



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

Electronic Communications Security Measures

007 – Virtualisation Security v1.0

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Prepared by Department of the
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Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	i
1 Foreword.....	3
2 Introduction.....	4
3 Scope.....	4
4 References.....	4
5 Definitions, Symbols and Abbreviations.....	5
5.1 Definitions.....	5
5.2 Symbols.....	7
5.3 Abbreviations.....	7
6 Overview of Risk.....	9
6.1 Introduction.....	9
6.2 Types of Virtualisation.....	10
6.3 Virtualisation Deployment Scenarios.....	11
6.4 Administration of the Virtualisation Layer.....	12
6.5 Virtualisation Layer Compromise.....	12
6.6 Geographic Issues.....	13
6.7 Management and Orchestration (MANO).....	13
6.8 Container Security.....	14
7 Security Measures.....	15
8 Implementation Guidance.....	18
9 Relevant References.....	19
9.1 ENISA: The security aspects of virtualisation.....	19
9.2 ENISA: Threat Landscape and Good Practice Guide for Software Defined Networks/5G.....	19
9.3 GSMA: FS.33 Network Function Virtualisation Threats Analysis.....	19

9.4	GSMA: Considerations, Best Practices and Requirements for a Virtualised Mobile Network	20
9.5	3GPP: TR 33.4848 v0.6.0 (2019-11) Study on Security Impacts of Virtualisation (DRAFT).....	20
9.6	NIST: SP 800-125 Guide to Security for Full Virtualisation Technologies.....	21
9.7	NIST: SP 800-125B Secure Virtual Network Configuration for VM Protection	21
9.8	NIST Special Publication 800-190 Application Container Security Guide	21
9.9	ETSI: Industry Specification Group (ISG) Network Functions Virtualisation (NFV)	21

1 Foreword

The Electronic Communications Security Measures (ECSMs) have been produced by the Electronic Communications Security Measures working group convened by the Irish National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC), which forms part of the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC); and with the support of the Commission for Communications Regulation (ComReg). Industry participation in the WG has involved network operators, including the Mobile Network Operators (MNO) which have been awarded 5G licences, and selected fixed line operators.

This ECSM is part of a series of documents listed below:

Title	Subject
ECSM 001	General
ECSM 002	Risk Management
ECSM 003	Physical and Environmental Security
ECSM 004	Training, Awareness and Personnel Security
ECSM 005	Network Management & Access Control
ECSM 006	Signalling Plane Security
ECSM 007	Virtualisation Security
ECSM 008	Network, Monitoring and Incident Response
ECSM 009	Supply Chain Security
ECSM 010	Diversity, Resilience & Continuity
...	...

11 2 Introduction

12 Ireland's modern digitally connected society and economy is highly dependent on reliable
13 and secure electronic communications networks and services (ECN and ECS respectively).
14 They form the backbone of much of Ireland's critical national infrastructure providing
15 connectivity to the essential services upon which citizens rely, such as healthcare providers,
16 energy providers, financial institutions, emergency services and public administration. It is of
17 paramount importance that these vital networks and services are protected from the full
18 range of threats with an appropriate level of technical and organisation security measures.

19 The ECSM Working Group Convened on the 06th 07th and 08th of October 2020 to discuss
20 matters concerning virtualisation security. The group heard from experts in the field of
21 virtualisation security and held focussed discussions on the risks, challenges and best
22 practices associated with virtualisation security as it pertains to telecommunications
23 networks. ECSM 007 –Virtualisation Security has been developed by the NCSC informed by
24 those meetings.

25 3 Scope

26 The security measures set out in this ECSM are applicable to all providers of public
27 electronic communications networks and electronic communications service which have
28 implemented virtualisation as part of their operational network deployments.

29 The legislative basis for the ECSMs is set out in ECSM 001- General

30 4 References

Document	Title
3GPP TR 33.848	Study on Security Impacts of Virtualisation (DRAFT v0.6.0)
ENISA	Technical Guideline on Security Measures under the EECC
ENISA	Supplement to the technical guideline on Security Measures under the EECC
ENISA	The Security Aspects of Virtualisation

ENISA	Threat Landscape and Good Practice Guide for Software Defined Networks/5G
GSMA FS.33	Network Function Virtualisation Threats Analysis
ISO/IEC 27001:2013	Information technology — Security techniques — Information security management systems — Requirements
ISO/IEC 27002:2013	Information technology — Security techniques — Code of practice for information security controls
NIST	Framework for Improving Critical Infrastructure Cybersecurity v1.1
NIST SP 800-100	Information Security Handbook: A Guide for Managers
NIST SP 800-125	Guide to Security for Full Virtualisation Technologies
NIST SP 800-125B	Secure Virtual Network Configuration for VM Protection
NIST SP 800-190	Application Container Security Guide
NIST SP 800-53 R4	Security and Privacy Controls for Federal Information Systems and Organizations

31

32 **5 Definitions, Symbols and Abbreviations**

33 **5.1 Definitions**

Term	Meaning
EU 5G Security Toolbox	Cybersecurity of 5G networks - EU Toolbox of risk mitigating measures' document published jointly by member states on 31st of January 2020
EU Risk Assessment	EU coordinated risk assessment of the cybersecurity of 5G networks report published jointly by the EU

	Member States on 09th October 2019
Host	A computer or other device that communicates with other hosts on a network. Hosts on a network include clients and servers that send or receive data, services, or applications.
Hardening	The process of securing a system by reducing its surface of vulnerability, reducing available means of attack. This typically includes changing default passwords, the removal of unnecessary software, unnecessary usernames or logins, and the disabling or removal of unnecessary service.
Hyperjacking	An attack in which a hacker takes malicious control over the hypervisor that creates the virtual environment within a virtual machine host
Kernel	A computer program at the core of a computer's operating system that has complete control over everything in the system.
National Risk Assessment	Risk assessment carried out by the National Cyber Security Centre and forwarded to the European Commission on 15 July 2019.
Noisy neighbour problem	When a VM accessing shared resources uses more than it should. This causes other VMs accessing those resources to suffer from reduced or erratic performance
Orchestration	A set of processes that collectively automate the management and control of digital information systems.
Scaling	The ability to dynamically extend/reduce resources granted to virtual elements as needed

Scaling out/in	The ability to scale by add/remove resource instances
Scaling up/down	The ability to scale by changing allocated resource, e.g., increase/decrease memory, CPU capacity or storage size
Trust Domain	A collection of entities that share a set of security policies
Trusted Platform Module	Trusted Platform Module (TPM, also known as ISO/IEC 11889) is an international standard for a secure crypto processor, a dedicated microcontroller designed to secure hardware through integrated cryptographic keys.
Virtualisation	The process of abstracting a resource beyond its physical form. Many types of technologies can be virtualised, including servers, storage devices, networks, network functions and applications.
Virtualisation Infrastructure	The totality of all hardware and software components that build up the environment in which virtualised elements are deployed
Virtual Machine	Virtualised computation environment that behaves very much like a physical computer/server

34 5.2 Symbols

35 Nil

36 5.3 Abbreviations

Term	Meaning
BMC	Baseboard Manager Controller
ComReg	The Commission for Communications Regulation
COTS	Commercial off the shelf

DECC	The Department of Environment, Climate and Communications
ILO	Integrated Lights Out
ECSM	Electronic Communications Security Measures
MANO	Management and Orchestration
MNO	Mobile Network Operator
NCSC	National Cyber Security Centre
NF	Network Function
NFV	Network Function Virtualisation
OS	Operating System
RAS	Reliability, Availability, Serviceability
TPM	Trust Platform Module
VLAN	Virtual Local Area Network
VM	Virtual Machine
VNF	Virtual Network Function

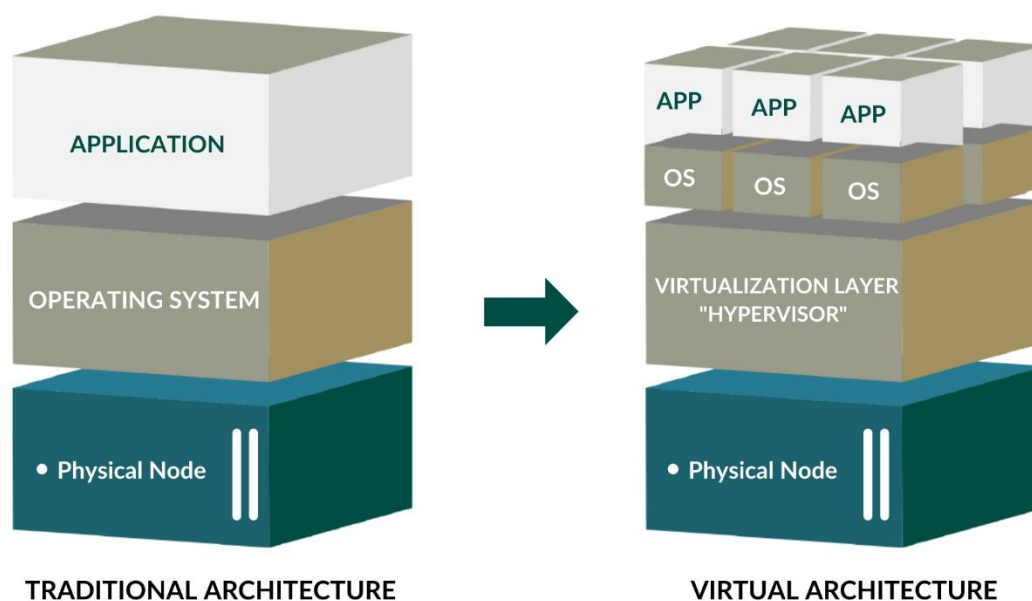
37

38

39 6 Overview of Risk

40 6.1 Introduction

41 In computing, virtualisation encompasses a number of different techniques to create a
42 virtual, or software version of a computing device. Examples of devices and systems which
43 may be virtualised include hardware platforms, memory, storage, or an entire network.
44 Network Function Virtualisation (NFV) refers to the deployment of Network Functions (NFs)
45 as software modules which run on commercial off the shelf (COTS) hardware. This
46 contrasts with the traditional deployment of network components as specialised hardware
47 devices.



48

49

Figure 1 - Virtualisation¹

50 Virtualisation is a fundamental building block of next generation networks and while not the
51 only way of implementing a 5G network, it is nevertheless the primary implementation
52 method being pursued to some degree by operators and manufacturers. Additionally,
53 virtualisation is being applied to earlier generations of networks, such as 4G, and part
54 virtualised networks containing a mixture of physical, containerised, and virtualised network
55 functions will be commonplace for most operators for the foreseeable future.

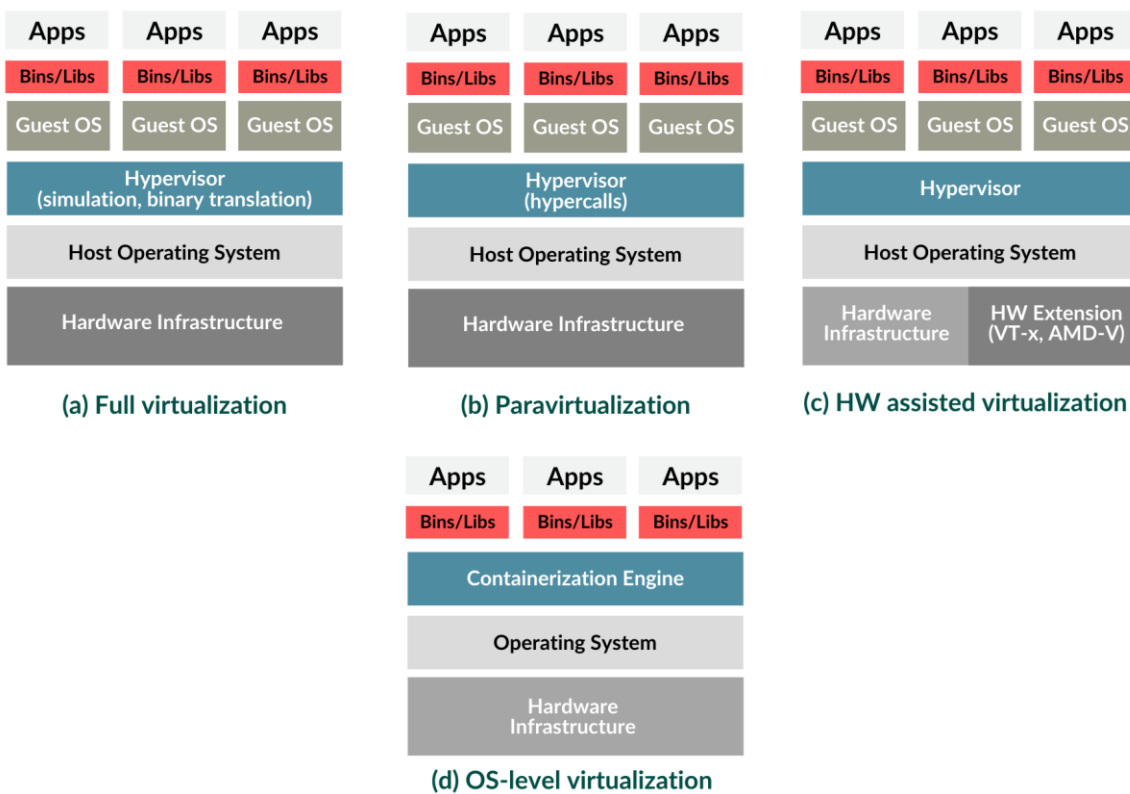
56 Virtualisation techniques, while providing clear advantages to security, also come with
57 increased security risks that must be taken into account when deploying a strong and secure
58 virtualised infrastructure.

¹ https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Virtual-vs-Traditional-Architecture-There-are-different-types-of-hypervisor-which-provide_fig1_323918941

59 **6.2 Types of Virtualisation**

60 One of the attractions of virtualisation is that it allows resources to be used flexibly. Sharing
 61 hardware resources between VNFs allows networks to scale services up and down as
 62 required and to centralise the management and orchestration.

63 However, the adoption of shared resources raises security questions which do not apply
 64 when using discrete physical infrastructure. In particular, virtualisation technology needs to
 65 ensure that VNFs can be isolated from one another, particularly in the case where they have
 66 specific security requirements. There are various approaches to isolating VNFs, ranging
 67 from using physically separate hardware to using separate containers. From a security
 68 perspective, there are four main types of virtualisation, with increasing levels of security



69
70 **Figure 2 – Types of Virtualisation²**

- 71 • **OS-Level virtualisation:** Also known as ‘containerisation’ where the separation
 72 between workloads is performed by the kernel on the host through a containerisation
 73 engine. In this case, compromise of the host’s kernel is enough to compromise the
 74 host and co-hosted workloads.

² ENISA: Security aspects of virtualization <https://www.enisa.europa.eu/publications/security-aspects-of-virtualization>

- 75 • **Para-virtualisation:** The hypervisor can be bypassed with ‘hypercalls’ for efficiency
76 reasons which allow the guest OS to directly address the hardware. In this case,
77 compromise of a ‘hypercall’ may be enough to compromise the host and co-hosted
78 workstreams.
- 79 • **Full virtualisation:** In full virtualisation, the hypervisor performs the security
80 separation. In this case, a hypervisor breakout is required to compromise the host
81 and co-hosted workstreams.
- 82 • **Hardware-backed virtualisation:** Security can be increased through the use of
83 hardware backed enforcement of separation mechanisms. (e.g., Input Output
84 Memory Management Unit filtering (IOMMU) protections such as Intel’s VT-d // VT-x
85 and AMD’s AMD-V // AMD-Vi).

86 It is expected that vulnerabilities in the kernel or within a para-virtualisation environment will
87 occur relatively frequently, and hence the first two types are not appropriate for use as a
88 security barrier. Where this type of virtualisation is used, virtual workloads from different trust
89 domains should not run on the same host.

90 On the other hand, full virtualisation does allow a level of security separation between virtual
91 machines. From a security perspective, full virtualisation provides the greatest flexibility in
92 terms of host deployment. However, it should be noted that a host compromise will
93 compromise all workloads running on that host as such the admin of the underlying
94 hardware (the RAS/BMC/ILO type functionality) is as critical as the admin of the virtualisation
95 layer.

96 **6.3 Virtualisation Deployment Scenarios**

97 There are various deployment scenarios for virtualised infrastructure, with varying levels of
98 risk. It ranges from a situation where an operator controls and owns their own virtualised
99 infrastructure, shares the infrastructure with their parent group, or hosts their infrastructure in
100 a third-party cloud provider. In a third-party environment, an operator could share their
101 environment with competing operators, or non-telecommunication related services. In such a
102 situation the network could be exposed to network traffic from entities with a lower overall
103 level of security.

104 Multi-tenant virtualisation infrastructures present a risk that without adequate separation
105 controls, the security or performance of their VNFs, could be compromised by other tenants
106 of the environment, either maliciously or through the “noisy neighbour problem”³

107 Obviously, the use of any third-party hosting for VNFs would need to be carefully managed
108 as outlined in ECSM 009 – Supply Chain Risk Management, ensuring that the outsourcing of
109 hosting does not result in a lowering of the overall security and the provider meets the
110 requirements set out in the ECSM series.

111 **6.4 Administration of the Virtualisation Layer**

112 A key aim of virtualisation is implementation of the network using flexible resources which
113 can be scaled and sized in near real-time to fit customer demand. To achieve this
114 effectively, NFV deployments rely on a single administration domain, where an administrator
115 with root access is able to manage the hosts and NFV environment. Without extra security
116 controls, an attacker who gains access to one of these accounts would be able to exploit,
117 control and manage the entire NFV environment.

118 Most virtualisation platforms make it possible for a user with root access to the virtualisation
119 layer to view and edit the memory of hosted VMs. This administrator may be able to change
120 or stop processes running in the VM, give other applications access to the VM or steal
121 security critical data.

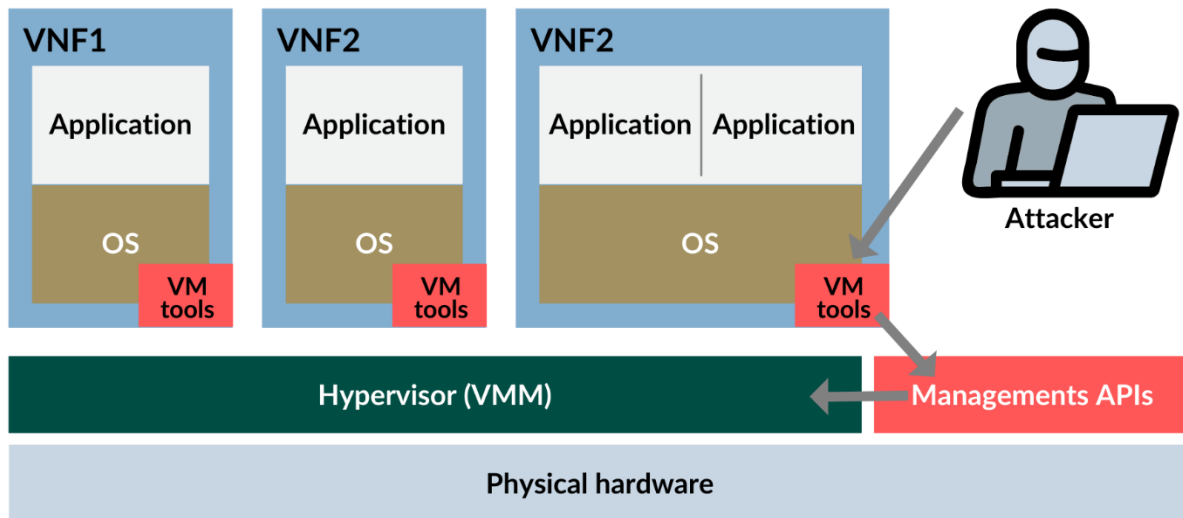
122 An attacker may have access to the virtualisation layer via a variety of means. The access
123 could be from a rogue employee at the hosting company or could be more illegitimate (see
124 below). From the point of view of the VNF these attack vectors are the same, as both results
125 in a rogue actor gaining access. In general, such access would be invisible to the VNF.

126 **6.5 Virtualisation Layer Compromise**

127 As a single point of failure, the hypervisor presents a uniquely high risk to network security in
128 the event that they contain vulnerabilities. While hypervisor vulnerabilities are not common,
129 the impact of one occurring can be devastating to network security. Gaining access to the
130 hypervisor would be catastrophic and give an attacker access to all workloads running above
131 the hypervisor. Such an attack is called ‘VM Breakout’ or ‘Hyperjacking’ and has been

³ When a VM accessing shared resources uses more than it should. This causes other VMs accessing those resources to suffer from reduced or erratic performance

132 demonstrated to be possible.⁴



133

134

Figure 3 – VM Breakout Attack⁵

135 To prevent a VM from impacting other VMs or hosts, it is a good practice to separate VM
136 traffic and management traffic. This will prevent attacks by VMs tearing into the management
137 infrastructure. It is also a good idea to separate the VLAN traffic into groups and disable all
138 other VLANs that are not in use. Likewise, VMs of similar functionalities can be grouped into
139 specific zones and their traffic should be isolated. Each zone can be protected using access
140 control policies and a dedicated firewall based on the necessary security level.

141 6.6 Geographic Issues

142 In traditional physical based networks, operators know where subscriber or other sensitive
143 data is located. However, virtual networks are designed in a way whereby such data can be
144 anywhere in the hosted environment, potentially spanning multiple data centres or legal
145 jurisdictions. In such a setup operators may encounter challenges in meeting legal
146 obligations to data protection and lawful interception legislation. It is important that even in
147 virtualised infrastructures, the operator has a clear picture of where sensitive data actually
148 physically resides and that it is appropriately protected.

149 6.7 Management and Orchestration (MANO)

150 One of the major advantages of virtualised networks is the ability to dynamically scale
151 network capacity out/in and up/down and to continuously adapt to network demands. A

⁴ Cloudburst: Hacking 3D (and Breaking Out of VMware) <https://www.blackhat.com/html/bh-usa-09/bh-usa-09-speakers.html>

⁵ http://www.anastacia-h2020.eu/publications/NFV_Security_Threats_and_Best_Practices.pdf

152 dynamically scaled network can present challenges due to the complexity of the system with
153 a risk of configuration errors having significant impacts on the security of the network. The
154 orchestration tools currently available provide the ability to deploy infrastructure and services
155 from code. This approach provides a fully reproducible and automatable method of building
156 and scaling a network in a secure and understood way, while limiting errors caused by
157 human interaction.

158 Using modern development tools and techniques such as code versioning, continual
159 integration, and delivery pipelines allows for rapid prototyping and testing of new features,
160 security patches, and changes, without impacting the network availability in a wider manner
161 as any changes can be tested at a small scale and quickly rolled back if there are any
162 negative consequences. Deploying services and infrastructure as code is the recommended
163 way of building out networks and services.

164 With the move to rapid prototyping and configuration as code, operators should implement
165 similar levels of control to these code repositories as they do to the configuration of
166 hardware and other security critical functions.

167 As the MANO is responsible for on-boarding, instantiation, and lifecycle management of all
168 VNFs within a virtualised network, it represents a single point of failure and an attractive
169 target for attackers. The system should be deployed in such a way as to provide isolation
170 and redundancy to increase the defence against a single point of failure. The MANO should
171 not reside on the same infrastructure as it controls. MANO functions should include internal
172 health checks to detect potential intrusion and take protective actions.

173 **6.8 Container Security**

174 Recently, application virtualisation has become increasingly popular due to advances in its
175 ease of use and a greater focus on developer agility as a key benefit. In application
176 virtualization, the same shared OS kernel is exposed virtually to multiple discrete apps. OS
177 components keep each app instance isolated from all others on the server. In this case,
178 each app sees only the OS and itself, and is isolated from other apps that may be running on
179 this same OS kernel.

180 The key difference between OS virtualization and application virtualisation is that with
181 application virtualisation, each virtual instance typically runs only a single app. Today's
182 application virtualization technology is primarily focused on providing a portable, reusable,
183 and automatable way to package and run apps. The terms application container or simply
184 container are frequently used to refer to these technologies. The term is meant as an

185 analogy to shipping containers, which provide a standardized way of grouping disparate
186 contents together while isolating them from each other.

187 Whilst containers offer increased agility and flexibility, the level of separation provided by the
188 kernel is not equivalent to full virtualisation. Therefore, containers should not be used to
189 separate sensitive workloads.

190 Covering the full range of security risks associated with containers, goes beyond the scope
191 of this document, however standards such as NIST SP 800-190 provide guidance on this
192 topic. The document highlights the risks associated with Image Risks, Registry Risks,
193 Orchestrator Risks, Container Risks and Host OS Risks, including recommending a series of
194 countermeasures that can be taken to mitigate the risks.

195 **7 Security Measures**

196 The operator should implement the Virtualisation Security Measures in a manner that is
197 customised to be appropriate and proportionate to the organisation.

Measure	Description
Understanding the Virtual Environment	
VS.01	The operator shall retain sufficient expertise to manage the virtualised infrastructure.
VS.02	The operator shall understand the virtual network, including data flows, trust domains and the location and status of the physical hosts on which the virtual network resides.
Secure Infrastructure	
VS.03	The hardware & software involved in providing the virtualisation infrastructure shall be kept up to date with regular security patches to known vulnerabilities.
VS.04	The hardware providing the virtualisation infrastructure shall support silicon chip-based security functionality with a trusted platform module (TPM) that stores measurements of the entire virtualisation layer and boot process.
VS.05	The hardware providing the virtualisation infrastructure shall be hardened. Communication between physical hosts shall be restricted to the minimum necessary. Interfaces shall be restricted to trusted hosts and hard-coded

	configurations shall be reduced to the minimum necessary.
VS.06	Sensitive virtual workloads or those providing a security boundary should not directly address the physical hardware on which they run. Exceptions shall be documented, risk assessed and justified.
Secure Virtualisation Layer	
VS.07	The software providing the virtual infrastructure, such as the hypervisor and Host OS, shall be hardened and kept up to date with regular security patches to known vulnerabilities.
VS.08	The virtualisation layer shall be validated during boot up using a TPM.
VS.09	The virtualisation layer shall be hardened. Only the minimum services and processes necessary to operate VNFs shall be included, and other services shall be removed by default.
VS.10	The virtualisation layer shall be monitored to detect potential intrusion and take protective actions.
Trust Domains and Separation	
VS.11	Virtual workloads shall be allocated a trust domain based on their sensitivity. Trust domains shall be separated using full virtualisation - containers shall not be used to separate trust domains.
VS.12	Physical hosts shall be categorised into security pools based on risk ⁶ . The pools shall be tagged with the trust domains that they can execute, in order to ensure sensitive functions are not executed in physically exposed locations where the risks associated with compromise of a host is increased (such as the network edge or shared data centres).
VS.13	The MANO represents a critical part of an operator's virtual network deployment and shall be provided with enhanced level of security protection and monitoring.

⁶ The risk may be based upon, inter alia, the host type, the security features of the host, and the location or environment within which that host resides.

Secure Administration	
VS.14	Administration of the virtualisation infrastructure or the MANO function represents the highest level of access. The security measures outlined in ECSM 005 – Network Management and Access Control around privileged access shall apply to the administration of the virtualisation infrastructure.
VS.15	Changes to the virtualisation infrastructure shall follow appropriate change management procedures including authorisation and documentation.
VS.16	Administration of the virtualisation infrastructure or MANO should be automated wherever possible, in order to reduce configuration errors and reduce opportunities for malicious actors.
VS.17	The code used for automated administration shall be stored securely and shall be monitored and audited. Changes to the code should require peer review and two person sign off.
VS.18	Administrators of the virtual infrastructure should not have access to the workloads within the virtualised environment. Exceptions shall be documented, risk assessed and justified.
VS.19	Administrators should only be provided with the privileges and access that is required for their role.

198

199

200 **8 Implementation Guidance**

201 Operators should take a policy-based approach to the security of their virtualised
202 infrastructure ensuring that the security measures are implemented consistently at an
203 organisational level.

204 The security measures outlined above provide the minimum baseline security standards
205 expected in order to mitigate the main risks identified to virtualised networks. In order for
206 operators to meet the Security Measures set out in this document, they should design and
207 implement security policies based upon the recommendations set out in appropriate
208 international standards or technical specifications. A non-exhaustive overview of some of the
209 main standards and guidance documents is provided below.

210 As most of the electronic communications industry is at an early stage in the deployment of
211 virtualisation it is intended that this ECSM will be reviewed and updated periodically in order
212 to keep abreast of security best practices, as the technology develops and evolves..

213

214 **9 Relevant References**

215 The following standards, guidelines and reports offer further detail and will assist operators
216 in designing policies, procedures and processes that meet the *Security Measures* outlined in
217 Section 7 of this document.

218 **9.1 ENISA: The security aspects of virtualisation**

219 <https://www.enisa.europa.eu/publications/security-aspects-of-virtualization>

220 This research paper by ENISA provides an in-depth analysis into all of the security aspects
221 of virtualisation. The paper gives a history and overview of virtualisation and current
222 implementations. The paper highlights the main threats, vulnerabilities, risks, and impacts
223 associated with virtual environments. Finally, the paper outlines a series of virtualisation
224 good practices. In total the paper recommends 82 controls covering General-purpose good
225 practices (Physical Layer, General, Configuration) and Component-specific good practices
226 (Guest/Host OS, Containers, Hypervisor & VNM⁷, Virtual network, Virtual Storage).

227 **9.2 ENISA: Threat Landscape and Good Practice Guide for 228 Software Defined Networks/5G**

229 <https://www.enisa.europa.eu/publications/sdn-threat-landscape>

230 This study reviews threats and potential compromises related to the security of SDN/5G
231 networks. More specifically, this report has identified related network assets and the security
232 threats, challenges and risks arising for these assets. Driven by the identified threats and
233 risks, existing security mechanism and good practices for SDN/5G/NFV has been identified.
234 Finally based in the collated information technical, policy and organizational
235 recommendations for proactively enhancing the security of SDN/5G is provided.

236 **9.3 GSMA: FS.33 Network Function Virtualisation Threats 237 Analysis**

238 [https://www.gsma.com/security/resources/fs-33-network-function-virtualisation-nfv-threats-
239 analysis/](https://www.gsma.com/security/resources/fs-33-network-function-virtualisation-nfv-threats-analysis/)

240 ***Restricted to GSMA Members.**

241 This document provides a comprehensive overview of the threats related to NFV and the
242 underlying infrastructure and platforms hosting the NFV.

⁷ MANO

243 The virtualization of network functions can be realized in several different ways and to
244 varying degrees. A Virtualised Network Function (VNF) can be a complex virtual appliance
245 running a complete operating system populated with several applications. It may have
246 multiple layers of interaction and functionality and, in some instances; it may even have
247 specific hardware requirements.

248 A VNF can also be an isolated singular function running on a thin container-based kernel
249 and have very limited interaction with its surrounding network entities. Containers, while
250 being streamlined and generally smaller than more traditional virtual machines are exposed
251 to the same NFV environment and suffer from the same vulnerabilities. In this document
252 they are therefore treated as virtual machines and covered by the same risks and mitigation
253 techniques if nothing else is stated in the risk or mitigation description itself.

254 **9.4 GSMA: Considerations, Best Practices and** 255 **Requirements for a Virtualised Mobile Network**

256 [Virtualisation.pdf \(gsma.com\)](#)

257 This document outlines the key considerations in the deployment of network virtualisation in
258 a mobile network environment. The topics covered within represent solutions to the potential
259 obstacles mobile operators may face when wishing to capitalize on network virtualisation
260 (covering both Network Functions Virtualisation and Software-Defined Networking).

261 It also provides an overview of the steps mobile operators should take to adopt this
262 technology and where appropriate, provide an indication of what they will need to complete
263 the work and which external organisations are best placed to deliver it. Finally, it outlines a
264 number of examples and approaches that have been taken by operators to identify and
265 address the gaps.

266 **9.5 3GPP: TR 33.4848 v0.6.0 (2019-11) Study on Security** 267 **Impacts of Virtualisation (DRAFT)**

268 [https://portal.3gpp.org/desktopmodules/Specifications/SpecificationDetails.aspx?specification
269 nId=3574](https://portal.3gpp.org/desktopmodules/Specifications/SpecificationDetails.aspx?specificationId=3574)

270 The document considers the consequences of virtualisation on 3GPP architectures, in order
271 to identify threats and subsequent security requirements. The document highlights 28 key
272 security issues with virtualisation in 3GPP network functions and recommends a number of
273 mitigations and solutions that reduce the overall risk. This document is still in draft, with the

274 most recent version made available on 29th of January 2021. Readers should look for the
275 most recent version when consulting this document.

276 **9.6 NIST: SP 800-125 Guide to Security for Full** 277 **Virtualisation Technologies**

278 <https://nvlpubs.nist.gov/nistpubs/Legacy/SP/nistspecialpublication800-125.pdf>

279 The purpose of the guide is to discuss the security concerns associated with full
280 virtualization technologies for server and desktop virtualization, and to provide
281 recommendations for addressing these concerns.

282 **9.7 NIST: SP 800-125B Secure Virtual Network** 283 **Configuration for VM Protection**

284 [SP 800-125B, Secure Virtual Network Configuration for VM Protection | CSRC \(nist.gov\)](#)

285 The purpose of this NIST Special Publication (SP) is to provide an analysis of various virtual
286 network configuration options for protection of virtual machines (VMs) and present
287 recommendations based on the analysis. The relevant configuration areas discussed in this
288 publication are network segmentation, network path redundancy, traffic control through
289 firewalls, and VM traffic monitoring. Each configuration option in each of these areas has
290 different advantages and disadvantages, which are identified in this publication. Analysis of
291 these has led to the development of one or more security recommendations for each
292 configuration area.

293 **9.8 NIST Special Publication 800-190 Application Container** 294 **Security Guide**

295 [Application Container Security Guide \(nist.gov\)](#)

296 Application container technologies, also known as containers, are a form of operating
297 system virtualization combined with application software packaging. Containers provide a
298 portable, reusable, and automatable way to package and run applications. This publication
299 explains the potential security concerns associated with the use of containers and provides
300 recommendations for addressing these concerns.

301 **9.9 ETSI: Industry Specification Group (ISG) Network** 302 **Functions Virtualisation (NFV)**

303 [ETSI - NFV](#)

304 ISG NFV has developed over 100 different specifications and reports for the virtualization of
305 network functions, with focus on the management and orchestration of virtualized resources.
306 From an architectural point of view, NFV specifications describe and specify virtualization
307 requirements, NFV architecture framework, functional components and their interfaces, as
308 well as the protocols and the APIs for these interfaces. Another set of NFV specifications
309 define the structure and format of deployment templates and how to package all artefacts
310 which are used by the NFV management and orchestration framework.

311 ISG NFV also studies VNF performance, reliability, and resiliency matters, analyses the
312 security challenges linked to virtualization (trust, attestation, regulation) and specifies
313 associated requirements. In support for 5G deployments, the ISG NFV specifications include
314 support for multi-site and multi-domain deployments, as well as network slicing. New
315 virtualization technologies such as support for containerized VNFs and container
316 infrastructure management are tackled in studies and on-going normative specifications
317 work. In addition, the ISG NFV specifies requirements for hardware acceleration, multi-
318 tenancy, autonomous networks, etc.

319 Of particular note are:

320 NFV-SEC 003: Network Functions Virtualisation (NFV); NFV Security; Security and Trust
321 Guidance

322 NFV-SEC 006 Network Functions Virtualisation (NFV); Security Guide; Report on Security
323 Aspects and Regulatory Concerns

324 NFV-SEC 014 Network Functions Virtualisation (NFV) Release 3; NFV Security; Security
325 Specification for MANO Components and Reference points.