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Ping Identity PT-AM-CPE Exam Syllabus Topics:

Topic	Details
Topic 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Federating Across Entities Using SAML2: This domain covers implementing single sign-on using SAML v2.0 and delegating authentication responsibilities between SAML2 entities.
Topic 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improving Access Management Security: This domain focuses on strengthening authentication security, implementing context-aware authentication experiences, and establishing continuous risk monitoring throughout user sessions.
Topic 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enhancing Intelligent Access: This domain covers implementing authentication mechanisms, using PingGateway to protect websites, and establishing access control policies for resources.
Topic 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Installing and Deploying AM: This domain encompasses installing and upgrading PingAM, hardening security configurations, setting up clustered environments, and deploying PingOne Advanced Identity Platform to the cloud.

- Extending Services Using OAuth2-Based Protocols: This domain addresses integrating applications with OAuth 2.0 and OpenID Connect, securing OAuth2 clients with mutual TLS and proof-of-possession, transforming OAuth2 tokens, and implementing social authentication.

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Ping Identity Certified Professional - PingAM Exam Sample Questions (Q40-Q45):

NEW QUESTION # 40

A user enters their credentials, but is faced with the error message "user requires profile to login". What is a possible cause of this message?

- A. The user has not filled in the required information in their profile
- B. The user has not entered the correct credentials
- C. Policies have not been defined to allow a user to access their profile page
- **D. The realm has not been set to user profile ignore mode**

Answer: D

Explanation:

This error message is directly related to the User Profile configuration within a specific realm in PingAM 8.0.2. In the "Core Authentication Attributes" of a realm, PingAM defines how it should handle user identities after they have successfully provided valid credentials through an authentication tree or chain.

There are primarily four modes for the User Profile setting:

Required: This is often the default. It specifies that after a user successfully authenticates, PingAM must be able to locate a corresponding user entry in the configured Identity Store. If the user exists in the datastore, the session is created. If the user does not exist, authentication fails with the error message "user requires profile to login" (or a similar profile-related exception in the logs).
Ignored: In this mode, PingAM issues an SSO session token immediately upon successful credential validation, regardless of whether a user profile exists in the back-end repository. This is useful for temporary or guest access where no permanent record is needed.

Dynamic: AM attempts to find the user; if the user is not found, it automatically creates a new profile in the identity store.

Dynamic with User Alias: Similar to dynamic creation but supports aliasing.

If an administrator sees the "user requires profile to login" error, it confirms that the credentials themselves were technically correct (the user passed the authentication nodes), but the realm is currently in Required mode (it has not been set to Ignore or Dynamic) and no matching entry exists in the identity store. This frequently happens in migration scenarios or when using external identity providers (like Social IDPs) where the "Link" or "Provisioning" step has not been properly configured in the authentication journey. To resolve this, the administrator must either pre-provision the user, set the mode to Ignore, or implement a Create Object node within the authentication tree to handle dynamic provisioning.

NEW QUESTION # 41

What happens when an end user accesses the following login page: .../XUI/?ForceAuth=true#login?

- A. The end user will be presented with second factor authentication
- B. A screen is presented to the end user suggesting they enable second factor authentication
- **C. Even if the end user is already authenticated, they will be redirected to the login page**
- D. Nothing. ForceAuth is not a parameter that PingAM knows how to process

Answer: C

Explanation:

The ForceAuth=true parameter is a standard directive used in various authentication protocols (specifically SAML2 and OIDC) and is natively supported by the PingAM 8.0.2 XUI (the modern End-User User Interface).

According to the "Authentication and SSO" documentation:

Normally, if a user has an active, valid session cookie (iPlanetDirectoryPro), and they navigate to the AM login URL, PingAM will recognize the session and automatically redirect the user to their destination (the "Success URL") without prompting for credentials. This is the core benefit of Single Sign-On.

However, when the ForceAuth=true parameter is appended to the query string, it instructs the PingAM authentication engine to bypass the session check for the purpose of re-authentication. The engine will:

Ignore the existing valid session cookie.

Force the user back to the login page (rendering the initial nodes of the configured authentication tree).

Require the user to provide their credentials again.

This is a critical security feature for high-value transactions. For instance, if a user is already logged in but attempts to change their bank transfer details, the application can redirect them to AM with ForceAuth=true to ensure the person sitting at the computer is indeed the authorized user. Option B is incorrect because ForceAuth only forces a re-authentication; whether that includes MFA depends on the tree configuration, not the parameter itself. Option C is incorrect as PingAM explicitly processes this parameter. Therefore, the primary outcome is the redirection to the login page regardless of the current session state.

NEW QUESTION # 42

What is the purpose of HTTP-only cookies?

- A. Cookies can not be read by client-side scripts
- B. Cookies can not be read by the server
- C. Cookies can only be transmitted over HTTP
- D. Cookies can only be transmitted over HTTPS

Answer: A

Explanation:

In the "Additional Cookie Security" section of the PingAM 8.0.2 documentation, HttpOnly is described as a critical security attribute for session cookies (like iPlanetDirectoryPro). Its primary purpose is to mitigate the risk of session hijacking via Cross-Site Scripting (XSS) attacks.

When a cookie is marked with the HttpOnly flag, the browser is instructed to restrict access to that cookie. Specifically, it prevents client-side scripts—such as those written in JavaScript—from accessing the cookie through the document.cookie API. If an attacker successfully injects a malicious script into a page, the script will be unable to "read" the session token, even though the cookie is still automatically sent by the browser with every valid HTTP request to the server.

Option B describes the Secure flag, which ensures cookies are only sent over encrypted (HTTPS) connections.

Option C is incorrect because the server must be able to read the cookie to validate the user's session.

Option D is a common misconception; the HttpOnly flag does not restrict the transport to "HTTP-only" (non-secure) protocols; rather, it restricts the access method within the browser environment.

By default, PingAM 8.0.2 enables the HttpOnly flag for all session cookies. This is considered a best practice in modern identity management because it ensures that even if a web application has a vulnerability that allows for script injection, the user's primary authentication token remains protected from being exfiltrated by the attacker's script.

NEW QUESTION # 43

Which one of the default PingAM audit log file contains messages related to changes made to sessions by end users?

- A. access.audit.json
- B. activity.audit.json
- C. authentication.audit.json
- D. config.audit.json

Answer: A

Explanation:

In PingAM 8.0.2, the audit logging service is designed to provide a comprehensive record of events for security, compliance, and troubleshooting. The audit logs are categorized by the type of event they record. According to the "Audit Logging Reference," PingAM generates several default log files, typically in JSON format.

The access.audit.json file is the primary log for events related to the lifecycle of a session and access to resources. This includes:

Session Creation: When a user successfully authenticates and a new session is established.

Session Termination: When a user logs out or a session expires.

Session Updates: Any changes made to the session, such as a Session Upgrade or modification of session properties by the end user or an application.

Policy Evaluations: Records of when a user requests access to a protected resource and the resulting permit or deny decision.

By contrast, the `config.audit.json` (Option B) records administrative changes to the system configuration (e.g., modifying a realm or a node). The `authentication.audit.json` (Option C) focuses specifically on the steps within an authentication tree, such as which nodes were visited and whether they succeeded or failed. While session changes happen after or as a result of authentication, the resulting session management event is logged in the access audit. The `activity.audit.json` (Option D) is generally used for internal system tasks and background processes. Therefore, for monitoring end-user session modifications, the `access.audit.json` is the correct authoritative source defined in the PingAM 8 documentation.

NEW QUESTION # 44

Which is the correct simplified TLS handshake sequence needed to authenticate clients using a mutual TLS exchange?

- A. 1. Client sends a certificate in the request to a server to establish a secure connection
2. The client sends its session key to the server
3. The server presents its certificate in a response to the client
4. The mutually secure connection is established and the client is authenticated
- B. 1. Client sends a request to a server to establish a secure connection
2. The client sends its certificate to the server
3. The server presents its certificate in a response to the client
4. The client sends its session key to the server
5. The mutually secure connection is established and the client is authenticated
- C. 1. Client sends a request to a server to establish a secure connection
2. The server presents its certificate in a response to the client
3. The client sends its certificate to the server
4. The mutually secure connection is established and the client is authenticated
- D. 1. Client sends a request to a server to establish a secure connection
2. The server requests the client certificate
3. The client sends its certificate and the session key to the server
4. The server sends its certificate to the client if the client certificate and key are valid
5. The mutually secure connection is established and the client is authenticated

Answer: C

Explanation:

Mutual TLS (mTLS) is a security enhancement where both the client and the server provide X.509 certificates to prove their identities.⁹ In PingAM 8.0.2, mTLS is frequently used for secure "Machine-to-Machine" (M2M) communication, such as between an OAuth2 client and the token endpoint, or between AM and a Directory Server (PingDS).

According to the PingAM documentation on "Secure Network Communication" and "mTLS for OAuth2," the handshake sequence for mTLS follows these logical steps:

Client Hello: The client initiates the request to the server.¹⁰

Server Hello & Certificate: The server responds by presenting its own certificate (verifying the server's identity to the client).¹¹ In an mTLS scenario, the server also includes a CertificateRequest message.¹² Client Certificate & Key Exchange: The client validates the server's certificate. If valid, the client then sends its own Client Certificate to the server, along with the encrypted pre-master secret or key exchange data.

Verification and Establishment: The server validates the client's certificate against its truststore. If the certificate is trusted and the cryptographic signatures match, the mutually secure connection is established.

Option D represents the most accurate "simplified" sequence. Option A is incorrect because the server presents its certificate before the client sends its own certificate. Option B and C are incorrect because the server always responds to the initial "Client Hello" with its own identity (Server Certificate) before the client proceeds with identity submission. This "handshake" ensures that no data is transmitted until both parties have cryptographically verified each other.

NEW QUESTION # 45

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