Ukraine's DELTA military system users targeted by infostealing malware

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A compromised Ukrainian Ministry of Defense email account was found sending phishing emails and instant messages to users of the 'DELTA' situational awareness program to infect systems with information-stealing malware.

The campaign was highlighted in a report today by <u>CERT-UA</u> (Computer Emergency Response Team of Ukraine), which warned Ukrainian military personnel of the malware attack.

DELTA is an intelligence collection and management system created by Ukraine with the help of its allies to help the military track the movements of enemy forces.

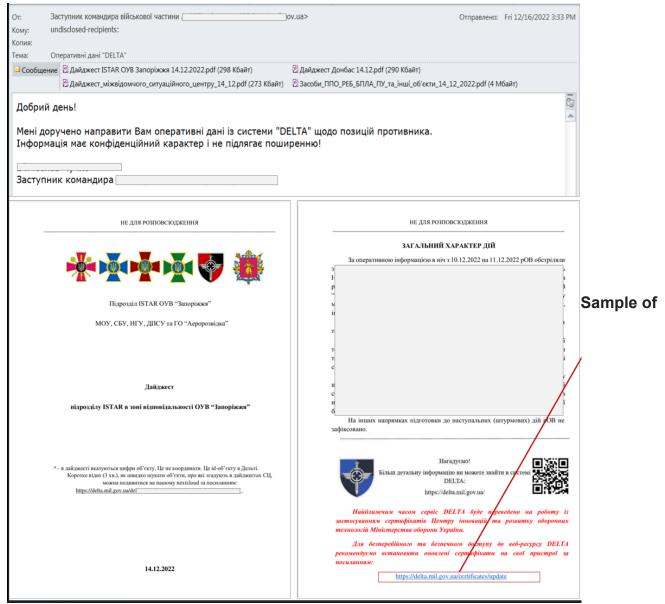
The system provides comprehensive real-time information with high-level integration from multiple sources on a digital map that can run on any electronic device, from a laptop to a smartphone.

Digital certificates are used for signing software code and authenticating servers, telling security products running on the OS that the application has not been tampered with and that the server operator is who they claim to be.

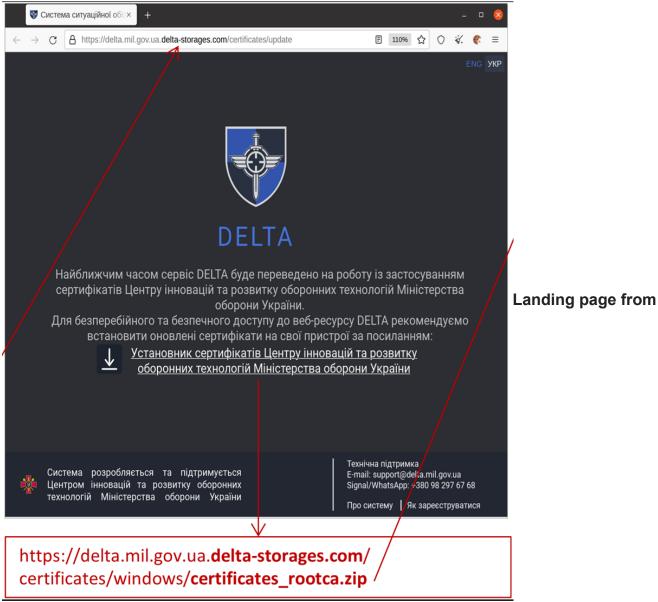
Infection process

As part of this campaign, threat actors used email or instant messages with fake warnings that users need to update the 'Delta' certificates to continue using the system securely.

The malicious email contains a PDF document purportedly with certificate installation instructions, which includes links to download a ZIP archive named "certificates_rootCA.zip."



email used in the campaign (CERT-UA)



where victims download the ZIP file (CERT-UA)

The archive contains a digitally signed executable named "certificates_rootCA.exe," which, upon launch, creates several DLL files on the victim's system and launches "ais.exe," which simulates the certificate installation process.

This step convinces the victim that the process was legitimate and reduces the chances of them realizing they have been breached.

Security Warning			
	You are about to install a certificate from a certification authority (CA) claiming to represent: CID Defense Technologies Windows cannot validate that the certificate is actually from "CID Defense Technologies ". You should confirm its origin by contacting "CID Defense Technologies ". The following number will assist you in this process: Thumbprint (sha1): 0009C840 F4B62052 44D5A3D7 98D2710E 80564C83 Warning: If you install this root certificate, Windows will automatically trust any certificate issued by this CA. Installing a certificate with an unconfirmed thumbprint is a security risk. If you click "Yes" you acknowledge this risk. Do you want to install this certificate?		Certificate
	Yes No		

installation dialog (CERT-UA)

Both the EXE files and the DLLs are protected by VMProtect, a legitimate software that is used for wrapping files in standalone virtualized machines, encrypting their content, and making AV analysis or detection impossible.

The dropped DLLs, "FileInfo.dll" and "procsys.dll," are malware, identified by CERT-UA as 'FateGrab' and 'StealDeal.'

FateGrab is an FTP file stealer targeting documents and emails of the following file formats: '.txt', '.rtf', '.xls', '.xlsx', '.ods', '.cmd', '.pdf', '.vbs', '.ps1', '.one', '.kdb', '.kdbx', '.doc', '.docx', '.odt', '.eml', '.msg', '.email.'

StealDeal is an information stealer malware that can, among other things, steal internet browsing data and passwords stored on the web browser.

CERT-UA was unable to link the above operation to any known threat actors.

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Bill Toulas is a technology writer and infosec news reporter with over a decade of experience working on various online publications. An open source advocate and Linux enthusiast, is currently finding pleasure in following hacks, malware campaigns, and data breach incidents, as well as by exploring the intricate ways through which tech is swiftly transforming our lives.