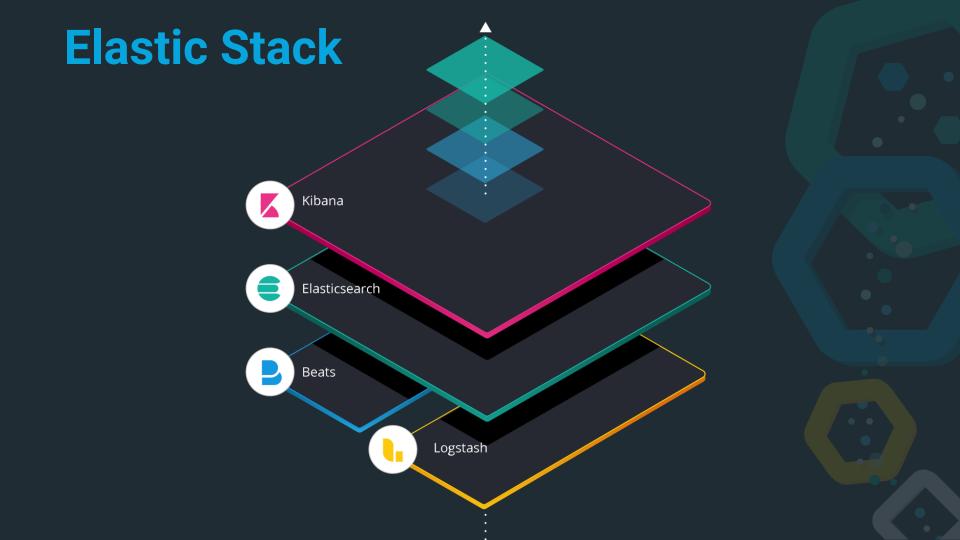
# Elasticsearch

Securing a search engine while maintaining usability

Alexander Reelsen @spinscale alex@elastic.co







### Elasticsearch in 10 seconds

- Search Engine (FTS, Analytics, Geo), near real-time
- 🕾 Distributed, scalable, highly available, resilient
- **SInterface: HTTP & JSON**
- Centrepiece of the Elastic Stack (Kibana, Logstash, Beats, APM, ML, App Search, Enterprise Search)
- Uneducated conservative guess: Tens of thousands of clusters worldwide, hundreds of thousands of instances

## **Agenda**

- Security: Feature or non-functional requirement?
- **Security Manager**
- **Second Production Mode vs. Development Mode**
- **Plugins**
- **Scripting language: Painless**

# Security

Feature or non-functional requirement?





#### Security as a non-functional requirement

- ⊗ Software has to be secure! O RLY?
- ⊕ Defensive programming
- ☼ Do not persist specific data (PCI DSS)
- ⊗ Not exploitable (pro tip: not gonna happen)
- No unintended resource access (directory trave
- Seast privilege principle
- Reduced impact surface (DoS)

Security

#### Dishwasher has directory traversal bug

Thanks a Miele-on for making everything dangerous, Internet of Things firmware slackers

By Richard Chirgwin 26 Mar 2017 at 23:08



Don't say you weren't warned: Miele went full Internet-of-Things with a network-connected dishwasher, gave it a web server, and now finds itself on the wrong end of a security bug report - and it's accused of ignoring the warning.

The utterly predictable vulnerability advisory on the Full Disclosure mailing list details CVE-2017-7240 - aka "Miele Professional PG 8528 -Web Server Directory Traversal." This is the builtin web server that's used to remotely control the glassware-cleaning machine from a browser.

# Security as a feature

- **Authentication**
- **STLS** transport encryption
- **Audit logging**

## Security or safety or resiliency?

- **⊗** Integrity checks
- ⊗ Preventing OOMEs
- Prevent deep pagination
- ☼ Do not expose credentials in cluster state/REST APISs
- ⊗ Stop writing data before running out of disk space
- ⊗ Unable to call System.exit

# **Security Manager**

Have you ever called System.setSecurityManager()?





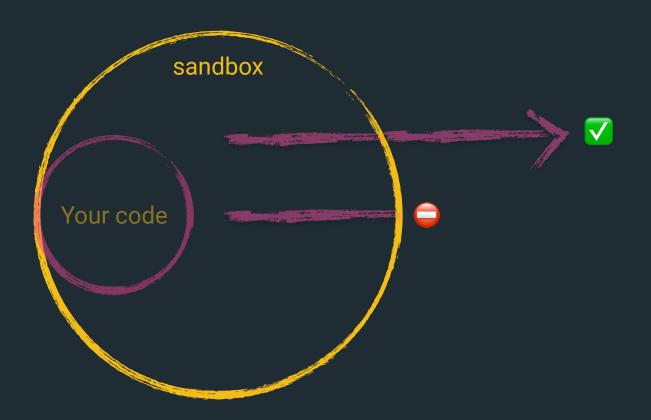
### What is a sandbox?



### What is a sandbox?



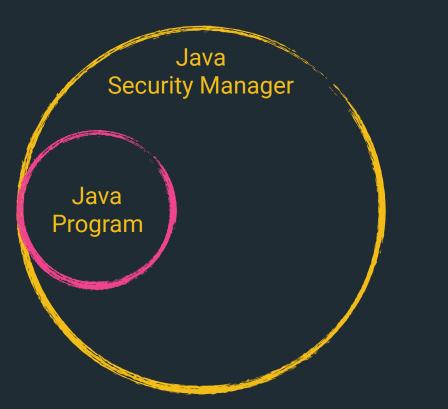
### What is a sandbox?



#### Introduction

- Prevent certain calls by your application
- Policy file grants permissions
  - ⊗ FilePermission (read, write)
  - SocketPermission (connect, listen, accept)
  - ⊗ URLPermission, PropertyPermission, ...

# **Java Security Manager**





# **Java Security Manager**





FilePermission read /etc/elasticsearch

FilePermission write /var/log/elasticsearch

SocketPermission
 connect \*

# **Java Security Manager**





#### Introduction

```
* Tests whether the file or directory denoted by this abstract pathname
* exists.
 * @return <code>true</code> if and only if the file or directory denoted
           by this abstract pathname exists; <code>false</code> otherwise
  @throws SecurityException
           If a security manager exists and its {@link
           java.lang.SecurityManager#checkRead(java.lang.String)}
           method denies read access to the file or directory
public boolean exists() {
   SecurityManager security = System.getSecurityManager();
   if (security != null) {
       security.checkRead(path);
      (isInvalid()) {
        return false;
    return ((fs.getBooleanAttributes( f: this) & FileSystem.BA_EXISTS) != 0);
```

#### Introduction

```
* Throws a <code>SecurityException</code> if the
* calling thread is not allowed to read the file specified by the
 * string argument.
 * >
 * This method calls <code>checkPermission</code> with the
* <code>FilePermission(file, "read") </code> permission.
* If you override this method, then you should make a call to
* <code>super.checkRead</code>
 * at the point the overridden method would normally throw an
 * exception.
              file the system-dependent file name.
 * @param
 * @exception SecurityException if the calling thread does not have
              permission to access the specified file.
 * @exception NullPointerException if the <code>file</code> argument is
              <code>null</code>.
               #checkPermission(java.security.Permission) checkPermission
 * @see
public void checkRead(String file) {
   checkPermission(new FilePermission(file,
        SecurityConstants.FILE READ ACTION));
```



# DEMO



#### **OHAI JLS**

#### 17.5.3. Subsequent Modification of final Fields

In some cases, such as descrialization, the system will need to change the final fields of an object after construction. final fields can be changed via reflection and other implementation-dependent means. The only pattern in which this has reasonable semantics is one in which an object is constructed and then the final fields of the object are updated. The object should not be made visible to other threads, nor should the final fields be read, until all updates to the final fields of the object are complete. Freezes of a final field occur both at the end of the constructor in which the final field is set, and immediately after each modification of a final field via reflection or other special mechanism.

https://docs.oracle.com/javase/specs/jls/se11/html/jls-17.html#jls-17.5.3

#### **Drawbacks**

- Hardcoded policies before startup
- **Objective** DNS lookups are cached forever by default
- ⊗ Forces you to think about dependencies!
- Many libraries are not even tested with the security manager, unknown code paths may be executed
- ⊗ No OOM protection! No stack overflow protection!
- **⊗** Granularity
- ⊗ No protection against java agents

# Reducing impact

**Bad things have less bad results** 



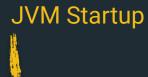


# Reducing impact

- Elasticsearch integration of the Java Security Manager
- Least privilege principle
- ⊗ Do not run as root
- ⊗ No chance of forking a process
- ⊗ Do not expose sensitive settings

## **Security Manager in Elasticsearch**

- Initialization required before starting security manager
- Elasticsearch needs to read its configuration file first to
   find out about the file paths
- Native code needs to be executed first
- Solution: Start with empty security manager, bootstrap, apply secure security manager



Read configuration file



Read configuration file

**IVM Startup** 

Native system calls

Read configuration file

VM Startup

Native system calls

Set security manager

Read configuration file

Native system calls

Set security manager

Load plugins

time

JVM Startup

Read configuration file

Native system calls

Set security manager Load plugins

Bootstrap checks

---

**IVM Startup** 

Read configuration file

Native system calls

Set security manager

Load plugins

**Bootstrap checks** 

Network enabled

time

**IVM Startup** 

Read configuration file

Native system calls

Set security manager

Load plugins

Bootstrap checks

Network enabled



JVM Startup

### **Security Manager in Elasticsearch**

- Special security manager is used
- ☼ Does not set exitVM permissions, only a few special classes are allowed to call
- Thread & ThreadGroup security is enforced
- Also SpecialPermission was added, a special marker permission to prevent elevation by scripts

### **Security Manager in Elasticsearch**

- ESPolicy allows for loading from files plus dynamic configuration (from the ES configuration file)
- Bootstrap check for
   java.security.AllPermission

## #noroot

there is no reason to run code as root!





### Do not run as root

Read configuration file

Native system calls

Set security manage

Load plugina

Bootstrap check

Network enabled



time

#### Do not run as root

```
/** Returns true if user is root, false if not, or if we don't know */
static boolean definitelyRunningAsRoot() {
    if (Constants.WINDOWS) {
        return false; // don't know
    }
    try {
        return JNACLibrary.geteuid() == 0;
    } catch (UnsatisfiedLinkError e) {
        // this will have already been logged by Kernel32Library, no need to repeat it return false;
    }
}
```

```
// check if the user is running as root, and bail
if (Natives.definitelyRunningAsRoot()) {
    throw new RuntimeException("can not run elasticsearch as root");
}
```

## seccomp

... or how I loved to abort system calls





Read configuration file

Native system calls

Set security manage

Load plugins

Bootstrap check

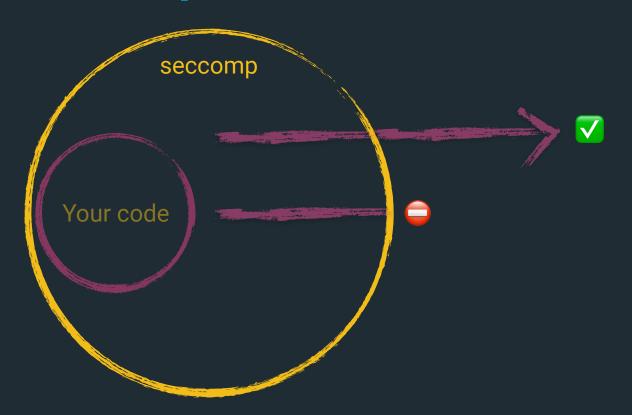
Network enabled

- Security manager could fail
- Elasticsearch should still not be able to fork processes
- One way transition to tell the operating system to deny
  execve, fork, vfork, execveat system calls
- ⊗ Works on Linux, Windows, Solaris, BSD, osx

```
// See <a href="https://www.kernel.org/doc/Documentation/prctl/seccomp filter.txt">https://www.kernel.org/doc/Documentation/prctl/seccomp filter.txt</a> for details.
SockFilter insns[] = {
 /* 1 */ BPF_STMT( code: BPF_LD + BPF_W + BPF_ABS, SECCOMP_DATA_ARCH_OFFSET),
 /* 2 */ BPF JUMP (code: BPF JMP + BPF JEQ + BPF K,
                                                           arch.audit,
                                                                            jt: 0, jf: 7),
 /* 3 */ BPF_STMT(code: BPF_LD + BPF_W + BPF_ABS, SECCOMP_DATA_NR_OFFSET),
 /* 4 */ BPF_JUMP(code: BPF_JMP + BPF_JGT + BPF_K,
                                                          arch.limit,
                                                                            jt: 5, jf: 0),
 /* 5 */ BPF_JUMP(code: BPF_JMP + BPF_JEQ + BPF_K, /
                                                          arch.fork,
                                                                            jt: 4, jf: 0),
                                                                            (jt: 3, jf: 0),
                                                                                                          // if (syscall == VFORK) goto fail;
 /* 6 */ BPF_JUMP(code: BPF_JMP + BPF_JEQ + BPF_K,
                                                          arch.vfork,
       */ BPF JUMP( code: BPF JMP + BPF JEQ + BPF K,
                                                           arch.execve,
                                                                            jt: 2, jf: 0),
                                                                                                          // if (syscall == EXECVE) goto fail;
                                                          arch.execveat,
                                                                           /jt: 1, jf: 0),
                                                                                                          // if (syscall == EXECVEAT) goto fail;
 /* 8 */ BPF_JUMP(code: BPF_JMP + BPF_JEQ + BPF_K,
 /* 9 */ BPF STMT(code: BPF RET + BPF K, SECCOMP RET ALLOW),
 /* 10 */ BPF_STMT(code: BPF_RET + BPF_K, k: SECCOMP_RET_ERRNO | (EACCES & SECCOMP_RET_DATA)), // fail: return EACCES;
```

```
SockFProg prog = new SockFProg(insns);
prog.write();
long pointer = Pointer.nativeValue(prog.getPointer());
int method = 1;
// first try it with seccomp(SECCOMP_SET_MODE_FILTER), falling back to prctl()
if ((linux_syscall(arch.seccomp,)SECCOMP_SET_MODE_FILTER, SECCOMP_FILTER_FLAG_TSYNC, new NativeLong(pointer)) != 0) {
    method = 0;
    int errno1 = Native.getLastError();
    if (logger.isDebugEnabled()) {
        logger.debug( message: "seccomp(SECCOMP_SET_MODE_FILTER): {}, falling back to prctl(PR_SET_SECCOMP)...",
                     JNACLibrary.strerror(errno1));
    if (linux_prctl(PR_SET_SECCOMP) SECCOMP_MODE_FILTER, pointer, arg4: 0, arg5: 0) != 0) {
        int errno2 = Native.getLastError();
        throw new UnsupportedOperationException("seccomp(SECCOMP_SET_MODE_FILTER): " + JNACLibrary.strerror(errno1) +
                                                ", prctl(PR_SET_SECCOMP): " + JNACLibrary.strerror(errno2));
if (linux_prctl(PR_GET_SECCOMP,) arg2: 0, arg3: 0, arg4: 0, arg5: 0) != 2) {
    throw new UnsupportedOperationException("seccomp filter installation did not really succeed. seccomp(PR_GET_SECCOMP): "
                                            + JNACLibrary.strerror(Native.getLastError()));
```

## seccomp sandbox





# DEMO



## Production mode vs Development mode

Annoying you now instead of devastating you later





Read configuration file

Native system calls

Set security manage

Load plugins

Bootstrap checks

Network enabled



time

#### Is your dev setup equivalent to production?

- Development environments are rarely setup like production ones
- How to ensure certain preconditions in production but not for development?
- ⊗ What is a good indicator?

#### **Mode check**

```
// the list of checks to execute
static List<BootstrapCheck> checks() {
    final List<BootstrapCheck> checks = new ArrayList<>();
    checks.add(new HeapSizeCheck());
    final FileDescriptorCheck fileDescriptorCheck
       = Constants.MAC_OS_X ? new OsXFileDescriptorCheck()
    checks.add(fileDescriptorCheck);
    checks.add(new MlockallCheck());
    if (Constants.LINUX) {
        checks.add(new MaxNumberOfThreadsCheck());
      (Constants.LINUX || Constants.MAC_OS_X) {
        checks.add(new MaxSizeVirtualMemoryCheck());
      (Constants.LINUX || Constants.MAC_OS_X) {
        checks.add(new MaxFileSizeCheck());
```

```
checks.add(new ClientJvmCheck());
checks.add(new UseSerialGCCheck());
checks.add(new SystemCallFilterCheck());
checks.add(new OnErrorCheck());
checks.add(new OnOutOfMemoryErrorCheck());
checks.add(new EarlyAccessCheck());
checks.add(new G1GCCheck());
checks.add(new AllPermissionCheck());
return Collections.unmodifiableList(checks);
```

```
static class FileDescriptorCheck implements BootstrapCheck {
   private final int limit;
   FileDescriptorCheck() {(this(limit: 65535);
   protected FileDescriptorCheck(final int limit) {
       if (limit <= 0) {</pre>
            throw new IllegalArgumentException("limit must be positive but was [" + limit + "]");
        this.limit = limit;
   public final BootstrapCheckResult check(BootstrapContext context) {
        final long maxFileDescriptorCount = getMaxFileDescriptorCount();
        if (maxFileDescriptorCount != -1 && maxFileDescriptorCount < limit)</pre>
            final String message = String.format(
                    Locale.ROOT,
                    format: "max file descriptors [%d] for elasticsearch process is too low, increase to at least [%d]",
                    getMaxFileDescriptorCount(),
                    limit);
            return BootstrapCheckResult.failure(message);
        } else {
            return BootstrapCheckResult.success();
    long getMaxFileDescriptorCount() { return ProcessProbe.getInstance().getMaxFileDescriptorCount(); }
```

```
static class G1GCCheck implements BootstrapCheck {
    @Override
    public BootstrapCheckResult check(BootstrapContext context) {
        if ("Oracle Corporation".equals(jvmVendor()) && isJava8() && isG1GCEnabled()) {
            final String jvmVersion = jvmVersion();
            final Pattern pattern = Pattern.compile("(\\d+)\\.(\\d+)-b\\d+");
            final Matcher matcher = pattern.matcher(jvmVersion);
            final boolean matches = matcher.matches();
            assert matches : jvmVersion;
            final int major = Integer.parseInt(matcher.group(1));
            final int update = Integer.parseInt(matcher.group(2));
            if((major == 25 \&\& update < 40)){
                final String message = String.format(
                        Locale.ROOT,
                         format: "JVM version [%s] can cause data corruption when used with G1GC; upgrade to at least Java 8u40", jvmVersion);
                return BootstrapCheckResult.failure(message);
        return BootstrapCheckResult.success();
```

# Plugins

... remaining secure





Read configuration file

Native system calls

Set security manager

Load plugins

Bootstrap check

Network enabled

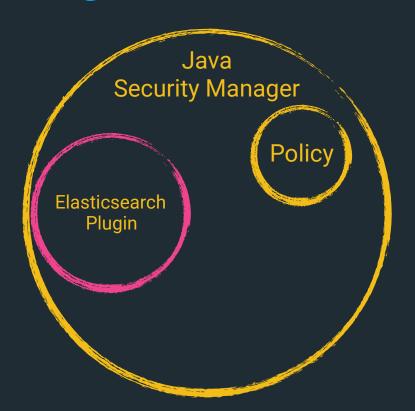


time

### Plugins in 60 seconds

- plugins are just zip files
- each plugin can have its own jars/dependencies
- each plugin is loaded with its own classloader
- each plugin can have its own security permissions
- SES core loads a bunch of code as modules (plugins that ship with Elasticsearch)

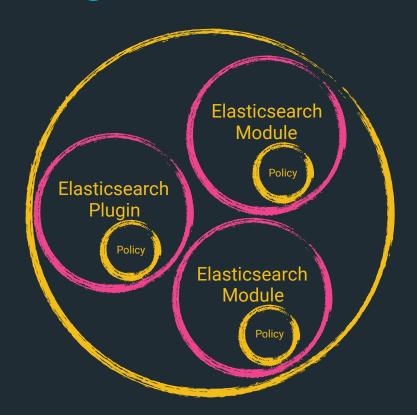
## Plugins & modules



## Plugins & modules



## Plugins & modules



## Sample permissions

```
grant {
   // needed to do crazy reflection
   permission java.lang.RuntimePermission "accessDeclaredMembers";
};
```

## Sample permissions

```
grant {
    // needed to generate runtime classes
    permission java.lang.RuntimePermission "createClassLoader";

    // expression runtime
    permission org.elasticsearch.script.ClassPermission "java.lang.String";
    permission org.elasticsearch.script.ClassPermission "org.apache.lucene.expressions.Expression";
    permission org.elasticsearch.script.ClassPermission "org.apache.lucene.search.DoubleValues";
    // available functions
    permission org.elasticsearch.script.ClassPermission "java.lang.Math";
    permission org.elasticsearch.script.ClassPermission "org.apache.lucene.util.MathUtil";
    permission org.elasticsearch.script.ClassPermission "org.apache.lucene.util.SloppyMath";
}:
```

## Sample permissions

```
grant codeBase "${codebase.netty-common}" {
    // for reading the system-wide configuration for the backlog of established sockets
    permission java.io.FilePermission "/proc/sys/net/core/somaxconn", "read";

    // netty makes and accepts socket connections
    permission java.net.SocketPermission "*", "accept,connect";
};

grant codeBase "${codebase.netty-transport}" {
    // Netty NioEventLoop wants to change this, because of https://bugs.openjdk.java.net/browse/JDK-6427854
    // the bug says it only happened rarely, and that its fixed, but apparently it still happens rarely!
    permission java.util.PropertyPermission "sun.nio.ch.bugLevel", "write";
}.
```

## **Introducing Painless**

A scripting language for Elasticsearch





### **Scripting: Why and how?**

Expression evaluation without needing to write java extensions for Elasticsearch

- **⊗** Node ingest script processor
- Search queries (dynamic requests & fields)
- Aggregations (dynamic buckets)
- ⊗ Templating (Mustache)

### **Scripting in Elasticsearch**

- **⇔ MVEL**
- **Groovy**
- **Expressions**
- **Painless**

### Painless - a secure scripting language

- Shard to take an existing programming language and make it secure, but remain fast
- **Sandboxing**
- Whitelisting over blacklisting, per method
- ⊗ Opt-in to regular expressions
- Prevent endless loops
- Detect self references to prevent stack overflows



# DEMO



# Summary

**Security is hard - let's go shopping!** 





### Summary

- ⊗ Not using the Security Manager what's your excuse?
- Scripting is important, is your implementation secure?
- S If you allow for plugins, remain secure!
- If you remove features, have alternatives!

### **Summary**

- Development has big impact on security
- ⊗ Operations is happy to help what is there out of the box
- ⊗ Developers know their application best!
- ⊗ Don't reinvent, check out existing features!
- Developers are responsible for writing secure code! Before something happens!

# Thanks for listening!

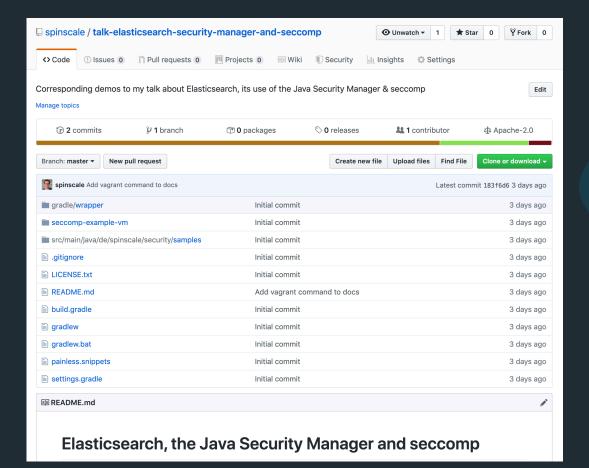
**Questions?** 

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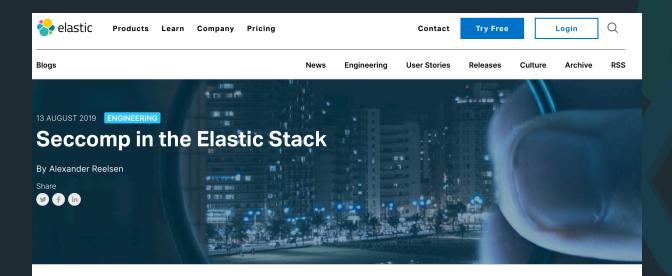




#### Resources



#### Resources



After giving a presentation about what is done in **Elasticsearch to improve out-of-the-box security, safety and usability** and engaging in a couple of follow-up discussions at different events, I decided to dig a little bit deeper into the topic of Linux's seccomp.

#### What is seccomp?

The idea of seccomp is to prevent the execution of certain system calls by a given application.

Why is this kind of security feature needed? Imagine someone finds a way to execute code within your application, which also implies they have the same user rights through which the application was started. Common use cases for this are web applications, where malicious attackers find a way to execute arbitrary commands — often due to invalid validation of input arguments. These attacks are categorized as remote

#### Creating Kibana Dashboards



Watch our demo on customizing and optimizing your visualizations.

#### Resources

- https://github.com/elastic/elasticsearch/
- https://www.elastic.co/blog/bootstrap\_checks\_annoying\_instead\_of\_devastating
- https://www.elastic.co/blog/scripting
- https://www.elastic.co/blog/scripting-security
- https://docs.oracle.com/javase/9/security/toc.htm
- https://docs.oracle.com/javase/9/security/permissions-java-development-kit.htm
- https://www.elastic.co/blog/seccomp-in-the-elastic-stack
- https://github.com/spinscale/talk-elasticsearch-security-manager-and-seccomp

# Bonus

register all your settings





### Mark sensitive settings

```
private static final Setting.AffixSetting<SecureString> SETTING_URL_SECURE =
    Setting.affixKeySetting( prefix: "xpack.notification.slack.account.", suffix: "secure_url",
    (key) -> SecureSetting.secureString(key, fallback: null));
```

#### Register all your settings

stacks/7.1.1/elasticsearch-7.1.1 bin/elasticsearch -Ecluster.namr=my-cluster



```
[2019-06-21T10:42:56,943][WARN ][o.e.b.ElasticsearchUncaughtExceptionHandler] [rhincodon] uncaught exception in thread [main]
org.elasticsearch.bootstrap.StartupException: java.lang.IllegalArgumentException: unknown setting [cluster.namr] did you mean [cluster.name]?
at org.elasticsearch.bootstrap.Elasticsearch.init(Elasticsearch.java:163) ~[elasticsearch-7.1.1.jar:7.1.1]
at org.elasticsearch.cli.EnvironmentAwareCommand.execute(EnvironmentAwareCommand.java:86) ~[elasticsearch-7.1.1.jar:7.1.1]
```



unknown setting [cluster.namr] did you mean [cluster.name]?

## Bonus

deep pagination vs search\_after





## **Pagination: Request**



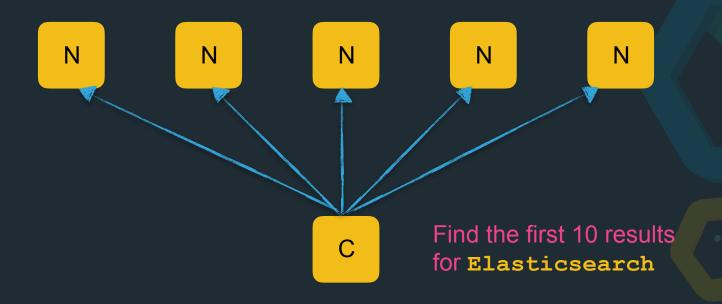
Find the first 10 results for Elasticsearch

## **Pagination: Request**

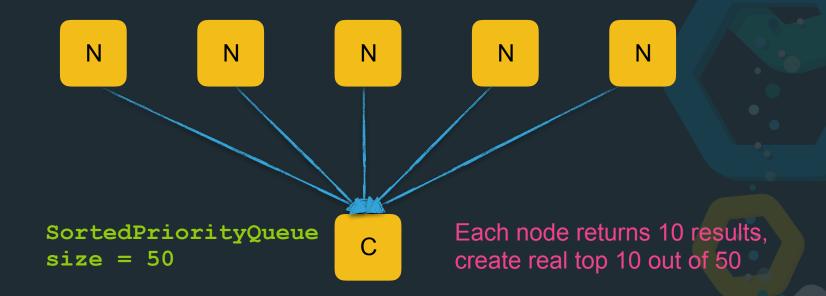


Find the first 10 results for Elasticsearch

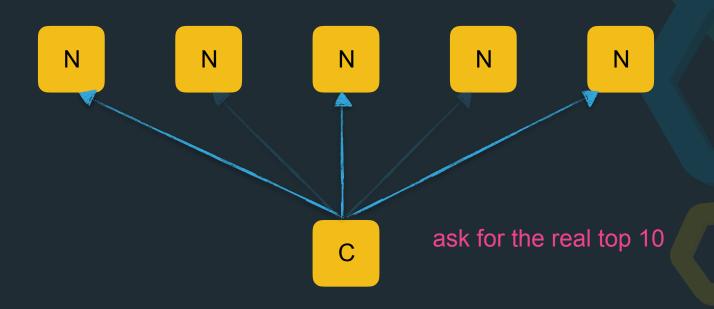
### **Pagination: Request**



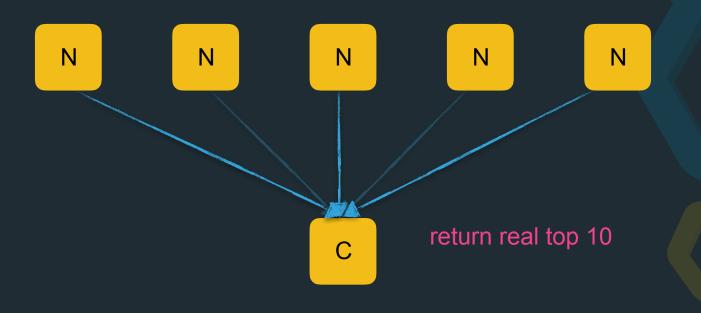
#### **Pagination: Query Phase**



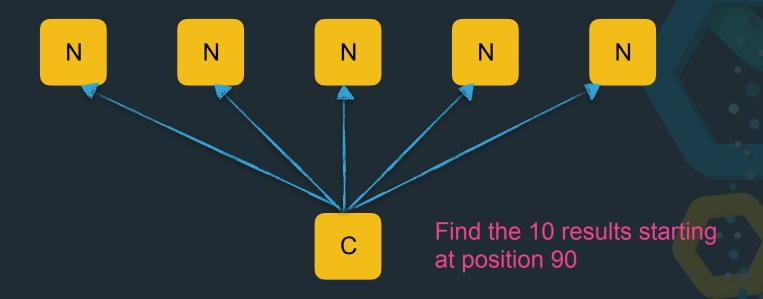
#### **Pagination: Fetch phase**



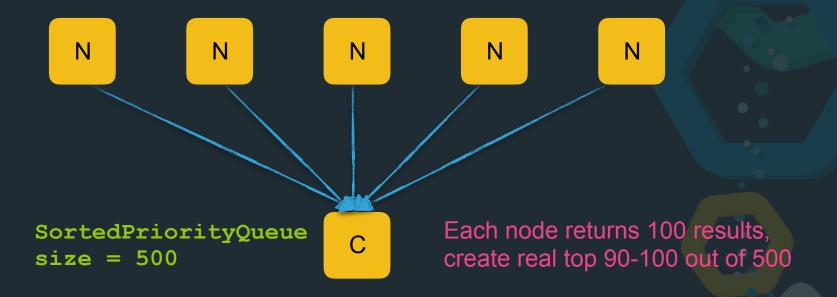
### **Pagination: Query Phase**



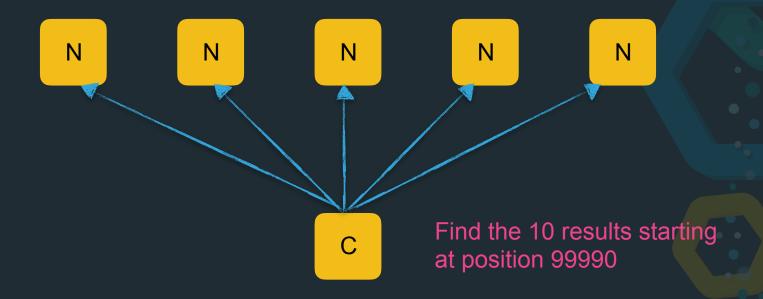
## **Pagination: Query**



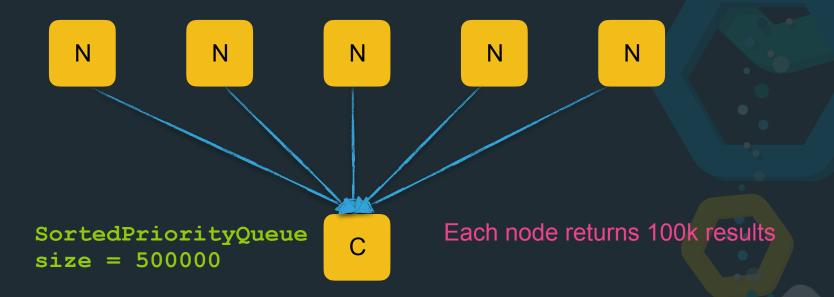
#### **Pagination: Query Phase**



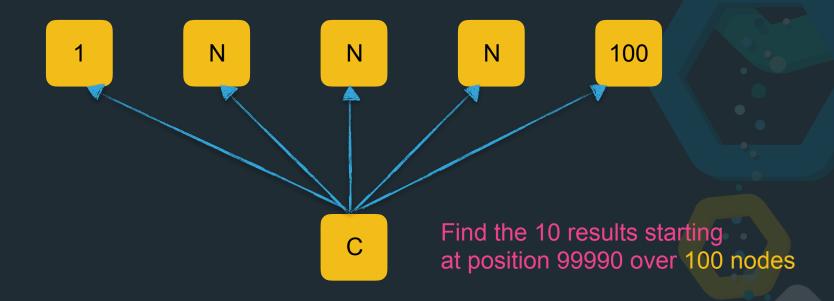
### **Pagination: Query**



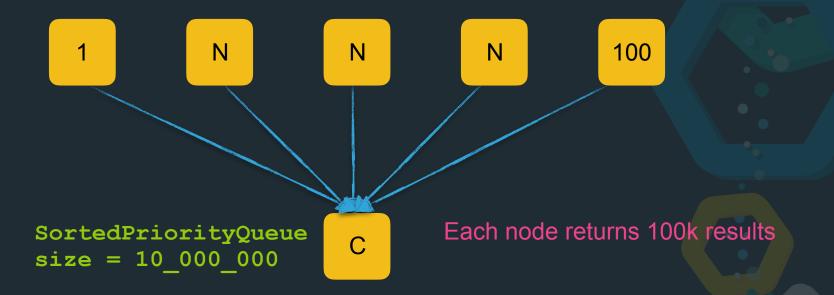
#### **Pagination: Query Phase**



### **Pagination: Query**



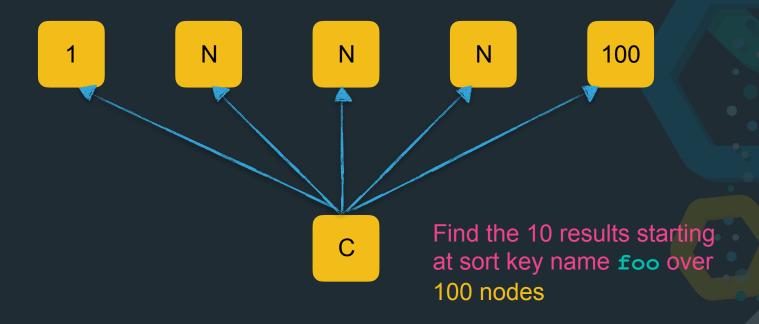
### **Pagination: Query**



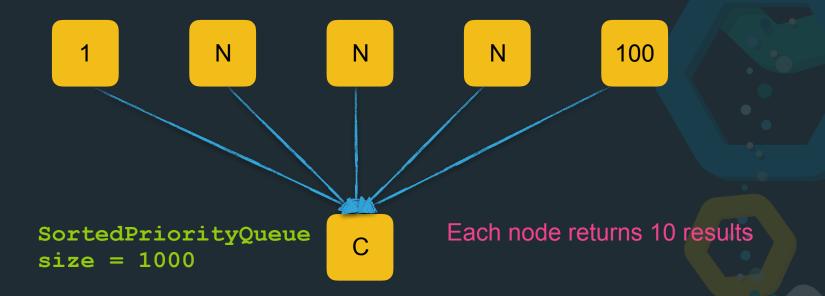
#### Solution: search\_after

- ☼ Do not use numerical positions
- ⊕ Use keys where you stopped in the inverted index
- Set the client tell you what the last key was
- Sust specify the last sort value from the last document returned as a starting point

#### Pagination: search\_after



#### Pagination: search\_after



## Bonus

replacing delete by query





#### delete\_by\_query removal/replace

- API endpoint was removed
- extensive documentation was added what to do instead
- infrastructure for long running background tasks was added
- delete\_by\_query was reintroduced using above infra and doing the exact same thing as in the documentation
- ⇔ data > convenience!

# Thanks for listening!

**Questions?** 

Alexander Reelsen @spinscale alex@elastic.co



