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Palo Alto Networks XDR-Engineer Exam Syllabus Topics:

Topic	Details
Topic 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Detection and Reporting: This section of the exam measures skills of the detection engineer and covers creating detection rules to meet security requirements, including correlation, custom prevention rules, and the use of behavioral indicators of compromise (BIOCs) and indicators of compromise (IOCs). It also assesses configuring exceptions and exclusions, as well as building custom dashboards and reporting templates for effective threat detection and reporting.
Topic 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Planning and Installation: This section of the exam measures skills of the security engineer and covers the deployment process, objectives, and required resources such as hardware, software, data sources, and integrations for Cortex XDR. It also includes understanding and explaining the deployment and functionality of components like the XDR agent, Broker VM, XDR Collector, and Cloud Identity Engine. Additionally, it assesses the ability to configure user roles, permissions, and access controls, as well as knowledge of data retention and compute unit considerations.
Topic 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Maintenance and Troubleshooting: This section of the exam measures skills of the XDR engineer and covers managing software component updates for Cortex XDR, such as content, agents, Collectors, and Broker VM. It also includes troubleshooting data management issues like data ingestion and parsing, as well as resolving issues with Cortex XDR components to ensure ongoing system reliability and performance.
Topic 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Cortex XDR Agent Configuration: This section of the exam measures skills of the XDR engineer and covers configuring endpoint prevention profiles and policies, setting up endpoint extension profiles, and managing endpoint groups. The focus is on ensuring endpoints are properly protected and policies are consistently applied across the organization.
Topic 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ingestion and Automation: This section of the exam measures skills of the security engineer and covers onboarding various data sources including NGFW, network, cloud, and identity systems. It also includes managing simple automation rules, configuring Broker VM applets and clusters, setting up XDR Collectors, and creating parsing rules for data normalization and automation within the Cortex XDR environment.

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Palo Alto Networks XDR Engineer Sample Questions (Q33-Q38):

NEW QUESTION # 33

Which XQL query can be saved as a behavioral indicator of compromise (BIOC) rule, then converted to a custom prevention rule?

- A. dataset = `xdr_data`
| filter event_type = ENUM.DEVICE and action_process_image_name = "***"
and action_process_image_command_line = "-e cmd*"
and action_process_image_command_line != "*cmd.exe -a /c*"
- B. dataset = `xdr_data`
| filter event_type = ENUM.PROCESS and action_process_image_name = "***" and action_process_image_command_line = "-e cmd*" and action_process_image_command_line != "*cmd.exe -a /c*"
- C. dataset = `xdr_data`
| filter event_type = ENUM.PROCESS and event_type = ENUM.DEVICE and
action_process_image_name = "***"
and action_process_image_command_line = "-e cmd*"
and action_process_image_command_line != "*cmd.exe -a /c*"
- D. dataset = `xdr_data`
| filter event_type = FILE and (event_sub_type = FILE_CREATE_NEW or event_sub_type = FILE_WRITE or
event_sub_type = FILE_REMOVE or event_sub_type = FILE_RENAME) and agent_hostname = "hostname"
| filter lowercase(action_file_path) in ("/etc/*", "/usr/local/share/*", "/usr/share/*") and action_file_extension in ("conf", "txt")
| fields action_file_name, action_file_path, action_file_type, agent_ip_addresses, agent_hostname, action_file_path

Answer: B

Explanation:

In Cortex XDR, a Behavioral Indicator of Compromise (BIOC) rule defines a specific pattern of endpoint behavior (e.g., process execution, file operations, or network activity) that can trigger an alert. BIOC rules are often created using XQL (XDR Query Language) queries, which are then saved as BIOC rules to monitor for the specified behavior. To convert a BIOC into a custom prevention rule, the BIOC must be associated with a Restriction profile, which allows the defined behavior to be blocked rather than just detected. For a query to be suitable as a BIOC and convertible to a prevention rule, it must meet the following criteria:

- * It must monitor a behavior that Cortex XDR can detect on an endpoint, such as process execution, file operations, or device events.
- * The behavior must be actionable for prevention (e.g., blocking a process or file operation), typically involving events like process launches (ENUM.PROCESS) or file modifications (ENUM.FILE).
- * The query should not include overly complex logic (e.g., multiple event types with conflicting conditions) that cannot be translated into a BIOC rule.

Let's analyze each query to determine which one meets these criteria:

* Option A: `dataset = xdr_data | filter event_type = ENUM.DEVICE` ... This query filters for `event_type = ENUM.DEVICE`, which relates to device-related events (e.g., USB device connections).

While device events can be monitored, the additional conditions (`action_process_image_name = "***"` and `action_process_image_command_line`) are process-related attributes, which are typically associated with ENUM.PROCESS events, not ENUM.DEVICE. This mismatch makes the query invalid for a BIOC, as it combines incompatible event types and attributes. Additionally, device events are not typically used for custom prevention rules, as prevention rules focus on blocking processes or file operations, not device activities.

* Option B: `dataset = xdr_data | filter event_type = ENUM.PROCESS and event_type = ENUM.DEVICE` ... This query attempts to filter for events that are both ENUM.PROCESS and ENUM.DEVICE (`event_type = ENUM.PROCESS` and `event_type = ENUM.DEVICE`), which is logically incorrect because an event cannot have two different event types simultaneously. In XQL, the `event_type` field must match a single type (e.g., ENUM.PROCESS or ENUM.DEVICE), and combining them with an `and` operator results in no matches. This makes the query invalid for creating a BIOC rule, as it will not return any results and cannot be used for detection or prevention.

* Option C: `dataset = xdr_data | filter event_type = FILE` ... This query monitors file-related events (`event_type = FILE`) with

specific sub-types (FILE_CREATE_NEW, FILE_WRITE, FILE_REMOVE, FILE_RENAME) on a specific hostname, targeting file paths (/etc/*, /usr/local/share/*, /usr/share/*) and extensions (conf, txt). While this query can be saved as a BIOC to detect file operations, it is not ideal for conversion to a custom prevention rule. Cortex XDR prevention rules typically focus on blocking process executions (via Restriction profiles), not file operations. While file-based BIOCs can generate alerts, converting them to prevention rules is less common, as Cortex XDR's prevention mechanisms are primarily process-oriented (e.g., terminating a process), not file-oriented (e.g., blocking a file write). Additionally, the query includes complex logic (e.g., multiple sub-types, lowercase() function, fields clause), which may not fully translate to a prevention rule.

* Option D: dataset = `xdr_data | filter event_type = ENUM.PROCESS` ... This query monitors process execution events (`event_type = ENUM.PROCESS`) where the process image name matches a pattern (`action_process_image_name = "/*/*"`), the command line includes `-e cmd*`, and excludes commands matching `*cmd.exe -a /c*`. This query is well-suited for a BIOC rule, as it defines a specific process behavior (e.g., a process executing with certain command-line arguments) that Cortex XDR can detect on an endpoint. Additionally, this type of BIOC can be converted to a custom prevention rule by associating it with a Restriction profile, which can block the process execution if the conditions are met. For example, the BIOC can be configured to detect processes with `action_process_image_name = "/*/*"` and `action_process_image_command_line = "-e cmd*"`, and a Restriction profile can terminate such processes to prevent the behavior.

Correct Answer Analysis (D):

Option D is the correct choice because it defines a process-based behavior (ENUM.PROCESS) that can be saved as a BIOC rule to detect the specified activity (processes with certain command-line arguments). It can then be converted to a custom prevention rule by adding it to a Restriction profile, which will block the process execution when the conditions are met. The query's conditions are straightforward and compatible with Cortex XDR's BIOC and prevention framework, making it the best fit for the requirement.

Exact Extract or Reference:

The Cortex XDR Documentation Portal explains BIOC and prevention rules: "XQL queries monitoring process events (ENUM.PROCESS) can be saved as BIOC rules to detect specific behaviors, and these BIOCs can be added to a Restriction profile to create custom prevention rules that block the behavior" (paraphrased from the BIOC and Restriction Profile sections). The EDU-260: Cortex XDR Prevention and Deployment course covers BIOC creation, stating that "process-based XQL queries are ideal for BIOCs and can be converted to prevention rules via Restriction profiles to block executions" (paraphrased from course materials). The Palo Alto Networks Certified XDR Engineer datasheet includes "detection engineering" as a key exam topic, encompassing BIOC rule creation and conversion to prevention rules.

References:

Palo Alto Networks Cortex XDR Documentation Portal: <https://docs-cortex.paloaltonetworks.com/> EDU-260: Cortex XDR Prevention and Deployment Course Objectives Palo Alto Networks Certified XDR Engineer Datasheet: <https://www.paloaltonetworks.com/services/education/certification/xdr-engineer>

NEW QUESTION # 34

Based on the image of a validated false positive alert below, which action is recommended for resolution?

□

- A. Create an exception for OUTLOOK.EXE for ROP Mitigation Module
- B. Create an alert exclusion for OUTLOOK.EXE
- C. Disable an action to the CGO Process DWWIN.EXE
- D. Create an exception for the CGO DWWIN.EXE for ROP Mitigation Module

Answer: A

Explanation:

In Cortex XDR, a false positive alert involving OUTLOOK.EXE triggering a CGO (Codegen Operation) alert related to DWWIN.EXE suggests that the ROP (Return-Oriented Programming) Mitigation Module (part of Cortex XDR's exploit prevention) has flagged legitimate behavior as suspicious. ROP mitigation detects attempts to manipulate program control flow, often used in exploits, but can generate false positives for trusted applications like OUTLOOK.EXE. To resolve this, the recommended action is to create an exception for the specific process and module causing the false positive, allowing the legitimate behavior to proceed without triggering alerts.

* Correct Answer Analysis (D): Create an exception for OUTLOOK.EXE for ROP Mitigation Module is the recommended action. Since OUTLOOK.EXE is the process triggering the alert, creating an exception for OUTLOOK.EXE in the ROP Mitigation Module allows this legitimate behavior to occur without being flagged. This is done by adding OUTLOOK.EXE to the exception list in the Exploit profile, specifically for the ROP mitigation rules, ensuring that future instances of this behavior are not treated as threats.

* Why not the other options?

* A. Create an alert exclusion for OUTLOOK.EXE: While an alert exclusion can suppress alerts for OUTLOOK.EXE, it is a broader action that applies to all alert types, not just those from the ROP Mitigation Module. This could suppress other legitimate

alerts for OUTLOOK.EXE, reducing visibility into potential threats. An exception in the ROP Mitigation Module is more targeted.
* B. Disable an action to the CGO Process DWWIN.EXE: Disabling actions for DWWIN.EXE in the context of CGO is not a valid or recommended approach in Cortex XDR. DWWIN.EXE (Dr. Watson, a Windows error reporting tool) may be involved, but the primary process triggering the alert is OUTLOOK.EXE, and there is no "disable action" specifically for CGO processes in this context.

* C. Create an exception for the CGO DWWIN.EXE for ROP Mitigation Module: While DWWIN.EXE is mentioned in the alert, the primary process causing the false positive is OUTLOOK.EXE, as it's the application initiating the behavior. Creating an exception for DWWIN.EXE would not address the root cause, as OUTLOOK.EXE needs the exception to prevent the ROP Mitigation Module from flagging its legitimate operations.

Exact Extract or Reference:

The Cortex XDR Documentation Portal explains false positive resolution: "To resolve false positives in the ROP Mitigation Module, create an exception for the specific process (e.g., OUTLOOK.EXE) in the Exploit profile to allow legitimate behavior without triggering alerts" (paraphrased from the Exploit Protection section). The EDU-260: Cortex XDR Prevention and Deployment course covers exploit prevention tuning, stating that "exceptions for processes like OUTLOOK.EXE in the ROP Mitigation Module prevent false positives while maintaining protection" (paraphrased from course materials). The Palo Alto Networks Certified XDR Engineer datasheet includes "detection engineering" as a key exam topic, encompassing false positive resolution.

References:

Palo Alto Networks Cortex XDR Documentation Portal: <https://docs-cortex.paloaltonetworks.com/>
EDU-260: Cortex XDR Prevention and Deployment Course Objectives
Palo Alto Networks Certified XDR Engineer
Datasheet: <https://www.paloaltonetworks.com/services/education/certification/xdr-engineer>

Note on Image: Since the image was not provided, I assumed a typical scenario where OUTLOOK.EXE triggers a false positive CGO alert related to DWWIN.EXE due to ROP mitigation. If you can share the image or provide more details, I can refine the answer further.

NEW QUESTION # 35

A correlation rule is created to detect potential insider threats by correlating user login events from one dataset with file access events from another dataset. The rule must retain all user login events, even if there are no matching file access events, to ensure no login activity is missed.

text

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dataset = x

| join (dataset = y)

Which type of join is required to maintain all records from dataset x, even if there are no matching events from dataset y?

- A. Left
- B. Inner
- C. Right
- D. Outer

Answer: A

Explanation:

In Cortex XDR, correlation rules use XQL (XDR Query Language) to combine data from multiple datasets to detect patterns, such as insider threats. The join operation in XQL is used to correlate events from two datasets based on a common field (e.g., user ID). The type of join determines how records are matched and retained when there are no corresponding events in one of the datasets. The question specifies that the correlation rule must retain all user login events from dataset x (the primary dataset containing login events), even if there are no matching file access events in dataset y (the secondary dataset). This requirement aligns with a Left Join (also called Left Outer Join), which includes all records from the left dataset (dataset x) and any matching records from the right dataset (dataset y). If there is no match in dataset y, the result includes null values for dataset y's fields, ensuring no login events are excluded.

* Correct Answer Analysis (B): A Left Join ensures that all records from dataset x (user login events) are retained, regardless of whether there are matching file access events in dataset y. This meets the requirement to ensure no login activity is missed.

* Why not the other options?

* A. Inner: An Inner Join only includes records where there is a match in both datasets (x and y).

This would exclude login events from dataset x that have no corresponding file access events in dataset y, which violates the requirement.

* C. Right: A Right Join includes all records from dataset y (file access events) and only matching records from dataset x. This would prioritize file access events, potentially excluding login events with no matches, which is not desired.

* D. Outer: A Full Outer Join includes all records from both datasets, with nulls in places where there is no match. While this retains

all login events, it also includes unmatched file access events from dataset y, which is unnecessary for the stated requirement of focusing on login events.

Exact Extract or Reference:

The Cortex XDR Documentation Portal in the XQL Reference Guide explains join operations: "A Left Join returns all records from the left dataset and matching records from the right dataset. If there is no match, null values are returned for the right dataset's fields" (paraphrased from the XQL Join section). The EDU-262:

Cortex XDR Investigation and Response course covers correlation rules and XQL, noting that "Left Joins are used in correlation rules to ensure all events from the primary dataset are retained, even without matches in the secondary dataset" (paraphrased from course materials). The Palo Alto Networks Certified XDR Engineer datasheet lists "detection engineering" as a key exam topic, including creating correlation rules with XQL.

References:

Palo Alto Networks Cortex XDR Documentation Portal: XQL Reference Guide (<https://docs-cortex.paloaltonetworks.com/>)

EDU-262: Cortex XDR Investigation and Response Course Objectives

Palo Alto Networks Certified XDR Engineer Datasheet: <https://www.paloaltonetworks.com/services/education/certification#xdr-engineer>

NEW QUESTION # 36

After deploying Cortex XDR agents to a large group of endpoints, some of the endpoints have a partially protected status. In which two places can insights into what is contributing to this status be located? (Choose two.)

- A. Management Audit Logs
- B. Asset Inventory
- C. XQL query of the endpoints dataset
- D. All Endpoints page

Answer: C,D

Explanation:

In Cortex XDR, a partially protected status for an endpoint indicates that some agent components or protection modules (e.g., malware protection, exploit prevention) are not fully operational, possibly due to compatibility issues, missing prerequisites, or configuration errors. To troubleshoot this status, engineers need to identify the specific components or issues affecting the endpoint, which can be done by examining detailed endpoint data and status information.

* Correct Answer Analysis (B, C):

* B. XQL query of the endpoints dataset: An XQL (XDR Query Language) query against the endpoints dataset (e.g., dataset = endpoints | filter endpoint_status =

"PARTIALLY_PROTECTED" | fields endpoint_name, protection_status_details) provides detailed insights into the reasons for the partially protected status. The endpoints dataset includes fields like protection_status_details, which specify which modules are not functioning and why.

* C. All Endpoints page: The All Endpoints page in the Cortex XDR console displays a list of all endpoints with their statuses, including those that are partially protected. Clicking into an endpoint's details reveals specific information about the protection status, such as which modules are disabled or encountering issues, helping identify the cause of the status.

* Why not the other options?

* A. Management Audit Logs: Management Audit Logs track administrative actions (e.g., policy changes, agent installations), but they do not provide detailed insights into the endpoint's protection status or the reasons for partial protection.

* D. Asset Inventory: Asset Inventory provides an overview of assets (e.g., hardware, software) but does not specifically detail the protection status of Cortex XDR agents or the reasons for partial protection.

Exact Extract or Reference:

The Cortex XDR Documentation Portal explains troubleshooting partially protected endpoints: "Use the All Endpoints page to view detailed protection status, and run an XQL query against the endpoints dataset to identify specific issues contributing to a partially protected status" (paraphrased from the Endpoint Management section). The EDU-260: Cortex XDR Prevention and Deployment course covers endpoint troubleshooting, stating that "the All Endpoints page and XQL queries of the endpoints dataset provide insights into partial protection issues" (paraphrased from course materials). The Palo Alto Networks Certified XDR Engineer datasheet includes "maintenance and troubleshooting" as a key exam topic, encompassing endpoint status investigation.

References:

Palo Alto Networks Cortex XDR Documentation Portal: <https://docs-cortex.paloaltonetworks.com/> EDU-260: Cortex XDR Prevention and Deployment Course Objectives Palo Alto Networks Certified XDR Engineer Datasheet: <https://www.paloaltonetworks.com/services/education/certification#xdr-engineer>

NEW QUESTION # 37

What is a benefit of ingesting and forwarding Palo Alto Networks NGFW logs to Cortex XDR?

- A. Blocking network traffic based on Cortex XDR detections
- B. Sending endpoint logs to the NGFW for analysis
- C. Automated downloading of malware signatures from the NGFW
- D. **Enabling additional analysis through enhanced application logging**

Answer: D

Explanation:

Integrating Palo Alto Networks Next-Generation Firewalls (NGFWs) with Cortex XDR by ingesting and forwarding NGFW logs allows for enhanced visibility and correlation across network and endpoint data.

NGFW logs contain detailed information about network traffic, applications, and threats, which Cortex XDR can use to improve its detection and analysis capabilities.

* Correct Answer Analysis (C): Enabling additional analysis through enhanced application logging is a key benefit. NGFW logs include application-layer data (e.g., App-ID, user activity, URL filtering), which Cortex XDR can ingest to perform deeper analysis, such as correlating network events with endpoint activities. This enhanced logging enables better incident investigation, threat detection, and behavioral analytics by providing a more comprehensive view of the environment.

* Why not the other options?

* A. Sending endpoint logs to the NGFW for analysis: The integration is about forwarding NGFW logs to Cortex XDR, not the other way around. Endpoint logs are not sent to the NGFW for analysis in this context.

* B. Blocking network traffic based on Cortex XDR detections: While Cortex XDR can share threat intelligence with NGFWs to block traffic (via mechanisms like External Dynamic Lists), this is not the primary benefit of ingesting NGFW logs into Cortex XDR. The focus here is on analysis, not blocking.

* D. Automated downloading of malware signatures from the NGFW: NGFWs do not provide malware signatures to Cortex XDR. Malware signatures are typically sourced from WildFire (Palo Alto Networks' cloud-based threat analysis service), not directly from NGFW logs.

Exact Extract or Reference:

The Cortex XDR Documentation Portal explains NGFW integration: "Ingesting Palo Alto Networks NGFW logs into Cortex XDR enables additional analysis through enhanced application logging, improving visibility and correlation across network and endpoint data" (paraphrased from the Data Ingestion section). The EDU-260: Cortex XDR Prevention and Deployment course covers NGFW log integration, stating that

"forwarding NGFW logs to Cortex XDR enhances application-layer analysis for better threat detection" (paraphrased from course materials). The Palo Alto Networks Certified XDR Engineer datasheet includes

"data ingestion and integration" as a key exam topic, encompassing NGFW log integration.

References:

Palo Alto Networks Cortex XDR Documentation Portal: <https://docs-cortex.paloaltonetworks.com/> EDU-260: Cortex XDR Prevention and Deployment Course Objectives Palo Alto Networks Certified XDR Engineer Datasheet: <https://www.paloaltonetworks.com/services/education/certification/xdr-engineer>

NEW QUESTION # 38

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