Building Advanced Threat Intel Queries Utilising Regex and TLS Certificates - (BianLian)

embee-research.ghost.io/building-advanced-censys-queries-utilising-regex-bianlian/

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<u>Advanced</u>

Creating Regex Signatures on TLS Certificates with Censys.

Regex Matching on TLS Certificates			
🔘 censys	services.banner_hashes="sha256:e3b0c44298fc1c149af services.tls.certificates.leaf_data.subject_dn:/C=.{16}, 0=	bf4c8996fb92427ae41e4649b934ca495991b7852b855" and .{16}, OU=.{16}/	•
CN=ru000502.widhost.net			2
C=0AzdH6wrkWQrPNnV, O=	o77AUUHhZbJaPItl, OU=HAeGmu8s467oU0GZ		1
C=0KNVIFIrKwcWzGp4, O=A1QoPXcTNtScdkIr, OU=sPc2iSvZwKI4adQ9			
C=0Un0VuZKQ100NUZm, 0=B0N2F1YNjt8poCuD, 0U=t3g0nTcU9rHAoLS5			
C=0xIHSpdnrhwWqkZP, O=9FzPOtUKFiMrYaX0, OU=MyaWjERyvXKztwDP		Regex Matching on TLS Certificates.	
C=1Gj56t4oF5mHaWnI, O=KprkkmNmGPVZofLN, OU=EWOITXeUKc6u7RR6			
C=1JWnle9fVU1LNvJV, O=1jfLp6Csxra3RfNg, OU=qXuOEn2tnjiQxc1D			
C=1k7m6KvMNz5nT8NU, 0=Y2jbU54vDjJXuTVI, 0U=ZHZHnVDtyeey0CoG			
C=25EU43J4sDcWqqYR, O=	Srdbh0Juronj6N3b, OU=6BW1jBrUN6DQ6Vw5		1
C=2f71Bw6mexn7yVev, O=8	PjT6PWrzupaqqFg, OU=WGjjNctUMp4kf39m		1
C=2rTsUXWM8tQ8bAdn, O=W6BpnJa2eIrh1jNf, OU=0wBkDTsTK48xpGcN			1
C=31g5v0vm2CdkRtPN_0=Kvv6nezIM76Gzd0n_0LI=aD8DnEEN2biseEdD			1
0-07410/04/14/00-1-04/14			1

In this post we will investigate a Bianlian C2 address and use TLS certificates to obtain another ~50 servers.

Our primary focus will be building a regex query that matches the unique TLS structure used by recent BianLian.

Regex and TLS Certs present a great opportunity to build queries without introducing geographic limitations like ASN numbers and hosting providers. By using TLS Certificates, we can also avoid limiting searches to specific port numbers or port counts. Effectively catching actors that avoid patterns demonstrated in previous posts. (Eg <u>here</u> and <u>here</u>)

Our final query will look something like this.

```
services.banner_hashes="sha256:e3b0c44298fc1c149afbf4c8996fb92427ae41e4649b934
ca495991b7852b855" and services.tls.certificates.leaf_data.subject_dn:/C=.
{16}, 0=.{16}, 0U=.{16}/
```

Note that regular expression searches are a paid feature of Censys. But for the purposes of demonstrating interesting concepts I thought this blog would be useful

At the end of this blog, there is a query that will catch the same certificates without utilising Regex. This can be used if you don't have a paid Censys account.

Performing an Initial Search

We can begin the search by looking up the initial IP of 185.248.100[.]118 which was obtained on ThreatFox.

Note that we can prepend *ip*: if we want an overview before jumping directly to the IP page.



Clicking on the IP Address takes us to the full page, where we can see an interesting TLS certificate on port 443.

UNKNOWN 443/TCP

1/25/2023 0	6:20 UTC
-------------	----------

Software	VIEW ALL DATA
🔍 linux 🗹	
Details	
TLS	
Handshake	
Version Selected	TLSv1_3
Cipher Selected	TLS_CHACHA20_POLY1305_SHA256
Certificate	
Fingerprint	c4b42e9c59f8f79da83385d08d3876dcd19987be433fd6148abe32d14254e8af
Subjec	C=ID5hgJb31CGtxS3R, 0=NgOiQK7LZP5nKyTE, 0U=fcr8shEwbsebOGQc
Issue	C=QaXvvhYVZUBot5hh, O=YUs8vBiShD2OI59X, OU=JptfXUKIKxJYLGdX
Fingerprint	
JARM	3fd21b20d3fd3fd21c43d21b21b43d1ec49a4b64df0a9e9f328abd60285841
JA3S	475c9302dc42b2751db9edcac3b74891

If we click on the "view all data" tab in the top right of the above screenshot, we can view the full information for port 443.

This enables us to see all available information for a given port, which is typically significantly more than what is available within the default summary view.

The first thing that stands out is the empty services.banner field. A lack of service banner (although boring at initial glance) could be a great pivot point.

443/UNKNOWN 📼		View Definition
Attribute	Value	
services.banner		Q
services.banner_hashes	sha256:e3b0c44298fc1c149afbf4c8996fb92427ae41e4649b934ca495991b7852b855	Q
services.certificate	c4b42e9c59f8f79da83385d08d3876dcd19987be433fd6148abe32d14254e8af	Q
services.discovery_method	PREDICTIVE_METHOD_20	Q
services.extended_service_name	UNKNOWN	Q
services.jarm.fingerprint	3fd21b20d3fd3fd21c43d21b21b43d1ec49a4b64df0a9e9f328abd60285841	Q
services.jarm.cipher_and_version_fingerprint	3fd21b20d3fd3fd21c43d21b21b43d	Q
services.jarm.tls_extensions_sha256	1ec49a4b64df0a9e9f328abd60285841	Q
services.jarm.observed_at	2023-11-25T11:39:07.471152539Z	Q
services.observed_at	2023-11-25T06:20:35.669842333Z	
services.perspective_id	PERSPECTIVE_NTT	Q

We can click on the blue search box next to the services.banner field to perform a pivot. This will pre-build the query and save us time finding the exact field to search. It's often better to use the banner hash when we want an exact match, this will avoid any issues where a value might be incorrectly typed when searching. This also ensures an exact match is queried.

Performing a basic pivot from the banner hash, we have an initial result of 14,605,188 servers. An admittedly huge number, But we'll improve this later.



If we go back to the initial summary view, we can see that the service was identified as "Unknown".

UNKNOWN 443/TCP

11/25/2023 06:20 UTC

VIEW ALL DATA

Software

🔍 linux 🗹

Details

TLS

Handshake

Version Selected TLSv1_3

Cipher Selected TLS_CHACHA20_POLY1305_SHA256

Certificate

Fingerpr	nt c4b42e9c59f8f79da83385d08d3876dcd19987be433fd6148abe32d14254e8af
Subje	ct C=ID5hgJb31CGtxS3R, O=NgOiQK7LZP5nKyTE, OU=fcr8shEwbsebOGQc
lssu	er C=QaXvvhYVZUBot5hh, O=YUs8vBiShD2OI59X, OU=JptfXUKIKxJYLGdX
Fingerprint	
JAF	M 3fd21b20d3fd3fd21c43d21b21b43d1ec49a4b64df0a9e9f328abd60285841
JA	3S 475c9302dc42b2751db9edcac3b74891

We can again use the "view all data" to find the "Unknown" field and perform a pivot with the search box.

services.port	443	hà	Q
services.service_name	UNKNOWN		٩
services.software.uniform_resource_identifier	cpe:2.3:o:*:linux:*:*:*:*:*		Q
services.software.part	0		0

This returns a lot of results, so we can take the resulting query and add it to our initial empty banner search.



Sadly this doesn't actually reduce the hits to any useful degree (in this case), but it's a useful technique to know so I wanted to include it in the post.

Since the addition of `UNKNOWN1 only reduced the hits by a very very small degree, it doesn't matter whether we include it or not for the remainder of this search.

For the remaining queries we can leave it out.



Moving on, we can go back to the field details page and observe the certificate information in more detail.

Of particular interest here is that only the C=, 0= and 0U= fields are present in the subject and issuer fields.

Typically there are additional values like Location ${\tt L}$, State ${\tt ST}$ and others. The absence of these values is an additional indicator that can be used.

For example, a "normal" certificate should look more like this.

Certificate	
Fingerprin	61b39fafe53fbc0db8497849456c48ecf22c0168d60b44c52b93c6fd2aea30c6
Subject	t C=CN, ST=Jiangsu, L=Nanjing, O=Huawei Software Technologies Co. Ltd., CN=n.cdnhwc3.com
Issue	C=BE, O=GlobalSign nv-sa, CN=GlobalSign RSA OV SSL CA 2018

We can also note that all of the C=, 0=, 0U= values are exactly 16 characters in length.

The lack of "regular" fields and presence of exactly 16 characters is itself a pattern worth signaturing.

services.tls.version_selected TLSv1_3 services.tls.cipher_selected TLS_CHACHA20_POLY1305_SHA256 services.tls.certificates.leaf.tp.sha.256 cdbd2e9c59f8f79da83385d08d3876dcd19987be433fd6148abe32d14254e8
services.tls.cipher_selected TLS_CHACHA20_POLY1305_SHA256
services the certificates leaf to sha 256 c4b42e9c59f8f79da83385d08d3876dcd19987be433fd6148abe32d14254e8
services.tls.certificates.leaf_data.subject_dn C=ID5hgJb31CGtxS3R, O=NgOiQK7LZP5nKyTE, OU=fcr8shEwbsebOGQc
services.tls.certificates.leaf_data.issuer_dn C=QaXvvhYVZUBot5hh, O=YUs8vBiShD2OI59X, OU=JptfXUKIKxJYLGdX
services.tls.certificates.leaf_data.pubkey_bit_size 2048
services.tls.certificates.leaf_data.pubkey_algorithm RSA
services.tls.certificates.leaf_data.tbs_fingerprint f704519c6a204975d691fb4a7ae8f669ce457dd8872857e56e050a2f9a62ad

We can use the blue search box again (right side of the detailed fields view) to automatically build an exact query.



Converting a Field to Regex

The initial pre-built query is an exact string search. (Indicated by the presence of = and the entire thing encased in quotes)

```
services.tls.certificates.leaf_data.subject_dn="C=ID5hgJb31CGtxS3R,
0=Ng0iQK7LZP5nKyTE, 0U=fcr8shEwbseb0GQc"
```

We can turn this into a regex by adjusting the equals = to a colon : and changing the double quotes " to forward slashes /

We can then validate the syntax by modifying the query and ensuring the same result is returned.



After validating the syntax, we can remove the main values and replace them with . {16}.

This ensures that exactly 16 characters are present following any of the C=, 0= or 0U= values.

In a real example you would probably want to avoid the . wildcard and use a more specific query like $[a-zA-Z0-9]{16}$, $[^,]{16}$ or $w{16}$. But for this example we will keep it simple with a .

Adjusting the query returns 56 results for matching certificates.



Validating a Regex Query with the "Build Report" Feature

By using the "report" button in the top-right corner, we can view a specific field for all of our returned results.

This can be extremely useful for validating that results are matching as intended.

Note in the screenshot below, that the "build report" function will show results for other services running on returned servers.

For example, a server with a matching hit on port 443, may also have a non-matching hit on port 8080. If both services contain a relevant field, they both will be displayed. Hence the additional results that don't match our query.

Either way this function is still useful for validating results.

Breakdown Field services.tls.certificates.leaf_data.subject_dn	Number of Buckets 100	DREPORT
Report for Hosts		
services.tls.certificates.leaf_data.subject_dn		rvices
C=CN, ST=BJ, L=BJ, O=AODUN, OU=AODUN		3.1%
CN=srv82054434.ultasrv.net	Validating results of our regex search using	2.79%
CN=localhost	the Build Report function.	2.48%
C=XX, ST=XX, L=XX, O=XX, OU=XX, CN=u22.isp, emailAddress=root@u22.isp		2.17%
		o 1.55%
C=Ychxl0xoT8nxSLa0, O=DNmluS6s9MUK5LR4, OU=qs08cf2XLedOalub		4 1.24%
CN=ru000502.widhost.net		2 0.62%
C=0AzdH6wrkWQrPNnV, O=o77AUUHhZbJaPItl, OU=HAeGmu8s467oU0GZ		1 0.31%
C=0KNVIFIrKwcWzGp4, 0=A1QoPXcTNtScdkIr, 0U=sPc2iSvZwKI4adQ9		1 0.31%
C=0Un0VuZKQ100NUZm, 0=B0N2F1YNjt8poCuD, 0U=t3g0nTcU9rHAoLS5		1 0.31%
C=0xIHSpdnrhwWqkZP, 0=9FzPOtUKFiMrYaX0, OU=MyaWjERyvXKztwDP		1 0.31%
C=1Gj56t4oF5mHaWnI, O=KprkkmNmGPVZofLN, OU=EWOITXeUKc6u7RR6		1 0.31%
C=1JWnle9fVU1LNvJV, O=1jfLp6Csxra3RfNg, OU=qXuOEn2tnjiQxc1D		1 0.31%
C=1k7m6KvMNz5nT8NU, O=Y2jbU54vDjJXuTVI, OU=ZHZHnVDtyeey0CoG		1 0.31%
C=25EU43J4sDcWqqYR, O=Srdbh0Juronj6N3b, OU=6BW1jBrUN6DQ6Vw5		1 0.31%
C=2f71Bw6mexn7yVev, O=8PjT6PWrzupaqqFg, OU=WGjjNctUMp4kf39m		1 0.31%
C=2rTsUXWM8tQ8bAdn, O=W6BpnJa2eIrh1jNf, OU=0wBkDTsTK48xpGcN		1 0.31%
C=31q5vOym2CdkRtPN, O=Kyv6pezIM76GzdQn, OU=aD8DpEEN2hjseFdD		1 0.31%
C=3YANGWWNSm1pg9dN, O=XetC5X8jubLzgq08, OU=IacqXuo4GTtPaN8N		1 0.31%
C=3smmnyE72wwcX0D1, O=ogSDhLWQbCFMhhSW, OU=ZvSdWMEhNfHZddsI		1 0.31%

With the query now validated further, we can add it to our initial empty banner search.

services.banner_hashes="sha256:e3b0c44298fc1c149afbf4c8996fb92427ae41e4649b934
ca495991b7852b855" and services.tls.certificates.leaf_data.subject_dn:/C=.
{16}, 0=.{16}, 0U=.{16}/

This results in 53 returned servers.



Investigating Hits With VirusTotal

Investigating the first 2 hits (that aren't our initial IP) with VirusTotal, we can see that both have been marked as BianLian trojan.

	Did you intend to search across the file corpus instead? Click here
8 / 88	① 8 security vendors flagged this IP address as malicious
	2.58.14.41 (2.58.14.0/23)
	AS 199959(Gwy It Pty Ltd)
9	
Community Score 💟	
DETECTION DETAIL	S RELATIONS COMMUNITY 1
Join the VT Community a	nd enjoy additional community insights and crowdsourced detections, plus an API key to automate checks.
Comments (1)	
drb_ra	
Bianlian Go Trojan Found	1
C2: 2[.]58[.]14[.]41:443 Certificate: c4be8524b7	7026424d88445b0243fde79e006c775444123f5aa5fe96a06048464
ASN: CROWNCLOUD	(214424)
#c2 #Bianlian_Go_Trojar	
	Did you intend to search across the file corpus instead? Click here
11	① 11 security vendors flagged this IP address as malicious
/ 88	213.139.205.146 (213.139.204.0/22)
	AS 395092 (SHOCK-1)
0	
Community Score	
DETECTION DETA	NLS RELATIONS COMMUNITY 4
_	
Join the VT Community	and enjoy additional community insights and crowdsourced detections, plus an API key to automate checks.
Comments (4) i	
drh ra	
💮 🛄 2 days a	go
Bianlian Go Trojan Fou C2: 213[.]139[.]205[.]14	nd 6:8080
Certificate: 66768ca94 Country: Germany (AS	454d70e25ccc297fb7232085754deb302f9b84f25a69026c0fd81d95 3395092)
ASN: SHOCK-1	
#c2 #Bianlian_Go_Troj	an

To save time scrolling through the page, we can use the **Build Report** feature again to obtain an easy list of all returned IP's.

Services, you could query for servi	ices.service_name. mm	and then generate a report on the breakdown of the field	Services.pore	
Breakdown Field			Number of Buckets	
ip			50	BUILD REPORT

Report for Hosts

ip		hosts
2.58.14.41	1	1.92%
3.76.100.131	1	1.92%
13.59.168.154	1	1.92%
13.215.227.78	1	1.92%
13.215.228.73	1	1.92%
23.152.0.64	1	1.92%
34.207.174.202	1	1.92%
34.219.121.232	1	1.92%
43.139.241.58	1	1.92%
45.45.219.141	1	1.92%
45.56.165.27	1	1.92%
45.56.165.30	1	1.92%
45.80.151.49	1	1.92%
45.86.163.188	1	1.92%
45.86.163.224	1	1.92%

We can also scroll down to the JSON output and combine it with CyberChef to obtain a textbased list.

49afbf4c8996fb92427ae41e4649b934ca495991b7852b855\"	and services.tls.certificates.leaf_data.subj
Input	+ 🗅 🖯 📋 📰
<pre>{ck "query": "services.banner_hashes=\"sha256:e3b0cd 495991b7852b855\" and services.tls.cere {16}, OU=.{16}/",ck "field": "ip",ck "total": 53,ck "duration": 1006,ck "total_omitted": 3,ck "potential_deviation": 0,ck "buckets": [ck {ck</pre>	44298fc1c149afbf4c8996fb92427ae41e4649b934ca tificates.leaf_data.subject_dn:/C=.{16}, O=.
"key": "2.58.14.41",cm "count": 1cm	
пес 3537 = 210	Tr Raw Bytes ↔ LF
Output	C 🖬 🗍 🖬
2.58.14.41 3.76.100.131 13.59.168.154 13.215.227.78 13.215.228.73 23.152.0.64 34.207.174.202 34.219.121.232 43.139.241.58 45.45.219.141 45.56.165.27	
	<pre>Byafbf4c8996fb92427ae41e4649b934ca495991b7852b855\" {ca "query": "services.banner_hashes=\"sha256:e3b0c 495991b7852b855\" and services.tls.cer {16}, OU=.{16}/",ca "field": "ip",ca "duration": 1006,ca "total_omitted": 3,ca "potential_deviation": 0,ca "buckets": [ca {ca "key": "2.58.14.41",ca "count": 1ca #e= 3537 = 210 Output 2.58.14.41 3.76.100.131 13.59.168.154 13.215.227.78 13.215.228.73 23.152.0.64 34.207.174.202 34.219.121.232 43.139.241.58 45.45.219.141 45.56.165.27 45 cf cf 20 </pre>

Taking that list and validating servers with VirusTotal, we can that every result was marked malicious, and all had at least one comment referencing BianLian.

Final Results Checked Against Virustotal

2[.]58[.]14[.]41 - BianLian 8/88 VT 3[.]76[.]100[.]131 - BianLian 11/88 VT 13[.]59[.]168[.]154 - BianLian 11/88 VT 13[.]215[.]227[.]78 - BianLian 11/88 VT 13[.]215[.]228[.]73 - BianLian 11/88 VT 23[.]152[.]0[.]64 - BianLian 11/88 VT 34[.]207[.]174[.]202 - BianLian 11/88 VT 34[.]219[.]121[.]232 - BianLian 9/88 VT 43[.]139[.]241[.]58 - BianLian 13/88 VT 45[.]45[.]219[.]141 - BianLian 6/88 VT 45[.]56[.]165[.]27 - BianLian 12/88 VT 45[.]56[.]165[.]30 - BianLian 11/88 VT 45[.]80[.]151[.]49 - 4/88 BianLian 45[.]86[.]163[.]188 - 9/88 BianLian 45[.]86[.]163[.]224 - 13/88 BianLian 54[.]193[.]91[.]232 - 11/88 BianLian 65[.]109[.]3[.]80 - 6/88 BianLian 66[.]29[.]155[.]44 - 6/88 BianLian 85[.]13[.]118[.]11 - 6/88 BianLian 87[.]247[.]185[.]109 - 6/88 BianLian 91[.]102[.]162[.]229 - 9/88 BianLian 94[.]131[.]98[.]34 - 14/88 BianLian 94[.]198[.]50[.]195 - 11/88 BianLian 103[.]57[.]250[.]152 - 14/88 BianLian 104[.]36[.]229[.]15 - 13/88 BianLian 104[.]194[.]11[.]252 - 6/88 BianLian 104[.]238[.]34[.]130 - 6/88 BianLian 104[.]238[.]35[.]163 - 11/88 BianLian 104[.]238[.]60[.]64 - 9/88 BianLian 104[.]238[.]61[.]150 - 9/88 BianLian 104[.]243[.]32[.]53 - 5/88 BianLian 104[.]243[.]33[.]83 - 6/88 BianLian 104[.]243[.]33[.]84 - 7/88 BianLian 108[.]174[.]60[.]151 - 8/88 BianLian 120[.]48[.]110[.]233 - 5/88 BianLian 139[.]59[.]40[.]48 - 8/88 BianLian 143[.]198[.]46[.]29 - 9/88 BianLian 149[.]154[.]158[.]34 - 10/88 BianLian 149[.]154[.]158[.]199 - 11/88 BianLian 149[.]248[.]14[.]201 - 6/88 BianLian 168[.]119[.]88[.]236 - 6/88 BianLian 173[.]254[.]235[.]30 - 10/88 BianLian 185[.]240[.]103[.]195 - 9/88 VT BianLian 185[.]248[.]100[.]118 - 6/88 BianLian 188[.]34[.]130[.]46 - 4/88 BianLian 192[.]52[.]166[.]233 - 6/88 VT BianLian 192[.]236[.]192[.]207 - 6/88 VT BianLian 194[.]213[.]18[.]45 - 9/88 VT BianLian 195[.]128[.]235[.]20 - 7/88 VT BianLian 198[.]199[.]76[.]216 - 6/88 VT BianLian

Note on Searching Without Regex

The regular expression (Regex) feature is only available within the Paid version of Censys.

If you wish to obtain the same results on the free version. You can use the following query to obtain the same results. This works if you know the specific length of each field you want to search.

It won't work in other cases where you want to specify a length range (eg something like .
{14,16}. But for hardcoded lengths, it can work and is functionally equivalent to .{16}
services.banner_hashes="sha256:e3b0c44298fc1c149afbf4c8996fb92427ae41e4649b934
ca495991b7852b855" and
services.tls.certificates.leaf_data.subject_dn:"C=?????????????,
0=???????????, 0U=??????????