















Welcome



TROY FILIPCEVIC

CEO & Founder Emergence Insurance















Coordinating the National Response to Cybercrime Incidents

Insights from the National Office of Cyber Security



JOE SMITH

Assistant Secretary of the Cyber Security Response Coordination Unit (CSRCU) National Office of Cyber Security

SLIDES REDACTED | TLP:AMBER















When Cyber Hits the Fan Real-life cyber incidents



LUKE FARDELL

Lead Cyber Analyst Tokio Marine Kiln













When Cyber Hits The Fan



The normal process isn't working $_{16:32}$ 🗸

I cannot leave 16:32 📈

Ok I have message don't worry 16:49

Ok I am being arrested I think 17:09 📈

Oh poor you don't worry about me 17:12

Just with the police will be done shortly 17:18 🗸

Don't worry I can easily cancel 17:20

No don't cancel I. Trying to get out 17:21 🛷

Ok but don't worry 17:21





Tokio Marine Kiln Role

- Lead Cyber Analyst
 - External attack surface scanning
 - Building tools
 - Helping on Complex Claims
 - Value Add services
 - Helping Group Companies
 - Bulk analysis of Coverholder portfolios







How I Ended Up Here

• It's complicated











Interesting Cases

- The Salisbury Poisonings
 - Salisbury Hospital
 - Public Health England / Porton Down
 - Police Mobile phones













Prime Ministers Laptop



 Prime Minister Theresa May visits China in 2018









• UK seizes Syria bound oil tanker off the coast of Gibraltar







Iran fury as Royal Marines seize tanker suspected of carrying oil to Syria

Iran summons UK ambassador over incident off Gibraltar as tensions escalate over nuclear deal



An image issued by the Ministry of Defence of the supertanker Grace 1, believed to be carrying 2m barrels of crude oil. Photograph: MoD/PA



























Australia 2019

- Government wide cyber attack
- 5 eyes response
- Zero Day vulnerability
- ACSC lead

Exclusive: Australia concluded China was behind hack on parliament, political parties – sources

Aa

By Colin Packham

September 16, 2019 4:50 AM GMT+1 · Updated 6 years ago









What it's like working in DFIR

- Long hours
- No Weekends
- High stress
- Difficult conversations
- Often anger taken out on DFIR team
- Conflict with rebuild stream
- Costing difficult

But we love it

• The most rewarding part is the challenge





Navigating Ransomware Engagement

Decision Factors, Negotiation Dynamics, and Business Implications



EVAN VOUGDIS

Cyber Director NSB Cyber













What we'll cover

- Introduction
- Decision Factors for Engagement
- Lifecycle of a Negotiation
- Business Decisions: To Pay or Not to Pay
- What Happens When You Pay
- Key Takeaways





Introduction to Ransomware - RaaS

Ransomware is malicious software that encrypts or locks up your files and demands a ransom payment for the decryption key.

Ransomware can infect your device through various means, such as spam emails, malicious links, or unverified downloads.

Successful ransomware attacks can have devastating effects, including loss of essential data, financial damage, and reputational harm.





Introduction to Ransomware – Ransom Notes

Hi friends, - Friendly Greeting

Whatever who you are and what your title is if you're reading this it means the internal infrastructure of your company is fully or partially dead, all your backups - virtual, physical - everything that we managed to reach - are completely removed. Moreover, we have taken a great amount of your corporate data prior to encryption.

Well, for now let's keep all the tears and resentment to ourselves and try to build a constructive dialogue. We're fully aware of what damage we caused by locking your internal sources. At the moment, you have to know:

1. Dealing with us you will save A LOT due to we are not interested in ruining your financially. We will study in depth your finance, bank & income statements, your savings, investments etc. and present our reasonable demand to you. If you have an active cyber insurance, let us know and we will guide you how to properly use it. Also, dragging out the negotiation process will lead to failing of a deal. — Want to work together

2. Paying us you save your TIME, MONEY, EFFORTS and be back on track within 24 hours approximately. Our <u>decryptor</u> works properly on any files or systems, so you will be able to check it by requesting a test decryption service from the beginning of our conversation. If you decide to recover on your own, keep in mind that you can permanently lose access to some files or accidently corrupt them - in this case we won't be able to help.

3. The security report or the exclusive first-hand information that you will receive upon reaching an agreement is of a great value, since NO full audit of your network will show you the vulnerabilities that we've managed to detect and used in order to get into, identify backup solutions and upload your data.
Provision of Security Report

4. As for your data, if we fail to agree, we will try to sell personal information/trade secrets/databases/source codes - generally speaking, everything that has a value on the <u>darkmarket</u> - to multiple threat actors at ones. Then all of this will be <u>published in our blog - https://akiral2iz6a7qgd3ayp316yub7xx2uep76idk3u2kollpj5z3z636bad.onion.</u>

5. We're more than negotiable and will definitely find the way to settle this quickly and reach an agreement which will satisfy both of us.

If you're indeed interested in our assistance and the services we provide you can reach out to us following simple instructions:

Install TOR Browser to get access to our chat room - https://www.torproject.org/download/.
 Paste this link - https://akiralkzxzq2dsrzsrvbr2xgbbu2wgsmxryd4csgfameg52n7efvr2id.onion.https://akiralkzxzq2dsrzsrvbr2xgbbu2wgsmxryd4csgfameg52n7efvr2id.onion.https://akiralkzxzq2dsrzsrvbr2xgbbu2wgsmxryd4csgfameg52n7efvr2id.onion.https://akiralkzxzq2dsrzsrvbr2xgbbu2wgsmxryd4csgfameg52n7efvr2id.onion.https://akiralkzxzq2dsrzsrvbr2xgbbu2wgsmxryd4csgfameg52n7efvr2id.onion.https://akiralkzxzq2dsrzsrvbr2xgbbu2wgsmxryd4csgfameg52n7efvr2id.onion.https://akiralkzxzq2dsrzsrvbr2xgbbu2wgsmxryd4csgfameg52n7efvr2id.onion.https://akiralkzxzq2dsrzsrvbr2xgbbu2wgsmxryd4csgfameg52n7efvr2id.onion.https://akiralkzxzq2dsrzsrvbr2xgbbu2wgsmxryd4csgfameg52n7efvr2id.onion.https://akiralkzxzq2dsrzsrvbr2xgbbu2wgsmxryd4csgfameg52n7efvr2id.onion.https://akiralkzxzq2dsrzsrvbr2xgbbu2wgsmxryd4csgfameg52n7efvr2id.onion.https://akiralkzxzq2dsrzsrvbr2xgbbu2wgsmxryd4csgfameg52n7efvr2id.onion.https://akiralkzxzq2dsrzsrvbr2xgbbu2wgsmxryd4csgfameg52n7efvr2id.onion.https://www.torproject.ong/download/.

——User-friendly Instructions

Keep in mind that the faster you will get in touch, the less damage we cause.





Decision Factors for Engagement - Severity

- 1. Data Encryption Impact Assess which systems are impacted?
- 2. Business Disruption Quantify downtime costs.
- 3. Scope and spread Is the Incident contained and what is the current scope of the compromise (i.e., Backup Environments).

😋 🔵 🗢 🐌 Comput	ter 🕨 Local Disk (C:) 🕨	Stest	✓ 4 Search	\$test	Q
Organize Include i	in library 👻 Share wit	h Slide show	New folder	•	0
> 🚖 Favorites	4	4	2	4	-
Libraries					
🖻 📢 Homegroup	1.doc.akira	1.jpg.akira	1.png.akira	2.doc.akira	
D 🍂 Computer		2	2	2	
Network					
	2.jpg.akira	2.png.akira	3.doc.akira	3.jpg.akira	+



Decision Factors for Engagement - Trust

- 1. Group Reputation– Who am I dealing with?
- 2. Deal Reliability Are they likely going to stick to our agreed terms?
- 3. Risk of Deception– Is the Incident contained and what is the current scope of the compromise ie Backup Environments.

~~~ AlphaCat ~~~

>>>> Your data are stolen and encrypted

>>>> What guarantees that we will not deceive you?

We are not a politically motivated group and we do not need anything other than your money.

If you pay, we will provide you the programs for decryption and we will delete your data. Life is too short to be sad. Be not sad, money, it is only paper.

If we do not give you decrypters, or we do not delete your data after payment, then nobody will pay us in the future.

Therefore to us our reputation is very important. We attack worldwide and there is no dissatisfied victim after payment.





## **Decision Factors for Engagement – Legal & Recovery**

- 1. Jurisdictional Laws Understand legal constraints OFAC / Sanctions
- 2. Backup Viability What is the current backup position of the victim?
- 3. Alternate Recovery Explore free backup tools (i.e., No more Ransom)
- 4. Insurance and Counsel What is your advice?

**SB** Cyber

| NEWS                                   | PRESS RELEASES                                                                                                                                                                                                         |  |  |
|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|
| Press Releases<br>Statements & Remarks | United States Sanctions Affiliates of Russia-<br>Based LockBit Ransomware Group                                                                                                                                        |  |  |
| Readouts                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |  |  |
| Testimonies                            | February 20, 2024                                                                                                                                                                                                      |  |  |
| Featured Stories                       | The United States imposes sanctions on affiliates of group responsible for ransomware attacks on the U.S.<br>financial sector                                                                                          |  |  |
| Webcasts                               | WASHINGTON — Today, the United States is designating two individuals who are affiliates of the Russia-                                                                                                                 |  |  |
| Press Contacts                         | based ransomware group LockBit. This action is the first in an ongoing collaborative effort with the U.S.<br>Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, and our international partners targeting LockBit. |  |  |
|                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |  |  |



## Lifecycle of a Negotiation

The lifecycle of a ransomware negotiation begins with **establishing secure communication protocols** to safely engage with attackers, followed by an **initial response and decision-making framework** to assess demands and motivations, and progresses through **counter-offer strategies**, **a decision point**, **and exit considerations** 

### **3. Decision Making Framework**

• Understanding the motivation, financial thresholds and limits of the organisation in terms of ransom payment.

### **4.** Counter-Offer Strategies

- Prepared guidelines for making counter-offers, if deemed necessary, which could involve negotiating a lower ransom or extended deadlines.
- Evaluate the ability to recover operations without paying the ransom.

### 1. Establishing Communication Protocols

- Establishing secure communication method.
- Documenting all communications for legal, analytical, and record-keeping purposes.

### 2. Initial Response

- Standardised initial response to ransom demands without committing to action.
  - Neutral in tone to avoid provocation or perceptions.

5. Exit Strategy Considerations

• Planning for different negotiation outcomes, including successful negotiation, failure to reach an agreement and escalation to law enforcement.



## Case Study – Qilin Ransomware Negotiation

- Qilin, emerged in 2022 as a Russian-speaking Ransomware-as-a-Service (RaaS) group.
- Qilin employs double extortion, encrypting data and exfiltrating sensitive information.
- Notable incidents include the 2024 Synnovis attack affecting NHS hospitals, up to 5.6M impacted.

**NSB** Cyber



## Lifecycle of a Negotiation – Initial Response T-0

\*Support 28.11.2023 8: Hello, if you need help you can post any questions in this chat Client-tc8Jlq8TDG 30.11.2023 7: hello support, are you able to receive this message? ------ Initial Contact - Neutral Support 30.11.2023 7: Yes, of course. Client-tc8Jlq8TDG 30.11.2023 7: ok good. we are still working through what has gone on with our environment. can you tell us what has happened?\* 

Initial Contact - Information \*Support 30.11.2023 9: All your systems have been encrypted Some data has also been taken from your servers. Client-tc8Jlq8TDG 30.11.2023 22: yes we have noticed, our server vms are currently not able to be accessed. Client-tc8Jlq8TDG 30.11.2023 22: our leadership team is requesting further information regarding the data taken. is there some sort of proof that can be provided for our checking - Initial Contact - Information \*Support 30.11.2023 22: wait for answer \*Support 1.12.2023 7: we're preparing a list, and we'll send it out shortly.



## Lifecycle of a Negotiation

### **3. Decision Making Framework**

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### **1. Establishing** Communication Protocols

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02

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### 4. Counter-Offer Strategies

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## **Business Decision – To Pay or not to Pay**

- **Impact Assessment** Assess short term & long-term impacts, is the situation existential? Operational? Reputational?
- **Recovery Feasibility** Assessment on effectiveness of backups and how long it will take? Maximum downtime?
- Legal & Sanctions Issues Payment to known sanctioned entities can carry significant penalties and regulatory issues. Australian government strongly discourages payment, however there is no ban in place.
- **Stakeholder Alignment** Ensure payment aligns with business goals, financial and ethical. Important to have a Ransomware Framework for these decisions to be laid out.





## Lifecycle of a Negotiation – Decision Making (Pay)

#### Confirming willingness to negotiate.

Client-tc8Jlq8TDG 6.12.2023 21:

Separately to the files, our leadership team is seeking to understand whether there is negotiation available on the current \$400k demand I am sure you have researched who we are, we help financially motivated organisation.

\*Support 6.12.2023 22:

We understand what you do. You have to understand that it's just business for us. You should also understand that we have your financial documents in our hands. We know you have that money. But, of course, you can count on some discount if we solve this issue quickly. In case you can't get to the page. close TOR Browser and open it again.

Client-tc8Jlq8TDG 7.12.2023 0:

Ok understand. Let me speak this through with the leadership team, as I don't have the visibility into company finances to that degree.

#### Client-tc8Jlq8TDG 7.12.2023 5:

Hello, a few more questions. Can you please explain the process of which the <u>decryptor</u> works? Is this an application that we get from you to which we run in our environment. As you know, our <u>exsi</u> is crippled at the moment so how would we go about decrypting the datastore if we come to an agreement.

Client-tc8Jlq8TDG 7.12.2023 5:

That's right, after payment, you will receive a program that you run inside your Linux servers, and it will restore everything to the state it was. You will receive detailed instructions and our support until full recovery. As for the amount - no one can give you a 75% discount, it's at least harmful to business. My boss is willing to consider a 20% discount on the original amount. As your company benefits society.

Current Bid \$75,000 | Current offer \$320,000





## Lifecycle of a Negotiation

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**NSB** Cyber

### 4. Counter-Offer Strategies

- Prepared guidelines for making counter-offers, if deemed necessary, which could involve negotiating a lower ransom or extended deadlines.
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• Planning for different negotiation outcomes, including successful negotiation, failure to reach an agreement and escalation to law enforcement.



## Lifecycle of a Negotiation – Decision Making (Pay) T-9

Client-tc8Jlq8TDG 7.12.2023 23:

Hello support, our leadership appreciates your understanding of our business and what we do, however this amount is not able to be met. I would like to provide a second offer at US\$100,000 for your consideration. Whilst a discount, we are clearly\interested in coming to a commercial agreement with the team to close out this issue.

Second Commercial Offer

Support 8.12.2023 7:

I'll tell you again, we understand what your customers are doing. But that doesn't bother us. My boss immediately agreed on a good discount for you. Attention, I repeat: the amount of the buyout was taken on the basis of the company's finances. Your suggestion sounds like a joke. If I go to my boss with this offer, I'm afraid tomorrow there may be an announcement in the news that your company has been attacked and the date has been stolen. We are waiting for a normal offer. Close to the initial amount, taking into account the discount already provided. And remember that time is not in your favor.

Support 8.12.2023 7: Your client needs to understand in case we don't come to an agreement. In addition to permanently losing access to your data, your customer will publish blogs and dates. Call partners and investors. All of this will cost much more than the solution we are proposing.

Client-tc8Jlq8TDG 8.12.2023 8:

Understood. I will chat to our executive team and pass on this information. We understand time is not in our favor, but we are trying to work towards a sensible outcome. We will come back to you. ------ Continued Delays





## Lifecycle of a Negotiation

### **3. Decision Making Framework**

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### **1. Establishing** Communication Protocols

- Establishing secure communication method.
- Documenting all communications for legal, analytical, and record-keeping purposes.

### 2. Initial Response

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### NSB Cyber

### 4. Counter-Offer Strategies

- Prepared guidelines for making counter-offers, if deemed necessary, which could involve negotiating a lower ransom or extended deadlines.
- Evaluate the ability to recover operations without paying the ransom.

### 5. Exit Strategy Considerations

• Planning for different negotiation outcomes, including successful negotiation, failure to reach an agreement and escalation to law enforcement.



## Lifecycle of a Negotiation – Decision Making (Pay) T-11

Client-tc8Jlq8TDG 11.12.2023 0: Hello, after working with executives over the weekend on coming to a suitable amount, we would like to put forward an offer of \$200,000US for your consideration. We want to reiterate that we appreciate the seriousness of this and that we want to come to a commercial agreement as you do.

Support 11.12.2023 1: Hello, my boss can accept 300,000 USD. So discount for you is 100,000 USD. It's the best offer we can give.

Client-tc8Jlq8TDG 11.12.2023 4: Our leadership has requested further information regarding what has been taken in order to make an informed decision regarding payment. Is there anything else that can be provided to us?

Support 11.12.2023 5: We gave you test decrypted files, small part of stolen data list, and files that you chose. After payment you'll get: full list of stolen data (we'll delete it from our servers), <u>decryptor</u> for all your systems, and we garantee that this case stay between ourselves.

Support 11.12.2023 5: you have about 24 hours to accept the offer

Current Bid \$200,000 | Current Offer \$300,000





## Lifecycle of a Negotiation – Decision Making (Pay) T-11

### Client-tc8Jlq8TDG 11.12.2023 20: hello, our leadership has met overnight and have increased their offer, which this is their final offer, of \$250,000 US. Whilst we very much acknowledge the seriousness of this situation, our business cannot financially support a higher payment. We have taken this commercial outcome serious from the start, and hope you can acknowledge that in your decision. - Final Offer - Additional Pressure Support 11.12.2023 21: Ok. We agree. You can pay. 🛶 🛶 Client-tc8Jlq8TDG 11.12.2023 21: ok. we are working out payment now, I will keep you updated as soon as things progress. So in addition to our decryptor, we will get advice from you on how this happened? We want to ensure this does not happen again. 🚽 Support 11.12.2023 22: Yes, you will receive information from us about the method of infiltration and some practical security tips. You can also be sure that our team's attack on your company will not happen again. Client-tc8Jlg8TDG 11.12.2023 23: ok thanks. As mentioned, we are working on payment right now. Please confirm that in event we cannot pay before 8 hour deadline is up, we will be afforded another day since we have agreement? Support 12.12.2023 0: Yes, we are ready to extend the timer as an exception. We have added 24 hours for you





## Lifecycle of a Negotiation – Sanctions Sanity Check

- Based on your instructions, we have conducted preliminary searches of the Consolidated List 13. of sanctions targets maintained by Australia<sup>9</sup> and the SDN List<sup>10</sup> maintained by the US (both as defined below) for the Wallet Address as well as the following names:
  - 13.1 Qilin;
  - 13.2 Agenda;
  - 13.3 Spider (for Scattered Spider and Wizard Spider);
  - 13.4 BlackCat:
  - Gold Ulrick; 13.5
  - UNC (for UNC3364, UNC2727 and UNC3944); 13.6
  - 13.7 Starfraud;
  - Scatter Swine; and 13.8
  - 13.9 Muddled Libra:







| Show transactions                                         |  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Buy bitcoin.                                           |  |
| 2. Send specified amount to our bitcoin address.          |  |
| 3. Wait for payment confirmation in bitcoin network.      |  |
| 4. After 2 confirmations we will send our decryptor       |  |
| software. You still be able to contact us for assistance. |  |



## Lifecycle of a Negotiation – Decision Making (Pay) T-13

Client-tc8Jlq8TDG 12.12.2023 5:

the money is clearing with our payment provider. As soon as it does, you will have it.

Client-tc8Jlq8TDG 13.12.2023 6:

hello, our payment is still clearing so we will require some more time on the timer. please note this is out of our hands and the money has been transferred out from our account. We are awaiting our provider. we hope you can understand.

Support 13.12.2023 6:

Hello. We increased the timer by 12 hours. It's enough ?

Client-tc8Jlq8TDG 13.12.2023 6:

I am guided by our provider, I am hoping so. They have advised it could be another 24 hours. As mentioned, the money has left our account (can send proof if needed), we are awaiting our vendor.

🛰 Minor Logistical Delay. Keeping Qilin Informed

Support 13.12.2023 6: Timer increased. We hope this time is enough Client-tc8Jlq8TDG 14.12.2023 6: Hello, I have been advised 10 minutes ago that the funds have cleared and payment will be in your wallet either this evening or tomororw morning. Please confirm once it arrives, and I will also update if we hear back from our vendor as to which one it'll be. Support 14.12.2023 7: hello, ok Support 14.12.2023 20: We have already received your payment. As soon as we see 10 confirmations in the Bitcoin network, we will send you decryption software Support 14.12.2023 21:

decryptor.zip (5.826 MB) - Decryptor Received





## Lifecycle of a Negotiation

### **3. Decision Making Framework**

• Understanding the motivation, financial thresholds and limits of the organisation in terms of ransom payment.

### **1. Establishing Communication Protocols**

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- Documenting all communications for legal, analytical, and record-keeping purposes.

### 2. Initial Response

02

- Standardised initial response to ransom demands without committing to action.
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### \_ \_ \_ \_ 7)

### 5. Exit Strategy Considerations

Prepared guidelines for making counter-offers, if deemed necessary, which could involve negotiating a lower ransom or extended deadlines.
Evaluate the ability to recover operations without paying the ransom.

**4. Counter-Offer Strategies** 

• Planning for different negotiation outcomes, including successful negotiation, failure to reach an agreement and escalation to law enforcement.





## Lifecycle of a Negotiation – Decision Making (Pay) T-13

Support 15.12.2023 15:

I hasten to inform you that the server on which your information was stored has been completely destroyed and deleted from our data center. All the information is now yours alone. Our team got into your network through a spam attack on your employees' emails. One of them opened our attachmend and download payload to one of the computers on your network. Hold a meeting with your employees, give them online security courses, and tell them not to open attachments inside emails unless they are sure it's from a trusted person. You can rest assured that this case will only be between you and us. Good luck. Best regards.

Client-tc8Jlq8TDG 15.12.2023 20:

hello, thank you for confirmation on both, this will help us moving forward. to ensure that we have remediated this user, are you able to advise which workstation this was on? we are also currently decrypting, whilst this seems to be working, is the technical suport available for this period just incase? — Attempted Information Extraction

Support 17.12.2023 0: I don't have info about name of workstation. Technical support is online, you can write this chat if you'll need.

Support 17.12.2023 7: We can't tell you the date and the person who received our email, so we'll compromise our attack vector and our payload. This will be useful for Internet security specialists and will harm our further work. Didn't Provide the Information

Client-tc8Jlq8TDG 19.12.2023 0: ok no worries. We are still decrypting, so we will keep this chat open for the moment. ----- Soft Exit. Leave Door Ajar





## Lifecycle of a Negotiation – Post-Payment T-15



PAYMENT MADE HERE





## **Key Takeaways**

- 1. Engagements are unique, dynamic, and rely on organisational factors/dependencies + threat actors' behaviours
- 2. Threat actor will directly engage and attempt to get the most favorable payout.
- 3. Ransomware impacts a plurality of business operations and logistic. Cost can grow exponentially.
- 4. The decision to pay relies on factors such as the threat actor, the intent, the extent of damages, the timeframe and the financial ability of the organisation.
  - The incident does not stop with the payment of ransom
- 5. Legal issues may prevent an organisation from making payment and/or engaging with a threat actor.





# The Shifting Legal Landscape

### Recent cases and updates





### ANDREW MIERS

Partner HWL Ebsworth Lawyers COLIN PAUSEY

Chief Operating Officer Emergence Insurance















## Dispatches from the Frontline















### THANK YOU













