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Palo Alto Networks XDR-Engineer Exam Syllabus Topics:

Topic	Details
Topic 1	• 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 2	• 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	• 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 4	• 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 5	• 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.

Palo Alto Networks XDR Engineer Sample Questions (Q24-Q29):

NEW QUESTION # 24

During a recent internal purple team exercise, the following recommendation is given to the detection engineering team: Detect and prevent command line invocation of Python on Windows endpoints by non- technical business units. Which rule type should be implemented?

- A. Indicator of Compromise (IOC)
- B. Analytics Behavioral Indicator of Compromise (ABIOC)
- **C. Behavioral Indicator of Compromise (BIOC)**
- D. Correlation

Answer: C

Explanation:

The recommendation requires detecting and preventing the command line invocation of Python (e.g., python.exe or py.exe) on Windows endpoints, specifically for non-technical business units. This involves identifying a specific behavior (command line execution of Python) and enforcing a preventive action (e.g., blocking the process). In Cortex XDR, Behavioral Indicators of Compromise (BIOCs) are used to define and detect specific patterns of behavior on endpoints, such as command line activities, and can be paired with a Restriction profile to block the behavior.

* **Correct Answer Analysis (B):** A Behavioral Indicator of Compromise (BIOC) rule should be implemented. The BIOC can be configured to detect the command line invocation of Python by defining conditions such as the process name (python.exe or py.exe) and the command line arguments.

For example, a BIOC rule might look for process = python.exe with a command line pattern like cmd.

exe /c python*. This BIOC can then be added to a Restriction profile to prevent the execution of Python by non-technical business units, which can be targeted by applying the profile to specific endpoint groups (e.g., those assigned to non-technical units).

* **Why not the other options?**

* **A. Analytics Behavioral Indicator of Compromise (ABIOC):** ABIOCs are analytics-driven rules generated by Cortex XDR's machine learning and behavioral analytics, not user-defined rules. They are not suitable for creating custom detection and prevention rules like the one needed here.

* **C. Correlation:** Correlation rules are used to generate alerts by correlating events across multiple datasets (e.g., network and endpoint data), but they do not directly prevent behaviors like command line execution.

* **D. Indicator of Compromise (IOC):** IOCs are used to detect specific artifacts (e.g., file hashes, IP addresses) associated with known threats, not to detect and prevent behavioral patterns like command line execution.

Exact Extract or Reference:

The Cortex XDR Documentation Portal explains BIOC rules: "Behavioral Indicators of Compromise (BIOCs) can detect specific

endpoint behaviors, such as command line invocation of processes like Python, and prevent them when added to a Restriction profile" (paraphrased from the BIOC section). The EDU-260:

Cortex XDR Prevention and Deployment course covers detection engineering, stating that "BIOCs are used to detect and block specific behaviors, such as command line executions, on Windows endpoints" (paraphrased from course materials). The Palo Alto Networks Certified XDR Engineer datasheet includes

"detection engineering" as a key exam topic, encompassing BIOC rule creation.

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 # 25

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

Answer: A

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 # 26

Some company employees are able to print documents when working from home, but not on network- attached printers, while others are able to print only to file. What can be inferred about the affected users' inability to print?

- A. They may have different disk encryption profiles that are not allowing print jobs on encrypted files
- B. They may be on different device extensions profiles set to block different print jobs

- C. They may be attached to the default extensions policy and profile
- **D. They may have a host firewall profile set to block activity to all network-attached printers**

Answer: D

Explanation:

In Cortex XDR, printing issues can be influenced by agent configurations, particularly those related to network access or device control. The scenario describes two groups of employees: one group can print when working from home but not on network-attached printers, and another can only print to file (e.g., PDF or XPS). This suggests a restriction on network printing, likely due to a security policy enforced by the Cortex XDR agent.

* Correct Answer Analysis (B): They may have a host firewall profile set to block activity to all network-attached printers is the most likely inference. Cortex XDR's host firewall feature allows administrators to define rules that control network traffic, including blocking outbound connections to network-attached printers (e.g., by blocking protocols like IPP or LPD on specific ports). Employees working from home (on external networks) may be subject to a firewall profile that blocks network printing to prevent data leakage, while local printing (e.g., to USB printers) or printing to file is allowed. The group that can only print to file likely has stricter rules that block all physical printing, allowing only virtual print-to-file operations.

* Why not the other options?

* A. They may be attached to the default extensions policy and profile: The default extensions policy typically does not include specific restrictions on printing, focusing instead on general agent behavior (e.g., device control or exploit protection). Printing issues are more likely tied to firewall or device control profiles.

* C. They may have different disk encryption profiles that are not allowing print jobs on encrypted files: Cortex XDR does not manage disk encryption profiles, and disk encryption (e.g., BitLocker) does not typically block printing based on file encryption status. This is not a relevant cause.

* D. They may be on different device extensions profiles set to block different print jobs:

While device control profiles can block USB printers, they do not typically control network printing or distinguish between print-to-file and physical printing. Network printing restrictions are more likely enforced by host firewall rules.

Exact Extract or Reference:

The Cortex XDR Documentation Portal explains host firewall capabilities: "Host firewall profiles can block outbound traffic to network-attached printers, restricting printing for remote employees to prevent unauthorized data transfers" (paraphrased from the Host-Based Firewall section). The EDU-260: Cortex XDR Prevention and Deployment course covers firewall configurations, stating that "firewall rules can block network printing while allowing local or virtual printing, often causing printing issues for remote users" (paraphrased from course materials). The Palo Alto Networks Certified XDR Engineer datasheet includes "Cortex XDR agent configuration" as a key exam topic, encompassing host firewall 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>

NEW QUESTION # 27

How long is data kept in the temporary hot storage cache after being queried from cold storage?

- A. 1 hour, re-queried to a maximum of 24 hours
- B. 1 hour, re-queried to a maximum of 12 hours
- **C. 24 hours, re-queried to a maximum of 7 days**
- D. 24 hours, re-queried to a maximum of 14 days

Answer: C

Explanation:

In Cortex XDR, data is stored in different tiers: hot storage (for recent, frequently accessed data), cold storage (for older, less frequently accessed data), and a temporary hot storage cache for data retrieved from cold storage during queries. When data is queried from cold storage, it is moved to the temporary hot storage cache to enable faster access for subsequent queries. The question asks how long this data remains in the cache and the maximum duration for re-queries.

* Correct Answer Analysis (B): Data retrieved from cold storage is kept in the temporary hot storage cache for 24 hours. If the data is re-queried within this period, it remains accessible in the cache. The maximum duration for re-queries is 7 days, after which the data may need to be retrieved from cold storage again, incurring additional processing time.

* Why not the other options?

* A. 1 hour, re-queried to a maximum of 12 hours: These durations are too short and do not align with Cortex XDR's data retention policies for the hot storage cache.

* C. 24 hours, re-queried to a maximum of 14 days: While the initial 24-hour cache duration is correct, the 14-day maximum for re-queries is too long and not supported by Cortex XDR's documentation.

* D. 1 hour, re-queried to a maximum of 24 hours: The 1-hour initial cache duration is incorrect, as Cortex XDR retains queried data for 24 hours.

Exact Extract or Reference:

The Cortex XDR Documentation Portal explains data storage: "Data queried from cold storage is cached in hot storage for 24 hours, with a maximum re-query period of 7 days" (paraphrased from the Data Management section). The EDU-262: Cortex XDR Investigation and Response course covers data retention, stating that "queried cold storage data remains in the hot cache for 24 hours, accessible for up to 7 days with re-queries" (paraphrased from course materials). The Palo Alto Networks Certified XDR Engineer datasheet includes "maintenance and troubleshooting" as a key exam topic, encompassing data storage management.

References:

Palo Alto Networks Cortex XDR Documentation Portal: <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 # 28

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

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