



Purpose

This document describes how to setup encryption between Nagios Log Server and syslog on Linux using self signed certificates.

Target Audience

This document is intended for use by Nagios Log Server Administrators who would like encryption between NLS and their Linux clients running syslog. Encryption ensures that the traffic between the Linux machine and Nagios Log Server is not sent in plain text.

Overview

This documentation is broken up into the following sections:

- Create Certificates on the Nagios Log Server
 - Create a Certificate Authority (CA)
 - Create a certificate for the Nagios Log Server
- Copy New Certificates
- Create Firewall Rule
- Create Input in Nagios Log Server using the certificates
- Create Filter in Nagios Log Server to break the syslog data into fields
- Configure syslog to use the CA certificate

Prerequisites

It is assumed that you already have syslog installed on your Linux machine, the installation steps are available in Nagios Log Server by clicking **+ Add Log Source** on the navigation bar and selecting **Linux**. The following documentation is available as well:

[Monitoring A New Log Source](#)

Terminology

For your information:

- SSL = Secure Sockets Layer
- TLS = Transport Layer Security

TLS replaces SSL, however the tools used to implement both generally use SSL in their name/directives. For simplicity reasons, the rest of this document will use the term SSL.

The steps in this documentation will create a CA and that CA will sign a certificate. This allows the client to trust that the CA certificate used by the destination is valid.

Global Config vs Per Instance

This documentation walks you through creating certificate files that will be used in the Logstash Input that is created.

If you define this Input in the **Global Config**, you will be required to place the certificate files on **ALL** of your Nagios Log Server instances. If you do not, the configuration will **NOT** be applied on the instances that do not have the certificate files. This means that the input configuration will never be updated on these instances.

If you do not wish to implement the certificates on each Nagios Log Server instance, you will need to create the Input as a **Per Instance** config for the instance that has the certificate files (this will be explained later).

Installing Necessary Components

Establish a terminal session to your Nagios Log Server and as root and execute the following command:

RHEL | CentOS | Oracle Linux

```
yum install -y mod_ssl openssl
```

Nagios Log Server **Sending syslog With SSL/TLS**

Debian | Ubuntu

```
apt-get install -y openssl
```

All of the remaining steps will be performed from within the root user's home directory to ensure the files you create are not accessible to anyone except the root user. Change into the home directory with this command:

```
cd ~
```

You will continue to use this terminal session throughout this documentation.

Create Certificate Authority

First step is to generate the private key file, execute the following command:

```
openssl genrsa -out syslog-ca.key 2048
```

That would have generated some random text. Next you will generate a request and sign the key:

```
openssl req -x509 -new -nodes -key syslog-ca.key -sha256 -days 1024 -out syslog-ca.pem
```

You will need to supply some values, some can be left blank, the following is an example:

```
Country Name (2 letter code) [XX]:AU
State or Province Name (full name) []:NSW
Locality Name (eg, city) [Default City]:Sydney
Organization Name (eg, company) [Default Company Ltd]:My Company Pty Ltd
Organizational Unit Name (eg, section) []:
Common Name (eg, your name or your server's hostname) []:syslog-ca
Email Address []:
```

Nagios Log Server **Sending syslog With SSL/TLS**

As you can see above, I did not supply an Organizational Unit Name or email address.

Create Nagios Log Server Certificate

Now you need to create a certificate for your Nagios Log Server instance(s). Execute the following command:

```
openssl genrsa -out syslog-nls.key 2048
```

That would have generated some random text. Next you will generate a request:

```
openssl req -new -key syslog-nls.key -out syslog-nls.csr
```

You will need to supply some values, some can be left blank, the following is an example:

```
Country Name (2 letter code) [XX]:AU
State or Province Name (full name) []:NSW
Locality Name (eg, city) [Default City]:Sydney
Organization Name (eg, company) [Default Company Ltd]:My Company Pty Ltd
Organizational Unit Name (eg, section) []:
Common Name (eg, your name or your server's hostname) []:syslog-nls
Email Address []:
```

```
Please enter the following 'extra' attributes
to be sent with your certificate request
```

```
A challenge password []:
```

```
An optional company name []:
```

As you can see above, I did not supply an Organizational Unit Name, email address, password or optional company name. Specifically, providing a password is not necessary.

Nagios Log Server Sending syslog With SSL/TLS

One more command is required to sign the key, execute the following command (*the following is one long command that has wrapped over two lines*):

```
openssl x509 -req -in syslog-nls.csr -CA syslog-ca.pem -CAkey syslog-ca.key  
-CAcreateserial -out syslog-nls.crt -days 500 -sha256
```

Which should produce output saying the Signature was OK and it was Getting Private Key.

Copy New Certificates

Use the following commands to copy the new certificates to the correct locations:

CentOS/RHEL

```
cp syslog-ca.key /etc/pki/tls/private/  
cp syslog-nls.key /etc/pki/tls/private/  
cp syslog-ca.pem /etc/pki/tls/certs/  
cp syslog-nls.crt /etc/pki/tls/certs/
```

Ubuntu/Debian

```
cp syslog-ca.key /etc/ssl/private  
cp syslog-nls.key /etc/ssl/private  
cp syslog-ca.pem /etc/ssl/certs  
cp syslog-nls.crt /etc/ssl/certs
```

If you plan on creating the Input as part of the Global Config, you will need to copy these certificate files to all the instances in your Nagios Log Server cluster. Please refer to the [Global Config vs Per Instance](#) section of this document for more information.

Create Firewall Rule

You need to create a firewall rule to allow the incoming TCP traffic. In your terminal session execute the

Nagios Log Server Sending syslog With SSL/TLS

following commands (depending on your operating system version):

RHEL | CentOS | CentOS Stream | Oracle Linux

```
firewall-cmd --zone=public --add-port=7778/tcp
firewall-cmd --zone=public --add-port=7778/tcp --permanent
```

Debian:

The local firewall is not enabled on Debian by default and no steps are required here. **IF** it is enabled then the commands are:

```
iptables -I INPUT -p tcp --destination-port 7778 -j ACCEPT
```

Ubuntu:

The local firewall is not enabled on Ubuntu by default and no steps are required here. **IF** it is enabled then the commands are:

```
sudo ufw allow 7778/tcp
sudo ufw reload
```

If you plan on creating the Input as part of the Global Config, you will need to create this firewall rule on all the instances in your Nagios Log Server cluster.

Create Input

NOTE: The examples below use the certificate locations related to CentOS/RHEL systems. If you are working on a Ubuntu/Debian systems, see the [Copy New Certificate](#) section and replace with applicable locations in the commands.

This creates an Input that uses the certificates you have created and will be listening on TCP port 7778. Login to one of your Nagios Log Server instances as an Admin user Click **Configure** on the navigation bar.

The screenshot shows the Nagios Log Server web interface. The top navigation bar includes 'Home', 'Dashboards', 'Alerting', 'Configure' (circled), 'Help', and 'Admin'. A search bar for logs is on the right. The left sidebar has a 'Configure' section with options: 'Apply Configuration', 'Config Snapshots', and 'Add Log Source'. Below this, there are two main categories: 'Global (All Instances)' with a 'Global Config' option, and 'Per Instance (Advanced)' with three instance options: 'nls-c6x-x86' (checked), 'nls-r6x-x64', and 'nls-r6x-x86'. The main content area is titled 'Configuration Editor' and contains a text box stating: 'Logstash is currently collecting locally on: 10.25.5.85 tcp: 2056, 5544, 2057, 3515 udp: 5544'.

Select one of these options:

- For a Global Config
 - In the left pane under **Global (All Instances)** click **Global Config**
- For a Per Instance Config
 - In the left pane under **Per Instance (Advanced)** click the **Log Server Instance** which has the certificate files you created.

Nagios Log Server Sending syslog With SSL/TLS

The remaining steps are common to either option.

On the right side of the screen there click the **+ Add** **Input** button and select **Custom**.

A new block appears at the bottom of the Inputs table.

Type a unique **name** for the input which will be **Syslog** (**SSL/TLS**). In the text area field enter the following code (you can copy and paste):

The screenshot shows the 'Inputs' section of the Nagios Log Server interface. At the top right, there is a '+ Add Input' button. Below it, a 'Custom' button is circled in red. The main area shows a table of inputs. The first input is 'Syslog (Default)' with a green 'Active' status and a pencil icon. Below it, a new input 'Syslog (SSL/TLS)' is shown, also with a green 'Active' status and a pencil icon. The configuration code for this input is displayed in a text area:

```

ssl_extra_chain_certs => ['/etc/pki/tls/certs/syslog-ca.pem']
ssl_cert => '/etc/pki/tls/certs/syslog-nls.crt'
ssl_key => '/etc/pki/tls/private/syslog-nls.key'
ssl_enable => true
ssl_verify => false
}

```

```

tcp {
    port => 7778
    type => 'syslog_tls'
    ssl_extra_chain_certs => ['/etc/pki/tls/certs/syslog-ca.pem']
    ssl_cert => '/etc/pki/tls/certs/syslog-nls.crt'
    ssl_key => '/etc/pki/tls/private/syslog-nls.key'
    ssl_enable => true
    ssl_verify => false
}

```

If you have an version of Nagios Log Server before 1.5.0 then the `ssl_extra_chain_certs` line needs to be `ssl_cacert` instead, as per:

```

ssl_cacert => '/etc/pki/tls/certs/syslog-ca.pem'

```

The `ssl_extra_chain_certs` option is an array which allows for multiple CA certs, this allows you to have a chain of CA certificates.

Click the **Save** button to create this input.

Create Filter

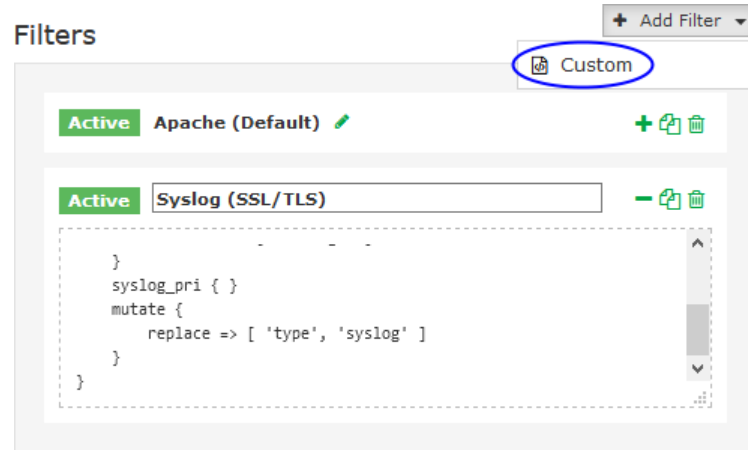
This creates a Filter that breaks the incoming syslog data into fields. While still on the Configure screen, on the right side of the page click the **+ Add Filter** button and select **Custom**.

A new block appears at the bottom of the Filters table.

Type a unique **name** for the filter which will be **Syslog (SSL/TLS)**. In the text area field enter the following code (you can copy and paste):

```
if [type] == 'syslog_tls' {
    grok {
        match => { "message" => "<{%POSINT:priority}>%
{SYSLOGTIMESTAMP:timestamp} {%SYSLOGHOST:hostname} {%DATA:program} (?:\[%
{POSINT:pid}\])?: {%GREEDYDATA:message}" }
        overwrite => [ 'message' ]
    }
    syslog_pri { }
    mutate {
        replace => [ 'type', 'syslog' ]
    }
}
```

Filters



NOTE: The **match =>** line and the two consecutive lines are one long line, it is wrapped over multiple lines in this documentation due to it being long (be careful with a copy and paste as it may be brought across as three separate lines).

Click the **Save** button to create this filter.

Verify And Apply Configuration

At this point you should click the **Verify** button to ensure the filter you just created is valid. Once the verify is successful you need to apply the configuration. In the left pane under **Configure** click **Apply Configuration**. Click the **Apply** button and then click **Yes, Apply Now** when prompted.

Configuring syslog On Linux

You will need to install the TLS module for rsyslog on your client machine. In this example the client machine is CentOS 7 and the command to install these are:

```
yum install -y rsyslog-gnutls
```

Next the CA certificate needs to be copied to your Linux machine:

```
/root/syslog-ca.pem  
copied to  
/etc/pki/tls/certs/syslog-ca.pem
```

You could do this using the `scp` command, for example (executed on your Nagios Log Server):

```
scp /root/syslog-ca.pem root@client_address:/etc/pki/tls/certs/syslog-ca.pem
```

Keep in mind the `scp` command requires that **openssh-clients** is installed on both the source and destination machine.

Once you've done this, edit the `/etc/rsyslog.d/99-nagioslogserver.conf` file in `vi` with the following command:

```
vi /etc/rsyslog.d/99-nagioslogserver.conf
```

Nagios Log Server **Sending syslog With SSL/TLS**

When using the vi editor, to make changes press *i* on the keyboard first to enter insert mode. Press *Esc* to exit insert mode.

Several lines need to be added to the beginning of the configuration and the port on the remote host line needs to be changed to 7778. Here is an example, the additions / changes are bolded:

```
### Begin forwarding rule for Nagios Log Server
$DefaultNetstreamDriver gtls
$ActionSendStreamDriverMode 1
$ActionSendStreamDriverAuthMode x509/certvalid
$DefaultNetstreamDriverCAFile /etc/pki/tls/certs/syslog-ca.pem
$WorkDirectory /var/lib/rsyslog
$ActionQueueFileName nlsFwdRule0
$ActionQueueHighWaterMark 8000
$ActionQueueLowWaterMark 2000
$ActionQueueMaxDiskSpace 1g
$ActionQueueSaveOnShutdown on
$ActionQueueType LinkedList
$ActionResumeRetryCount -1
# Remote host is: name/ip:port, e.g. 192.168.0.1:514, port optional
*. * @@nagios_log_server_address:7778
### End of Nagios Log Server forwarding rule
```

When you have finished, save the changes in vi by typing:

```
:wq
```

and press Enter.

Nagios Log Server Sending syslog With SSL/TLS

Now you need to restart the syslog service on the Linux machine. On CentOS 7 this is accomplished by executing:

```
systemctl restart rsyslog
```

Verify Incoming Logs

To confirm that Nagios Log Server is receiving data from the Linux server navigate to the **Dashboards** page. Perform a **Query** on the host field using the **IP Address** of your **Linux** host:

```
host:<Linux Host Address>
```

Here is an example that show the received logs appearing in the ALL EVENTS panel.

QUERY ▾

● host:10.25.13.37 Q +

FILTERING ▾

⚙️ ▾ GRAPH

ALL EVENTS

Fields ⌵

All (49) / Current (25)

Type to filter...

- @timestamp
- @version
- _id
- _index
- _type
- highlight
- host
- hostname
- message

0 to 50 of 250 available for paging →

@timestamp >	< host >	< type >	< message >	Actions
2018-10-02T13:04:25.619+10:00	10.25.13.37	syslog	Started System Logging Service.	Q ▾
2018-10-02T13:04:25.619+10:00	10.25.13.37	syslog	Unregistered Authentication Agent for unix-process:2959:449714537 (system bus name :1.2552, object path /org/freedesktop/PolicyKit1/AuthenticationAgent, locale en_US.UTF-8) (disconnected from bus)	Q ▾
2018-10-02T13:04:25.619+10:00	10.25.13.37	syslog	[origin software="rsyslogd" swVersion="8.24.0" x-pid="2966" x-info="http://www.rsyslog.com"]; start	Q ▾
2018-10-02T13:04:25.619+10:00	10.25.13.37	syslog	Starting System Logging Service...	Q ▾

📄 Export as CSV ⓘ ⚙️ + ×

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Page 12 / 15
Updated – March, 2023

Additional Information

If you would like to verify that traffic is encrypted, you can verify this by using `tcpdump`. First you must have `tcpdump` installed on your Nagios Log Server which can be done with this command:

RHEL | CentOS | Oracle Linux

```
yum install -y tcpdump
```

Debian | Ubuntu

```
apt-get install -y tcpdump
```

Once installed execute the following command to observe the traffic:

```
tcpdump -i eth0 -nnvXSs 0 host 10.25.13.37
```

In that command, `eth0` is the network interface on the Nagios Log Server and `10.25.13.37` is the IP address of the Linux machine.

Here is example output **before** implementing SSL/TLS.

```
13:22:42.122028 IP (tos 0x0, ttl 64, id 24258, offset 0, flags [DF], proto TCP
(6), length 800)
    10.25.13.37.40086 > 10.25.5.84.5544: Flags [P.], cksum 0x987e (correct), seq
2705226557:2705227305, ack 2060624355, win 229, options [nop,nop,TS val
202974717 ecr 428191577], length 748
    0x0000:  4500 0320 5ec2 4000 4006 b26b 0a19 0d25  E...^.@..k...%
    0x0010:  0a19 0554 9c96 15a8 a13e 7b3d 7ad2 a1e3  ...T.....>{=z...
    0x0020:  8018 00e5 987e 0000 0101 080a 0c19 25fd  .....~.....%.
```

```

0x0030:  1985 af59 3c33 303e 4f63 7420 2032 2031  ...Y<30>Oct..2.1
0x0040:  333a 3232 3a34 3220 6365 6e74 6f73 3139  3:22:42.centos19
0x0050:  2073 7973 7465 6d64 3a20 5374 6f70 7069  .systemd:..Stoppi
0x0060:  6e67 2053 7973 7465 6d20 4c6f 6767 696e  ng.System.Loggin

```

You can see in the right hand side the plain text such as ".systemd:..Stopping.System.Loggin."

Here is example output **after** implementing SSL/TLS.

```

13:20:45.359313 IP (tos 0x0, ttl 64, id 50753, offset 0, flags [DF], proto TCP
(6), length 1312)
    10.25.5.84.7778 > 10.25.13.37.60328: Flags [P.], cksum 0x2bbd (incorrect ->
0xe766), seq 3447726428:3447727688, ack 1805938821, win 122, options [nop,nop,TS
val 428074815 ecr 202857919], length 1260
    0x0000:  4500 0520 c641 4000 4006 48ec 0a19 0554  E....A@.@.H....T
    0x0010:  0a19 0d25 1e62 eba8 cd80 215c 6ba4 7085  ...%.b....!\k.p.
    0x0020:  8018 007a 2bbd 0000 0101 080a 1983 e73f  ...z+.....?
    0x0030:  0c17 5dbf 1603 0304 e702 0000 4d03 035b  ..].....M..[
    0x0040:  b2e4 0d91 32b7 b042 7d58 5d39 1a18 1ab8  ....2..B}X]9....
    0x0050:  b6e2 223d 0093 9e69 fe26 2bd0 f606 3b20  .."=...i.&+...;.
    0x0060:  5bb2 e40d 830e e57c b620 6ffb 805d 20b4  [...|..o..]..
    0x0070:  6dc5 956b 1245 e955 d014 a8a2 dada fef1  m..k.E.U.....
    0x0080:  c013 0000 05ff 0100 0100 0b00 0341 0003  .....A..
    0x0090:  3e00 033b 3082 0337 3082 021f 0209 00d0  >..;0..70.....
    0x00a0:  3c8a 52cc a810 b530 0d06 092a 8648 86f7  <.R....0...*.H..

```

You can see in the right hand side the data in encrypted and cannot be understood.

Finishing Up

This completes the documentation on how to send encrypted syslogs with SSL/TLS to Nagios Log Server. If you have additional questions or other support related questions, please visit us at our Nagios Support Forums:

<https://support.nagios.com/forum>

The Nagios Support Knowledgebase is also a great support resource:

<https://support.nagios.com/kb>