

Adventures in Attacking Wind Farm Control Networks

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whoami

- Security researcher
 - Focus in control systems and network security
- PhD in Computer Science from The University of Tulsa
 - Cellular networks, security engineering and forensics
- Presented “How to Hack your Mini Cooper”
 - @ DEFCON 21
 - CAN bus tricks and message reverse engineering
- I enjoy trying to break things...
 - Sometimes I try to fix them 😊
 - Sometimes people don't listen ☹️



Disclaimer

- All affected parties have been notified of identified security issues that are about to be presented
- I am NOT a power grid engineer!
- Don't try this at home (without permission)...



Why Hack a Wind Farm?

- Wind energy
 - Becoming the predominant source of renewable energy
 - 4.7% of electricity generated in the United States in 2015
 - Contribution expected to climb to 20% by 2030
- Increased reliance on wind energy draws attention to attackers
- Modern wind farms are operated by computers and networks
- What's the worst that could happen?
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wfzglxMEo8g>
 - Mechanical failures can be influenced by targeting insecure control networks!
- But most importantly...

To Prevent Attackers from Turning these Peaceful Systems...



Into Targets of Ransomware... or



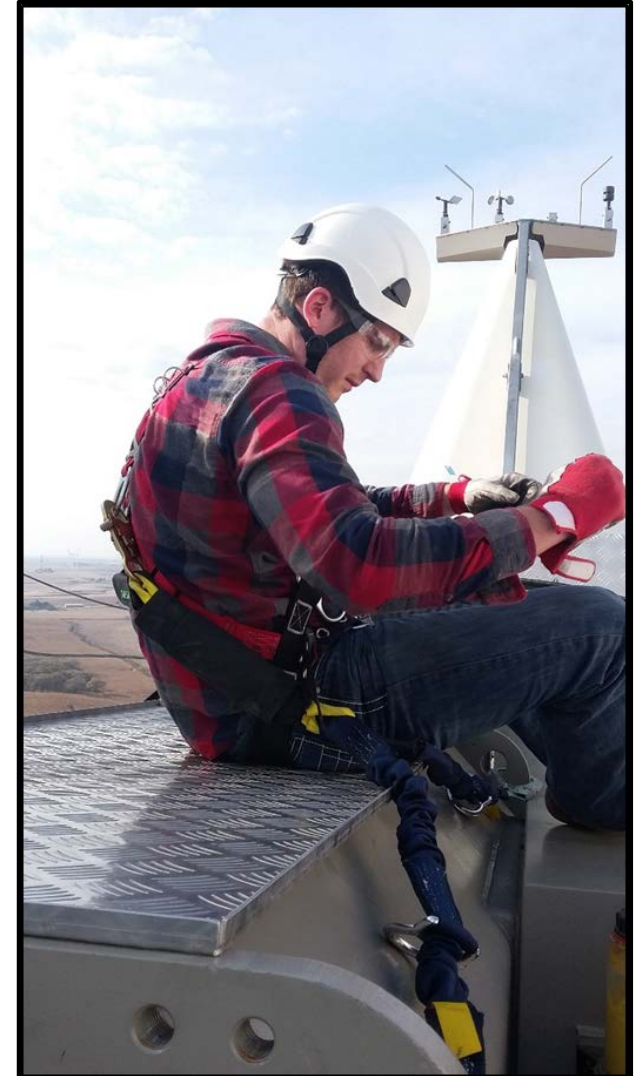
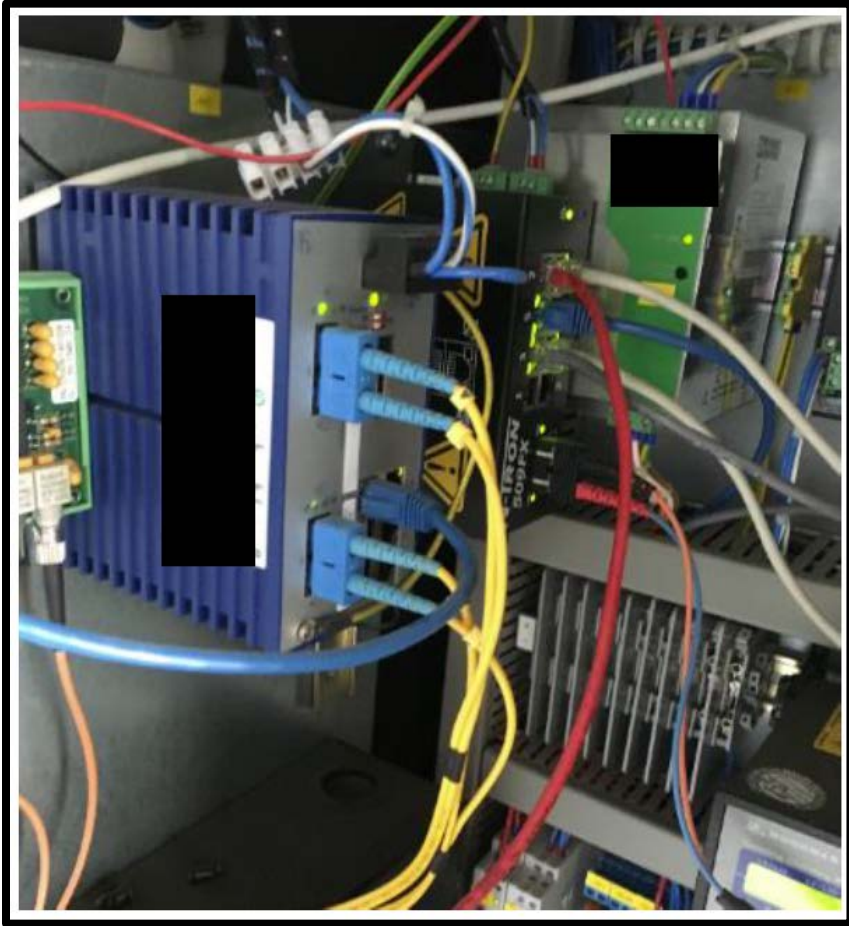
Into Massive Burning Wastelands...



What is a Wind Farm?

- Power plant that converts wind into electricity
- Wind turbines
 - Variable power source that generates energy from wind
- Substations
 - Collects the energy produced by wind turbines and feeds it into the power grid
- SCADA systems/networks
 - Controls the wind turbines and substations
 - Mix of ICS and IT
- IEC-61400-* specifications
 - Defines design, operations and communications requirements

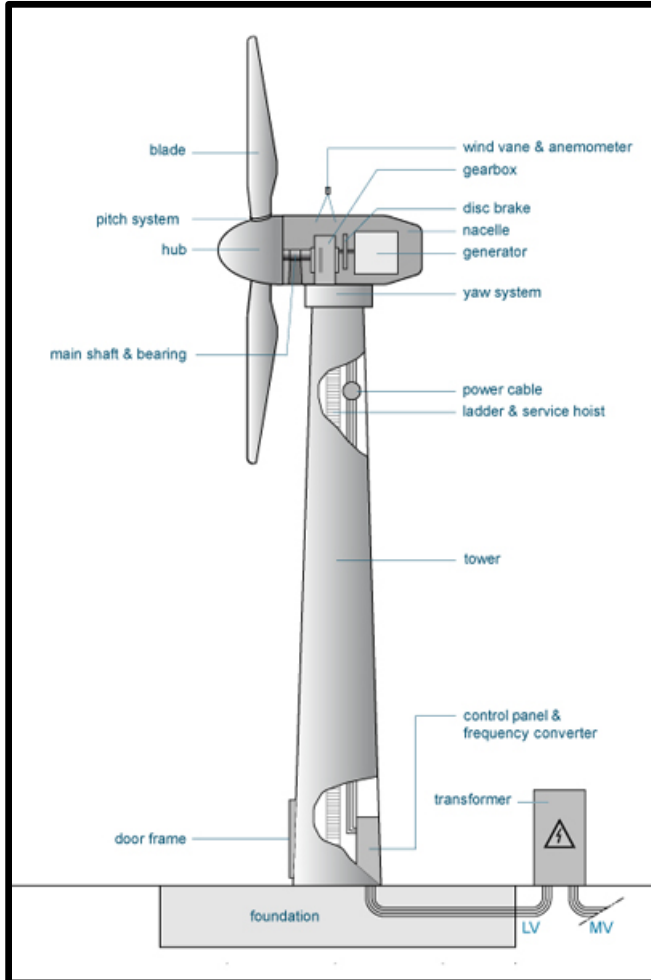
Red Teaming a Wind Farm



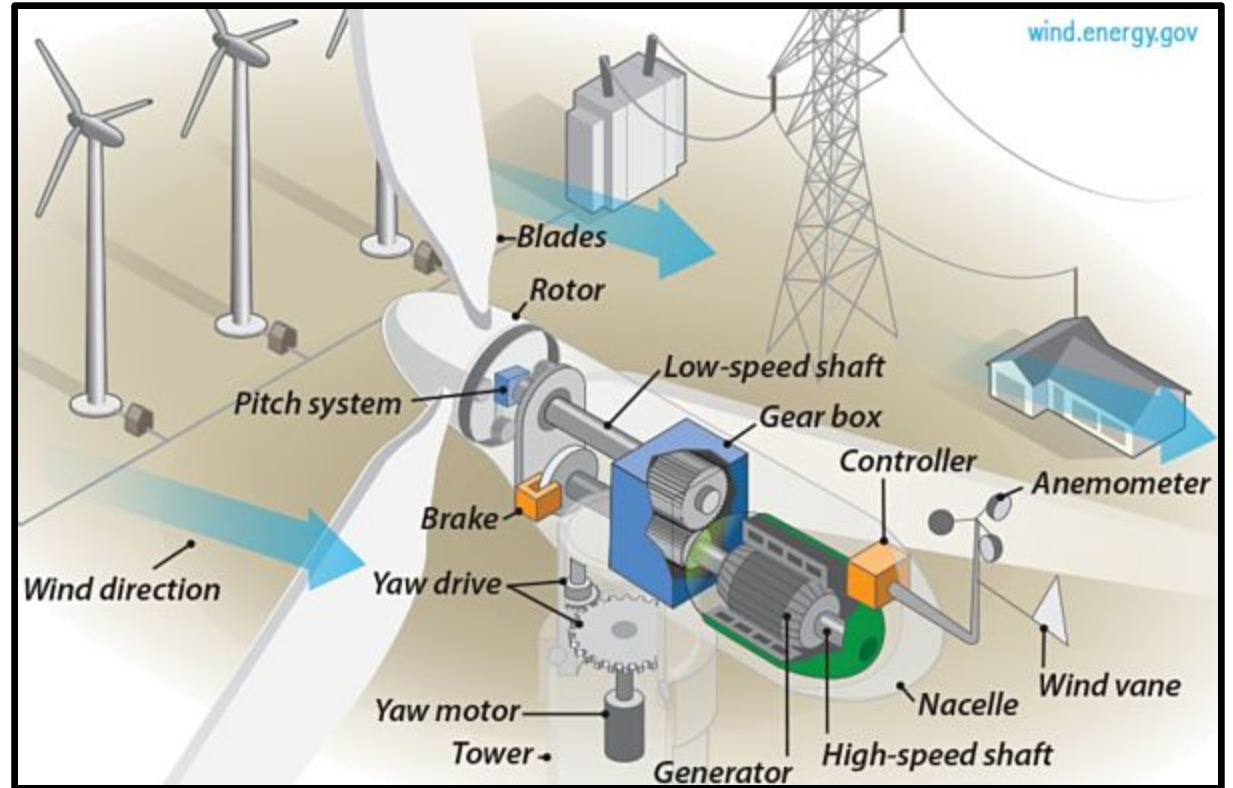
Red Teaming at Over 300 Feet...



Wind Turbine Anatomy

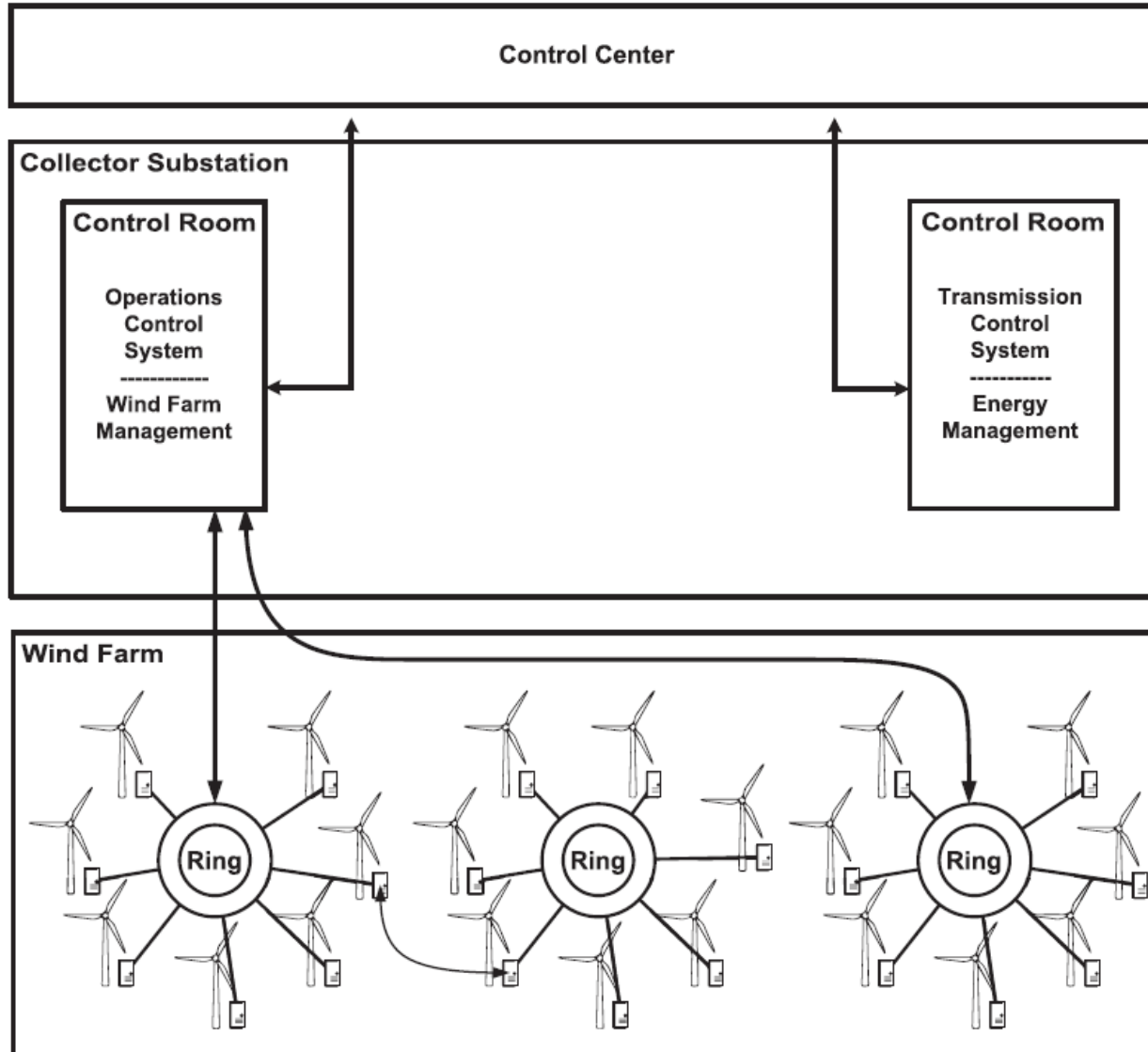


Turbine

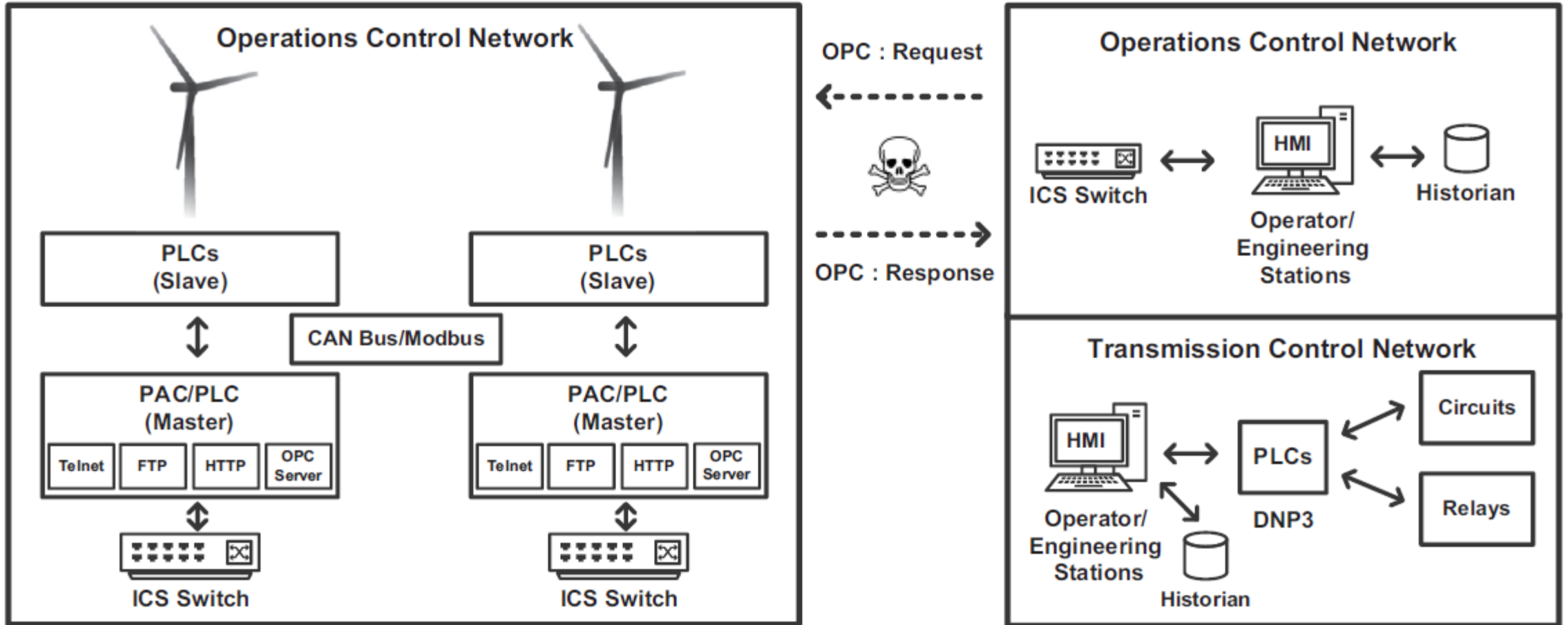


Nacelle

Communications Infrastructure

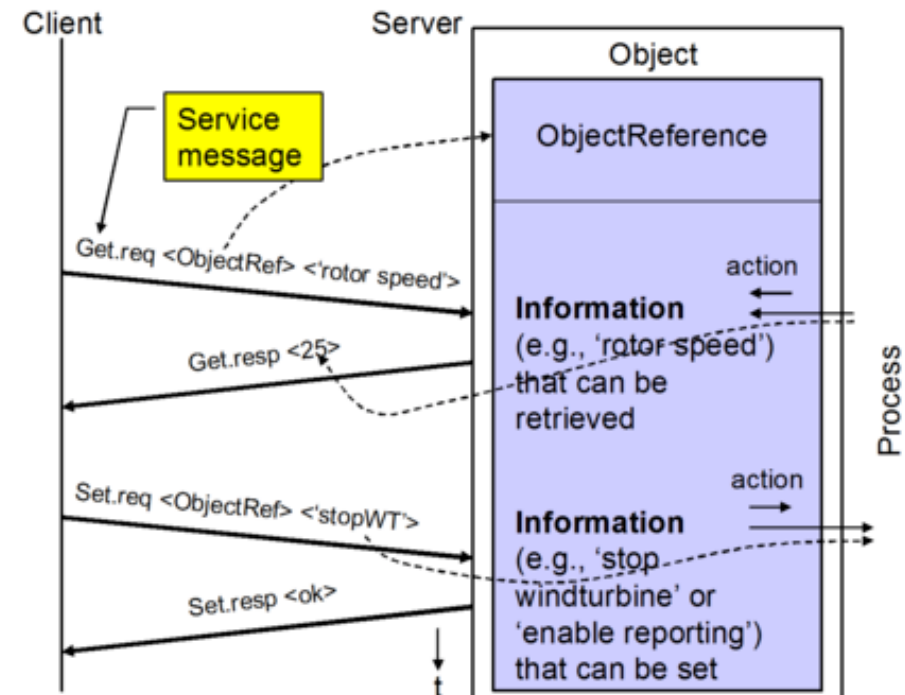


Wind Farm Operations Control Network



IEC-61400-25

- Defines uniform communications requirements for wind power plants
- Support for a handful of protocols
 - SOAP-based web services
 - OPC XML-DA
 - DNP3
 - IEC 60870-5-104
 - IEC 61850-8-1 MMS



OPC XML-DA Specification

- Uses SOAP messages to exchange data (HTTP, XML)
- OPC XML-DA message services
 - Status
 - Read
 - Write ← 😊
 - Subscription
 - Browse
 - ...
 - Get Properties

Example:

```
<soap:Body>
  <Write xmlns="http://opcfoundation.org/webservices/XMLDA/1.0/">
    <Options
      ReturnErrorText="false"
      ReturnItemName="true"
      LocaleID="en"
    />
    <ItemList>
      <Items ItemName="Simple Types/UInt">
        <Value xsi:type="xsd:unsignedInt">4294967295</Value>
      </Items>
      <Items ItemName="Simple Types/Int">
        <Value xsi:type="xsd:int">2147483647</Value>
      </Items>
      <Items ItemName="Simple Types/Float">
        <Value xsi:type="xsd:float">3.402823E+38</Value>
      </Items>
    </ItemList>
  </Write>
</soap:Body>
```

Overview of Vulnerabilities

- Programmable automation controllers (PACs)
 - Running legacy operating systems
 - Everything running as root!
 - Use of insecure remote management services
 - Easy to guess or vendor default passwords
 - No code signing!
- No authentication or encryption of control messages
- No network segmentation between wind turbines
- Extremely weak physical security
- Exactly what we would expect from an ICS
- And now the fun begins... 😊



Vendor Implementation != Specification

- OPC XML-DA messages are sent in the clear by default!
- Technical specification assumes this...
- Sometimes people don't follow instructions ☹️
- OPC XML-DA spec. overly reliant on the vendor to tack on additional encryption to secure protocol (e.g., SSL/TLS)
- Fail...

OPC-XML-DA Specification – “security”

2.8 Security

The assumption that OPC XML-DA makes is that the transport will handle security, e.g., HTTPS

The OPC specifications define interfaces that provide open access to various forms of process control information. Such information can be of great importance to the operations of an enterprise and should therefore be protected. Vendors and end-users must work together to ensure that sensitive information is guarded against unauthorized access. Unauthorized access can include both data espionage and sabotage of critical control parameters.

In the past, many companies have simply chosen to adopt a "wide-open" security policy for DCOM OPC servers and have relied on firewalls to protect from intruders. With the advent of web service technology, process control information is no longer restricted to the confines of a LAN. Web services are frequently deployed outside the firewall, potentially exposing important information to any person connected to the Internet.

End-users (network and site administrators) are responsible for enabling and properly configuring the security features of their selected web server components (for example, enabling the SSL capabilities of Microsoft IIS). This may include restricting access to web services to authorized users.

OPC-XML-DA Specification – “disable write”

OPC XML-DA Specification
(Version 1.0)



Released

Vendors may also provide additional mechanisms to allow finer control over the types of operations that specific users are permitted to carry out on specific items (for example, using the Microsoft .NET security classes).

It is highly recommended that, as a minimum, vendors provide a means to globally disable the Server's "write" capabilities, putting it into a "read-only" mode.

If a vendor does choose to provide custom mechanisms, then that vendor must be certain that they do not compromise existing security mechanisms already in use. Custom mechanisms must be well integrated with existing security mechanisms. For example, client authentication and identification must be based on facilities supplied by the operating system (where available), rather than vendor-specific approaches.

End-users are still responsible for configuring vendor-specific security mechanisms correctly. Vendors should provide assistance with configuration as necessary.

The OPC Foundation is not responsible for any damage relating to compromised security. Vendors and end-users must choose for themselves the security measures needed to ensure the safety of data exposed via OPC.

Please refer to OPC Security Custom Interface Standard for additional insight into security concepts.

Example OPC-XML-DA Read Request Items

- Wind speed
- Break status
- Rotor pitch angle
- Power production
- Rotor RPM
- Nacelle direction
- Ambient temperature inside nacelle
- Misc. temperatures
 - Oil, rotor, generator
- Controller operating status

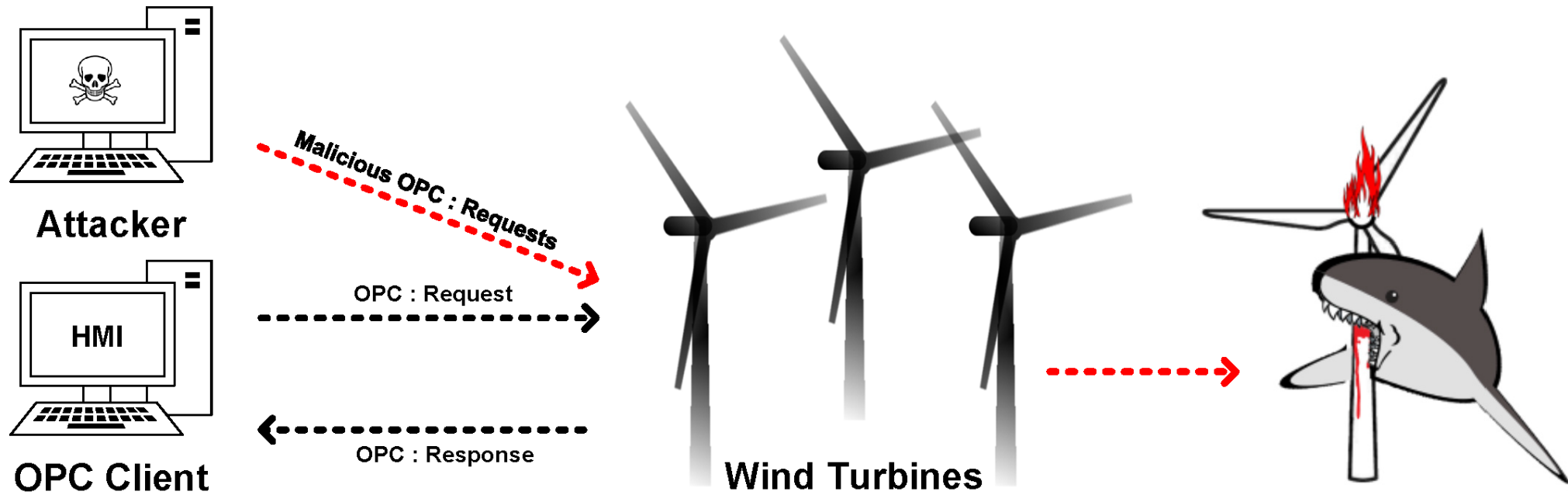
Example OPC-XML-DA Write Request Commands

- Specifics will vary from vendor to vendor
- Change maximum power generation output
- Wind turbine operating state
 - On
 - Off
 - Idle
 - Emergency shutdown (not graceful)
 - A.K.A “Hard Stop”
 - Induces excessive wear and tear on critical mechanical components!

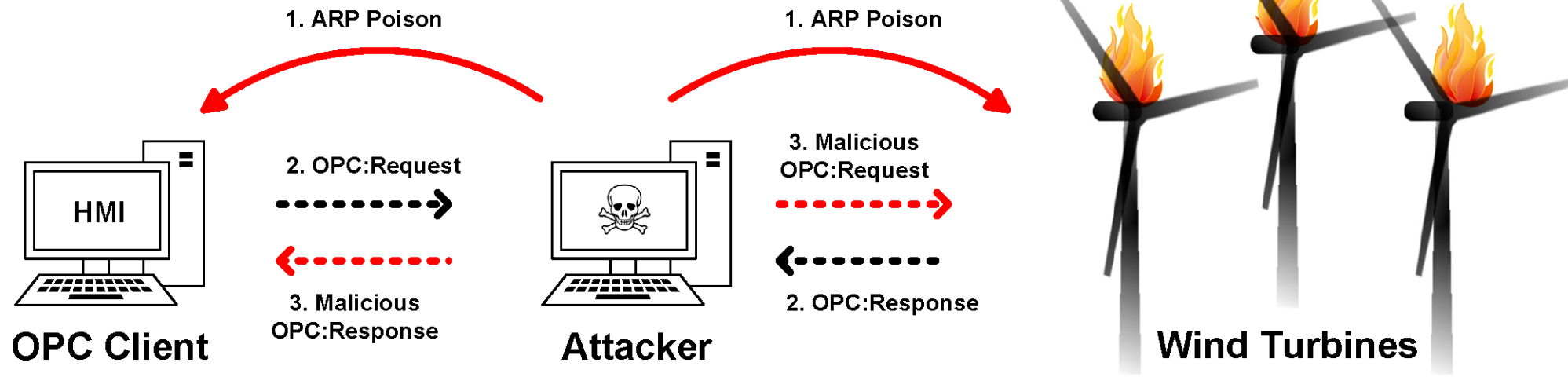
- Access can be achieved in a number of ways
 - Physical access to remote turbines in the middle of a field
 - Physical security mechanisms can be easily defeated with lock picks or bolt cutters
- Attach rogue device to ICS network switch inside the turbine
 - Raspberry Pi with cellular or Wi-Fi module for remote out-of-band access
 - Boom. You're in!



Windshark



Windpoison

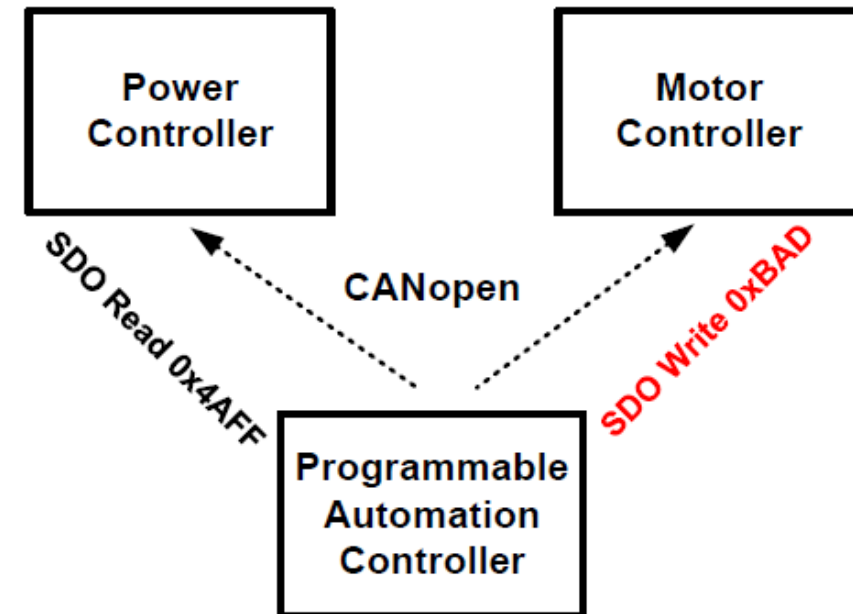


Building Blocks for Wind Farm Security Assessment Tools

- Developed wind farm network security assessment tools
 - Specifically, to attack IEC-61400-25 protocols and network services
- Command-and-control protocol reverse engineering
 - Tcpdump/Wireshark – Static analysis
 - Scapy – Dynamic analysis
- Raspberry Pi 3 (Linux)
 - Python 2.7
 - Bash
 - Scapy – for packet manipulation/fabrication
 - Nmap – for identifying remote OPC servers (running inside of wind turbines)
 - Iptables – for dropping/forwarding packets
- Wind* suite of tools

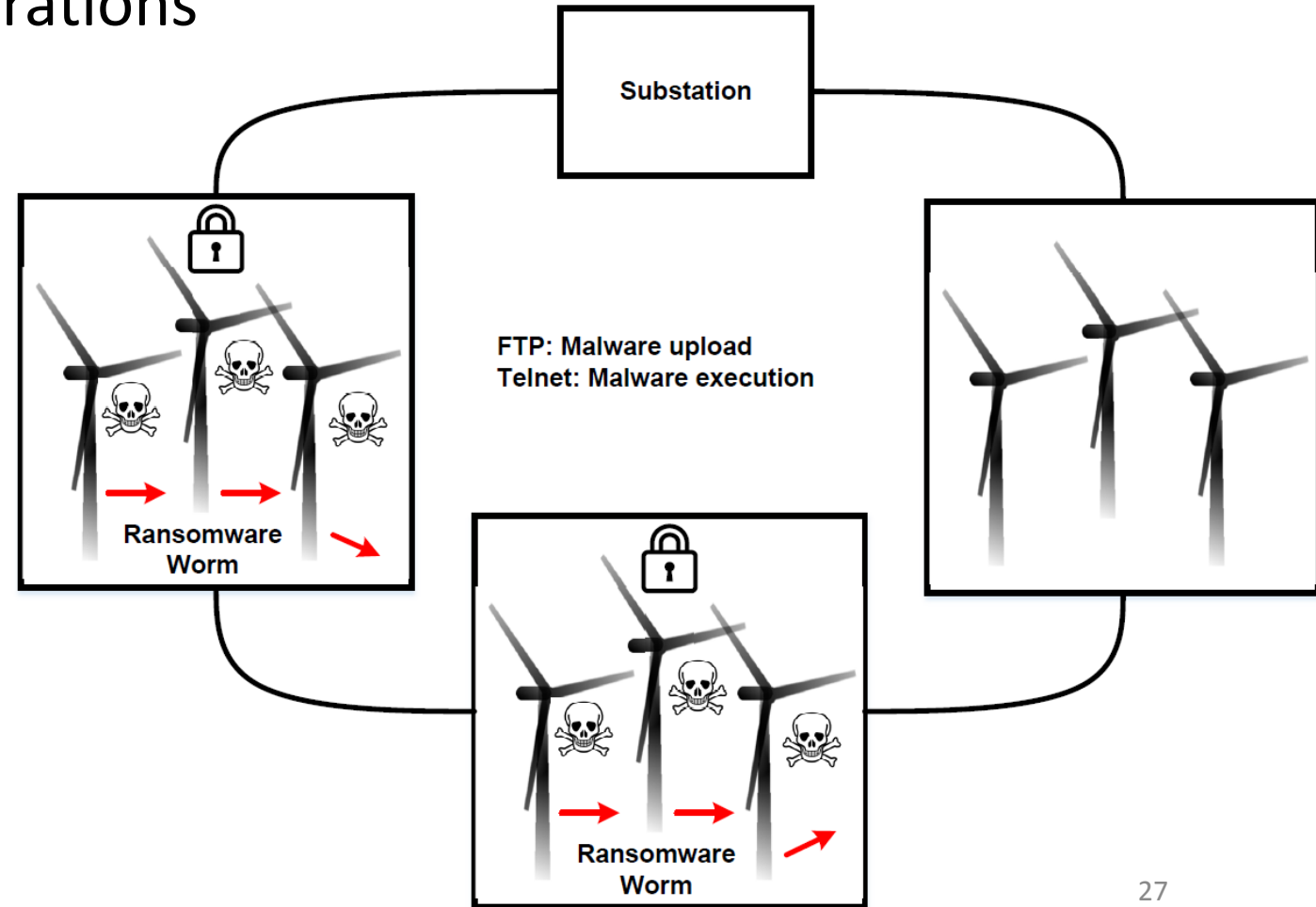
Windworm

- Targeting programmable automation controllers (PACs)
 - Cross-compile malware for embedded platforms (e.g., Windows, Linux, RTOS)
- Leverage root user accounts with default/weak passwords
- Malware propagation technique
 - Malware upload -> FTP
 - Malware execution -> Telnet
- Modify critical wind turbine process control variables
 - CANopen (object dictionary)
 - Initial values stored and loaded from a vendor defined configuration file (Electronic Data Sheet)
 - Manipulate power generation and motor variables/limits ☺
- Repeat... pwn wind farm

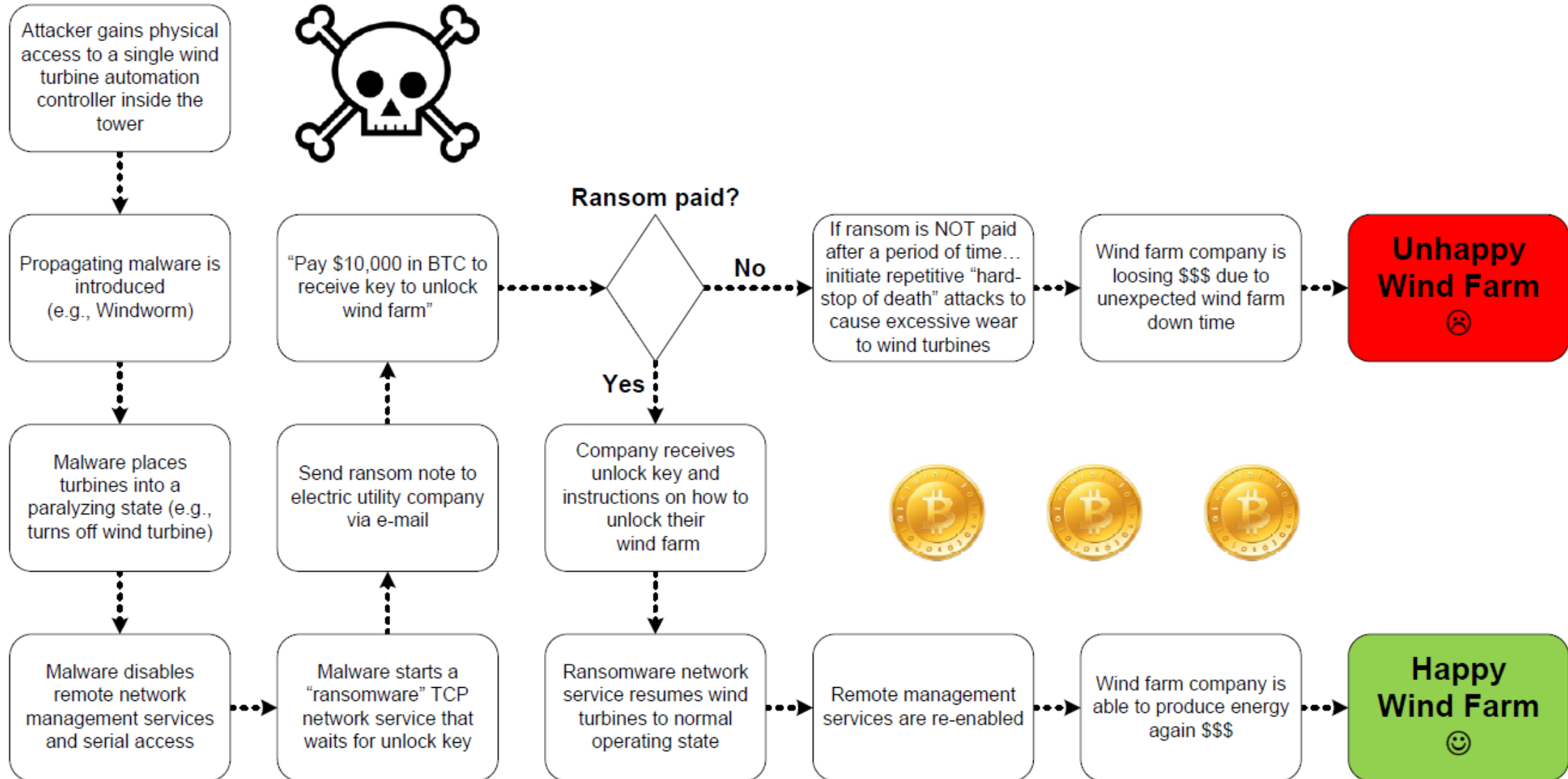


Windransom Scenario

- Goal: Paralyze wind farm operations
- Unless ransom is paid
 - \$\$\$BTC\$\$\$
- How would this work??



How to Ransomware a Wind Farm for Bitcoin?



What is the Potential Financial Impact Due to Wind Farm Downtime?

- Lost revenue to the wind farm energy company?
 - Assume 100% dependence on wind energy (no other renewable sources)
 - Assume a 35% capacity factor (worst case)
 - $250 \text{ MW} \times 365 \text{ days} \times 24 \text{ hours} \times 35\% = 766.5 \text{ GWh} = 766,500 \text{ MWh} = 766,500,000 \text{ kWh}$

- Example of a ransomware infected wind farm

- 250 MW (max capacity)
- 167 x 1.5 MW wind turbines
- @ \$0.12 cents/kWh

Downtime (hours)	Cumulative cost of wind farm downtime
1	~ \$10,500 (35% capacity) - \$30,000 (max capacity)
8	~ \$84,000 - \$240,000
24 (one day)	~ \$252,000 - \$720,000
48 (two days)	~ \$504,000 - \$1,440,000
72 (three days)	~ \$756,000 - \$2,160,000
168 (one week)	~ \$1,764,000 - \$5,040,000
336 (two weeks)	~ \$3,528,000 - \$10,080,000
672 (one month)	~ \$7,056,000 - \$20,160,000
2016 (three months)	~ \$21,168,000 - \$60,480,000

Wind Farm Malware Outbreak Recovery?

- How to recover from a large-scale attack?
 - Different perspectives on this depending on who you are (e.g., operator and vendor)
 - Reimage automation controllers (timely)?
 - Replace hardware (costly and timely)?
- How do you know the infection has been fully remediated?
 - How confident are you that it won't reappear?
- In the mean time, the operator is losing out on the ability to produce energy
 - Which means they're losing \$\$\$



Key Takeaways and Conclusions

- A call-to-arms for securing wind farm control networks!
- Wind farm control networks are extremely susceptible to attack
 - This is just the tip of the iceberg
- Be proactive
 - Don't wait on vendors to provide "security"
 - Verify vendor claims on "security"
 - Retrofit security as needed
- Wind turbine network segmentation
 - Inline firewalls at each tower
 - Encrypted VPN tunnels for each tower

Thanks!

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