

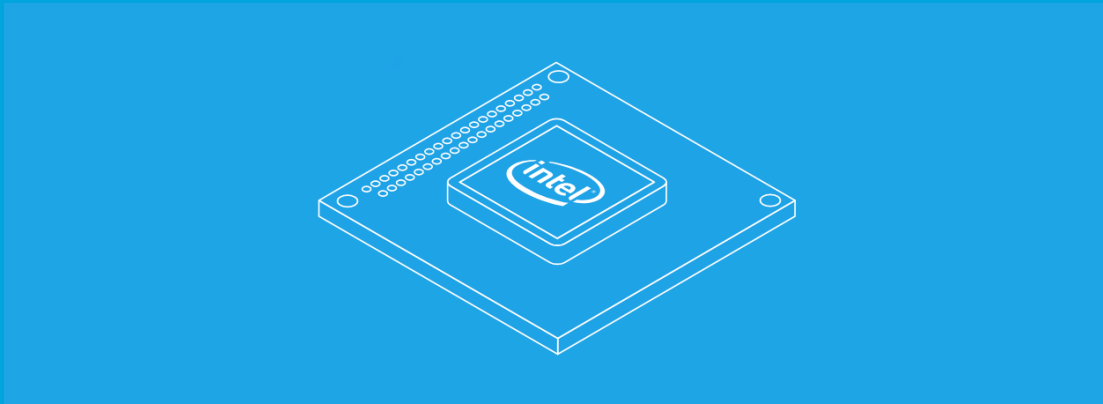


Security Newsletter

18 June 2018

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New 'Lazy FP State Restore' Vulnerability Found in All Modern Intel CPUs



Another security vulnerability has been discovered in Intel chips that affects the processor's speculative execution technology—like Specter and Meltdown—and could potentially be exploited to access sensitive information, including encryption related data. Dubbed Lazy FP State Restore, the vulnerability (CVE-2018-3665) within Intel Core and Xeon processors has just been confirmed by Intel, and vendors are now rushing to roll out security updates in order to fix the flaw and keep their customers protected.

As the name suggests, the flaw leverages a system performance optimization feature, called Lazy FP state restore, embedded in modern processors, which is responsible for saving or restoring the FPU state of each running application 'lazily' when switching from one application to another, instead of doing it 'eagerly.'

However, it should be noted that, unlike Spectre and Meltdown, the latest vulnerability does not reside in the hardware. So, the flaw can be fixed by pushing patches for various operating systems without requiring new CPU microcodes from Intel. According to Intel, since the flaw is similar to Spectre Variant 3A (Rogue System Register Read), many operating systems and hypervisor software have already addressed it. AMD processors are not affected by this issue.

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Football app tracks illegal broadcasts using your microphone and GPS



The organization behind Spain's top-flight soccer league known as La Liga has added a functionality to its official Android app that enables it to identify bars, restaurants and other public venues that broadcast soccer games illegally. It has turned out that, after being downloaded or updated, the app asks the user for permission to access their smartphone's microphone and geolocation service (GPS).

If the user grants their permission, La Liga receives the ability to activate the phone's microphone remotely in order to record audio clips of the handset's surroundings. In doing so, the app seeks to ascertain if the captured sound corresponds to that of the broadcast of a soccer game. At the same time, by turning on the phone's geolocation service it can pinpoint the location of the place where the recording was made and, thus, identify the establishment that may be showing the game without a license.

La Liga's governing body, LFP, said in its statement on Monday that the functionality was added to its Android app only in the June 8 update with the sole aim of cracking down on unauthorized broadcasts of soccer games within Spain. La Liga says that unlicensed broadcasts of soccer games in bars and restaurants cost Spanish soccer €150 million (US\$176 million) in lost revenues each year.

In an effort to further ease privacy concerns, La Liga said that it doesn't access the captured audio snippet, as the snippet is instead automatically converted into a binary code on the device itself. The code is then compared to a reference database and, if there's no match between the two, the former code is discarded. The organization stressed that there is no way to turn the code back into the actual content of the recording.

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