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R. Housley
Vigil Security
L. Ziegler
National Security Agency
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Reclassification of Suite B Documents to Historic Status
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Abstract

This document reclassifies the RFCs related to the U.S. National Security Agency (NSA) Suite B cryptographic algorithms as Historic, and it discusses the reasons for doing so. This document moves [RFC 5759](#), [RFC 6239](#), [RFC 6318](#), [RFC 6379](#), [RFC 6380](#), [RFC 6403](#), and [RFC 6460](#) to Historic Status.

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1. Introduction

Several RFCs profile security protocols for use with the National Security Agency (NSA) Suite B Cryptography. Suite B is no longer supported by NSA, and the web pages that specify the cryptographic algorithms are no longer available.

In July 2015, NSA published the Committee for National Security Systems Advisory Memorandum 02-15 as the first step in replacing Suite B with NSA's Commercial National Security Algorithm (CNSA) Suite. Information about the CNSA Suite can be found in [[CNSA](#)].

2. Rationale

As indicated in [[CNSA](#)], NSA is transitioning from Suite B to the CNSA Suite. As a result, the profiles of the security protocols for the Suite B algorithms are now only of historic interest.

3. The RFCs Related to Suite B

Between 2007 and 2012, several Suite-B-related RFCs were published to profile security protocols for use with the Suite B algorithms. They are:

- o [[RFC4869](#)], "Suite B Cryptographic Suites for IPsec" (Obsoleted by [RFC 6379](#))

- o [[RFC5008](#)], "Suite B in Secure/Multipurpose Internet Mail Extensions (S/MIME)" (Obsoleted by [RFC 6318](#))
- o [[RFC5430](#)], "Suite B Profile for Transport Layer Security (TLS)" (Obsoleted by [RFC 6460](#))
- o [[RFC5759](#)], "Suite B Certificate and Certificate Revocation List (CRL) Profile"
- o [[RFC6239](#)], "Suite B Cryptographic Suites for Secure Shell (SSH)"
- o [[RFC6318](#)], "Suite B in Secure/Multipurpose Internet Mail Extensions (S/MIME)"
- o [[RFC6379](#)], "Suite B Cryptographic Suites for IPsec"
- o [[RFC6380](#)], "Suite B Profile for Internet Protocol Security (IPsec)"
- o [[RFC6403](#)], "Suite B Profile of Certificate Management over CMS"
- o [[RFC6460](#)], "Suite B Profile for Transport Layer Security (TLS)"

4. Documents that Reference the Suite-B-related RFCs

There are several references among these RFCs. These cross-references are not examined further.

Other RFC make reference to these Suite-B-related RFCs; these references are discussed in the following subsections.

4.1. Documents that Reference [RFC 4869](#)

One other RFC makes reference to [RFC 4869](#) [[RFC4869](#)].

[RFC 6071](#), "IP Security (IPsec) and Internet Key Exchange (IKE) Document Roadmap" [[RFC6071](#)], points out that [RFC 4869](#) adds four pre-defined suites based upon Suite B specifications. They are:

- o IKE/ESP suite "Suite-B-GCM-128"
- o IKE/ESP suite "Suite-B-GCM-256"
- o IKE/AH suite "Suite-B-GMAC-128"
- o IKE/AH suite "Suite-B-GMAC-256"

In each case, these suite definitions make use of algorithms that are defined in other RFCs. No interoperability or security concerns are raised if implementations continue to make use of these suite names.

4.2. Documents that Reference [RFC 5759](#)

One other RFC makes reference to [RFC 5759](#) [[RFC5759](#)].

[RFC 6187](#), "X.509v3 Certificates for Secure Shell Authentication" [[RFC6187](#)], points out that [RFC 5759](#) provides additional guidance for Elliptic Curve Digital Signature Algorithm (ECDSA) keys when used with Suite B.

4.3. Documents that Reference [RFC 6379](#)

One other RFC makes reference to [RFC 6379](#) [[RFC6379](#)].

[RFC 7321](#), "Cryptographic Algorithm Implementation Requirements and Usage Guidance for Encapsulating Security Payload (ESP) and Authentication Header (AH)" [[RFC7321](#)], points out that the AES-GCM algorithm is used by Suite B, and it has emerged as the preferred authenticated encryption method in IPsec.

4.4. Documents that Reference [RFC 6403](#)

Two other RFCs make reference to [RFC 6403](#) [[RFC6403](#)].

[RFC 6402](#), "Certificate Management over CMS (CMC) Updates" [[RFC6402](#)], says that development of the profile for Suite B was the activity that demonstrated the need for these updates.

[RFC 7030](#), "Enrollment over Secure Transport" [[RFC7030](#)], points out that the scenarios in the two documents are very similar.

4.5. Documents that Reference [RFC 6460](#)

Three other RFCs make reference to [RFC 6460](#) [[RFC6460](#)].

[RFC 6605](#), "Elliptic Curve Digital Signature Algorithm (DSA) for DNSSEC" [[RFC6605](#)], states that material was copied liberally from [RFC 6460](#).

[RFC 7525](#), "Recommendations for Secure Use of Transport Layer Security (TLS) and Datagram Transport Layer Security (DTLS)" [[RFC7525](#)], observes that the Suite B profile of TLS 1.2 uses different cipher suites.

[RFC 8253](#), "PCEPS: Usage of TLS to Provide a Secure Transport for the Path Computation Element Communication Protocol (PCEP)" [[RFC8253](#)], points [RFC 6460](#) for the TLS_ECDHE_ECDSA_WITH_AES_128_GCM_SHA256 and TLS_ECDHE_ECDSA_WITH_AES_256_GCM_SHA384 cipher suites. Both of these ciphersuites are defined in [[RFC5289](#)], which would have been a better reference.

5. Impact of Reclassifying the Suite-B-related RFCs to Historic

No interoperability or security concerns are raised by reclassifying the Suite-B-related RFCs to Historic Status.

6. IANA Considerations

No changes are requested to any IANA registries.

7. Security Considerations

The CNSA Suite includes algorithms using the larger key sizes that are included in Suite B. There are no interoperability or security concerns raised by reclassifying the Suite-B-related RFCs to Historic Status.

8. References

8.1. Normative References

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Authors' Addresses

Russ Housley
Vigil Security, LLC
918 Spring Knoll Drive
Herndon, VA 20170
US

Email: housley@vigilsec.com

Lydia Ziegler
National Security Agency
9800 Savage Road
Ft. George G. Meade, MD 20755-6940
US

Email: llziegl@nsa.gov