

January 24, 2017

Spectre-Meltdown Vulnerability Statement for Your ION Networks Products

These vulnerabilities were initially tracked as CVE-2017-5753, CVE-2017-5715, and CVE-2017-5754, commonly become known as “Spectre” and “Meltdown”. ION Networks products, like many others that depend upon a modern CPUs, are potentially are affected by these vulnerabilities.

Early in January, the global technology community was notified of the Spectre and Meltdown vulnerabilities within specific system processors. Researchers have found weaknesses in these processors that could let attackers read kernel, and therefore sensitive, information from user space programs. Chip manufacturers Intel and AMD have been identified as potentially at risk to exhibit these vulnerabilities.

ION Appliance hardware is based upon processors from VIA Technologies which have not been named as being vulnerable to Spectre or Meltdown. ION is currently waiting for an official statement from VIA regarding these vulnerabilities.

The ION Appliance software is based on a customized version of the Linux operating system with an ION firmware front end and a non-standard authentication prompts and methods. These items add layers of security layers to the OS that do not allow non-authenticated users to place files or malicious code on the system. There is no web browser in the ION Appliance, so there is no ‘drive by’ vulnerability to execute files on the appliance. In addition, as always, utilizing the ION Challenge/Response method of authentication is highly recommended to further increase the level of security.

While there are patches issued for the Linux kernel for some of the commercial Linux distributions, they have recently been retracted due to instability issues. The patches only applied to Intel and AMD CPU’s. Based on the information currently available, our assessment is that the ION appliances might be vulnerable to Spectre or Meltdown, but the risk of information release to unauthorized users is low.

If you have any further questions or concerns, please contact ION Networks Technical Support at +1 908-546-3900 Option 2 or by emailing ion.networks.support@apitech.com.

Thank you,

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