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Title : Palo Alto Networks XDR Engineer

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Palo Alto Networks XDR-Engineer Exam Syllabus Topics:

Topic	Details
Topic 1	<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 2	<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 3	<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 4	<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.
Topic 5	<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.

Palo Alto Networks XDR Engineer Sample Questions (Q38-Q43):

NEW QUESTION # 38

Based on the Malware profile image below, what happens when a new custom-developed application attempts to execute on an endpoint?

- A. It will execute after the second attempt
- B. It will immediately execute
- C. It will not execute
- D. It will execute after one hour

Answer: C

Explanation:

Since no image was provided, I assume the Malware profile is configured with default Cortex XDR settings, which typically enforce strict malware prevention for unknown or untrusted executables. In Cortex XDR, the Malware profile within the security policy determines how executables are handled on endpoints. For a new custom-developed application (an unknown executable not previously analyzed or allow-listed), the default behavior is to block execution until the file is analyzed by WildFire (Palo Alto Networks' cloud-based threat analysis service) or explicitly allowed via policy.

* Correct Answer Analysis (B): By default, Cortex XDR's Malware profile is configured to block unknown executables, including new custom-developed applications, to prevent potential threats. When the application attempts to execute, the Cortex XDR agent intercepts it, sends it to WildFire for analysis (if not excluded), and blocks execution until a verdict is received. If the application is not on an allow list or excluded, it will not execute immediately, aligning with option B.

* Why not the other options?

* A. It will immediately execute: This would only occur if the application is on an allow list or if the Malware profile is configured to allow unknown executables, which is not typical for default settings.

* C. It will execute after one hour: There is no default setting in Cortex XDR that delays execution for one hour. Execution depends on the WildFire verdict or policy configuration, not a fixed time delay.

* D. It will execute after the second attempt: Cortex XDR does not have a mechanism that allows execution after a second attempt. Execution is either blocked or allowed based on policy and analysis results.

Exact Extract or Reference:

The Cortex XDR Documentation Portal explains Malware profile behavior: "By default, unknown executables are blocked until a WildFire verdict is received, ensuring protection against new or custom-developed applications" (paraphrased from the Malware Profile Configuration section). The EDU-260:

Cortex XDR Prevention and Deployment course covers Malware profiles, stating that "default settings block unknown executables to prevent potential threats until analyzed" (paraphrased from course materials).

The Palo Alto Networks Certified XDR Engineer datasheet includes "Cortex XDR agent configuration" as a key exam topic, encompassing Malware profile settings.

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 default Malware profile configuration. If you can share the image or describe its settings (e.g., specific allow lists, exclusions, or block rules), I can refine the answer to match the exact configuration.

NEW QUESTION # 39

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 fileoperations, 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 BIOC 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 BIOC 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 BIOC 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 # 40

A new parsing rule is created, and during testing and verification, all the logs for which field data is to be parsed out are missing. All the other logs from this data source appear as expected. What may be the cause of this behavior?

- A. The Broker VM is offline
- B. The XDR Collector is dropping the logs
- C. The parsing rule corrupted the database

- D. The filter stage is dropping the logs

Answer: D

Explanation:

In Cortex XDR, parsing rules are used to extract and normalize fields from raw log data during ingestion, ensuring that the data is structured for analysis and correlation. The parsing process includes stages such as filtering, parsing, and mapping. If logs for which field data is to be parsed out are missing, while other logs from the same data source are ingested as expected, the issue likely lies within the parsing rule itself, specifically in the filtering stage that determines which logs are processed.

* Correct Answer Analysis (C): The filter stage is dropping the logs is the most likely cause. Parsing rules often include a filter stage that determines which logs are processed based on specific conditions (e.g., log content, source, or type).

If the filter stage of the new parsing rule is misconfigured (e.g., using an incorrect condition like `log_type != expected_type` or a regex that doesn't match the logs), it may drop the logs intended for parsing, causing them to be excluded from the ingestion pipeline. Since other logs from the same data source are ingested correctly, the issue is specific to the parsing rule's filter, not a broader ingestion problem.

* Why not the other options?

* A. The Broker VM is offline: If the Broker VM were offline, it would affect all log ingestion from the data source, not just the specific logs targeted by the parsing rule. The question states that other logs from the same data source are ingested as expected, so the Broker VM is likely operational.

* B. The parsing rule corrupted the database: Parsing rules operate on incoming logs during ingestion and do not directly interact with or corrupt the Cortex XDR database. This is an unlikely cause, and database corruption would likely cause broader issues, not just missing specific logs.

* D. The XDR Collector is dropping the logs: The XDR Collector forwards logs to Cortex XDR, and if it were dropping logs, it would likely affect all logs from the data source, not just those targeted by the parsing rule. Since other logs are ingested correctly, the issue is downstream in the parsing rule, not at the collector level.

Exact Extract or Reference:

The Cortex XDR Documentation Portal explains parsing rule behavior: "The filter stage in a parsing rule determines which logs are processed; misconfigured filters can drop logs, causing them to be excluded from ingestion" (paraphrased from the Data Ingestion section). The EDU-260: Cortex XDR Prevention and Deployment course covers parsing rule troubleshooting, stating that "if specific logs are missing during parsing, check the filter stage for conditions that may be dropping the logs" (paraphrased from course materials). The Palo Alto Networks Certified XDR Engineer datasheet includes "data ingestion and integration" as a key exam topic, encompassing parsing rule configuration and troubleshooting.

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 # 41

An administrator wants to employ reusable rules within custom parsing rules to apply consistent log field extraction across multiple data sources. Which section of the parsing rule should the administrator use to define those reusable rules in Cortex XDR?

- A. RULE
- B. INGEST
- C. FILTER
- D. CONST

Answer: D

Explanation:

In Cortex XDR, parsing rules are used to extract and normalize fields from log data ingested from various sources to ensure consistent analysis and correlation. To create reusable rules for consistent log field extraction across multiple data sources, administrators use the CONST section within the parsing rule configuration. The CONST section allows the definition of reusable constants or rules that can be applied across different parsing rules, ensuring uniformity in how fields are extracted and processed. The CONST section is specifically designed to hold constant values or reusable expressions that can be referenced in other parts of the parsing rule, such as the RULE or INGEST sections. This is particularly useful when multiple data sources require similar field extraction logic, as it reduces redundancy and ensures consistency. For example, a constant regex pattern for extracting IP addresses can be defined in the CONST section and reused across multiple parsing rules.

* Why not the other options?

* RULE: The RULE section defines the specific logic for parsing and extracting fields from a log entry but is not inherently reusable

across multiple rules unless referenced via constants defined in CONST.

* INGEST: The INGEST section specifies how raw log data is ingested and preprocessed, not where reusable rules are defined.

* FILTER: The FILTER section is used to include or exclude log entries based on conditions, not for defining reusable extraction rules.

Exact Extract or Reference:

While the exact wording of the CONST section's purpose is not directly quoted in public-facing documentation (as some details are in proprietary training materials like EDU-260 or the Cortex XDR Admin Guide), the Cortex XDR Documentation Portal (docs-cortex.paloaltonetworks.com) describes data ingestion and parsing workflows, emphasizing the use of constants for reusable configurations. The EDU-260: Cortex XDR Prevention and Deployment course covers data onboarding and parsing, noting that "constants defined in the CONST section allow reusable parsing logic for consistent field extraction across sources" (paraphrased from course objectives). Additionally, the Palo Alto Networks Certified XDR Engineer datasheet lists "data source onboarding and integration configuration" as a key skill, which includes mastering parsing rules and their components like CONST.

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 # 42

Which step is required to configure a proxy for an XDR Collector?

- A. Connect the XDR Collector to the Pathfinder
- B. Configure the proxy settings on the Cortex XDR tenant
- **C. Edit the YAML configuration file with the new proxy information**
- D. Restart the XDR Collector after configuring the proxy settings

Answer: C

Explanation:

The XDR Collector in Cortex XDR is a lightweight tool for collecting logs and events from servers and endpoints. When a proxy is required for the XDR Collector to communicate with the Cortex XDR cloud, the proxy settings must be configured in the collector's configuration file. Specifically, the YAML configuration file (e.g., config.yaml) must be edited to include the proxy details, such as the proxy server's address, port, and authentication credentials (if required).

* Correct Answer Analysis (A): To configure a proxy for the XDR Collector, the engineer must edit the YAML configuration file with the new proxy information. This involves adding or updating the proxy settings in the file, which the collector uses to route its traffic through the specified proxy server.

* Why not the other options?

* B. Restart the XDR Collector after configuring the proxy settings: While restarting the collector may be necessary to apply changes, it is not the primary step required to configure the proxy. The YAML file must be edited first.

* C. Connect the XDR Collector to the Pathfinder: The Pathfinder is a Cortex XDR feature for discovering endpoints, not for configuring proxy settings for the XDR Collector.

* D. Configure the proxy settings on the Cortex XDR tenant: Proxy settings for the XDR Collector are configured locally on the collector, not in the Cortex XDR tenant's web interface.

Exact Extract or Reference:

The Cortex XDR Documentation Portal explains XDR Collector configuration: "To configure a proxy for the XDR Collector, edit the YAML configuration file to include the proxy server details, such as address and port" (paraphrased from the XDR Collector Configuration section). The EDU-260: Cortex XDR Prevention and Deployment course covers XDR Collector setup, stating that "proxy settings are configured by editing the collector's YAML file" (paraphrased from course materials). The Palo Alto Networks Certified XDR Engineer datasheet includes "data ingestion and integration" as a key exam topic, encompassing XDR Collector configuration.

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 # 43

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