



Securing Optimized Code Against Power Side Channels



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Background

Approach

Conclusion and Future Work



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Introduction

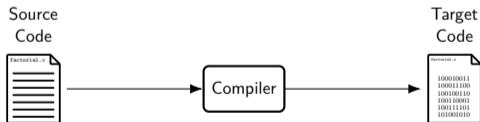
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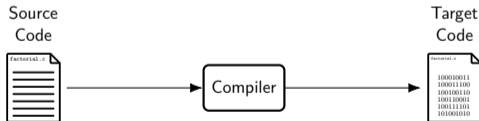
Power Side-Channel (PSC) Attacks

- ▶ Exploit properties of the **machine code** of a program



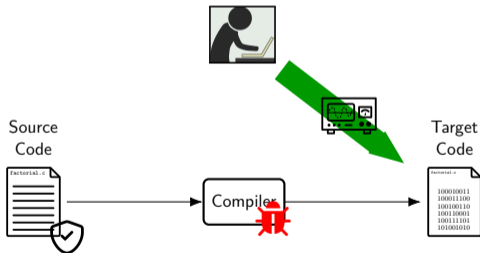
Power Side-Channel (PSC) Attacks

- ▶ Exploit properties of the **machine code** of a program



Power Side-Channel (PSC) Attacks

- ▶ Exploit properties of the **machine code** of a program
- ▶ The attacker records the **power consumption** of the running program





PSC Attacks

insecure Xor

```
1 u32 Xor(u32 pub, u32 key) {  
2     u32 t = pub  $\oplus$  key;  
3     return t;  
4 }
```

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The **power traces** depend on program transition between zeros and ones (exclusive OR).

PSC Attacks

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software secure Xor

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6      return (mask, t);
7  }
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binary of secure Xor

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Transitions between the **old** and the **new** values in hardware registers **leak** the difference in ones and zeros (hamming distance).

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Securing Binary Code

General-Purpose Compilation



- ▶ Focus on **performance**

Securing Binary Code

General-Purpose Compilation



- ▶ Focus on **performance**
- ▶ Generate code for **multiple targets**

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Conventional Compilation (Wang et al. '19)

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- ▶ **Portable** approach

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- ▶ Not portable, adjusted to one processor

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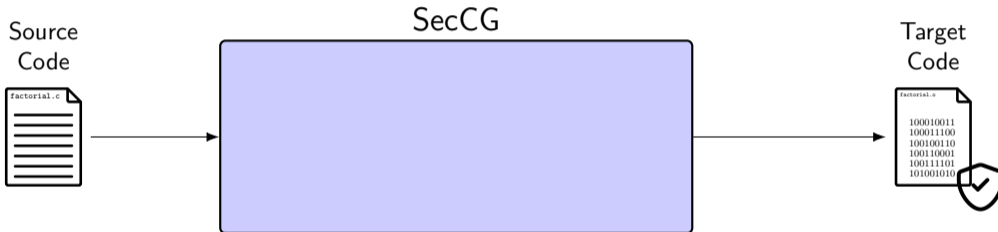
Binary-Rewriting (Shelton et al. '19)

- ▶ Not portable, adjusted to one processor
- ▶ Good performance but introduces overhead

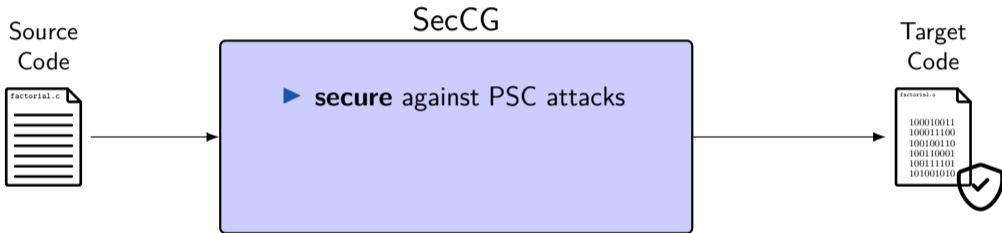


Security-Aware Code Generation (SecCG)

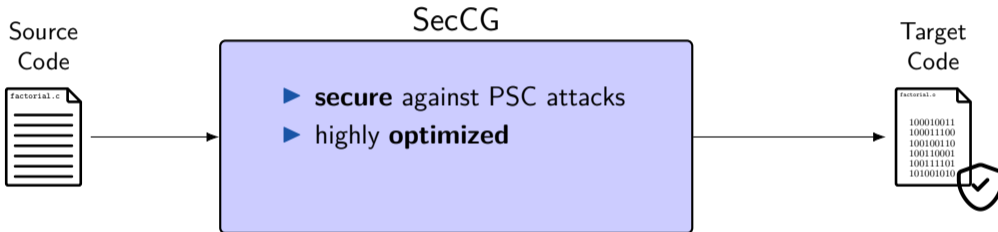
Security-Aware Code Generation (SecCG)



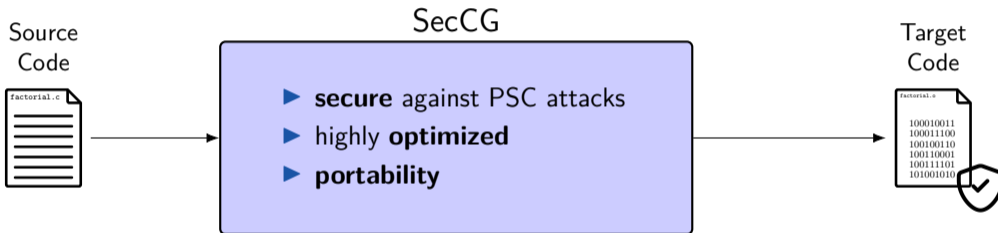
Security-Aware Code Generation (SecCG)



Security-Aware Code Generation (SecCG)



Security-Aware Code Generation (SecCG)





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Constraint Programming (CP)

Modeling

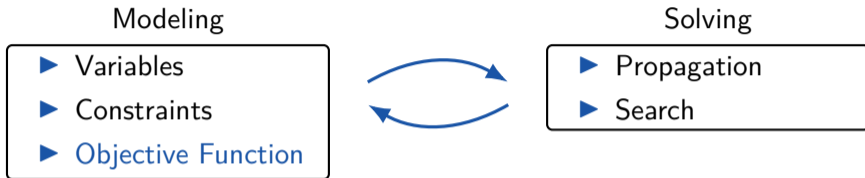
- ▶ Variables
- ▶ Constraints
- ▶ Objective Function



Solving

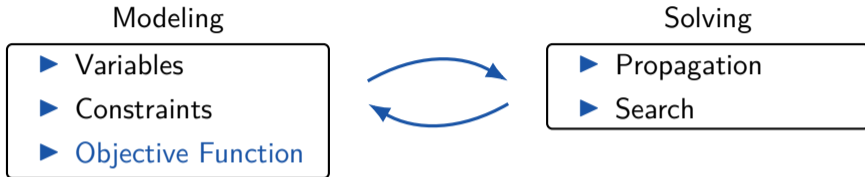
- ▶ Propagation
- ▶ Search

Constraint Programming (CP)



CP strengths:

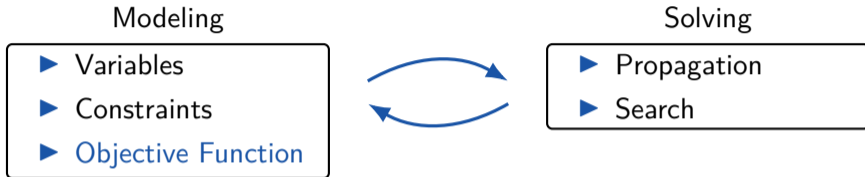
Constraint Programming (CP)



CP strengths:

- ▶ Global constraints

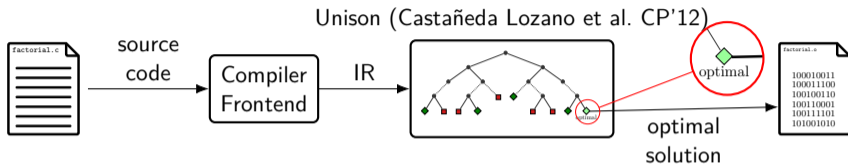
Constraint Programming (CP)



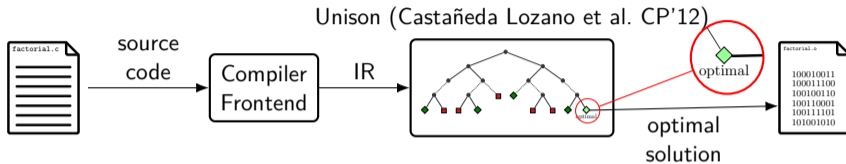
CP strengths:

- ▶ Global constraints
- ▶ Control over search
(e.g. Gecode)

Constraint-Based Compiler Backend

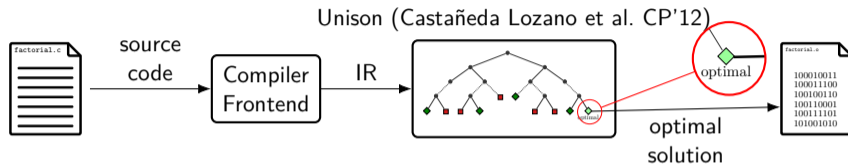


Constraint-Based Compiler Backend



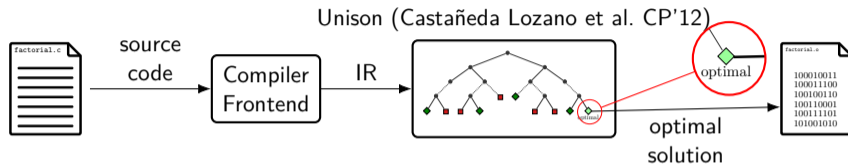
- ▶ Decision variables:

Constraint-Based Compiler Backend



- ▶ Decision variables:
 - ▶ c : the **issue cycle** for each instruction

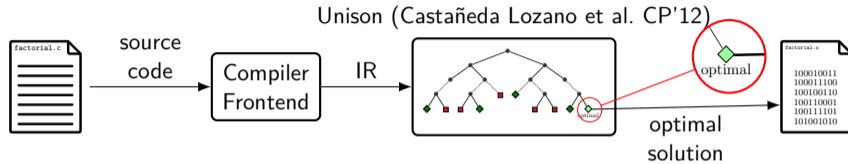
Constraint-Based Compiler Backend



► Decision variables:

- c : the **issue cycle** for each instruction
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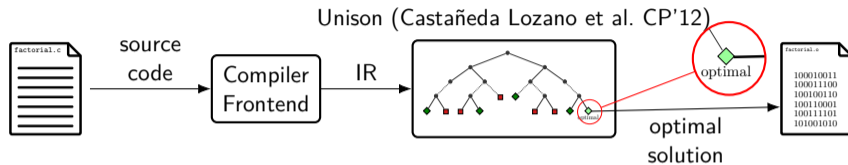
Constraint-Based Compiler Backend



▶ Decision variables:

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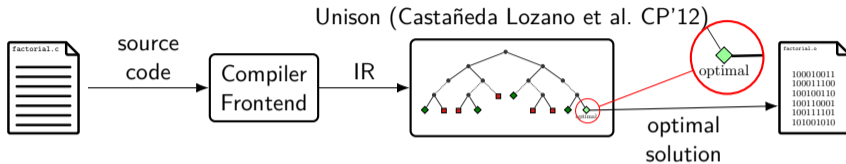


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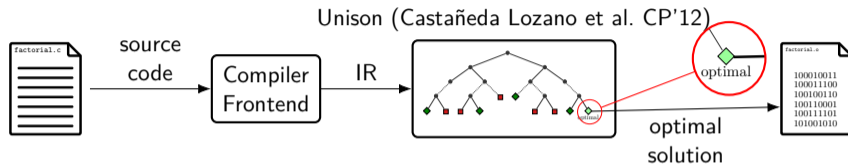
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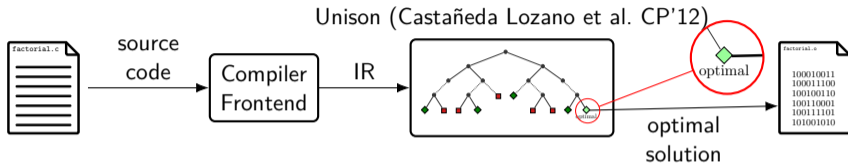
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Constraint-Based Compiler Backend



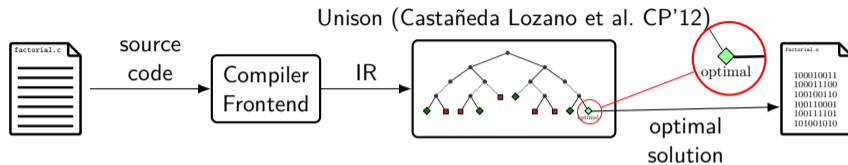
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Constraint-Based Compiler Backend



▶ Decision variables:

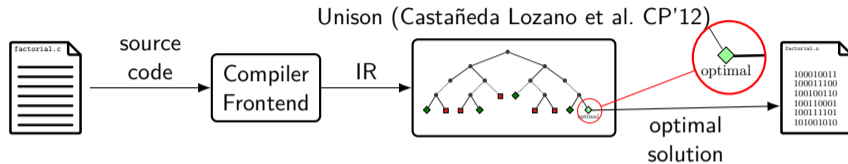
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Constraint-Based Compiler Backend



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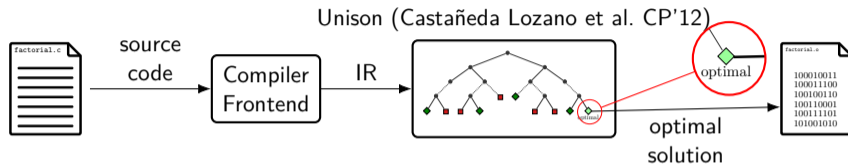
▶ Constraints:

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▶ Optimization goal:

- ▶ execution time (speed)

Constraint-Based Compiler Backend



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- ▶ hardware description
- ▶ compiler transformations

▶ Optimization goal:

- ▶ execution time (speed)
- ▶ code size (size)

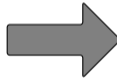


Example: Exclusive OR

```
uint32 xor_mem (uint32 *pub,  
               uint32 *mask,  
               uint32 *key) {  
    uint32 sm, res;  
    sm = (*sec) ^ (*mask);  
    res = (*pub) ^ sm;  
    return res;  
}
```


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```
1 9d001be8 <xor_mem>:  
2    lw $a1, 0($a1)  
3    lw $a2, 0($a2)  
4    xor $a1, $a1, $a2  
5    lw $a0, 0($a0)  
6    xor $v0, $a0, $a1  
7    jr $ra  
8    ...
```



Example: Exclusive OR

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1 9d001be8 <xor_mem>:  
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3   lw  $a2, 0($a2)  
4   xor $a1, $t1, $a2  
5   lw  $a0, 0($a0)  
6   xor $v0, $a0, $a1  
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```

Register allocation: \$a1 to \$t1

Example: Exclusive OR

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```

Instruction **issue cycle**: Swap instructions `lw $a1, 0($a1)` with `lw $a2, 0($a2)`

Example: Exclusive OR

Allows generating **secure** solutions!

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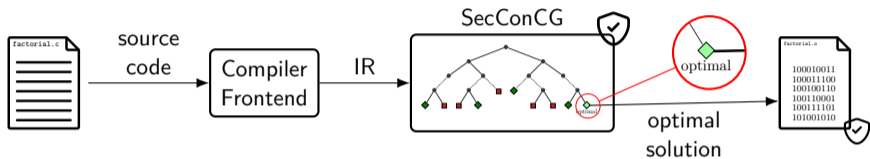
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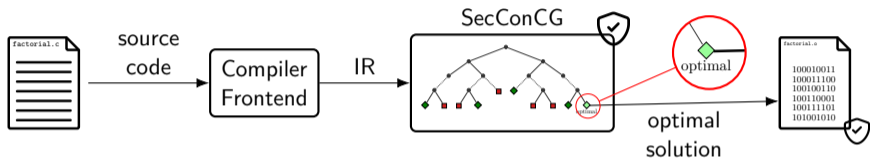
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Secure-by-Construction Code Optimization (SecCG)

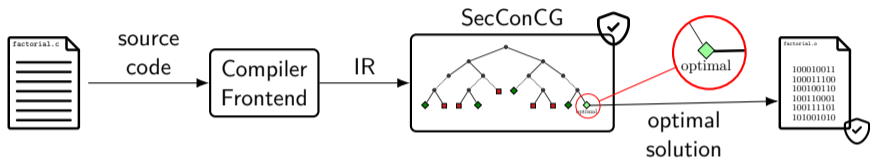


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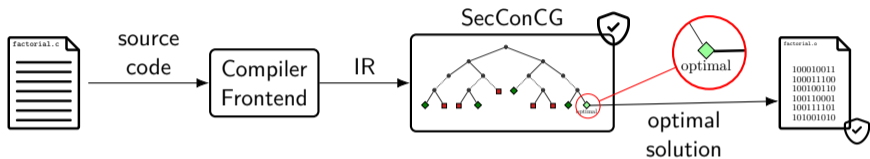
- ▶ Perform **security analysis** to extract information about the program variables

Secure-by-Construction Code Optimization (SecCG)



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- ▶ Extend constraint-based compiler backend with **security constraints**

Secure-by-Construction Code Optimization (SecCG)



- ▶ Perform **security analysis** to extract information about the program variables
- ▶ Extend constraint-based compiler backend with **security constraints**
- ▶ Generate the **optimal** and **secure** solution



Register-Reuse Transitional Effects

```
u32 Xor(u32 p, u32 m,  
        u32 k) {  
    u32 mk = m  $\oplus$  k;  
    u32 rs = mk  $\oplus$  p;  
    return rs;  
}
```

Exclusive OR in C

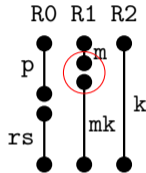
Register-Reuse Transitional Effects

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u32 Xor(u32 p, u32 m,
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    u32 mk = m ⊕ k;
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    return rs;
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```

Exclusive OR in C



Vulnerable Register Allocation

```

R0: p, R1: m,
R2: k
R1 = R1 ⊕ R2
R0 = R0 ⊕ R1

```

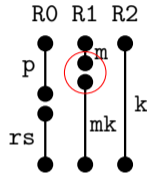
Register R1 changes value from m to $m \oplus k$, which reveals information about k .

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}
    
```

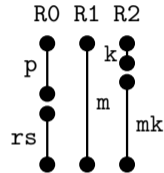
Exclusive OR in C



Vulnerable Register Allocation

R0: p, R1: m,
R2: k

$R1 = R1 \oplus R2$
 $R0 = R0 \oplus R1$



Secure Register Allocation

R0: p, R1: m,
R2: k

$R2 = R2 \oplus R1$
 $R0 = R0 \oplus R2$

Register R2 changes value from k to $m \oplus k$, which does not leak secret information.



Modeling Leak-Free Code

Mitigations

- ▶ **Register** overwrite leaks



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Generate Constraint Model



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- ▶ Generate **set of pairs of variables** that should not follow each other on the same register



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Proof

- ▶ The generated code does not leak secrets via **register-reuse transitions**



Memory-Bus Transitional Effects

```
u32 Xor(u32 *p, u32 *m,  
        u32 *k, u32 *r) {  
    u32 ki = *k;  
    u32 mi = *m;  
    u32 mk = mi  $\oplus$  ki;  
    *r = mk;  
    ...  
}
```

Memory Operations in C

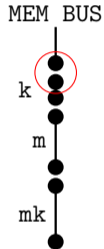
Memory-Bus Transitional Effects

```

u32 Xor(u32 *p, u32 *m,
        u32 *k, u32 *r) {
    u32 ki = *k;
    u32 mi = *m;
    u32 mk = mi ⊕ ki;
    *r = mk;
    ...
}

```

Memory Operations in C



```

R0: *p, R1: *m,
R2: *k, R3: *r
R2 = load R2
R1 = load R1
R2 = R2 ⊕ R1
store R2
...

```

Vulnerable Instruction Scheduling

The first load transfers a secret value via the MEM BUS, which leaks if the initial value of MEM BUS is constant.

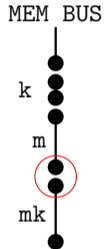
Memory-Bus Transitional Effects

```

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Memory Operations in C



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Vulnerable Instruction Scheduling

Memory-Bus Transitional Effects

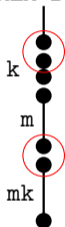
```
u32 Xor(u32 *p, u32 *m,
        u32 *k, u32 *r) {
```

```
    u32 ki = *k;
    u32 mi = *m;
    u32 mk = mi ⊕ ki;
    *r = mk;
    ...
```

```
}
```

Memory Operations in C

MEM BUS

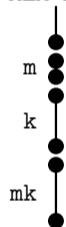


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R2 = load R2
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Vulnerable Instruction Scheduling

MEM BUS



R0: *p, R1: *m,
R2: *k, R3: *r

```
R1 = load R1
R2 = load R2
R2 = R2 ⊕ R1
store R2
...
```

Secure Instruction Scheduling

Changing the first load instruction after loading a random value removes the leaks.



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- ▶ Generate **set of pairs of memory operations** that should not follow each other



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Evaluation

Experiments

- ▶ Architecture: MIPS32 and ARM Cortex M0



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Results



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- ▶ **Performance Overhead¹**: 13% overhead - 5% improvement

¹ compared to non-secure optimal



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1 compared to non-secure optimal

2 compared to secure non-optimal



Evaluation

Experiments

- ▶ Architecture: MIPS32 and ARM Cortex M0
- ▶ Benchmarks: 12 masked programs in C and C++
- ▶ Portfolio: Gecode v6.2, Chuffed (Geas and OR-Tools have worse performance)

Results

- ▶ **Performance Overhead¹**: 13% overhead - 5% improvement
- ▶ **Performance Improvement²**: geometric-mean speedup 3.5 for ARM and 2.9 for MIPS32
- ▶ **Compilation Overhead¹**: up to 50 times slowdown

1 compared to non-secure optimal

2 compared to secure non-optimal



Contents

Introduction

Background

Approach

Conclusion and Future Work



Conclusion and Future Work

Conclusion

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- ▶ Consider additional transitional leaks (e.g. memory overwrite)
- ▶ Improve scalability of the approach by decomposition
- ▶ Evaluate the generate code on hardware

Thank you!