1	Introduction . . . . .	140
6.2	Background . . . . .	141
6.2.1	Indicators of compromise . . . . .	141
6.2.2	Intelligence cycle . . . . .	143
6.3	The issue . . . . .	145
6.3.1	Threat specification . . . . .	145
6.3.2	Real-world IOC . . . . .	146
6.4	Approaches and limitations . . . . .	147

6.5	Key requirements for behavioral IOC detection and sharing . . . . .	150
6.5.1	Acquisition . . . . .	153
6.5.2	Processing . . . . .	154
6.5.3	Analysis . . . . .	155
6.5.4	Dissemination . . . . .	156
6.5.5	A practical example . . . . .	157
6.6	Discussion . . . . .	160
6.7	Conclusions . . . . .	161
<b>7</b>	<b>Discussion</b>	<b>163</b>
7.1	Advanced Threat Actors in cyberspace . . . . .	163
7.2	Categorization of Advanced Threat Actors . . . . .	165
7.2.1	Motivation of Advanced Threat Actors . . . . .	166
7.2.2	Nation-state actors . . . . .	169
7.2.3	Non-state actors . . . . .	171
7.2.4	Critical infrastructures . . . . .	172
7.3	Characterization of Advanced Threat Actors . . . . .	173
7.3.1	Low level observables . . . . .	175
7.3.2	Tactics, techniques and procedures . . . . .	177
7.3.3	Goals and strategy . . . . .	179
7.3.4	Attribution . . . . .	180
7.4	Detection of Advanced Threat Actors . . . . .	181
7.4.1	The role of intelligence . . . . .	182
7.4.2	Indicators of Compromise . . . . .	185
7.4.3	The detection process . . . . .	187
<b>8</b>	<b>Conclusions</b>	<b>191</b>
<b>A</b>	<b>Acronyms</b>	<b>195</b>
<b>Bibliography</b>		<b>199</b>