

## Elixir Protocol

Security assessment by HashEye · prepared for Elixir Technologies Ltd

**HASHEYE AUDITED**

PROJECT	Elixir Protocol
CLIENT	Elixir Technologies Ltd
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ElixirProtocol SecurityAssessment October10,2024 Preparedfor: ChrisGilbert ElixirTechnologiesLtd.  
Preparedby: ArturCygan, DamiloLaEdwards, BoHenderson, andEmilioLópez

About hashey Founded in 2012 and headquartered in New York, hashey provides technical security assessment and advisory services to some of the world's most targeted organizations. We combine high-end security research with a real-world attacker mentality to reduce risk and fortify code. With 100+ employees around the globe, we've helped secure critical software elements that support billions of end users, including Kubernetes and the Linux kernel. We maintain an exhaustive list of publications at <https://github.com/hashey-io/publications>, with links to papers, presentations, public audit reports, and podcast appearances. In recent years, hashey consultants have showcased cutting-edge research through presentations at CanSecWest, HCSS, Devcon, Empire Hacking, GrrCon, LangSec, NorthSec, the O'Reilly Security Conference, PyCon, REcon, Security BSides, and SummerCon. We specialize in software testing and code review projects, supporting client organizations in the technology, defense, and finance industries, as well as government entities. Notable clients include HashiCorp, Google, Microsoft, Western Digital, and Zoom. hashey also operates a center of excellence with regard to blockchain security. Notable projects include audits of Algorand, Bitcoin SV, Chainlink, Compound, Ethereum 2.0, MakerDAO, Matic, Uniswap, Web3, and Zcash. To keep up to date with our latest news and announcements, please follow hashey on Twitter and explore our public repositories at <https://github.com/hashey-io>. To engage us directly, visit our "Contact" page at <https://www.hashey.io/contact>, or email us at [info@hashey.io](mailto:info@hashey.io). hashey, Inc. 497 Carroll St., Space 71, Seventh Floor Brooklyn, NY 11215 <https://www.hashey.io> [info@hashey.io](mailto:info@hashey.io) hashey 1 ElixirProtocolSecurityAssessment PUBLIC

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Project Summary Contact Information The following project manager was associated with this project:

Sam Greenup, Project Manager sam.greenup@hashey.io

The following engineering director was associated with this project:

Keith Hoodlet, Engineering Director, Application Security keith.hoodlet@hashey.io

Joselin Feist, Engineering Director, Blockchain joselin@hashey.io

The following consultants were associated with this project:

Artur Cygan, Consultant Damiola Edwards, Consultant artur.cygan@hashey.io damiola.edwards@hashey.io

Bo Henderson, Consultant Emilio López, Consultant bo.henderson@hashey.io emilio.lopez@hashey.io

Project Timeline The significant events and milestones of the project are listed below. Date Event

July 24, 2024 Pre-project kickoff call August 2, 2024 Status update meeting #1

August 9, 2024 Delivery of report draft August 9, 2024 Report readout meeting

October 10, 2024 Delivery of comprehensive report hashey\_e 5 Elixir Protocol Security Assessment PUBLIC

Executive Summary Engagement Overview

Elixir Technologies Ltd engaged Hashey to review the security of Elixir Protocol. Elixir is a consensus-based peer-to-peer networking protocol that performs algorithmic trades on centralized and decentralized exchanges.

A team of four consultants conducted the review from July 29 to August 7, 2024, for a total of five engineer-weeks of effort. Our testing efforts focused on the staking and delegation

methods of the smart contracts, user authentication, and soundness of the consensus

mechanism. With full access to source code and documentation, we performed static and dynamic testing of the elixir-protocol and elixir-protocol-api repositories, using automated and manual processes.

Observations and Impact Our review of Elixir Protocol uncovered several high-

severity issues, although most are also highly difficult to exploit. However, one high-severity issue requires only low difficulty to

exploit; this issue allows delegators to bypass the redelegate cooldown period (TOB-ELIXIR-

12) by immediately signaling after the initial delegation. Other noteworthy

findings include a lack of data validation that enables the strategy executor to sign arbitrary payloads provided by the API (TOB-ELIXIR-6).

We identified two issues relating to the consensus mechanism. One relates to inadequate

deauthorization of users who were previously in the set of core validators, allowing

minority validators to participate in consensus (TOB-ELIXIR-13). A second issue in the

quorum requirement could cause the consensus mechanism to halt if the queue of active, non-core validators grows too large (TOB-ELIXIR-14).

The system exposes Redpanda to the Internet; this design decision led to several findings (TOB-ELIXIR-9, TOB-ELIXIR-19, and TOB-ELIXIR-20). All in all, the code base is well-

organized and features thorough code comments, which

aided our security review. However, the system needs to be tested more thoroughly prior

to deployment. Some issues, such as an incorrect calculation of the minimum proposal

requirement in the majority group (TOB-ELIXIR-4), could have been caught earlier by more thorough unit tests.

Recommendations Based on the code base maturity evaluation and findings identified during the security

review, Hashey recommends that Elixir Technologies Ltd take the following steps

before deploying the protocol to production: hashey\_e 6 Elixir Protocol Security Assessment PUBLIC

- Remediate the findings disclosed in this report. These findings should be addressed as part of a direct remediation or as part of any refactor that may occur when addressing other recommendations. •

- Expand the test suite. We identified gaps in the smart contract test coverage using

- mutation tests. Write additional tests that assert the expected behavior of every

- branch of the business logic, and then use code coverage assessments to confirm

- that gaps in test coverage have been closed. • Write documentation. Although the code is well commented, high-

- level documentation is necessary to ensure that end users can safely interact with Elixir protocol. ○

- Write goal-oriented usage manuals, one for each type of end user (e.g.,

- staker, validator, trader). These should provide clear how-to instruction that

guide users through every action they might need to take and should clearly outline the risks associated with any given action with accompanying guidance on mitigating or eliminating these risks. ◦  
Create an API reference that documents all smart contract methods and API endpoints. The parameters, return values, and side effects should be listed in one place that is easy to search. In addition, interactions between components should be described to complement the existing system diagrams. This will help current developers add new features safely, aid future developers in ramping up quickly, and help other security reviewers to assess the code base productively. ◦  
Create an incident response plan. See appendix F for guidance. •  
Assign ownership to a multi-signature wallet. Contract upgrades are extremely sensitive operations and do not require frequent or automated execution, so multi-signature wallets would be a good fit for ownership roles that can authorize upgrades. See appendix G for guidance regarding the secure usage of multi-signature wallets. hashey  
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**Finding Severities and Categories** The following tables provide the number of findings by severity and category.  
**EXPOSURE ANALYSIS**  

Severity	Count
High	8
Medium	4
Low	2
Informational	5
Undetermined	3

  
**CATEGORY BREAKDOWN**  

Category	Count
Access Controls	2
Configuration	4
Cryptography	1
Data Exposure	1
Data Validation	7
Denial of Service	4
Patching	1
Session Management	1
Timing	1

  
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**Project Goals** The engagement was scoped to provide a security assessment of the Elixir Protocol. Specifically, we sought to answer the following non-exhaustive list of questions: • Are there any error-prone or incorrect steps in the deployment and initialization of the system's smart contracts? • Is there any way for a user to bypass the redelegate and unstake cooldown periods? • Does off-chain code manage keys, use cryptographic primitives, and interact with smart contracts safely? • Could an attacker steal from users or deny them access to their staked funds? • Is all user-provided input properly validated? • Can an attacker capture or halt the system's consensus mechanism? • Are any access controls missing, and do any roles have unsuitable permissions? • Can any system actions be front-run, or are there other race conditions that an attacker could take advantage of? hashey  
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**Project Targets** The engagement involved a review and testing of the targets listed below.  

protocol	Repository
<a href="https://github.com/ElixirProtocol/elixir-protocol">https://github.com/ElixirProtocol/elixir-protocol</a>	Version 99e669d6a1cd88011a395fc74cf374372f8b5c52
Type Python, Solidity	Platform EVM, Linux
protocol-api	Repository
<a href="https://github.com/ElixirProtocol/elixir-protocol-api">https://github.com/ElixirProtocol/elixir-protocol-api</a>	Version f508fc1a120886688da020f55dd22dbb0f303ccd
Type Python	Platform Linux

  
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**Project Coverage** This section provides an overview of the analysis coverage of the review, as determined by our high-level engagement goals. Our approaches included the following: •  
**Smart contracts.** We ran slither and slither-mutate to automatically identify points of interest and gaps in the test coverage to guide our manual review. ◦  
**Core:** A permissioned actor that controls administrative functions such as setting important addresses and slashing users. We reviewed the initialization process, access controls, and this contract's interactions with other components. ◦  
**Dispute Manager:** This contract allows anyone with a valid Consensus Audit Details struct to trigger the jailing of misbehaving validators. We reviewed the signature validation logic and address checks to assess whether invalid parameters can be used to prevent jailing an dishonest validator or to cause an honest actor to be jailed. ◦  
**Pool and Pool Manager:** These contracts act as an auditable record of all pools and their configuration parameters. Since these components contain little logic, we spent less time reviewing them beyond determining if initialization and ownership methods behave as expected. ◦  
**Stake Manager:** This contract contains critical methods that tied directly into the consensus mechanism and was the primary focus of our smart contract review. We assessed the movement of funds into and out of the contract, looking for opportunities to steal or lock user funds. We listed the different contract states and transitions between them to identify ways that a user could bypass the signal delays, delegate more than they staked, or otherwise disrupt the system. •  
**Protocol services.** These Python modules implement the core off-chain business logic of the Elixir protocol. The two services we looked at most closely are the following: ◦  
**Consensus processor:** We looked for ways that an attacker could abuse delegations or perform a Sybil attack to disrupt the consensus building

process. We reviewed the arithmetic supporting validator and proposal counts along with the overall business logic searching for ways that an attacker could capture or halt consensus. hashey 11 Elixir Protocol Security Assessment PUBLIC

◦ Strategy executor: This component ingests data frames and produces order proposals. We reviewed the strategy executor paying particular attention to its authorization with the protocol API. • Protocol API: The protocol-API manages user authentication and acts as a gateway for interactions with ancillary Redis and database services. We searched for ways that authentication could be bypassed and carefully studied this component's interactions with the consensus service. Coverage Limitations Because of the time-boxed nature of testing work, it is common to encounter coverage limitations. The following list outlines the coverage limitations of the engagement and indicates system elements that may warrant further review: • We performed only automated analysis and light manual review of the protocol services that were not explicitly listed above. • The order proposal generation and GLT strategy code was not a primary focus of our review. • We did not thoroughly review files managing the production environments such as Docker files and other cloud config files. hashey 12 Elixir Protocol Security Assessment PUBLIC

Automated Testing hashey uses automated techniques to extensively test the security properties of software. We use both open-source static analysis and fuzzing utilities, along with tools developed in-house, to perform automated testing of source code and compiled software. Test Harness Configuration We used the following tools in the automated testing phase of this project: Tool Description Policy Slither A static analysis framework that can statically verify algebraic relationships between Solidity variables Appendix D slither-mutate A deterministic mutation generator that detects gaps in test coverage Appendix E Semgrep An open-source static analysis tool for finding bugs and enforcing code standards when editing or committing code and during build time Appendix D Bandit A static analysis tool designed to find common security issues in Python code Appendix D CodeQL A code analysis engine developed by GitHub to automate security checks Appendix D Areas of Focus Our automated testing and verification work focused on the following system properties: • Identify common issues and anti-patterns in Solidity and Python • Identify gaps in test coverage to guide our review efforts Test Results The results of this focused testing are detailed below. hashey 13 Elixir Protocol Security Assessment PUBLIC

slither-mutate : The following table displays the portion of each type of mutant for which all unit tests passed. The presence of valid mutants indicates that there are gaps in test coverage because the test suite did not catch the introduced change. • Uncaught revert mutants replace a given expression with a revert statement and indicate that the line is not executed during testing. • Uncaught comment mutants comment out a given expression and indicate that the effects of this line are not checked by any assertions. • Uncaught tweak mutants indicate that the expression being executed features edge cases that are not covered by the test suite. The protocol/contracts/src subdirectory is the root for all target paths listed below. Contract supporting tests or that produced zero analyzed mutants (e.g., interfaces) were omitted from mutation testing analysis. Target Uncaught Reverts Uncaught Comments Uncaught Tweaks ELX.sol 100%100%100% Pool.sol 0%42%14% PoolManager.sol 11%50%N/A StakeManager.sol 0%22%11% Core.sol 24%45%32% DisputeManager.sol 0%29%0% hashey 14 Elixir Protocol Security Assessment PUBLIC

Codebase Maturity Evaluation hashey uses a traffic-light protocol to provide each client with a clear understanding of the areas in which its codebase is mature, immature, or underdeveloped. Deficiencies identified here often stem from root causes within the software development lifecycle that should be addressed through standardization measures (e.g., the use of common libraries, functions, or frameworks) or training and awareness programs. Category Summary Result Arithmetic The protocol uses a modern version of Solidity without any unchecked arithmetic blocks, preventing overflows. Smart contract arithmetic uses only simple addition and subtraction, eliminating the possibility of issues due to rounding errors. We observed that the protocol services use Python's Decimal to help prevent unexpected rounding issues in off-chain monetary calculations. However, an incorrect variable was used in one consensus-impacting calculation (TOB-ELIXIR-4), indicating that the off-chain arithmetic would benefit from more thorough tests. Moderate Auditing The Elixir smart contracts consistently emit events that include enough data for effective off-chain monitoring. Event and parameter names provide context, although the system would benefit from additional documentation regarding the implications of each event as well as an

incident response plan. The off-chain components print sufficient logs for monitoring the internal state. Satisfactory Authentication/ Access Controls The core contract manages granular access roles that follow the principle of least privilege. We did not identify any missing or misconfigured access controls, although a two-step process for ownership transfers would help prevent irrevocable mistakes (TOB-ELIXIR-15). Multiple issues were reidentified in off-chain authentication code. For example, the protocol-api auth service does not revoke access when, for example, a validator's delegations drop out of the top 100 or their IP address weak hashey 15 Elixir Protocol Security Assessment PUBLIC

changes (TOB-ELIXIR-9). Complexity Management Smart contracts and their methods have well-defined responsibilities that rely on clear and consistent naming conventions. We identified few instances of duplicate code or functions with high cyclomatic complexity. Each Python service adheres to a predictable and well-organized structure, aiding review of the codebase. Satisfactory Configuration Example environment variable values clarify developer intent and aided our review. However, we identified some instances of error-prone configurations, such as the Redis deactivation; (TOB-ELIXIR-5). Moderate Cryptography and Key Management Well-established libraries are used to perform signing operations and to interact with other cryptographic primitives. However, private keys pass through environment variables during startup, increasing the risk of key exposure (TOB-ELIXIR-3). We identified a place where parts of the payload are not authenticated (TOB-ELIXIR-16). Moderate Data Handling Some signing operations happen without sufficient payload validation (TOB-ELIXIR-6). There is no clearly defined data validation layer for untrusted user input in the API, which led to TOB-ELIXIR-7 and TOB-ELIXIR-17. Weak Decentralization The smart contracts depend on off-chain services to function, one component of which is a centralized message delivery hub. All system logic, including the management of user ELX tokens, is upgradable by a single account without giving users the chance to opt out. Weak Documentation Smart contract methods feature NatSpec comments, and Python functions are described with docstrings. The system architecture diagram provided context that aided our review. However, very little high-level documentation was provided. Moderate Low-Level Manipulation The smart contracts do not rely on any EV assembly code nor on any low-level calls, apart from those included in well-established libraries. Satisfactory hashey 16 Elixir Protocol Security Assessment PUBLIC

Maintenance The code is organized into logical modules, making it relatively straightforward to maintain. However, outdated Python dependencies (TOB-ELIXIR-1) indicate the lack of a process for updating dependencies in a timely manner; the system could benefit from the use of tools such as Dependabot in CI to automatically keep dependencies up to date in the repository. Moderate Memory Safety and Error Handling The protocol services are rewritten in Python, a memory-safe language, eliminating the possibility of low-level memory problems. Error handling is generally performed appropriately. Satisfactory Testing and Verification Both Solidity and Python portions of the codebase feature unit tests. However, mutation testing uncovered some important gaps in Solidity test coverage, and some of the issues we identified could have been found earlier with more thorough tests (TOB-ELIXIR-4). Moderate Transaction Ordering We identified issues in the smart contracts that either arise from, or are made more severe due to, transaction-ordering risks. The system would benefit from further investigation and more rigorous specification of timing risks. Moderate hashey 17 Elixir Protocol Security Assessment PUBLIC

Summary of Findings The table below summarizes the findings of the review, including type and severity details.

ID	Title	Type	Severity
1	Use of outdated dependencies	Patching	Informational
2	Use of HTTP requests without timeout	Denial of Service	Informational
3	Private keys stored in environment variables	Data Exposure	High
4	Majority proposal group will always satisfy minimum size requirement	Data Validation	High
5	Authentication at risk of replay attacks if misconfigured	Configuration	High
6	Strategy executor does not validate payload to sign	Data Validation	High
7	Missing IP address validation allows bypassing Redpanda ACL	Data Validation	Medium
8	Use of assert statement in production code	Data Validation	Undetermined
9	Redpanda accounts and associated permissions are never revoked	Access Controls	Undetermined
10	Delegators can redelegate stake to jailed delegatee	Data Validation	Medium
11	Attackers can cause slashing to become economically infeasible	Denial of Service	Low
12	Delegators can immediately undelegate before their delegatee is jailed	Timing	High
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13	Minority validators may participate in consensus process	Session Management	High
14	An influx of new strategy executors may halt consensus	Denial of Service	Medium
15	Lack of two-step process for ownership transfers	Data Validation	Informational
16	Response payload to authentication challenge is not signed	Cryptography	Informational
17	API does not validate display_name and app_version	Data Validation	Undetermined
18	All on-chain events replayed upon startup	Denial of Service	Medium
19	Redpanda exposed to the Internet	Configuration	High

20APIhasadminaccesstoRedpandaConfigurationHigh 21Useofunpinnedthird-partyDockerimagesand actionsonworkflows ConfigurationLow 22Absenceofaccesscontrolsonpoolcreation function AccessControlsInformational hashey 19ElixirProtocolSecurityAssessment PUBLIC

DetailedFindings 1.Useofoutdateddependencies Severity:InformationalDifficulty:Undetermined Type:PatchingFindingID:TOB-ELIXIR-1 Target:Multiple pyproject.toml , poetry.lock ,Dockerfiles Description Weused pipaudit todetecttheuseofoutdateddependenciesinthePythoncodebases, whichidentifiedanumberofvulnerablepackagesreferencedbythe pyproject.toml and poetry.lock files. Thefollowingisalistofthevulnerabledependenciesusedinthecodebase,andknown vulnerabilitiesaffecttheversionsinuse: • certifi (GHSA-248v-346w-9cwc) • pysha3 (GHSA-6w4m-2xhg-2658) • requests (GHSA-9wx4-h78v-vm56) • urllib3 (GHSA-34jh-p97f-mpxf) Inmanycases,theuseofavulnerabledependencydoesnotnecessarilymeanthe applicationisvulnerable.Vulnerablemethodsfromsuchpackagesneedtobecalledwithin aparticularexploitablecontext.Todeterminewhethertheoff-chainapplicationsare vulnerabletotheseissues,eachissuewillhavetobemanuallytriated.Theseverityis markedinformationalasuponpreliminaryinspection,theseissuesdonotappear to impactthecodebasedirectly. Moreover,theservicesuseanoutdatedversionofPython(3.10.12),whichwasreleasedon June6,2023.Anewversion(3.10.14),releasedonMarch19,2024,isavailable; additionally,version3.12.4,releasedonJune6,2024,canbeusedifupgradingtothemajor versionisfeasible. Recommendations Shortterm,updatesystemdependencies totheir latestversionswhereverpossible.Use toolssuchas pipaudit toconfirmthatnovulnerabledependenciesremain. Longterm,implementthesechecksaspartoftheCI/CDpipelineofapplication development.IntegrateanautomatedsolutionssuchasDependabotintoyourdevelopment hashey 20ElixirProtocolSecurityAssessment PUBLIC

processtoassistinpromptlydetectingandupdatingdependencieswithknownsecurity problems. hashey 21ElixirProtocolSecurityAssessment PUBLIC

2.UseofHTTPrequestswithouttimeout Severity:InformationalDifficulty:High Type:DenialofServiceFindingID:TOB-ELIXIR-2 Target: elixir-protocol and elixir-protocol-api Pythonapplications Description TheElixiroff-chaincodeusesthePython requests librarytosendHTTPrequests.By default,requestsdonottimeoutunless the timeout parameterisexplicitlypassedtothe methodforarequest.Thisbehavior maycausetheprogramtohangindefinitelywhenthe requestedserveris sloworunresponsive.Theprogramssendrequests withoutatimeout inthefollowinglocations: • TocreataenewuserinRedpanda: elixir-protocol-api/app/api/services/auth.py#L103 • Toresetanexistinguser'spassword: elixir-protocol-api/app/api/services/auth.py#L111 • TocancelallordersinVertex: elixir-protocol/services/failsafe\_exchange\_processor/failsafe\_exchange\_processor/vertex/vertex\_failsafe.py#L98 • TofetchthepoolconfigurationfromIPFS: elixir-protocol/services/onchain\_pool\_config\_feed/onchain\_pool\_configuration\_feed/listeners/contract.py#L59 • TocreatenewordersinVertex: elixir-protocol/services/order\_reconciler/order\_reconciler/exchanges/vertex/vertex\_reconciler.py#L315 • TocancelordersinVertex: elixir-protocol/services/order\_reconciler/order\_reconciler/exchanges/vertex/vertex\_reconciler.py#L368 • Torequestanauthenticationchallengeasastrategyexecutor: elixir-protocol/services/strategy\_executor/strategy\_executor/elixir\_api.py#L22 • Tosubmitaresponsetoanauthenticationchallengeasastrategyexecutor: elixir-protocol/services/strategy\_executor/strategy\_executor/elixir\_api.py#L55 hashey 22ElixirProtocolSecurityAssessment PUBLIC

Recommendations Shortterm,passanexplicit timeout parameter toall requests methods. Longterm,integratestaticanalysis toolssuchasBanditintoyoursoftwaredevelopment lifecycleandCI/CDprocesses.They candetectissues suchasthisoneearlyoninthe developmentprocess. hashey 23ElixirProtocolSecurityAssessment PUBLIC

3.Privatekeysstoredinenvironmentvariables Severity:HighDifficulty:High Type:DataExposureFindingID:TOB-ELIXIR-3 Target:Off-chainservicesigningkeys Description Elixir'soff-chainservicesareconfiguredviaenvironmentvariablesthatincludesensitive data,suchasprivatekeys,for signing.Environmentvariablesarenotsuitableforstoring sensitivedata,astheymayleakviamultiplechannelssuchascrashreports.Examplesof thisconfigurationinclude the CONSENSUS\_PROCESSOR\_PRIVATE\_KEY , STRATEGY\_EXECUTOR\_PRIVATE\_KEY ,and FEED\_AGGREGATOR\_PRIVATE\_KEY environment variables,whichareusedtosigncriticaldata. ExploitScenario Thefeedaggregatorservicecrashes,andthecrashreportcontaining FEED\_AGGREGATOR\_PRIVATE\_KEY keymaterialisexportedtoathird-partyanalytics service. Recommendations Shortterm,refrainfromusingenvironmentvariablesforconfiguringkeymaterial.Instead, fetchthekeymaterialonservicestartupfromadedicatedsecretstorageservice.Thiswill mitigatetheissueswithleakyenvironmentvariables. Longterm,useadedicatedservicefor signinginsteadofstoringkeymaterialinindividual

services. This will protect the key material from leaking via another channel such as code execution inside these services. Examples of managed signing services include Google Cloud Key Management Service or AWS CloudHSM. hashey 24 Elixir Protocol Security Assessment PUBLIC

4. Majority proposal group will always satisfy minimum size requirement Severity: High Difficulty: High  
Type: Data Validation Finding ID: TOB-ELIXIR-4 Target: elixir-protocol/services/consensus\_processor/consensus\_processor/consensus\_builder.py Description  
The consensus builder contains a check to ensure that the majority proposal group is large enough to form consensus. However, the check performed is incorrect and will never fail.  
# determine if enough the majority proposal group is big enough to form consensus  
consensus\_proposal\_group = majority\_proposal\_groups[0]  
proposal\_count = len(consensus\_proposal\_group.proofs)  
minimum\_requirement = math.ceil(proposal\_count \* self.min\_consensus\_threshold)  
if proposal\_count < minimum\_requirement: self.logger.info("Need to wait for more proposals, majority proposal group only has {proposal\_count} proposals, {minimum\_requirement} proposals are required", data\_frame\_id=data\_frame\_id, ) return None  
Figure 4.1: The check to ensure that the majority proposal is large enough to form consensus ( elixir-protocol/services/consensus\_processor/consensus\_processor/consensus\_builder.py#L403-L412 )  
This check compares the proposal count with the minimum requirement, which is computed as a percentage of the proposal count. The proposal count will therefore never be less than the minimum requirement. Exploit Scenario  
An attacker, who controls a small number of validators and is capable of confusing other validators to produce invalid proposals, obtains a small majority in the system. The check to ensure that the majority is large enough does not trigger adequately, and the attacker's proposal is accepted. Recommendations Short term, correct the check so that it correctly computes the minimum requirement, possibly as a percentage of the total proposals. hashey 25 Elixir Protocol Security Assessment PUBLIC  
Long term, implement unit tests for important functionality to ensure that it behaves as intended. hashey 26 Elixir Protocol Security Assessment PUBLIC

5. Authentication at risk of replay attacks if misconfigured Severity: High Difficulty: High  
Type: Configuration Finding ID: TOB-ELIXIR-5 Target: elixir-protocol-api authentication Description  
The elixir-protocol-api authentication is vulnerable to replay attacks if the service is ever run with config.redis\_enabled set to False . The implementation of the connect and verify endpoints enables running in this configuration without reporting any error (figures 5.1 and 5.2). In such a case, the nonce is set to None , and connect returns the message "Elixir Protocol Verification Message. None" to sign. The same happens in verify , which will validate messages with None as a nonce .  
def connect(self, address: str):  
 """ Create a message for the validator to sign. """ nonce = None key = f"validator-nonce-{address}"  
 # check to see if we have a nonce for this validator. if self.config.redis\_enabled:  
 redis = self.redis\_service.get\_redis() nonce = redis.get(key) if nonce is None: nonce = uuid.uuid4()  
 redis.set(key, nonce, ex=None) return {"message": f"{SIGNED\_MESSAGE}{nonce}", "nonce": nonce, "address": address}  
Figure 5.1: The vulnerable connect endpoint function ( elixir-protocol-api/app/api/services/auth.py#L45-L59 ) nonce = None redis = self.redis\_service.get\_redis()  
# search for saved nonce value if self.config.redis\_enabled: nonce = redis.get(f"validator-nonce-{address}") if not nonce: raise HTTPException(status\_code=401, detail="INVALID\_NONCE") hashey 27 Elixir Protocol Security Assessment PUBLIC

# recover the address message = encode\_defunct(text=f"{SIGNED\_MESSAGE}{nonce}")  
recovered\_address = self.web3.eth.account.recover\_message(message, signature=signature.replace("'", ""))  
Figure 5.2: The vulnerable verify endpoint function ( elixir-protocol-api/app/api/services/auth.py#L167-L179 ) Exploit Scenario  
An attacker captures a signed "Elixir Protocol Verification Message. None" message and replays it while the API service is misconfigured with config.redis\_enabled set to False . The attacker then gains access to the Redpanda event bus. Recommendations Short term, reject connect and verify requests with 500 or 503 status code if Redis is disabled in production environment. Disabling Redis should not make the system insecure. Long term, explicitly mark insecure configuration options with unsafe wording and make it impossible to turn them on outside of the development environment. hashey 28 Elixir Protocol Security Assessment PUBLIC

6. Strategy executor does not validate payload to sign Severity: High Difficulty: High  
Type: Data Validation Finding ID: TOB-ELIXIR-6 Target: elixir-protocol/services/strategy\_executor/strategy\_executor/elixir\_api.py Description  
The strategy executor services sign the authentication message from the API without validating its structure (figure 6.1). The server can abuse this functionality to sign arbitrary EIP-191 personal\_sign messages and use them as if they were originally signed by the strategy executor.

```
authentication_message=authentication["message"]
validator_address=get_address_from_key(private_key)
self.logger.info("Sending authorization request", address=validator_address)
# send signed message back to api for verification message=encode_defunct(text=str(authentication_message))
signature=Web3().eth.account.sign_message(message,private_key=private_key)
Figure 6.1: Strategy executor signing data without validating its structure ( elixir-protocol/services/strategy_executor/strategy_executor/elixir_api.py#L47-L53 ) Exploit Scenario
An attacker who controls the API replies with an authentication message that is a malicious OrderProposalDetail
payload. The payload is signed by the strategy executor and returned to the attacker. The attacker can submit a fraudulent order proposal on behalf of
the executor because, during the regular operation, the strategy executor signs this structure with the same key.
Recommendations Short term, validate the structure of the authentication message returned by the API
server. Make sure to validate the length and structure of the nonce to prevent injection attacks.
Long term, ensure that the payload structure is always validated before each signing operation. hashey
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```

```
7. Missing IP address validation allows bypassing Redpanda ACL Severity: Medium Difficulty: Low
Type: Data Validation Finding ID: TOB-ELIXIR-7 Target: elixir-protocol-api/app/api/services/auth.py
Description The IP address used to create Redpanda ACLs is not validated, which allows bypassing the
host restriction from ACLs (figure 7.1). Because the IP address can be an arbitrary string, it
is possible to send an all hosts wildcard ( * ) instead of a concrete IP address.
def create_acls(self, username: str, ip_address: str): """ Create ACLs in redpanda for user. """
self.logger.info("Creating ACLs")
admin_client = KafkaAdminClient(bootstrap_servers=self.config.event_bus_brokers) read_acl = ACL(
principal=f"User:{username}", host=ip_address, operation=ACLOperation.READ,
permission_type=ACLPermissionType.ALLOW,
resource_pattern=ResourcePattern(ResourceType.TOPIC, DATA_FRAME_TOPICS), ) write_acl = ACL(
principal=f"User:{username}", host=ip_address, operation=ACLOperation.WRITE,
permission_type=ACLPermissionType.ALLOW,
resource_pattern=ResourcePattern(ResourceType.TOPIC, ORDER_PROPOSAL_TOPICS), )
Figure 7.1: Unvalidated IP address sends up straight in ACLs ( elixir-protocol-api/app/api/services/auth.py#L125-L144 ) Exploit Scenario
A malicious strategy executor sends a * instead of a concrete IP address to verify an
endpoint. They use the Redpanda credential to execute a distributed denial-of-service attack.
Recommendations Short term, require the IP address sent by strategy executor to be a concrete value, or
take the IP address from the connection instead of the user having to provide it. hashey
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```

```
8. Use of assert statement in production code Severity: Undetermined Difficulty: High
Type: Data Validation Finding ID: TOB-ELIXIR-8 Target: elixir-protocol/services/strategy_executor/strategy_executor/glt_strategy.py , elixir-protocol/shared/shared/event_scanner/event_scanner.py
Description
When optimizations are requested with the -O flag, assert statements are removed from the program. The following functions use assert statements that will be skipped if optimizations are enabled.
• GltStrategy.get_balance
• GltStrategy.get_price
• GltStrategy.get_metrics
• GltStrategy.apply_order_level
• EventScanner.scan
Exploit Scenario
The strategy executor is run with optimizations enabled, and the apply_order_level function operates on an invalid proposal with a mismatched number of buys and sells, leading to undefined behavior.
Recommendations Short term, change the assert statements to statements that explicitly raise exceptions.
This will remove the risk that the validation layer will be optimized out.
Long term, integrate static analysis tools such as Bandit into your software development lifecycle and CI/CD processes. They can detect issues such as this one early on in the development process. hashey
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```

```
9. Redpanda accounts and associated permissions are never revoked Severity: Undetermined Difficulty: High
Type: Access Controls Finding ID: TOB-ELIXIR-9 Target: elixir-protocol-api/app/api/services/auth.py
Description As part of the authentication process, when a strategy executor or client calls the /verify API endpoint with a valid request that meets all the requirements to participate in the system, the back-end service will create or update an account in the Redpanda message broker for the strategy executor or client to use, along with a pair of ACL rules that allow connections as this username from a certain IP address. However, there is no mechanism to expire or disable these accounts, so clients that stop participating or are jailed continue to have access to the event bus. Additionally, a new pair of ACL rules are recreated each time a user connects, and previous ACL rules are not cleared from Redpanda. As a result, an account may be accessible from multiple IP addresses even in absence of an issue like TOB-ELIXIR-7. Exploit Scenario #1
A malicious strategy executor or operator repeatedly logs in with multiple concrete IP addresses to the /verify
```

endpoint. As ACLs do not get cleared, the Redpanda user is now accessible from all the IP addresses provided by the malicious operator. They then distribute the credentials obtained on the last login operation and execute a distributed denial-of-service attack. Exploit Scenario#2 A strategy executor operating with address 0xA and a token delegation from address 0xB is compromised and the attacker extracts the Redpanda credentials in use. The operator contains the compromise by rotating the strategy executor keys, which will now use wallet 0xC, and by moving 0xB's delegation to the new address. While the previous address is now unsuitable to login through the protocol API backend, as it has no tokens delegated to it, the attacker can still use the Redpanda credentials to observe messages or perform a denial-of-service attack. Recommendations Short term, implement credential revocation. Old ACL rules for users should be revoked when a new authenticated session is established. This will give users the ability to remove old entries in the case of compromise. In addition, access should be revoked if users are jailed or their delegations drop to zero. hashey 32ElixirProtocolSecurityAssessment PUBLIC

Long term, review authorized permissions and the contexts in which they are valid. It is equally important to ensure that authorizations are revoked when valid contexts become invalid, as it is when valid contexts are originally established. hashey 33ElixirProtocolSecurityAssessment PUBLIC

10. Delegates can redelegate stake to jailed delegatee Severity: Medium Difficulty: Low Type: Data Validation Finding ID: TOB-ELIXIR-10 Target: elixir-protocol/contracts/src/StakeManager.sol Description The internal `_updateDelegation` helper method does not prevent users from delegating to a validator that is jailed, allowing dishonest users to accidentally lose access to their stake. The `delegate` function is responsible for handling both delegation and redelegation actions. During redelegation, several validation checks are performed: ensuring that the redelegation has been signaled in advance, confirming that the current delegatee of the delegator is not jailed, and verifying the delegator has not signaled an unstake. However, the status of the new delegatee, to whom the delegator intends to move their stakes, is not checked if they are jailed. This allows for redelegation to a jailed validator, leading to potential loss of funds for the delegator. Exploit Scenario Bob notices that Alice runs a validator with a good performance history, but she is unaware that Alice recently misbehaved. Bob sends a transaction delegating his stake to Alice right after another user sends a transaction jailing Alice, and both transactions succeed. As a result, Bob inadvertently loses access to his funds. Recommendations Short term, add a check to the `_updateDelegation` method that reverts a transaction that attempts to delegate to a validator who has been jailed. Long term, strive to make it as hard as possible for an honest user to make a costly mistake. Pay particular attention to race conditions that occur during contract state transitions. hashey 34ElixirProtocolSecurityAssessment PUBLIC

11. Attackers can cause slashing to become economically infeasible Severity: Low Difficulty: High Type: Denial of Service Finding ID: TOB-ELIXIR-11 Target: elixir-protocol/contracts/src/StakeManager.sol Description The `slash` function takes a single address as a parameter, along with the amount to be slashed. When a significant number of users need to be slashed, the `slash` function must be called for each address individually. This approach becomes infeasible if there is a large number of small delegations. `///@notice Slashes a staker ///@param staker Staker to be slashed ///@param amount Amount to be slashed function slash(address staker, uint256 amount) external onlyCore { // Reduces staker's balance. stakedBalance[staker] -= amount; // Reduced delegated balance. _moveDelegates(delegates[staker], address(0), amount); // Transfer the tokens. elixirToken.safeTransfer(msg.sender, amount); emitSlashed(staker, amount, stakedBalance[staker]); } Figure 11.1: The slash method ( StakeManager.sol#L271-L285 ) Based on the current design of the protocol, when a validator is jailed, all delegators who staked with that jailed validator will have their stakes locked and potentially slashed. However, in the event of slashing, each affected delegator needs to be slashed individually. The cost of performing slashing on the entire set of affected delegators increases proportionally with the number of delegators involved. In cases where the number of affected delegators is significantly large, the high cost may discourage the execution of slashing, allowing delegators to evade the intended penalty. Exploit Scenario Bob acquires ELX tokens with the intent of misbehaving. To grief the protocol by making it less cost-effective for him to be slashed, he distributes small amounts of his tokens among a large number of accounts and delegates them all to himself. After Bob is jailed for acting maliciously, the cost of recovering ELX from his delegators is prohibitively expensive. hashey 35ElixirProtocolSecurityAssessment PUBLIC`

Recommendations Shortterm, consider implementing an additional batch slash method in the StakeManager contract that accepts an array of addresses and slashes each down to a zero balance. Some arithmetic and conditional logic can be skipped, making this a cheaper and easier way to recover funds from a large number of misbehaving accounts. Longterm, keep in mind that a delegatee with a small number of large delegators may have an equal weight as a delegatee with a large number of small delegators. Consider both situations and ways an attacker may take advantage of differences such as gas economics. hashey

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12. Delegators can immediately undelegate before their delegatee is jailed Severity: High Difficulty: Low Type: Timing Finding ID: TOB-ELIXIR-12 Target: elixir-protocol/contracts/src/StakeManager.sol Description There is no penalty for preemptively signaling redelegation immediately after initial delegation. Doing so (and waiting through the cooldown) would give delegatees the ability to front-run future jail transactions and avoid having their funds locked, effectively bypassing the delay that signaling is supposed to impose. As part of the front-running protection mechanism designed to prevent delegators from unstaking or redelegating just before their delegatee is jailed, delegators are required to signal an undelegate and wait for the expiration of a waiting period before proceeding with the undelegation. However, the signalUndelegate function can be invoked at the start of the delegation period. Once the waiting period has passed, the undelegation/redelegation requirement is met, allowing the delegator to maintain this state and immediately undelegate or redelegate at any time. This is particularly problematic if the delegatee is about to be jailed, as the delegatee jail transaction can be front-run with an undelegate or redelegate transaction to avoid the penalty. Exploit Scenario Alice delegates her stake with Bob the delegatee, immediately after the delegation, she signals undelegate while maintaining her delegation with Bob even when the undelegation waiting period has passed. Bob is about to be jailed, she notices a jail transaction for Bob in the mempool and front-runs it with an undelegate transaction which gets executed first allowing her to effectively evade the jail Recommendations Shortterm, delegators that have signaled redelegates should be excluded from a validator's total delegations. Longterm, keep in mind that timestamps on the blockchain are error prone and a frequent source of errors. Review all timestamps used by the system and, for each, consider what would happen immediately before and after important thresholds as well as at the extremes. This will facilitate a review of the code base and help prevent similar problems. hashey

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13. Minority validators may participate in consensus process Severity: High Difficulty: Medium Type: Session Management Finding ID: TOB-ELIXIR-13 Target: elixir-protocol/services/consensus\_processor/consensus\_processor/consensus\_builder.py Description The consensus builder receives and considers any proposals from active validators towards its goal of achieving consensus. Active validators are those with a non-zero delegation and which are not jailed. Considering that access to a validator is not revoked if their delegated token amount becomes small (see TOB-ELIXIR-9), this could allow one or many minority strategy executors (i.e., those with a small delegation, and that should not be part of the "core" set) to participate in the consensus process. A malicious actor may take advantage of this fact to gain a majority of the consensus vote. Exploit Scenario Assuming that the top 99 validators have over 1,000 tokens delegated each, an attacker obtains 1,001 tokens. The attacker develops a malicious strategy executor software that will for the most part behave identically to the official software; however, when it receives a special signal, it will submit a malicious proposal. The attacker then delegates their tokens to the address 0xA, and runs a malicious strategy executor with this address. Once the executor is online, the attacker redelegates all but one cent of the tokens to a new address, 0xB, and repeats the process. Each time, when the freshly-delegated validator attempts to log into the system, this validator will be considered part of the "core" list and be allowed to connect to Redpanda, as their delegation will be one of the top 100 (CORE\_VALIDATOR\_SET\_SIZE) largest by amount delegated. This process is repeated 200 times, until the attacker is operating a majority of the active validators that can participate in consensus. The attacker can then choose to operate their strategy executors benevolently, and collect a outsized share of the system rewards. However, the attacker can also opt to signal to their validators when the market conditions are beneficial, and all of their executors will then submit a coordinated, malicious proposal, which becomes the majority proposal and gains consensus. The system then executes the malicious proposal, and potentially jails good validators, further strengthening the attacker's position. hashey

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Shortterm, implement a mechanism to disconnect and revoke Redpanda access from strategy executors that should not be part of the core set. Enforces some sort of minimum delegation value to be able to participate in consensus.

Longterm, run a threat modeling exercise covering the interaction of users with permissioned and permissionless components within the system. This exercise should identify as system's specific risks and the actors that could take advantage of them, both outside (e.g., validators, third-party providers) and from within (e.g., contract operators). `hashey` 39 Elixir Protocol Security Assessment PUBLIC

14. An influx of new strategy executors may halt consensus Severity: Medium Difficulty: Low  
Type: Denial of Service Finding ID: TOB-ELIXIR-14 Target: `elixir-protocol-api/app/api/services/auth.py`, `elixir-protocol/services/consensus_processor/consensus_processor/consensus_builder.py` Description  
The consensus builder requires a minimum number of proposals to achieve consensus, as one of its many checks. This minimum requirement is computed as a percentage of active (i.e. with a non-zero delegation and not jailed) validators, as shown in figure 14.1.

```
def get_active_validators(self, data_frame: DataFrame):  
    return data_frame.data_frame_detail.active_validators.validator_addresses  
def get_min_required_proposals(self, data_frame: DataFrame):  
    active_validators = self.get_active_validators(data_frame)  
    return math.ceil(len(active_validators) * self.min_validators_threshold)  
def has_minimum_proposals(self, data_frame: DataFrame):  
    total_proposals = self.get_proposal_count(data_frame)  
    min_required_proposals = self.get_min_required_proposals(data_frame)  
    return total_proposals >= min_required_proposals
```

Figure 14.1: The check to ensure that there are enough proposals (`elixir-protocol/services/consensus_processor/consensus_processor/consensus_builder.py#317-327`)  
However, the authentication endpoint verification (`/verify` API route) will allow only a fixed number (`CORE_VALIDATOR_SET_SIZE`) of validators to login and obtain Redpanda access; this value is currently set to 100. This means that, with a large enough number of validators, consensus may become unachievable, as 100 validators may not be enough to comply with the minimum number of proposals required for consensus.

```
# determine if the validator is in the core validator set  
validators = validator_service.get_validators(  
    offset=0, limit=CORE_VALIDATOR_SET_SIZE, order_by="total_delegated", order_dir="desc")  
matches = list(filter(lambda v: v.address == existing.address, validators))  
if not matches: hashey  
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```

```
# create authentication event  
self.create_authentication_event(existing.address, False)  
raise HTTPException(status_code=401, detail="EXCLUDED_ADDRESS")
```

Figure 14.2: The `/verify` API endpoint will not let all validators in (`elixir-protocol-api/app/api/services/auth.py#80-89`)  
Exploit Scenario An attacker splits their tokens among 202 addresses and delegates them to 202 different validators, so that the minimum proposals required to achieve consensus increases by 101 (50% of 202). As a result, the system is halted and no further consensus can be achieved because only 100 validators may connect to Redpanda and the consensus builder cannot receive enough proposals in each round.

Recommendations  
Shortterm, adjust the logic so that the minimum proposals required are a function of the smallest among the amount of participating validators or the core validator set size. Note that dynamically adjusting the size of the core validator set in relation to the total number of validators may not be enough, as a malicious validator may purposely decide not to participate in consensus.

Longterm, run a threat modeling exercise covering the interaction of users with permissioned and permissionless components within the system. This exercise should identify as system's specific risks and the actors that could take advantage of them, both outside (e.g., validators, third-party providers) and from within (e.g. contract operators). `hashey` 41 Elixir Protocol Security Assessment PUBLIC

15. Lack of two-step process for ownership transfers Severity: Informational Difficulty: High  
Type: Data Validation Finding ID: TOB-ELIXIR-15 Target: `elixir-protocol/contracts/src/*` Description  
When called, the `transferOwnership` function immediately sets the contract owner to the provided address. The use of a single step to make such a critical change is error-prone; if the function is called with erroneous input, the results could be irreversible or difficult to recover from. The issue is present in the following contracts: 

- Core
- DisputeManager
- ELX
- Pool
- PoolManager
- StakeManager

 The requirement for a separate acceptance step before role transfer is completed will guarantee that the new owner can properly execute transactions on the contract as it will be administering.  
Exploit Scenario Alice invokes `transferOwnership` to change the contract owner but accidentally enters the wrong address. She permanently loses the ability to set important system parameters and upgrade the contract.  
Recommendations  
Shortterm, implement a two-step process for all irreversible critical operations. Consider using the `Ownable2StepUpgradeable` `OpenZeppelin` dependency instead of `OwnableUpgradeable`

for ownership management. Longterm, identify and document all possible actions that can be taken by privileged accounts, along with their associated risks. This will facilitate reviews of the code base and prevent future mistakes. hashey 42 Elixir Protocol Security Assessment PUBLIC

16. Response payload to authentication challenge is not signed Severity: Informational Difficulty: High  
Type: Cryptography Finding ID: TOB-ELIXIR-16 Target: elixir-protocol/protocol/services/strategy\_executor/strategy\_executor/elixir\_api.py , elixir-protocol-api/app/api/services/auth.py Description During the authentication process, the strategy executor signs a challenge message with a nonce and returns it to the API to obtain credentials, together with other information such as its IP address, display name, beneficiary address, and application version. However, these additional details are not covered by the signature, so their authenticity could be compromised. This is, however, unlikely, as the exchange occurs over a TLS connection. Exploit Scenario An attacker on the same network as the strategy executor performs a machine-in-the-middle (MitM) attack to intercept and modify the challenge-response authentication messages. They do so by taking advantage of a compromised or malicious root CA installed on the strategy executor machine. The strategy executor requests a challenge from the server, signs it, and returns it together with their IP address, display name, beneficiary address, and application version. The attacker changes the beneficiary address to a different one under their control before passing the message over to the /verify endpoint. The server accepts the challenge, uses the modified beneficiary address, and pays out the validator reward to the attacker. Recommendations Short term, include these extra details or a hash of them as part of the signed message, so that the protocol API can verify that they have not been tampered with. Consider pinning the certificates used by the protocol API in the strategy executor to ensure that the communications cannot be sent to an unexpected party. hashey 43 Elixir Protocol Security Assessment PUBLIC

17. API does not validate display\_name and app\_version Severity: Undetermined Difficulty: High  
Type: Data Validation Finding ID: TOB-ELIXIR-17 Target: elixir-protocol-api/app/api/services/auth.py Description During the authentication process, the protocol API server receives a "display\_name" string and the application version string provided by the strategy executor. These strings are arbitrary and they are not validated either in length or contents. An attacker may send large amounts of data to cause a denial of service, or abuse the unsanitized storage for malicious payloads. Exploit Scenario A malicious strategy executor submits a cross-site scripting (XSS) payload as their display name. That string is then rendered unsafely in a future administrative panel developed by Elixir, and malicious code gets executed in that context. Recommendations Short term, ensure that both strings conform to an expected format and maximum length, and sanitize their contents before storing them. Long term, validate and sanitize any untrusted, user-provided input that is received by the system. hashey 44 Elixir Protocol Security Assessment PUBLIC

18. All on-chain events replayed upon startup Severity: Medium Difficulty: High  
Type: Denial of Service Finding ID: TOB-ELIXIR-18 Target: feed\_aggregator , message\_recorder , metrics\_recorder , strategy\_metrics services Description The feed\_aggregator , message\_recorder , metrics\_recorder , and strategy\_metrics services replay on startup all events from the beginning of the history (figure 18.1). This makes these services vulnerable to denial of service if the history takes a long time to process. In other words, the progress in processing events is not persisted throughout restart of a service. onchain\_feed\_consumer=SharedQueueConsumer( brokers=config.event\_bus\_brokers, topics=config.event\_bus\_onchain\_feed\_topics, shared\_data\_queue=shared\_data\_queue, offset=OFFSET\_MODE\_EARLIEST, )  
Figure 18.1: The consumer configuration responsible for replaying all events ( elixir-protocol/services/feed\_aggregator/feed\_aggregator/\_\_main\_\_.py#L35 -L40 ) Exploit Scenario An attacker finds a way to persist a large amount of events that are reprocessed on startup in one of the vulnerable services. The attacker either finds a way to crash the service or waits for the service to restart. The service takes a long time to start and it is not serving its purpose during that time. Recommendations Short term, update the services to persist the state built from the event stream. This can happen every event, after a batch of events, or periodically, depending on the performance requirements. It is important to persist the event stream offset atomically with the state built on the events up to the offset. If the cached state data schema changes, it can be either migrated or purged (since the event stream is the authoritative source). If it is purged, the state has to be rebuilt; however, since this is a one-time event, it should not significantly increase the risk of a denial-of-service attack. hashey 45 Elixir Protocol Security Assessment PUBLIC

Long term, add tests that check data integrity between the event history and the cached state and ensure that services are starting in a timely manner even in the face of massive amounts of data. hashey 46 Elixir Protocol Security Assessment PUBLIC

19.RedpandaexposedtotheInternet Severity:HighDifficulty:High Type:ConfigurationFindingID:TOB-ELIXIR-19 Target: Redpanda Description TheconsequenceofElixir'soff-chainsystemarchitectureisthattheRedpandabrokeris exposedtotheinternet,asthestrategyexecutorsconnectdirectlytothebroker.This makesRedpandaeasilyaccessibletoattackers,astheycandirectlytrytoexploittheservice overthenetwork.Theconsequencesofthisdesigndecisionalsomanifestinfindings TOB-ELIXIR-9andTOB-ELIXIR-20. ExploitScenario Aremotelyexploitablevulnerability,suchasCVE-2023-50976,isdiscoveredinRedpanda. BecauseRedpandaaisaccessibleoverthenetworktoanyone,attackerseasilyexploitthis vulnerability,potentiallygainingwriteaccessorperformingadenial-of-serviceattack. Recommendations Shortterm,hideRedpandainstancessotheyareaccessibleonlyontheinternalnetworkto therelevantsservices.UseACLstolimitaccesstotheminimumrequiredbyeachservice. AddfunctionalitytotheAPIServicestreamdataframestoandreceiveorderproposals fromstrategyexecutors. Longterm,alwayslimitpublicnetworkaccessasmuchaspossibleandexposeonlythenecessaryAPIs. hasheyeye 47ElixirProtocolSecurityAssessment PUBLIC

20.APIhasadminaccesstoRedpanda Severity:HighDifficulty:High Type:ConfigurationFindingID:TOB-ELIXIR-20 Target:APIService,Redpanda Description TheAPIServicehasadminaccesstoRedpandaconfigureusers(figure20.1)andACLs (figure20.2).Havingssuchpowerfulcapabilityinaserviceexposedtotheinternetputs Redpandaatahighriskofexploitation. defcreate\_user(self,address:str): """Createanewuser.""" username=f"user\_{address}" password=secrets.token\_urlsafe(32) #createuser self.logger.info("Creatinguser") create\_response=requests.post( f"{self.config.admin\_event\_bus\_brokers}/v1/security/users", json={"username":username,"password":password,"algorithm": "SCRAM-SHA-256"}, ) #checkresponsecode ifcreate\_response.status\_code==500and"Useralreadyexists"in create\_response.text: #updateuserinformation update\_response=requests.put( f"{self.config.admin\_event\_bus\_brokers}/v1/security/users/{username}", json={"password":password,"algorithm":"SCRAM-SHA-256"}, ) Figure20.1:APIusesadminendpointstoconfigureRedpandausers ( elixir-protocol-api/app/api/services/auth.py#L96-L123 ) defcreate\_acls(self,username:str,ip\_address:str): """CreateACLsinredpandaforuser.""" self.logger.info("CreatingACLs") admin\_client=KafkaAdminClient(bootstrap\_servers=self.config.event\_bus\_brokers) read\_acl=ACL(principal=f"User:{username}", host=ip\_address, operation=ACLOperation.READ, hasheyeye 48ElixirProtocolSecurityAssessment PUBLIC

```
permission_type=ACLPermissionType.ALLOW,
resource_pattern=ResourcePattern(ResourceType.TOPIC,DATA_FRAME_TOPICS), ) write_acl=ACL(
principal=f"User:{username}", host=ip_address, operation=ACLOperation.WRITE,
permission_type=ACLPermissionType.ALLOW,
resource_pattern=ResourcePattern(ResourceType.TOPIC,ORDER_PROPOSAL_TOPICS), ) try:
admin_client.create_acls([read_acl,write_acl]) exceptExceptionase:
self.logger.error("ErrorcreatingACLs",exception=e)
raiseHTTPException(status_code=500,detail="BROKER_ERROR")
Figure20.1:APIusesadminendpointstoconfigureACLs ( elixir-protocol-api/app/api/services/auth.py#L125-L150 ) ExploitScenario
AnattackerfindsawaytoexecutecodeinthecontextofanAPIServiceandusesitto
reconfigureRedpandatoeasilyaccessibleforanywrites. Recommendations
Shortterm,hideRedpandainsideinternalnetwork,asdetailedintheshort-term recommendationforTOB-ELIXIR-20.Thiswillremovetheneedfordynamicconfigurationof
RedpandausersandACLsfromtheAPI,thusremovingtheneedforhavingadminaccess.
Longterm,avoidgivingthepowerofadministrativetaskstoservicesexposedtothe internet. hasheyeye
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```

21.Useofunpinnedthird-partyDockerimagesandactionsonworkflows Severity:LowDifficulty:High Type:ConfigurationFindingID:TOB-ELIXIR-21 Target: elixir-protocol/.github/workflows/{abis.yaml,contracts.yml,strategy\_executor.yml} ,multipleDockerfiles Description Severalworkflowsintherepositorydirectlyusethird-partyactionssuchas stefanzweifel/git-auto-commit-action@v5 , foundry-rs/foundry-toolchain@v1 , docker/setup-qemu-action@v2 , docker/setup-buildx-action@v2 , docker/login-action@v2 , docker/build-push-action@v3 ,and juliangruber/read-file-action@v1 .Someof theseworkflowsaveprivilegedaccesstosecretssuchasDockerHubtokens,orwrite accesstotherepository. - uses:stefanzweifel/git-auto-commit-action@v5 with: commit\_message: ⌀ autoupdatingABIs Figure21.1:Anexampleworkflowusingathird-partyactionreferencedbyitag ( elixir-protocol/.github/workflows/abis.yaml#57-59 ) Gittagsaremutable.Thismeansthatwhile,forexample, juliangruber/read-file-action is pinned to v1 ,theupstreammay silentlychange thereferencepointedto by v1 .Thiscanincludemaliciousre-tags,whichmaycauseElixir's

workflows to suddenly start executing malicious code. GitHub's security hardening guidelines for third-party actions encourage developers to pin third-party actions to a full-length commit hash. Generally excluded from this are "official" actions under the actions organization; however, these other actions are not developed by GitHub. Several Docker files in the repository exhibit an analogous issue: their FROM lines indicate an image tag name that may change on the server side (figure 21.2). To prevent these images from silently changing, these should be pinned with a SHA256 hash. [hashey 50 Elixir Protocol Security Assessment PUBLIC](#)

`FROM python:3.10.12-slim-buster` **Figure 21.2: An example Docker file using a third-party image referenced by its tag (elixir-protocol/services/feed\_aggregator/Dockerfile#L1)**  
**Exploit Scenario** An attacker (or compromised maintainer) silently replaces the `v5` tag on the `stefanzweifel/git-auto-commit-action` repository with a malicious action that injects malicious code into the repository. When the "Generate ABIs" workflow is run, malicious code is committed and uploaded to the repository. **Recommendations**  
**Short term**, replace the current version tag references used in the workflow for third-party actions with full-length commit hashes. Similarly, pin Docker base images by their full hashes.  
**Long term**, use Dependabot's support for GitHub Actions to keep third-party action commit hashes up to date, complemented with maintainer reviews to ensure their safety. Incorporate static analysis tools such as Semgrep into the CI pipeline to detect issues earlier on. [hashey 51 Elixir Protocol Security Assessment PUBLIC](#)

**22. Absence of access control on pool creation function** Severity: Informational Difficulty: Low  
Type: Access Controls Finding ID: TOB-ELIXIR-22 Target: `protocol/contracts/src/PoolManager.sol`  
Description Pools act as a form of on-chain data storage, with the `poolManager` contract responsible for maintaining the record of configuration changes over time. The `createPool` function is used to create and add new pools (records) to the contract's storage. However, this function currently lacks proper access controls, allowing any user to create and add new pools.  
`85 function createPool( 86 address _baseToken, 87 address _quoteToken, 88 IPool.Exchange _exchange, 89 bytes32 _strategy, 90 string calldata _params 91) external returns (address pool) { 92 // Get ERC20 instance of baseToken to get decimals. 93 ERC20 baseToken = ERC20(_baseToken); 94 ERC20 quoteToken = ERC20(_quoteToken); 95 96 // Define pool parameters 97 PoolConstants.PoolParameters memory poolParameters = PoolConstants.PoolParameters({ 98 owner: msg.sender, // Owner of pool 99 baseToken: baseToken, // Token to be paid 100 quoteToken: quoteToken, // Token to be received 101 exchange: _exchange, // Exchange 102 strategy: _strategy, // Strategy 103 params: _params // Parameters 104 }); 105 106 // Create pool and save its address 107 pool = address(new Pool(abi.encode(poolParameters))); 108 pools.push(pool); 109 110 emit PoolCreated(pool, poolParameters); 111 }` **Figure 22.1: contracts/src/PoolManager.sol#L85-L111** This could expose the protocol to potential issues: [hashey 52 Elixir Protocol Security Assessment PUBLIC](#)

- It allows users to submit garbage pool data to the contract.
- It creates an opportunity for recreating existing pools with potentially incorrect data or parameters.

Legitimate pool creation transactions can be front-run with fake ones with similar data to trick the off-chain monitoring component into consuming the maliciously altered pool data. **Recommendations**  
**Short term**, consider adding the appropriate access controls to the `createPool` function.  
**Long term**, carefully review all critical functions within the contract to ensure correct access controls are in place, and add confirmation tests to verify the safeguards in place. [hashey 53 Elixir Protocol Security Assessment PUBLIC](#)

#### A. Vulnerability Categories

The following tables describe the vulnerability categories, severity levels, and difficulty levels used in this document.

Vulnerability Category	Description
Access Controls	Insufficient authorization or assessment of rights
Auditing and Logging	Insufficient auditing of actions or logging of problems
Authentication	Improper identification of users
Configuration	Misconfigured servers, devices, or software components
Cryptography	Breach of system confidentiality or integrity
Data Exposure	Exposure of sensitive information
Data Validation	Improper reliance on the structure or values of data
Denial of Service	As a system failure with an availability impact
Error Reporting	Insecure or insufficient reporting of error conditions
Patching	Use of an outdated software package or library
Session Management	Improper identification of authenticated users
Testing	Insufficient test methodology or test coverage
Timing	Race conditions or other order-of-operations flaws
Undefined Behavior	Undefined behavior triggered within the system

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SeverityLevels SeverityDescription  
 InformationalTheissuedoesnotposean immediateriskbutisrelevanttosecuritybest practices.  
 UndeterminedTheextentoftheriskwasnotdeterminedduringthisengagement.  
 LowTheriskissmallorisnotonetheclienthasindicatedisimportant.  
 MediumUserinformationisatrisk;exploitationcouldposereputational,legal,or moderatefinancialrisks.  
 HighTheflawcouldaffectnumeroususersandhaveseriousreputational,legal, orfinancialimplications.  
 DifficultyLevels DifficultyDescription  
 UndeterminedThedifficultyofexploitationwasnotdeterminedduringthisengagement.  
 LowTheflawiswellknown;publictoolsforitsexploitationexistorcanbe scripted.  
 MediumAnattackermustwriteanexploitorwillneedin-depthknowledgeofthe system.  
 HighAnattackermusthaveprivilegedaccesstothesystem,mayneedtoknow  
 complexttechnicaldetails,ormustdiscoverotherweaknessestoexploitthis issue. hashey  
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#### B.CodeMaturityCategories

Thefollowingtablesdescribethecodematuritycategoriesandratingcriteriausedinthis document.

CodeMaturityCategories	CategoryDescription
Arithmetic	Theproperuseofmathematicaloperationsandsemantics
Auditing	Theuseofeventauditingandloggingtosupportmonitoring Authentication/ AccessControls
Theuseofrobustaccesscontrolstohandleidentificationand authorizationandtoensuresafeinteractionswiththesystem	Complexity Management
Thepresenceofclearstructuresdesignedtomanagesystemcomplexity, includingtheseparationofsystemlogicintoclearlydefinedfunctions	
Configuration	Theconfigurationofsystemcomponentsinaccordancewithbest practices Cryptographyand KeyManagement
Theuseofrobustmechanismsforkeygenerationanddistribution	
DataHandling	Theafehandlingofuserinputsanddataprocessedbythesystem
Decentralization	Thepresenceofadecentralizedgovernancestructureformitigating insidertthreatsandmanagingrisksposedbycontractupgrades
Documentation	Thepresenceofcomprehensiveandreadablecodebaseddocumentation Low-Level Manipulation
Thejustifieduseofinlineassemblyandlow-levelcalls	
Maintenance	Thetimelymaintenanceofsystemcomponentstomitigaterisk MemorySafety andErrorHandling
Thepresenceofmemorysafetyandrobusterror-handlingmechanisms	Testingand Verification
Thepresenceofrobusttestingprocedures(e.g.,unittests,integration tests,andverificationmethods)andsufficienttestcoverage	Transaction Ordering
Thesystem'sresistancetotransaction-orderingattacks	hashey 56ElixirProtocolSecurityAssessment PUBLIC

RatingCriteria	RatingDescription
Strong	Noissueswerefound,andthesystemexceedsindustrystandards.
Satisfactory	Minorissueswerefound,butthesystemiscompliantwithbestpractices.
Moderate	Someissueshatmayaffectsystemsafetywerefound.
Weak	Manyissueshataaffectsystemsafetywerefound.
Missing	Arequiredcomponentismissing,significantlyaffectingsystemsafety.
NotApplicable	Thecategoryisnotapplicabletothisreview.
NotConsidered	Thecategorywasnotconsideredinthisreview. Further Investigation Required
Furtherinvestigationisrequiredtoreachameaningfulconclusion.	hashey 57ElixirProtocolSecurityAssessment PUBLIC

#### C.CodeQualityRecommendations

Thefollowingrecommendationsarenotassociatedwithanyspecificvulnerabilities. However,theywillenhancecodereadabilityandmaypreventtheintroductionof vulnerabilitiesinthefuture. •

- Unuseddependencies.Thefollowingcontractsareinheritedbutneverused. Reviewtheseand reassesswhethertheyarerequired.
  - PoolManager.ReentrancyGuard
  - Pool.ReentrancyGuard
- ELX.ERC20VotesUpgradeable
- Error-proneconstants.TheFeeConstantslibrarydefinesa DEFAULT\_FEE\_TIMESLICE\_SECONDS constantequaltothenumberofsecondsper week.Solidityprovidesacollectionofsufficeshataallowsonetodefinesuch constantsinawaythatisslesserrorproneandeasiertoread.Considerreplacingthe value 604800 with 1weeks .
- Unusedstoragevariableandsetterfunction.The minimumStakeAmount state variableanditssetterfunctionaredefinedinthe Core contractbutarenottused. Carefullyreviewtheseandremoveanydeadorunusedcode.

```

126 ///@noticeSettheminimumstakeamounttobecomeavalidator.
127 ///@paramnewMinimumStakeAmountStakeamount.
128functionsetMinimumStakeAmount(uint256newMinimumStakeAmount) 129external
130onlyRole(RoleConstants.STAKE_MANAGER_ADMIN) 131{ 132minimumStakeAmount=newMinimumStakeAmount;
133emitMinimumStakeAmountUpdated(newMinimumStakeAmount); 134} FigureC.1:
contracts/src/Core.sol#L126-L134 • Extractrepeatedlogicintoahelperfunction.The penalizeValidator

```

```

method of the DisputeManager contracthashighcyclomaticcomplexity.Itcanbe
simplifiedbycallingahelperfunctioninsteadofrepeatingthefollowinglogic. //Signermustbeavalidator.
boolisValidator=false; //Checkthattheproofsignerisavalidatorandnotjailed.
for(uint256j=0;j<consensus.validatorsEnrolled.validators.length;j++){
if(consensus.validatorsEnrolled.validators[j]==proofSigner){ isValidator=true; break; hashey
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} } FigureC.2:Logicfromthe penalizeValidator methodthatcouldbeextractedintoan internalhelpermethod
• ReviewandcorrectPythontypinghints.Weobservedseveralinstancesinthe
codebasewhereafunctionhasanoptionalargumentwitha None defaultvalue;
however,istypeindicatesitcannotbe None .FigureC.2showsonesuchexample.
ThiscanconfusetypecheckersandIDESand,forinstance,resultinincorrectdead codehighlighting.Use
typing.Optional (orthenewer X|None syntax)to conveytypescorrectly.
asyncdefproduce_message(self,message:Any,topic_name:str=None,key:str= None,headers:Any=None):
iftopic_nameisNone: topic_name=generate_topic_name(category=self.producer_topic_name) ifkeyisNone:
key=generate_message_key() FigureC.3:Both topic_name and key
aretypedasstrings;however,theirdefaultvalueisnota string( elixir-
protocol/shared/shared/event_bus/async_producer.py#32-37 ) •
Preferusingsys.exit(...)overexit(...)whenexitingtheprogram.The exit(...)
functionisahelperfortheinteractiveshellandmaynotbeavailableon allPythonimplementations. •
Quotevariableusesinshellscriptswheresplittingisundesirable.Variable expansionsmustbedouble-
quotedsoastopreventbeingsplitintomultiplepieces
accordingtowhitespaceorwhicheverseparatorisspecifiedbytheIFSvariable. • Use apt-get insteadof apt
.SeveralDockerfilesinvoke apt toperformpackage management. apt isanend-
usertoolanditscommandlineinterfacestabilityisnot guaranteed.Using apt-get
ispreferredwhenscripting,asitretainsbackwards compatibility. • Alwaysperform apt-getupdate
togetherwiththe apt-getinstall command.Runningthecommandsseparatelymaycauseissuesorleadto out-of-
datepackageinstallsdueto layercaching. •
Correcttheuseofgetattr(...)defaultvalueswhensortingvalidatorsand
rewards.Ifthespecifiedproperty(secondargument)isnotfoundontheobject
(firstargument),thedefaultvalue(thirdargument)isreturnedinstead.However,
thisargumentisnotareplacementproperty,butadefaultvalue.Considerreplacing
theinstancesinfiguresC.3andC.4with validator.apy and reward.amount , respectively. hashey
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sorted_validators=sorted( validators, key=lambdavalidator:getattr(validator,order_by,"apy"),
reverse=order_dir=="desc", ) FigureC.4:If order_by doesnotdescribeavalidpropertyof validator
,thestring "apy" will beusedforthesortcomparisons. ( elixir-protocol-
api/app/api/services/validator.py#46-50 ) sorted_rewards=sorted( rewards,
key=lambdareward:getattr(reward,order_by,"amount"), reverse=order_dir=="desc", ) FigureC.5:If
order_by doesnotdescribeavalidpropertyof reward ,thestring "amount" will
beusedforthesortcomparisons. ( elixir-protocol-api/app/api/services/rewards.py#57-61 ) hashey
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D.AutomatedAnalysisToolConfiguration
Thisappendixdescribesthesetupoftheautomatedanalysis toolsusedduringthisaudit.
Thoughstaticanalysis toolsfrequentlyreportfalsepositives,theydetectcertaincategories
ofissues,suchasmemoryleaks,misspecifiedformatstrings,andtheuseofunsafeAPIs,
withessentiallyperfectprecision.Werecommendperiodicallyrunningthesestaticanalysis
toolsandreviewingtheirfindings. Slither ToinstallSlither,weused pip byrunning python3-
mpipinstallslither-analyzer . WeusedSlithertodetectcommonissuesandanti-
patternsinthecodebase.Although
Slitherdidnotdiscoveranysevereissuesduringthisreview,someinformationaland code-
qualityissuesweredetected.IntegratingSlitherintothe project'stestingenvironment
canhelpfindotherissues thatmaybeintroducedduringfurtherdevelopmentandwillhelp
improvetheoverallqualityofthesmartcontracts'code. slither.--no-fail-pedantic--exclude='naming-
convention,solc-version' --filter-pathslib,script,test FigureD.1:AnexampleSlitherconfiguration
Integrating slither-action intothe project'sCIPipelinecanautomatethisprocess. Bandit
ToinstallBandit,weused pip byrunning python3-mpipinstallbandit .
AfterinstallingBandit,weusedthefollowingcommandtoanalyzebothrepositories: bandit-rrepository-
folder/ Asthismayresultinmanyfindings,itispossibletoreignoresomeofthecodebyusingthe -x
flaginBandit.Thefollowingexampleignoresthe scripts.py andtestfiles,aswellasthe
defaultBanditignoreset: bandittargets/-r-x
".svn,CVS,.bzz,.hg,.git,__pycache__,.tox,.eggs,*egg,tests,script s.py" Semgrep
ToinstallSemgrep,weused pip byrunning python3-mpipinstallsemgrep . hashey
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```

To run the projects (running multiple predefined rules simultaneously by providing multiple `--config` arguments): `semgrep --config "p/hashey" --config "p/ci" --config "p/python" --config "p/security-audit" --metrics=off`. We also used `semgrep-rules-manager` to fetch and run other third-party rules. We recommend integrating Semgrep into the project's CI/CD pipeline. To thoroughly understand the Semgrep tool, refer to the [Hashey Testing Handbook](#), where we aim to streamline the use of Semgrep and improve security testing effectiveness. Also, consider doing the following:

- Limit resultsto error severity only by using the `--severity ERROR` flag.
- Focus first on rules with high confidence and medium- or high-impact metadata.
- Use the SARIF format (by using the `--sarif` Semgrep argument) with the SARIF Viewer for Visual Studio Code extension. This will make it easier to review the analysis results and drill down into specific issues to understand their impact and severity. CodeQL We installed CodeQL by following CodeQL's installation guide. After installing CodeQL, we ran the following command to create the project database for the Elixir repositories: `codeql database create elixir.db --language=python`. We then ran the following command to query the database: `codeql database analyze elixir.db --format=sarif-latest --output=codeql_res.sarif --python-lgtm-full python-security-and-quality python-security-experimental`. For more information about CodeQL, refer to the CodeQL chapter of the [Hashey Testing Handbook](#).

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**E. Mutation Testing** Mutation tests make changes to each line of a target contract's source code and re-run the test suite against each change. Changes that result in test failures indicate adequate test coverage, while changes that do not cause tests to fail indicate gaps in test coverage. Mutation testing allows auditors to focus their review on areas of the codebase that are most likely to contain latent bugs, and it helps developers identify and add missing tests. Slither version 0.10.2 introduced a built-in Solidity mutation testing tool with first-class support for Foundry projects. We ran a mutation testing campaign against the `smart` contracts using the following command: `slither-mutate ./contracts/src --test-cmd='forgetest' --ignore-dirs='interfaces,constants'`. Figure E.1: A command that runs a mutation testing campaign against `smart` contracts in the `protocol` repository. Note that the overall runtime of this campaign is approximately 40 minutes on a consumer-grade laptop. An abbreviated, illustrative example of a mutation test output file is shown in Figure E.2. `INFO:Slither-Mutate:Mutating contract PoolManager` `INFO:Slither-Mutate: [RR]Line125: 'return pools' => 'revert()' -> UNCAUGHT` `INFO:Slither-Mutate: [CR]Line62: '_disableInitializers()' => '//_disableInitializers()' -> UNCAUGHT` `INFO:Slither-Mutate: [CR]Line71: '__UUPSUpgradeable_init()' => '//__UUPSUpgradeable_init()' -> UNCAUGHT` `INFO:Slither-Mutate: [CR]Line110: 'emitPoolCreated(pool, PoolParameters)' => '//emitPoolCreated(pool, PoolParameters)' -> UNCAUGHT` `INFO:Slither-Mutate: [CR]Line120: 'emitPoolUpdated(address(pool), params)' => '//emitPoolUpdated(address(pool), params)' --> UNCAUGHT` `ERROR:Slither-Mutate: list index out of range` `INFO:Slither-Mutate: Done mutating PoolManager.` `INFO:Slither-Mutate: Revert mutants: 1 uncaught of 9 (11.111111111111111%)` `INFO:Slither-Mutate: Comment mutants: 4 uncaught of 8 (50.0%)` `INFO:Slither-Mutate: ZeroTweak mutants analyzed`. Figure E.2: Abbreviated output from the mutation testing campaign on `PoolManager.sol`. In summary, the following features of the `PoolManager` contract lack sufficient tests:

- The `pools` getter method is not executed by any tests, as indicated by the uncaught `revert` mutant on line 125.

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- Note that tests validate the initialization logic of implementation and proxy contracts. When important deployment steps are recommended on lines 62 and 71, the tests still pass.
- Event emissions, such as those on lines 110 and 120, are not validated by tests. We recommend that the Elixir team review the existing tests and add additional verification that would catch the aforementioned types of mutations. Then, use scripts similar to that provided in Figure E.1 to re-run a mutation testing campaign to ensure that the added tests provide adequate coverage.

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## F. Incident Response Recommendations

This section provides recommendations on formulating an incident response plan.

- Identify the parties (either specific people or roles) responsible for implementing the mitigations when an issue occurs (e.g., deploying smart contracts, pausing contracts, upgrading the frontend, etc.).
- Document internal processes for addressing situations in which a deployed remedy does not work or introduces a new bug.
- Consider documenting a plan of action for handling failed remediations.
- Clearly describe the intended contract deployment process.
- Outline the circumstances under which Elixir Technologies Ltd will compensate users affected by an issue (if any).
- Issues that warrant compensation could include an individual or aggregate

Loss or loss resulting from user error, a contract flaw, or a third-party contract flaw. • Document how the team plans to stay up to date on new issues that could affect the system; awareness of such issues will inform future development work and help the team secure the deployment toolchain and the external on-chain and off-chain services that the system relies on. ◦

Identify sources of vulnerability news for each language and component used in the system, and subscribe to updates from each source. Consider creating a private Discord channel in which a bot will post the latest vulnerability news; this will provide the team with a way to track all updates in one place. Lastly, consider assigning certain team members to track news about vulnerabilities in specific system components. •

Determine when the team will seek assistance from external parties (e.g., auditors, affected users, other protocol developers) and how it will onboard them. ◦

Effective remediation of certain issues may require collaboration with external parties. •

Define contract behavior that would be considered abnormal by off-chain monitoring solutions. hashey

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It is best practice to perform periodic dry runs of scenarios outlined in the incident response plan to find omissions and opportunities for improvement and to develop “muscle memory.” Additionally, document the frequency with which the team should perform dry runs of various scenarios, and perform dry runs of more likely scenarios more regularly. Create a template to be filled out with descriptions of any necessary improvements after each dry run. hashey

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## 6. Security Best Practices for Using Multisignature Wallets

Consensus requirements for sensitive actions, such as upgrading contracts, are meant to mitigate the risks of the following: •

- Anyone overruling the judgment of others
- Failures caused by anyone’s mistake
- Failures caused by the compromise of anyone’s credentials

For example, in a 2-of-3 multisignature wallet, the authority to upgrade the StakeManager contract would require a consensus of two individuals in possession of two of the wallet’s three private keys. For this model to be useful, the following conditions are required:

1. The private keys must be stored or held separately, and access to each one must be limited to a unique individual.
2. If the keys are physically held by third-party custodians (e.g., a bank), multiple keys should not be stored with the same custodian. (Doing so would violate requirement #1.)
3. The person asked to provide the second and final signature on a transaction (i.e., the cosigner) should refer to a pre-established policy specifying the conditions for approving the transaction by signing it with his or her key.
4. The cosigners should also verify that the half-signed transaction was generated willingly by the intended holder of the first signature’s key.

Requirement #3 prevents the cosigner from becoming merely a “deputy” acting on behalf of the first signer (forfeiting the decision-making responsibility to the first signer and defeating the security model). If the cosigner can refuse to approve the transaction for any reason, the due-diligence conditions for approval may be unclear. That is why a policy for validating transactions is needed. A verification policy could include the following: •

- A protocol for handling a request to cosign a transaction (e.g., a half-signed transaction will be accepted only via an approved channel)
- A allowlist of specific addresses allowed to be the payee of a transaction
- A limit on the amount of funds spent in a single transaction or in a single day

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Requirement #4 mitigates the risks associated with a single stolen key. For example, say that an attacker somehow acquired the unlocked Ledger Nano S of one of the signatories. A voice call from the cosigner to the initiating signatory to confirm the transaction would reveal that the key had been stolen and that the transaction should not be cosigned. If the signatory were under an active threat of violence, he or she could use a duress code (a codeword, a phrase, or another signal agreed upon in advance) to covertly alert the others that the transaction had not been initiated willingly, without alerting the attacker. hashey

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H. Fix Review Results When undertaking a fix review, hashey reviews the fixes implemented for issues identified in the original report. This work involves a review of specific areas of the source code and system configuration, not comprehensive analysis of the system.

On September 6, 2024, hashey reviewed the fixes and mitigations implemented by the Elixir Technologies Ltd. team for the issues identified in this report. We reviewed each fix to determine its effectiveness in resolving the associated issue.

In summary, all of the 22 issues described in this report were resolved by Elixir Technologies Ltd. For additional information, please see the Detailed Fix Review Results below. ID Title Status

1UseofoutdateddependenciesResolved 2UseofHTTPrequestswithouttimeoutResolved  
3PrivatekeysstoredinenvironmentvariablesResolved 4Majorityproposalgroupwillalwaysatisfyminimumsize  
requirement Resolved 5AuthenticationatriskofreplayattacksifmisconfiguredResolved  
6StrategyexecutordoesnotvalidatepayloadtosignResolved  
7MissingIPaddressvalidationallowsbypassingRedpandaACLResolved  
8UseofassertstatementinproductioncodeResolved  
9RedpandaaccountsandassociatedpermissionsareneverrevokedResolved  
10DelegatorsscanredelegatestakestojaileddelegateeResolved  
11AttackerscancauseslashingtobecomeeconomicallyinfeasibleResolved hashey  
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12Delegatorscanimmediatelyundelegatebeforetheirdelegateeis jailed Resolved  
13MinorityvalidatorsmayparticipateinconsensusprocessResolved  
14AninfluxofnewstrategyexecutorsmayhaltconsensusResolved 15Lackoftwo-  
stepprocessforownershiptransfersResolved  
16ResponsepayloadtoauthenticationchallengeisnotsignedResolved  
17APIdoesnotvalidatedisplay\_nameandapp\_versionResolved 18Allon-  
chaineventsreplayeduponstartupResolved 19RedpandaexposedtotheInternetResolved  
20APIhasadminaccesstoRedpandaResolved 21Useofunpinnedthird-  
partyDockerimagesandactionsonworkflowsResolved  
22AbsenceofaccesscontrolsonpoolcreationfunctionResolved hashey 70ElixirProtocolSecurityAssessment  
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DetailedFixReviewResults TOB-ELIXIR-1:Useofoutdateddependencies  
ResolvedinPR465.ThePythondependencieswereupdated. TOB-ELIXIR-2:UseofHTTPrequestswithouttimeout  
Resolvedincommit6c0031d.A45-secondtimeoutwasaddedtotherequests. TOB-ELIXIR-  
3:Privatekeysstoredinenvironmentvariables  
ResolvedinPR572,PR478,andPR549.TheservicesnowissuesignrequeststoGoogle  
CloudKeyManagementServicewheretheprivatekeymaterialisstored.Thevalidatorsare  
providedwithmultipleoptionsforkeymaterialstorage,includingthemanagedcloud solutions.Theless-  
safemethodsarestillavailable,althoughtheyarediscouragedbecause  
theElixirProtocolteamhasnocontroloverthevalidatorsruntimeenvironment.We  
recommenddocumentingallthekeymanagementoptionssotheusersareawareoftherisks. TOB-ELIXIR-  
4:Majorityproposalgroupwillalwaysatisfyminimumsizerequirement  
Resolvedincommita949bc1.Thecalculationof minimum\_requirement wasfixedand nowisafractionofthe  
total\_proposals . TOB-ELIXIR-5:Authenticationatriskofreplayattacksifmisconfigured  
Resolvedincommit481a55a.Thecodewasrefactored,andtheRediserviceisinjectedas  
adependency.Thenonceisnolongeremptywhenserviceismisconfigured. TOB-ELIXIR-  
6:Strategyexecutordoesnotvalidatepayloadtosign  
ResolvedinPR474.Themessagestructurevalidationwasaddedtothestategyexecutor code. TOB-ELIXIR-  
7:MissingIPaddressvalidationallowsbypassingRedpandaACL  
Resolvedincommits0dbd7d6and38db652.Thearchitecturehaschanged,andIP  
addressesarenolongercollectedfromvalidators,removingtheneedforvalidation. TOB-ELIXIR-  
8:Useofassertstatementinproductioncode  
ResolvedinPR487.Theassertstatementswerereplacedwiththeexplicitraisestatements  
underviolatingconditions. TOB-ELIXIR-9:Redpandaaccountsandassociatedpermissionsareneverrevoked  
ResolvedinPR42.Thearchitecturehaschanged,andAPIInolongerconfiguresthe  
RedpandaACLs.Theaccessrevocationmechanismisnolongerneeded. TOB-ELIXIR-  
10:Delegatorsscanredelegatestakestojaileddelegatee  
Resolvedincommita0ae84e.Anadditionalcheckhasbeenaddedtothe \_updateDelegation  
methodthatpreventsouserfromdelegatingtoanaddresshathas beenjailed. hashey  
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TOB-ELIXIR-11:Attackerscancauseslashingtobecomeeconomicallyinfeasible Resolvedincommitfd18709.The  
slash methodofthe Core contractnowacceptsalistof  
accountsandlistofamounts,respectively,toslash,withappropriateverificationoflist  
lengths.Thisdecreasesthegasoverheadfromslashingalargenumberofaccounts.  
Werecommendfurtheranalysisofgasusage.Reviewtheshort-termrecommendationfor  
thisissueandconsiderwhetheritwouldbeacceptabletoslashthebalanceofaccounts  
downtozeroifandonlyifaccountsareflaggedasmisbehavinginthespecificway  
describedbythisissue.Doingsowouldsignificantlylowerthegasusageofslashingmany  
accountsinsuchscenarios. TOB-ELIXIR-12:Delegatorscanimmediatelyundelegatebeforetheirdelegateeis  
jailed Resolvedincommitaf5634d.Eventlistenersinthe onchain\_stake\_manager\_feed servicenowrespondto  
SignalRedelegate and CancelSignalRedelegate events. Whena SignalRedelegate  
eventisreceived,thecurrentdelegatedbalanceissubtracted  
fromtheexistingdelegatedbalance,andthisdelegatorisremovedfromthelistofstaker

addresses (only if this delegator has not already been removed). This causes delegators that have signaled an intent to redelegate to be excluded from a validator's total delegations. Additionally, when a `CancelSignalRedelegate` event is received, this action is undone by adding the delegated balance back to the old delegatee and adding their address back to the list of staker addresses. Critically, the `StakeManager` contract was updated in PR689 to allow signal cancellations only when a signal has been registered but the signaled action has not yet been completed. This will prevent a malicious user from repeatedly canceling signals to repeatedly increase their delegated balance. TOB-ELIXIR-13: Minority validators may participate in consensus process Resolved in PR497 and PR42. The validators system has been rearchitected, and it is no longer possible to submit a proposal without being in the core validator set. TOB-ELIXIR-14: An influx of new strategy executors may halt consensus Resolved in PR497 and PR42. The constraint is now a fraction of the core validator set size, which solves the issue with consensus halting by an influx of malicious validators. TOB-ELIXIR-15: Lack of two-step process for ownership transfers Resolved in commit 543b3e0. The `OwnableUpgradeable` dependencies have been replaced with `Ownable2StepUpgradeable` contracts that properly implement a two-step process for ownership transfers. hashey 72ElixirProtocolSecurityAssessment PUBLIC

TOB-ELIXIR-16: Response payload to authentication challenge is not signed Resolved in PR56. The request structure was refactored into `ValidatorAuthorizationRequest`, which contains a proof and detail. The detail structure is encoded with Ethereum ABI for signature verification.

TOB-ELIXIR-17: API does not validate `display_name` and `app_version` Resolved in PR42. The values are now validated in the application code as well as in the database. TOB-ELIXIR-

18: All on-chain events replayed upon startup Resolved in PR498. The services now resume event consumption from the last processed event instead of replaying the history from the beginning on startup. TOB-ELIXIR-19: Redpanda exposed to the Internet Resolved in PR42. The backend was rearchitected in such a way that Redpanda is split into

two clusters, one on the internal network and one that is internet-facing. The internet-facing cluster is read-only, and validators do not write any data to it. The order proposals are now sent to the API. Although this fix was not part of four original recommendations and Redpanda is still exposed, the new architecture minimizes the possible damage to the point we consider it resolved. TOB-ELIXIR-20: API has admin access to Redpanda Resolved in PR42 and commit 8de6fdd. The architecture has changed, and the API no longer configures the Redpanda ACLs. The admin access and related code was removed from the service. TOB-ELIXIR-

21: Use of unpinned third-party Docker images and actions on workflows Resolved in commit sc4360eb and f34b570. Third-party Docker images and actions were pinned. TOB-ELIXIR-

22: Absence of access control on pool creation function Resolved in commit 0d15c2f. An `onlyOwner` function modifier has been added to the `createPool` method of the `PoolManager` contract. hashey 73ElixirProtocolSecurityAssessment PUBLIC

#### I. Fix Review Status Categories

The following table describes the statuses used to indicate whether an issue has been sufficiently addressed.

Fix Status	Status Description
Undetermined	The status of the issue was not determined during this engagement.
Unresolved	The issue persists and has not been resolved.
Partially Resolved	The issue persists but has been partially resolved.
Resolved	The issue has been sufficiently resolved.

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