Google is deprecating GCM communication protocol used by MDM

Anish | ESET Nederland - 2020-07-13 - Comments (0) - FAQ's

Issue

- Google Cloud Messaging (GCM) communication protocol is being deprecated and is being replaced by Firebase Cloud Messaging (FCM) communication protocol.
- Google Cloud Messaging (GCM) communication protocol is being deprecated on May 29, 2019. After this date, the communication between MDM and ESET Endpoint Security for Android on managed devices is no longer guaranteed.

Details

On April 10, 2018, Google is deprecating the Google Cloud Messaging (GCM) service. The GCM server and client APIs will be removed on May 29, 2019. GCM will be replaced by Firebase Cloud Messaging (FCM), which will inherit the reliable and scalable GCM infrastructure, plus many new features.

Google Cloud Messaging is used by the ESET Remote Administrator / ESET Security Management Center MDM component for Android device management.

Solution

Who is affected by this change?

All MDM users who are managing Android devices will be affected by this change. The GCM communication protocol is used by both MDM version 6 and version 7, but these two versions will be affected differently.

The Firebase Cloud Messaging communication protocol from Google will be supported by MDM versions 7.0+ on the server side and by ESET Endpoint Security for Android versions 2.2.x+ on the client side.

Mobile device enrollment is not affected by this change.

1. **I am using MDM version 6.x. What should I do?**
    1. Since Google's FCM communication protocol can only be supported by MDM version 7, you will need to upgrade MDM to version 7.

MDM version 7 cannot be used with a version 6.x ERA server

MDM version 7 cannot be used with ERA server version 6.x. In order to start managing your mobile devices with MDM version 7, you will need to upgrade your ERA server and Agents to version 7. Upgrade to ESMC 7 documentation.

1. After you've successfully upgraded MDM to version 7, follow the steps in question #2.
2. **I have MDM version 7.x. What should I do?**
    1. Add Firebase Cloud Messaging hostname (fcm.googleapis.com) to your firewall rules. The communication ports used for GCM will be the same for FCM communication. After 29 May 2019, you can remove the GCM hostname (android.googleapis.com) from your firewall rules since it will no longer be needed.

    2. Verify that all managed Android devices are running ESET Endpoint Security for Android version 2.2x and later. If you have devices running earlier versions, run the Software Install Task to upgrade your outdated version of ESET Endpoint Security for Android.

    3. After successfully completing these steps, your devices will continue to be managed the same as before.

3. **What will happen to my managed Android devices after May 29, 2019, if I didn't upgrade MDM or the ESET Endpoint Security for Android application?**

After May 29, 2019, the GCM communication protocol will be deprecated. As a result, communication between the MDM and the devices managed by ESET Endpoint Security for Android will no longer be guaranteed on the same level as before.

4. **I want to upgrade after May 29, 2019. Do I need to re-enroll my managed Android devices?**
   No, communication between MDM core and the managed Android devices will not stop. It will just be limited. Once you upgrade your managed Android devices using the steps for ERA MDM6 / ESMC MDM7 above, full communication will be restored.

5. **I manage only iOS devices. How does this situation affect me?**
   iOS management is not affected by this specific issue. However, the MDM Core version 6 support status will be changing to Basic Support. We highly recommend that you upgrade to MDM version 7.