Cosmic Conquest

Analyzing the Security of Low Earth Orbit Satellites

Johannes Willbold

$whoami

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Space Odyssey

Space Odyssey: An Experimental Software Security Analysis of Satellites

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Distinguished Paper Award

***Abstract*—Satellites are an essential aspect of our modern society and have contributed significantly to the way we live today, most notable through modern telecommunications, global positioning, and Earth observation. In recent years, and especially in the wake of the *New Space Era*, the number of satellite deployments has seen explosive growth. Despite its critical importance, little academic research has been conducted on satellite security and, in particular, on the security of onboard firmware. This lack likely stems from by now outdated assumptions on achieving security by obscurity, effectively preventing meaningful research on satellite firmware.**

In this paper, we first provide a taxonomy of threats

in 2022 [2]. The vast majority of these satellites form mega-constellations like *Starlink*, which plans to launch more than 40,000 satellites in the coming years [3].

Small satellites [4] are at the heart of this *New Space Era* as their size and the widespread use of Commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) components makes them affordable even for small institutions. Furthermore, they cover a broad spectrum of use cases ranging from commercial applications (like Earth observation, machine-to-machine communication, and Internet services) to research applications, such as technology testing, weather and earthquake forecasting, and even interplanetary missions [5]–[8].

44th IEEE Symposium on Security and Privacy (S&P)

Our Journey ...

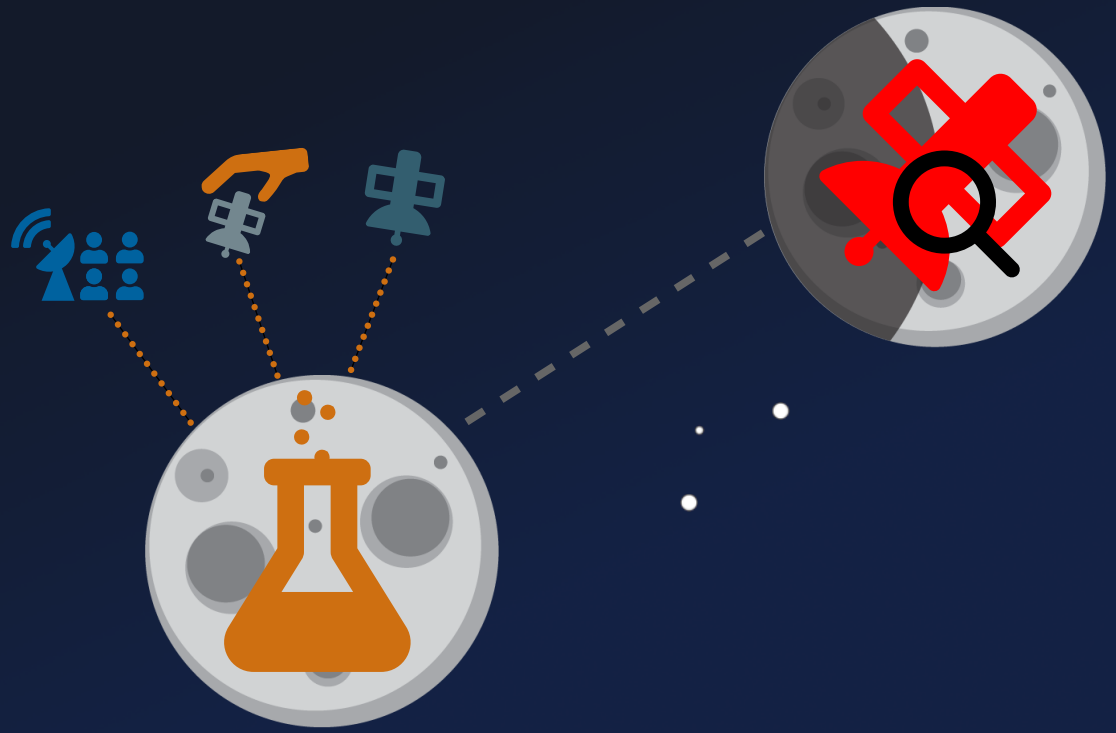
Firmware Attacks

Our Journey ...

Firmware Attacks

Our Journey ...

System Analysis



Firmware Attacks

Our Journey ...

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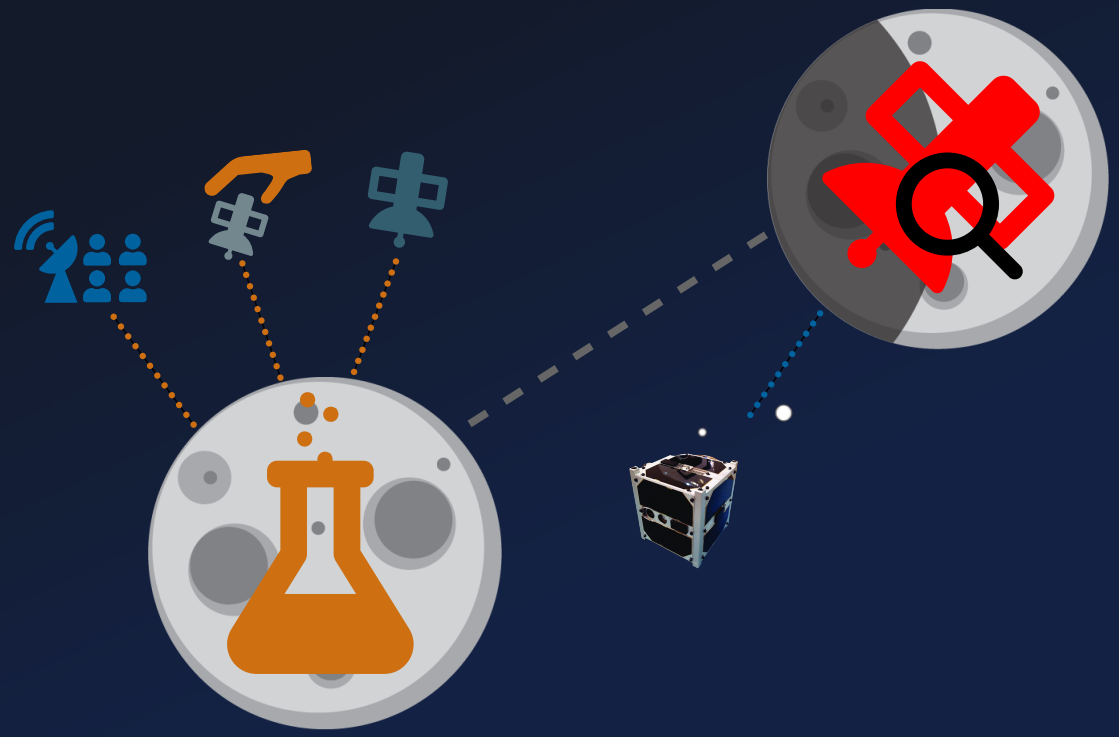

Firmware Attacks

Our Journey ...

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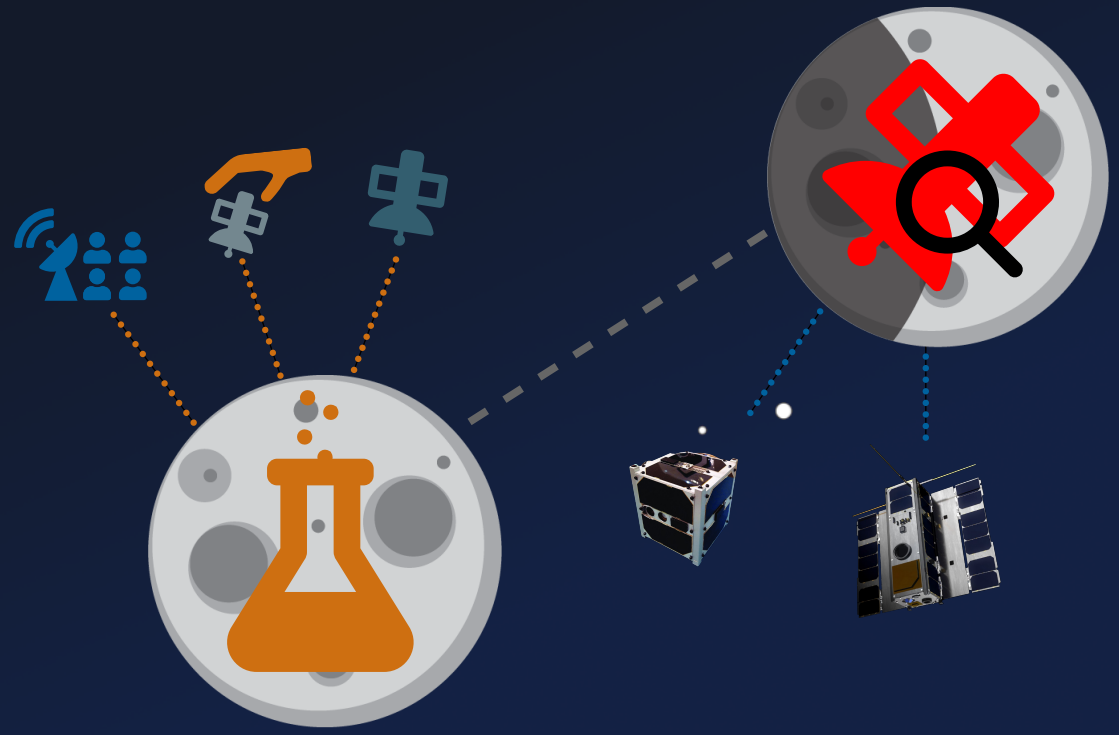

Firmware Attacks

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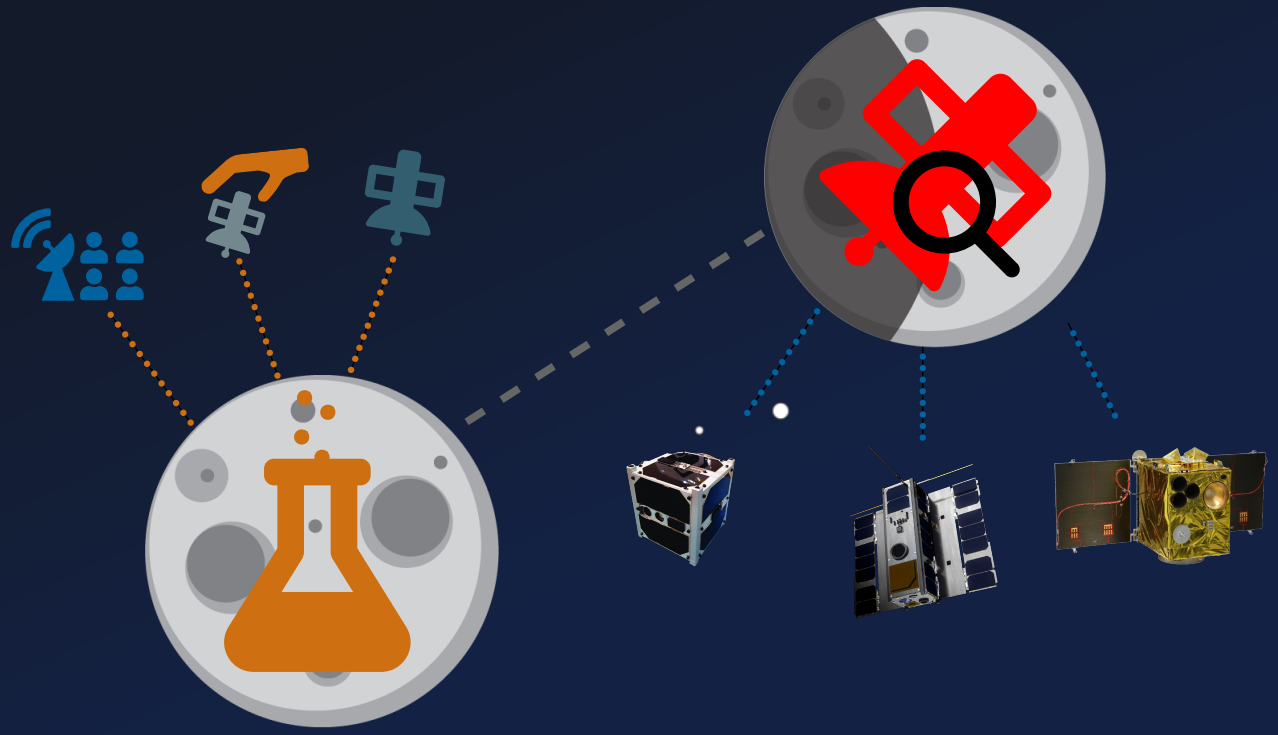

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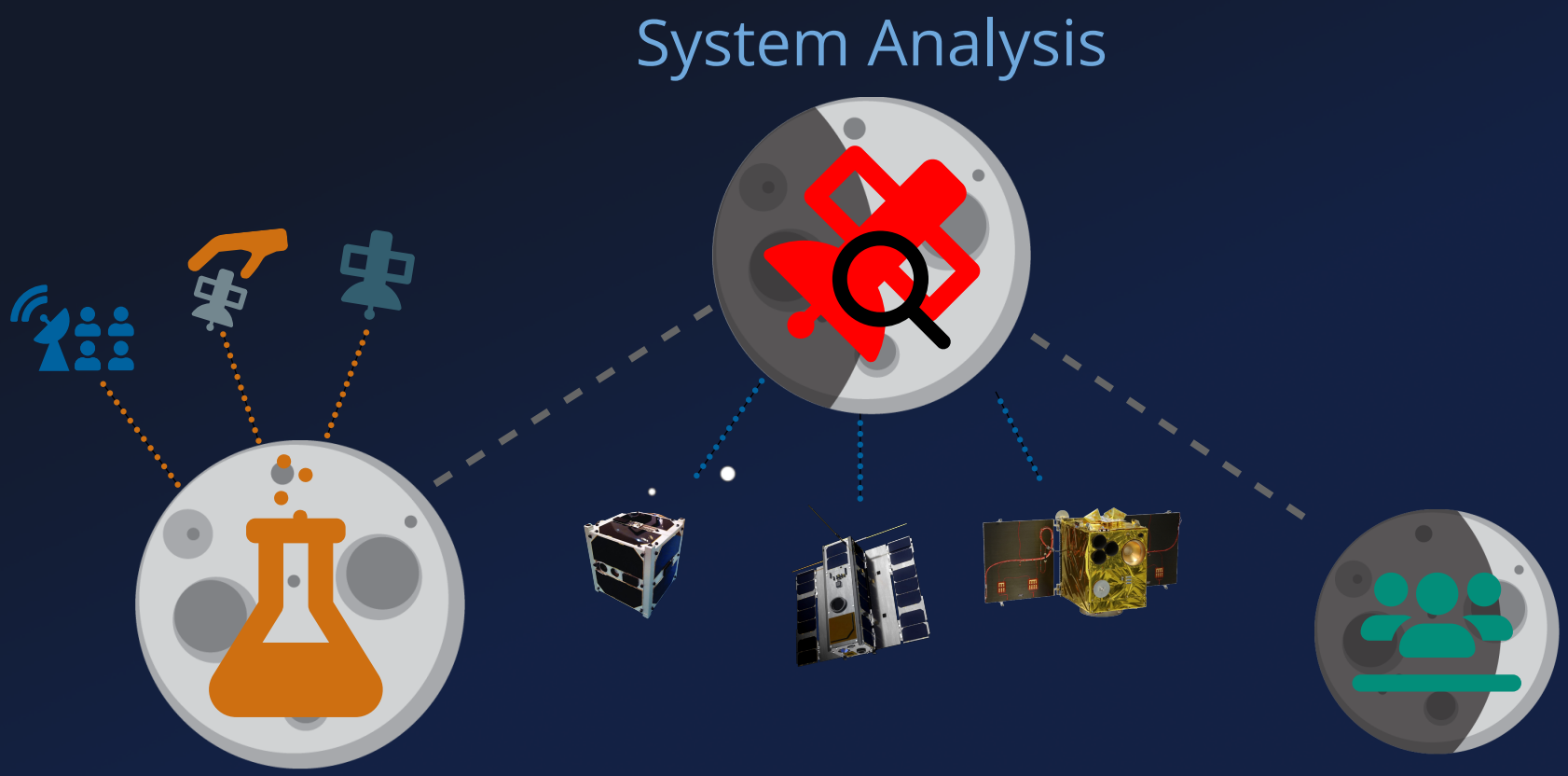

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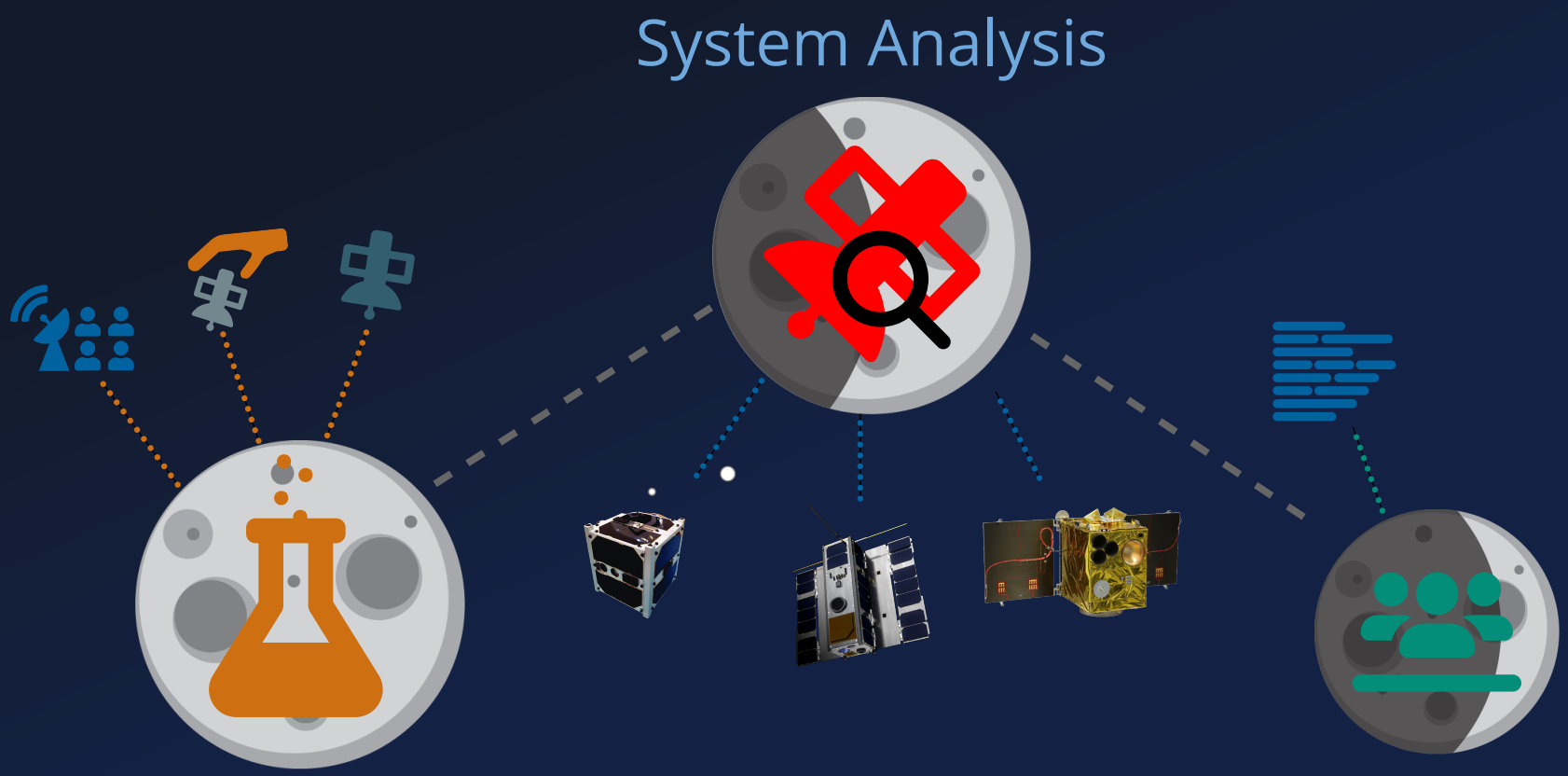

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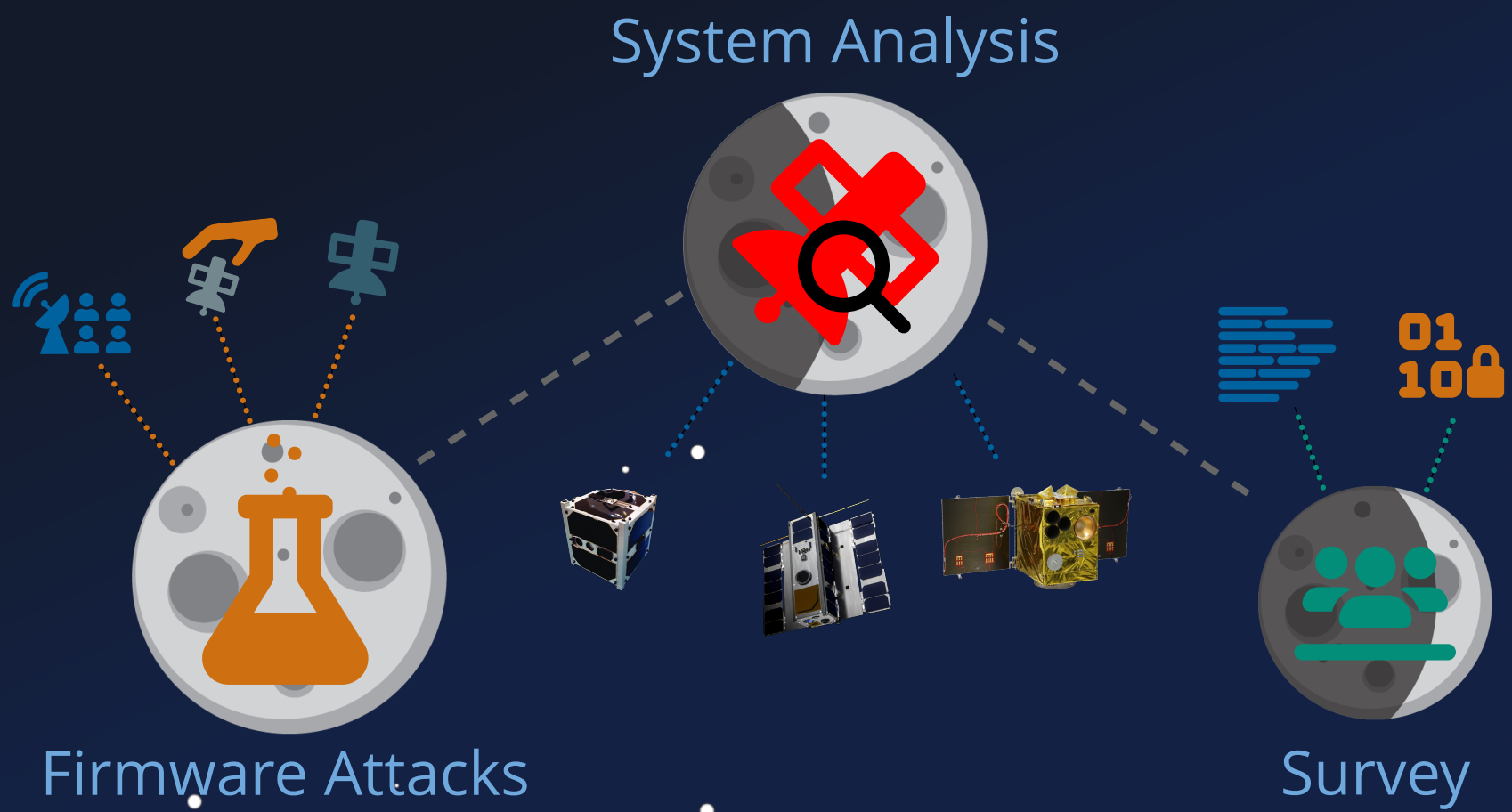

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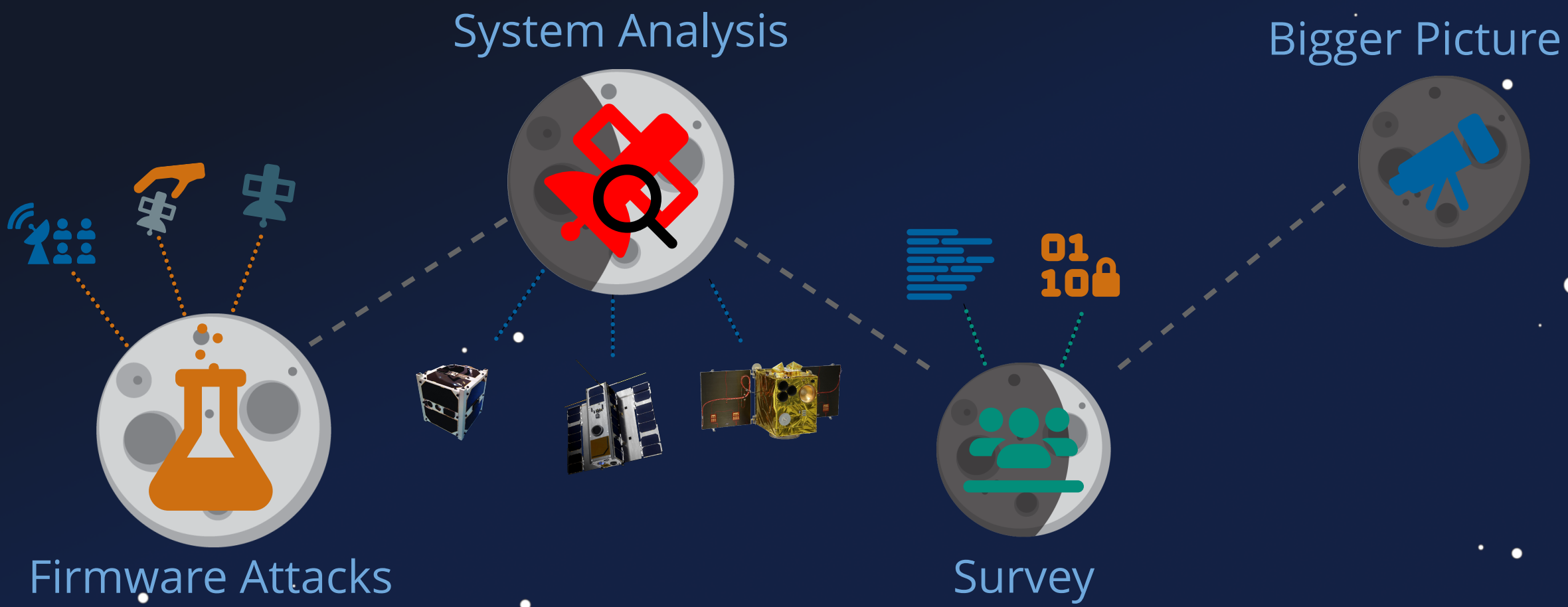
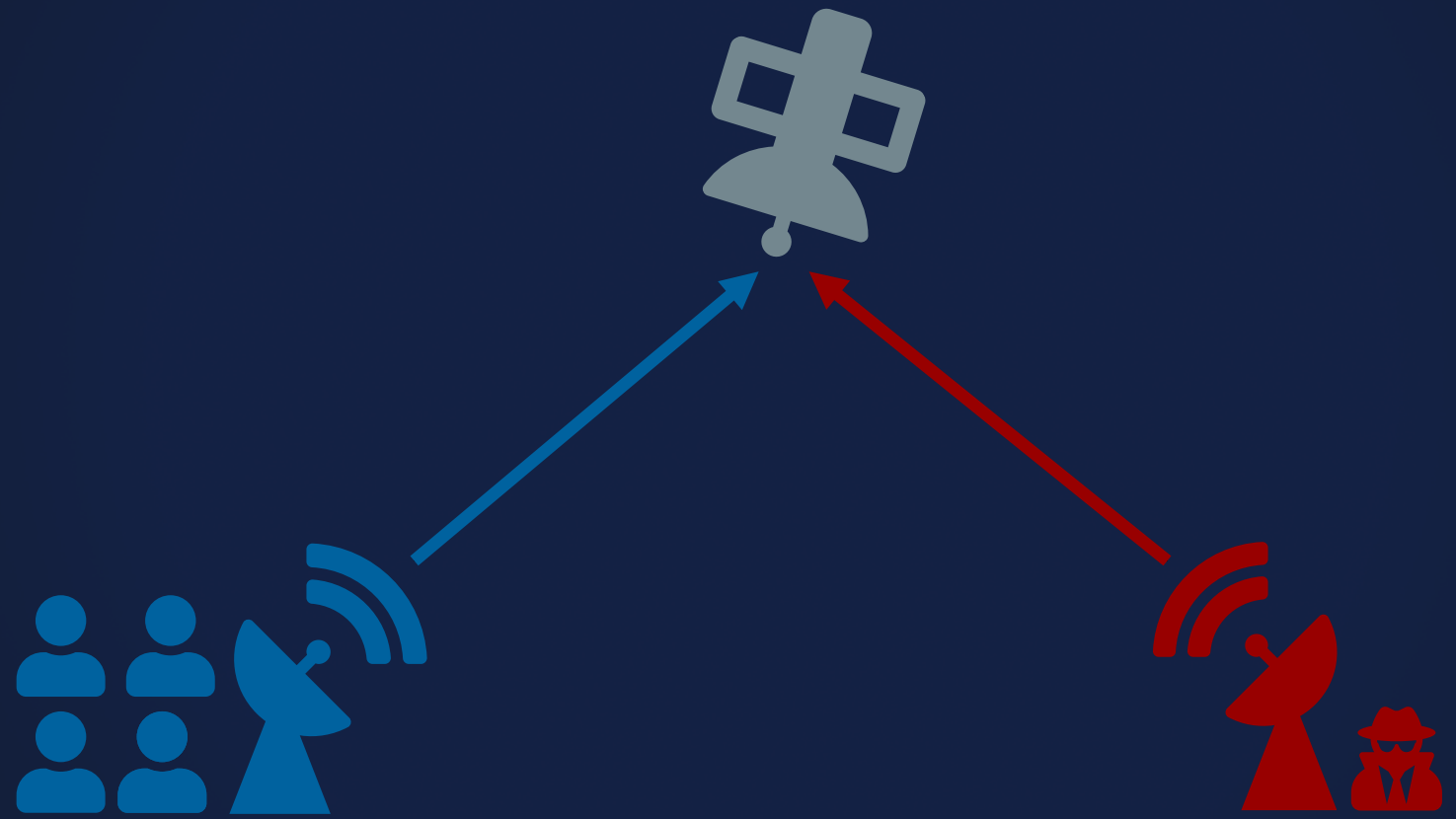
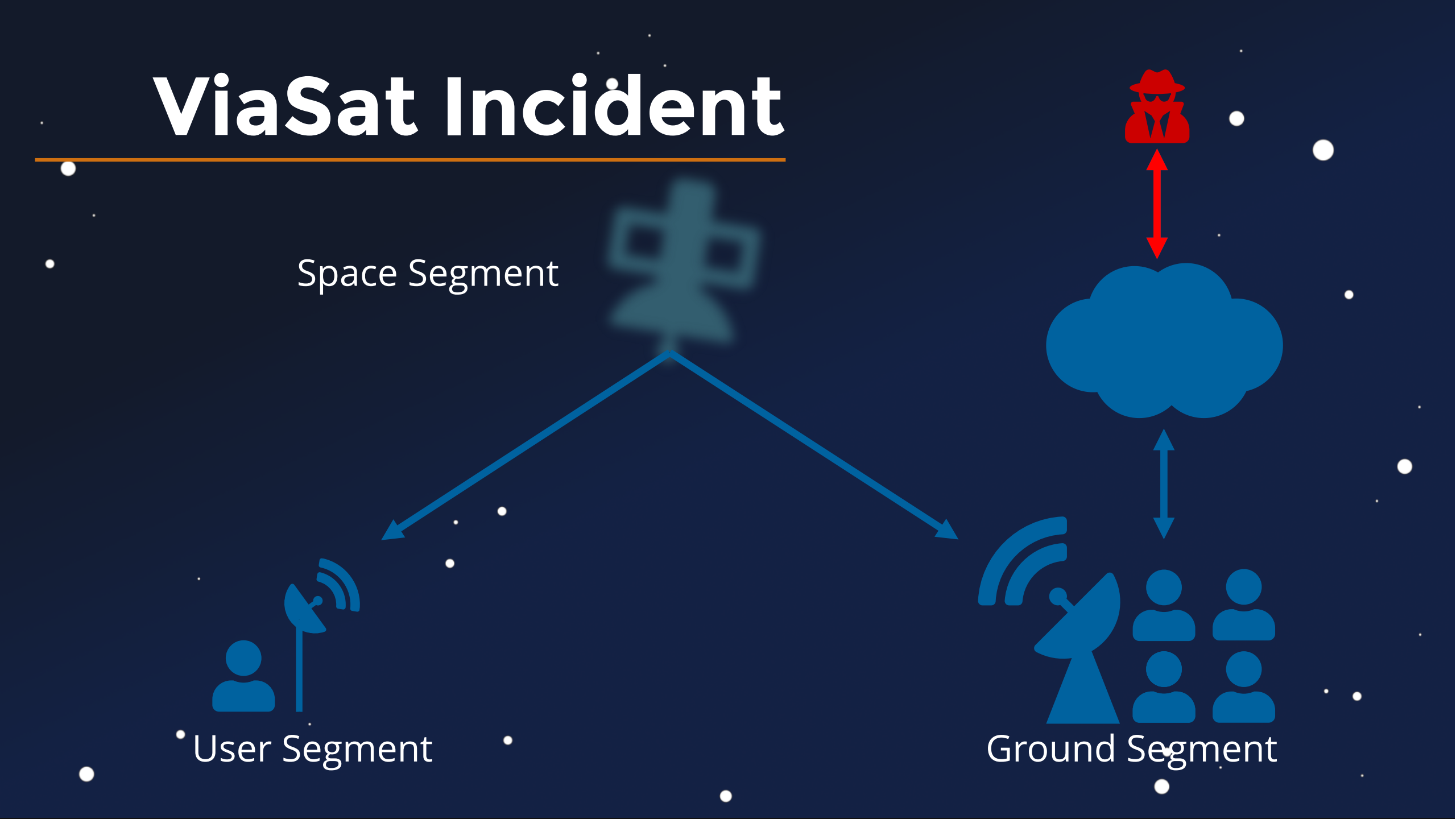

System Analysis
Bigger Picture
01
10
Firmware Attacks
Survey

Firmware Attacks



ViaSat Incident



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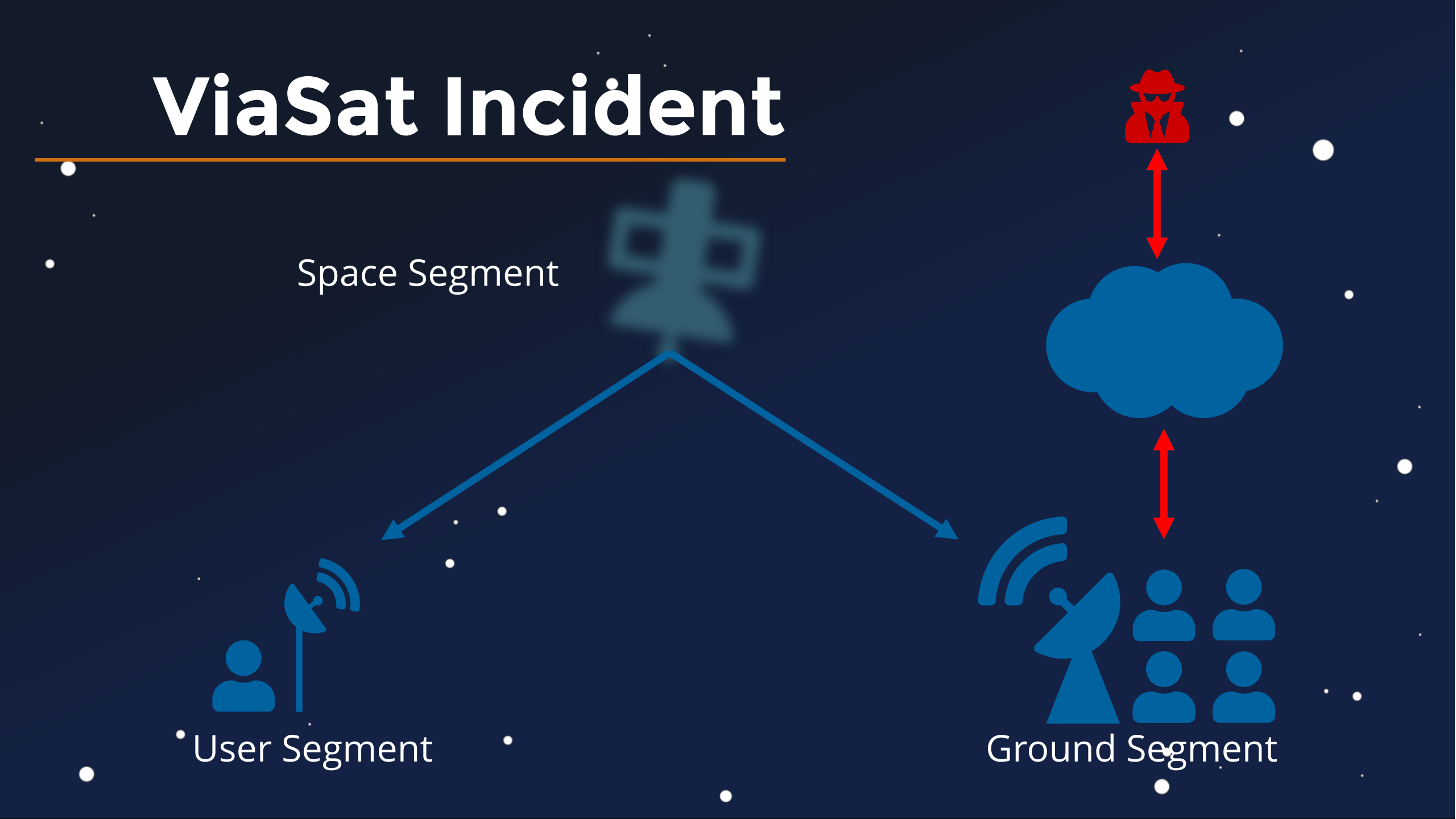

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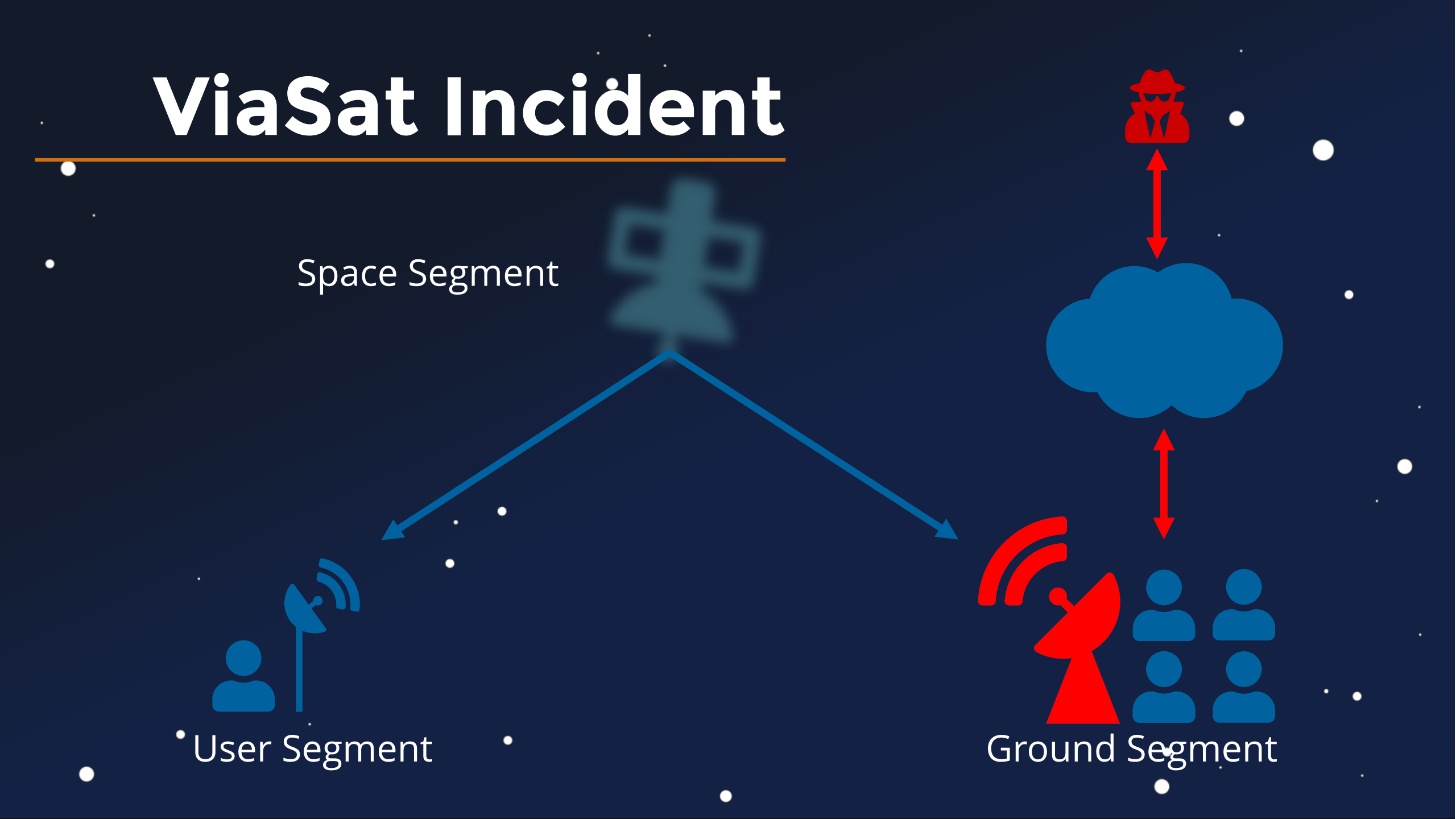

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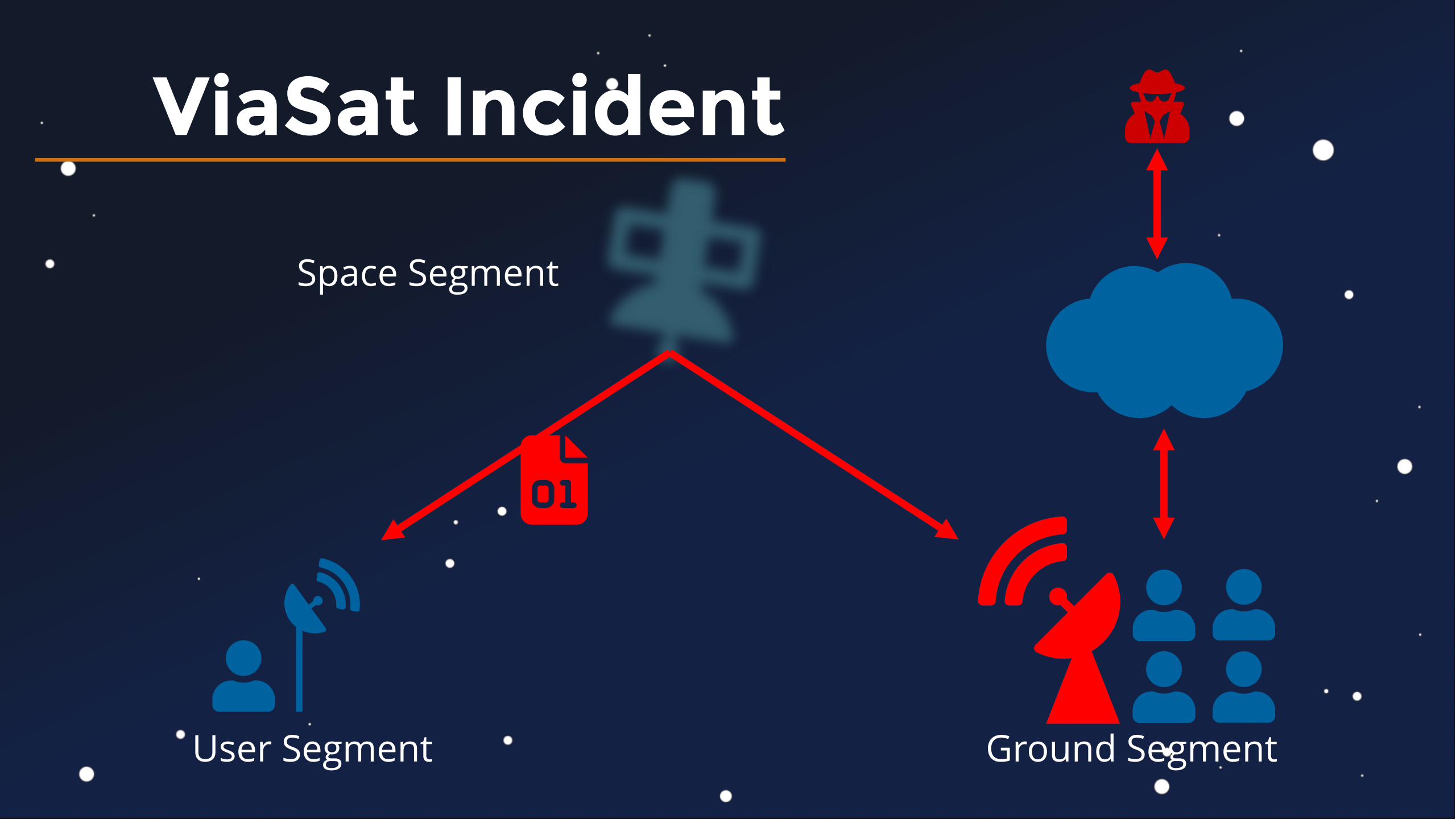

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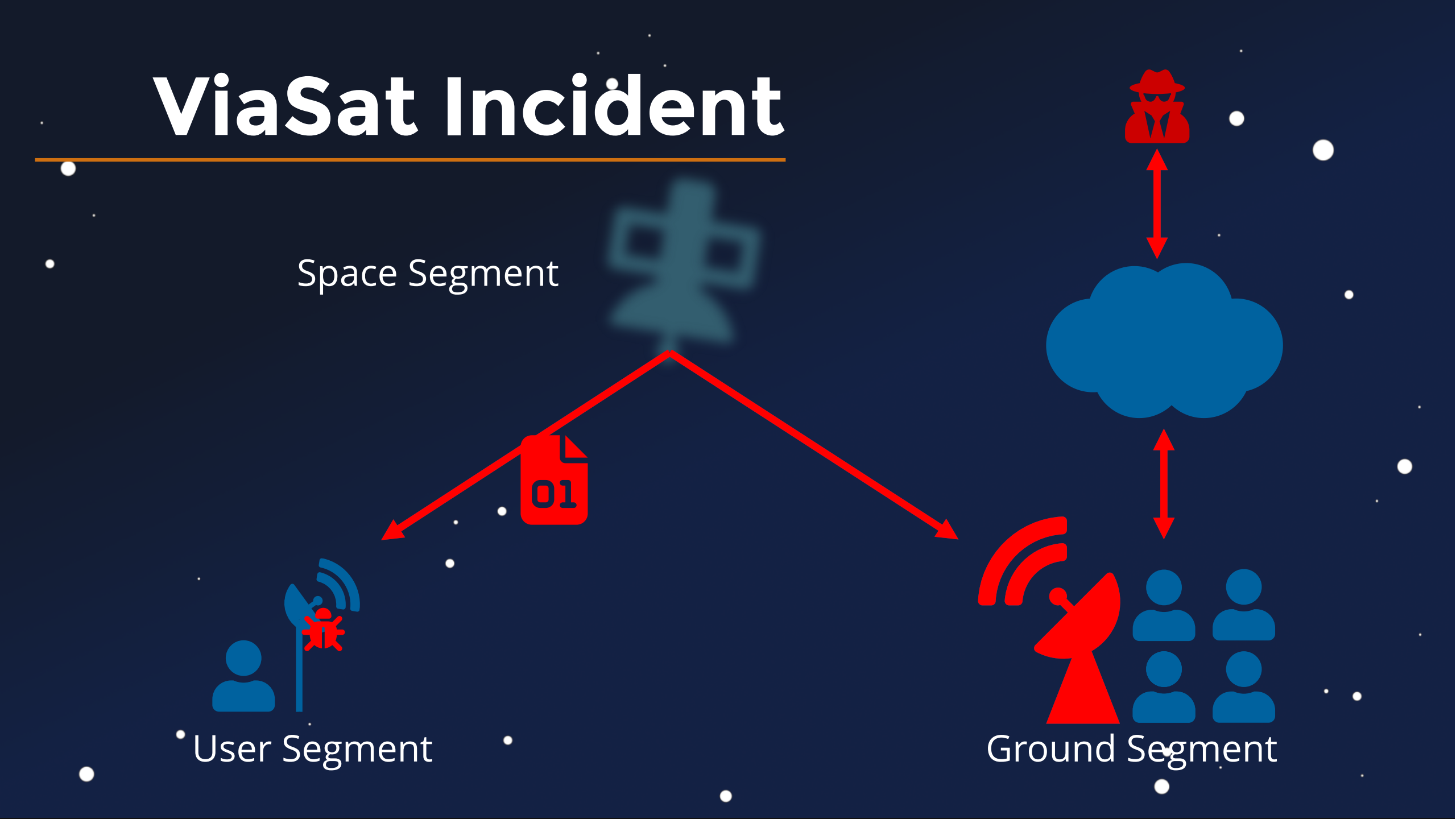

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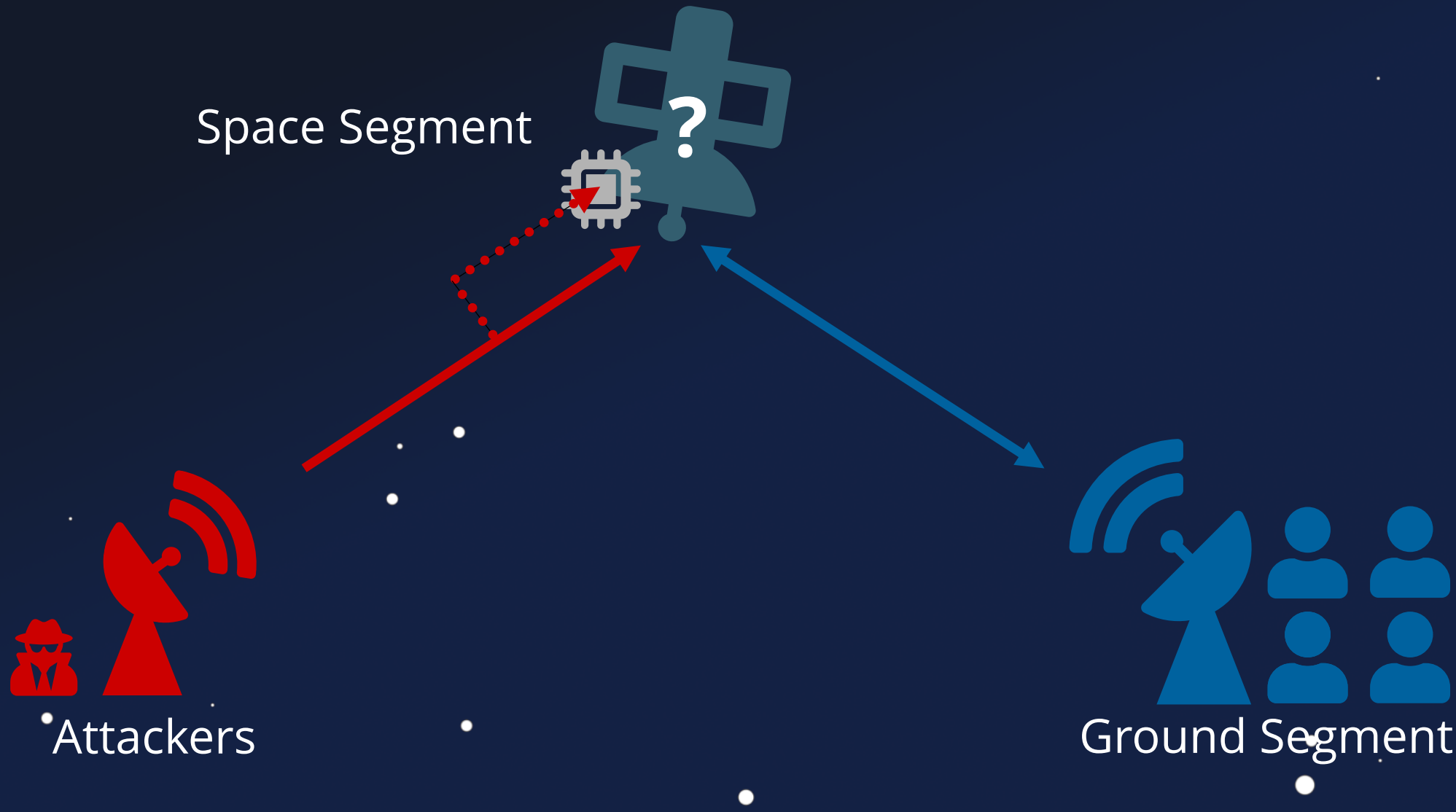

Not so Novel


CCSDS
The Consultative Committee for Space Data Systems
Report Concerning Space Data System Standards
SECURITY THREATS AGAINST SPACE MISSIONS
INFORMATIONAL REPORT
CCSDS 350.1-G-3
GREEN BOOK
February 2022

Not so Novel

CCSDS REPORT CONCERNING SECURITY THREATS AGAINST SPACE MISSIONS

3.4.8 REPLAY

Applicable to: Space Segment, Ground Segment, Space-Link Communication.

Description: Transmissions to or from a spacecraft or between ground system computers can be intercepted, recorded, and played back at a later time.

Possible Mission Impact: If the recorded data were a command set from the ground to the spacecraft and they are re-transmitted [illegible] intended destination, they might be executed, potentially [illegible] time. If the replay [illegible] are not rejected, they could result [illegible] spacecraft operations, such as a maneuver [illegible] spacecraft re-orientation [illegible] the result that a spacecraft is in an unintended orientation [illegible] tumbling, antennas pointed in the wrong direction, solar arrays pointed away from the sun, [illegible] the reset of critical onboard parameters).

3.4.9 SOFTWARE THREATS

Applicable to: Space Segment, Ground Segment.

Description: Users, system operators, and programmers often make mistakes that can result in security problems. Users or administrators can install unauthorized or unvetted software that might contain bugs, viruses, or spyware, which could result in system instability. System operators might misconfigure a system resulting in security weaknesses. Programmers may introduce logic or implementation errors that could result in system vulnerabilities, or instability/reliability. Weaknesses may be discovered after a mission is operational, which external threat agents might attempt to exploit to inject instructions, software, or configuration changes.

Possible Mission Impact: Software threats could result in loss of data and safety issues [illegible] loss of spacecraft control, unauthorized spacecraft control, or loss of mission.

3.4.10 [illegible]THORIZED ACCESS

Applicable to: Space [illegible] Ground Segment.

Description: Access control policies based on strong authentication provide a means by which only authorized entities are allowed to perform system actions, while all others are prohibited.

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Not so Novel

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MARCH 2020

A REPORT OF THE CSIS AEROSPACE SECURITY PROJECT

SPACE THREAT ASSESSMENT 2020

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Foreword
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CSIS | CENTER FOR STRATEGIC & INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

Not so Novel

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Foreword
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CSIS

Illustration
Cyberattacks can be used to take control of a satellite and damage or destroy it.

user terminals that connect to satellites are all potential intrusion points for cyberattacks. Cyberattacks can be used to monitor data traffic patterns (i.e., which users are communicating), to monitor the data itself, or to insert false or corrupted data in the system. While cyberattacks require a high degree of understanding of the systems being targeted, they do not necessarily require significant resources to conduct. Cyberattacks can be contracted out to private groups or individuals, which means that a state or non-state actor that lacks internal cyber capabilities might still pose a cyber threat.[9]

A cyberattack on space systems can result in data loss, widespread disruptions, and even permanent loss of a satellite. For example, if an adversary can seize control of a satellite through a cyberattack on its command and control system, the attack could shut down all communications and permanently damage the satellite by expending its propellant supply or damaging its electronics and sensors. Accurate and timely attribution of a cyberattack can be difficult, if not impossible, because attackers can use a variety of methods to conceal their identity, such as using hijacked servers to launch an attack.

THREAT CHARACTERISTICS

The types of counterspace threats described above have distinctly different characteristics that make them more suitable for use in some scenarios than others. As shown in Table 1, some types of counterspace threats are difficult to attribute or have fully reversible effects, such as mobile jammers. High-powered lasers, for example, are "silent" and can carry out an attack with little public awareness that anything has happened. Other types of counterspace weapons produce effects that make it difficult for the attacker to know if the attack was successful, and some produce collateral damage that can affect space systems other than the one being targeted.

Counterspace weapons that are reversible, difficult to attribute, and have limited public awareness are ideally suited for situations in which an opponent may want to signal resolve, create uncertainty in the mind of its opponent, or achieve a fait accompli without triggering an escalatory response. For example, an adversary that wants to deter the United States from intervening in a situation may believe that such attacks will stay below the threshold for escalation (i.e., not trigger the very thing it is trying to prevent) while creating significant operational challenges for the United States that make the prospect of intervention more costly and protracted. Conversely, counterspace weapons that have limited battle damage assessment or that risk collateral damage may be less useful to adversaries in many situations. Without reliable battle damage assessment, for example, an adversary cannot plan operations with the confidence that its counterspace actions have been successful. Furthermore, weapons that produce collateral damage in space, such as large amounts of space debris, run the risk of escalating a conflict and turning other nations against the attacker.

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5

AEROSPACE REPORT NO.
TOR-2021-01333-REV A

Cybersecurity Protections for Spacecraft: A Threat Based Approach

April 29, 2021

Brandon Bailey
Cyber Assessment and Research Department (CARD)
Cybersecurity Subdivision (CSS)

Prepared for:
U.S. GOVERNMENT AGENCY

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Outdated Assumptions

Myth of Inaccessibility

$$$ → $

Affordable
Ground Stations

Myth of Inaccessibility

$$$ → $

Affordable
Ground Stations

Ground Station as a Service
GSaaS

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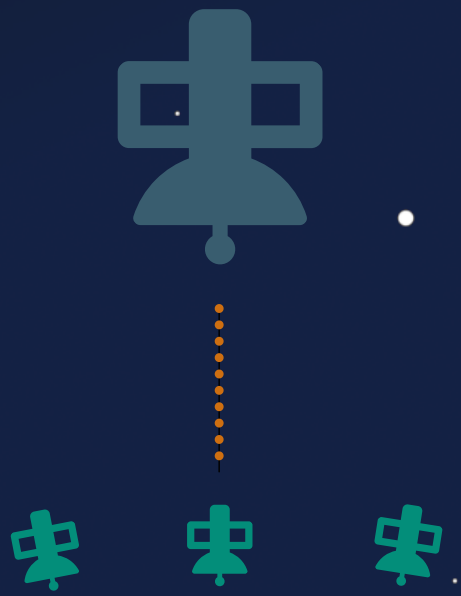


More Satellites
GEO → LEO

Security by Obscurity

“ No Insights <=> No Attacker

Security by Obscurity

- ~~*No Insights <=> No Attacker*~~

Security by Obscurity

> ~~*No Insights <=> No Attacker*~~

More Developers

More People Involved

Security by Obscurity

> ~~*No Insights <=> No Attacker*~~

More Developers
More People Involved

Commercial off-the-Shelf
(COTS) Components

Security by Obscurity

> *~~No Insights <=> No Attacker~~*

More Developers
More People Involved

Commercial off-the-Shelf
(COTS) Components

Higher Stakes
Critical Infrastructure

Attacker Goals

Denial of Service

Attacker Goals

Denial of Service

Malicious Data Interaction

Attacker Goals

Denial of Service

Seizure of Control

Malicious Data Interaction

Attacker Goals

Denial of Service

Seizure of Control

Malicious Data Interaction

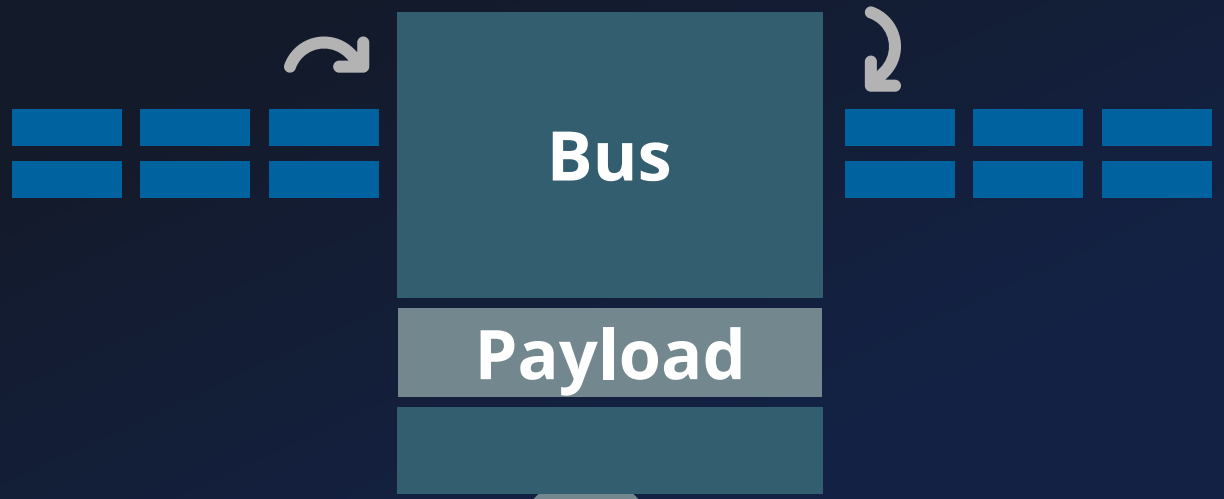
Attacker Goals

Seizure of Control

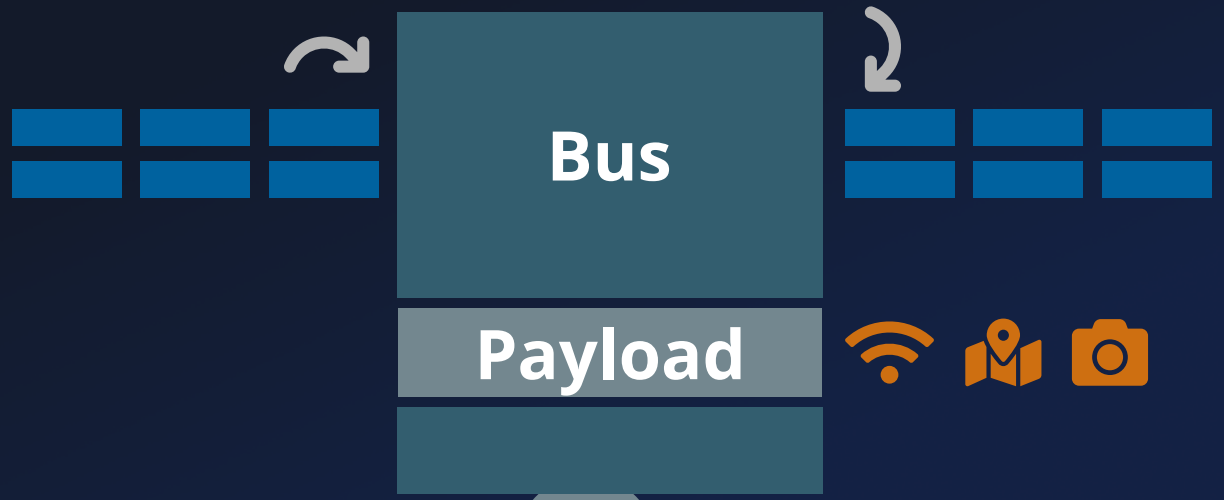
Attacker Goals

Seizure of Control

Components



Components



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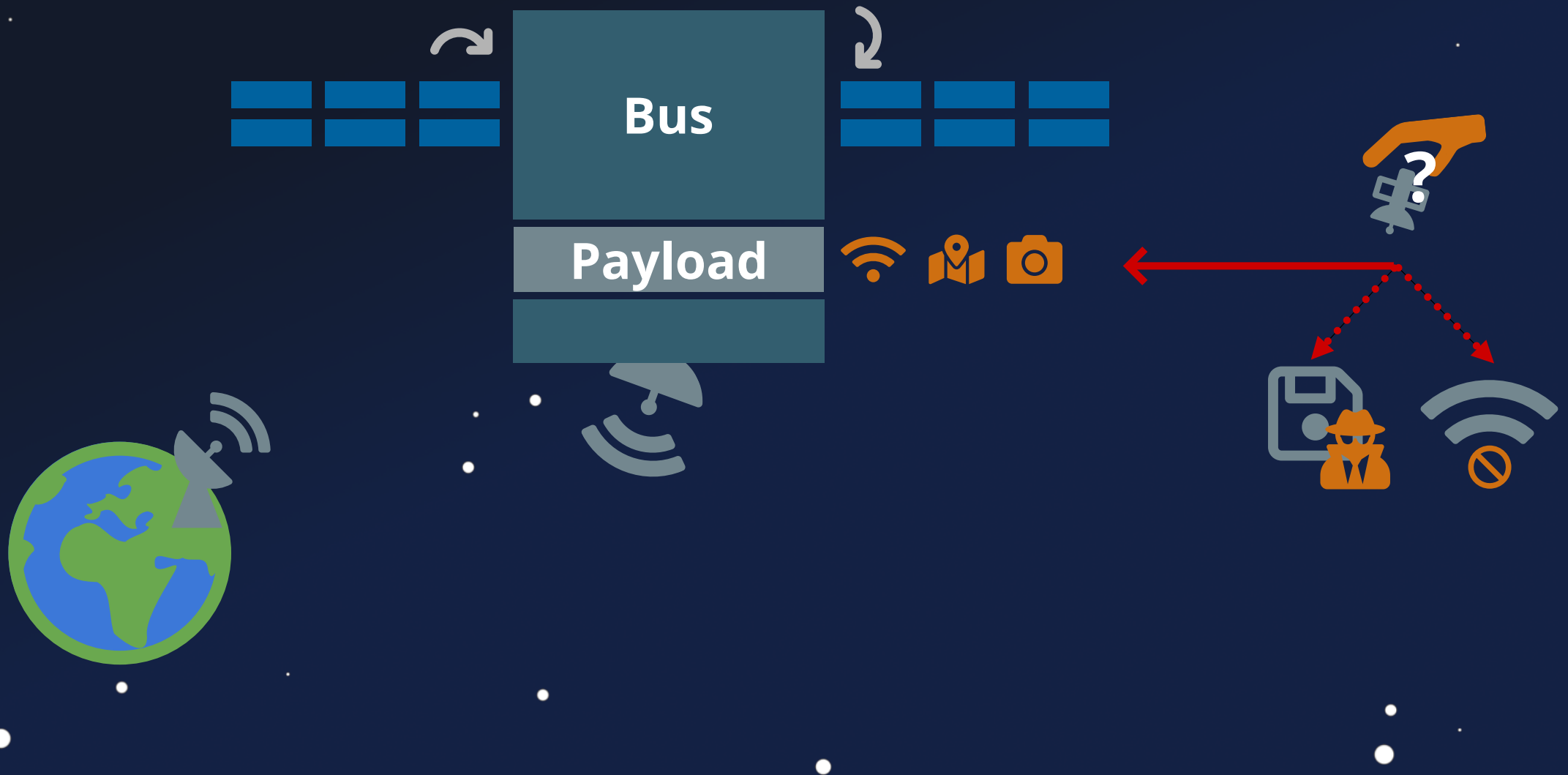

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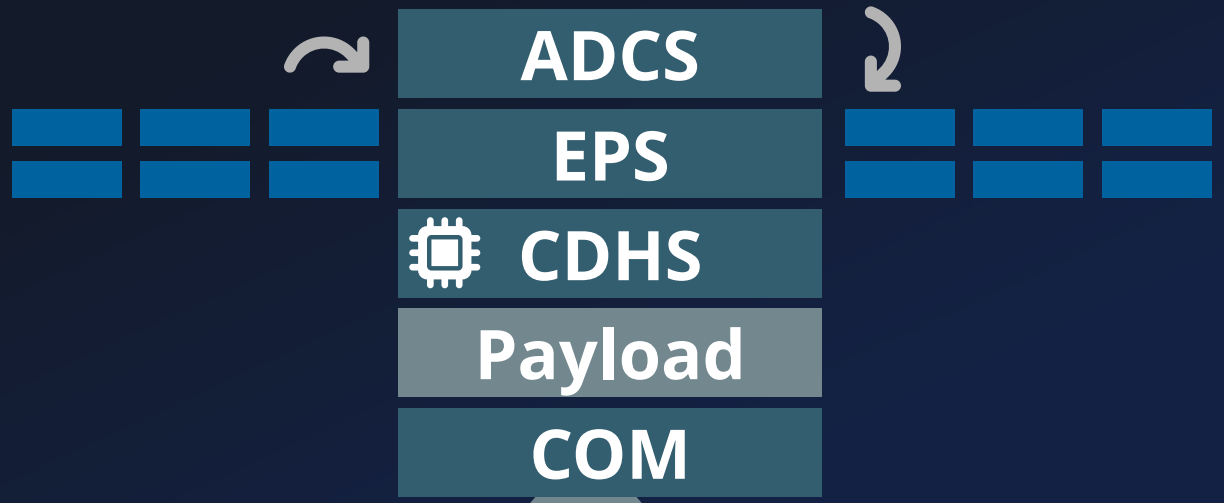
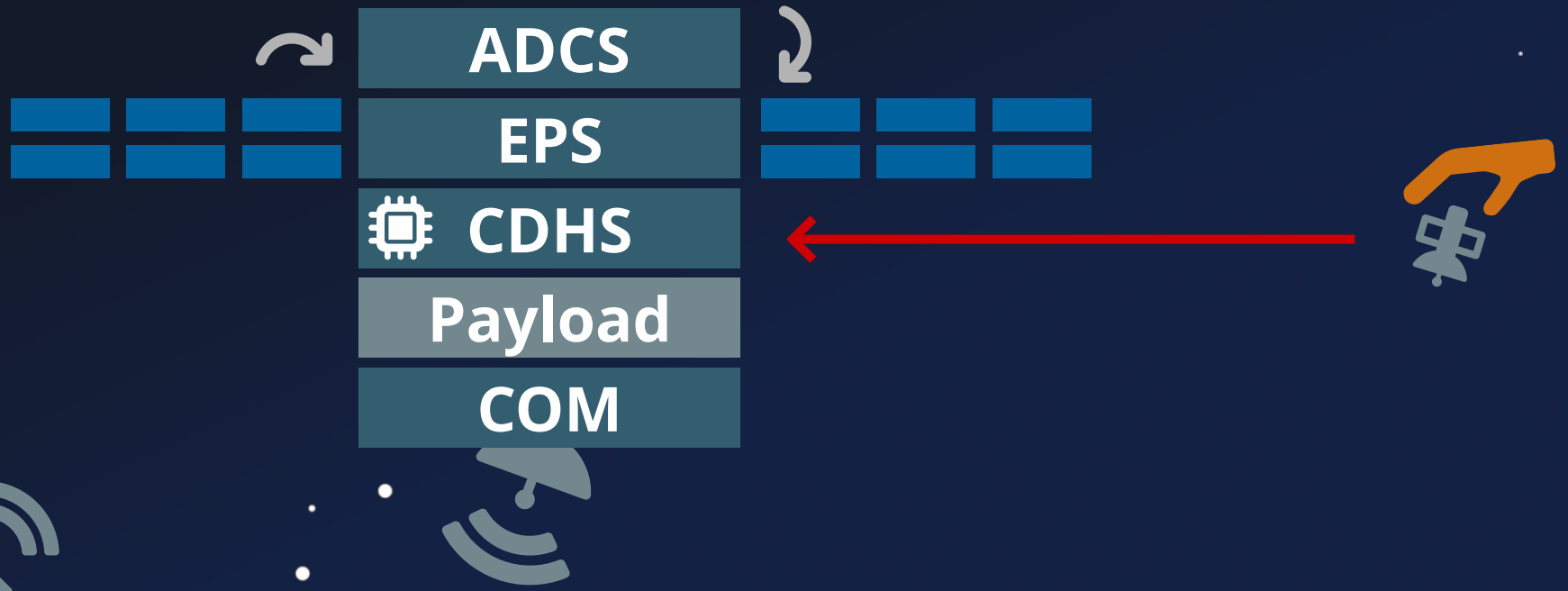
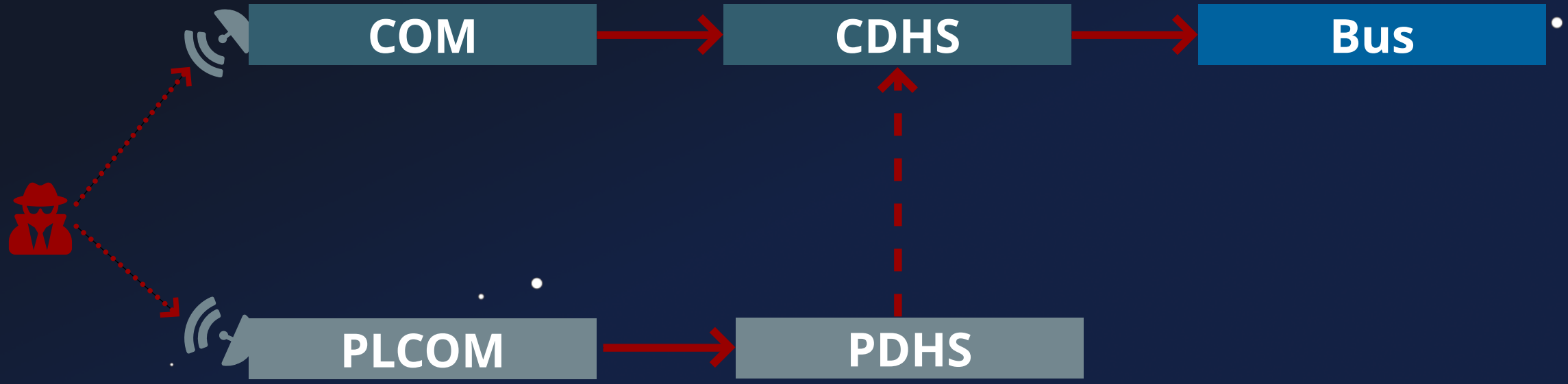


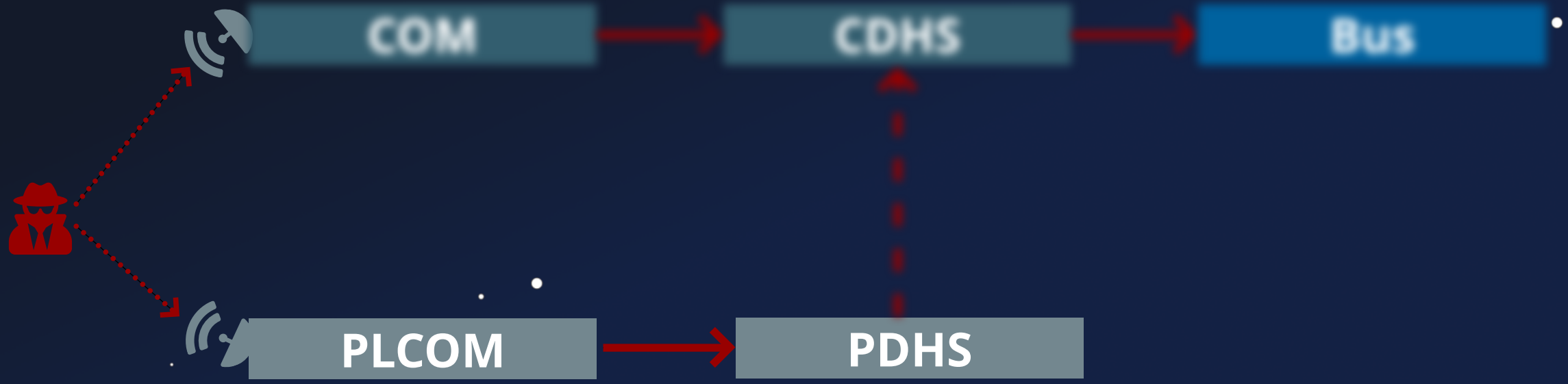
Components



Attack Path

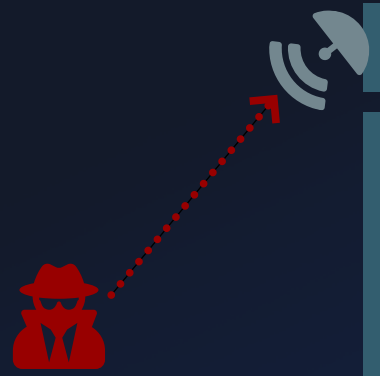


Attack Path



- CySat 2023 In Orbit Demonstration
- CySat 2022

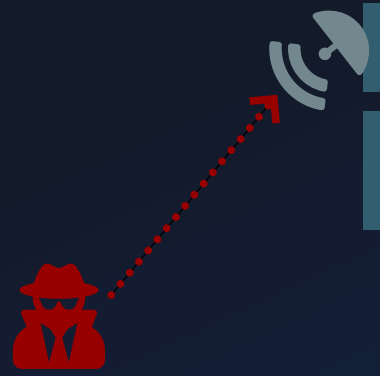
Attack Path



COM → **CDHS** → **Bus**

- Bypass COM Protection
  - Missing AC
  - Insecure Protocol
  - Outdated Crypto
  - Timing Side Channels
  - Leaked Keys
  - Timed Backdoor
  - ...

Attack Path



COM

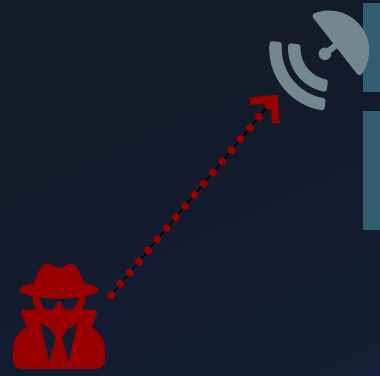
- Bypass COM Protection
  - [...]

CDHS

- Deploy Attacker Payload
  - Firmware Update
    - Signed Image
    - Slow Upload
    - Complex System

Bus

Attack Path



COM

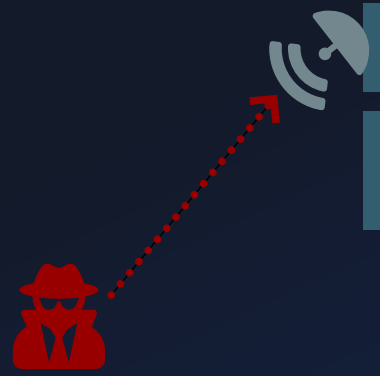
- Bypass COM Protection
  - [...]

CDHS

- Deploy Attacker Payload
  - ~~Firmware Update~~
  - Dangerous TC
  - Vulnerable TC

Bus

Attack Path



COM

- Bypass COM Protection
  - [...]

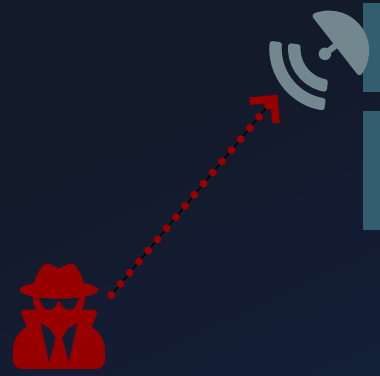
CDHS

- Deploy Attacker Payload
  - ~~Firmware Update~~
  - Dangerous TC
  - Vulnerable TC

Bus

- Hijack Bus Control Flow
- Full Bus Privileges

Attack Path



COM

- Bypass COM Protection
  - [...]

CDHS

- Deploy Attacker Payload
  - ~~Firmware Update~~
  - Dangerous TC
  - Vulnerable TC

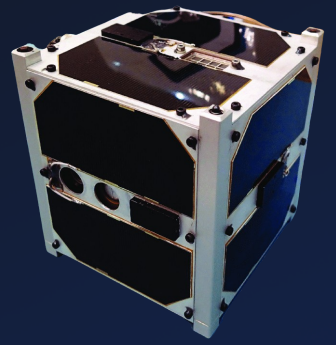
Bus

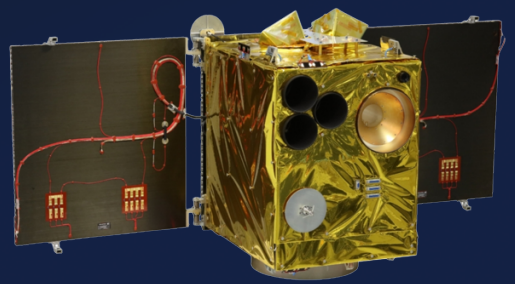
- Hijack Bus Control Flow
- Full Bus Privileges

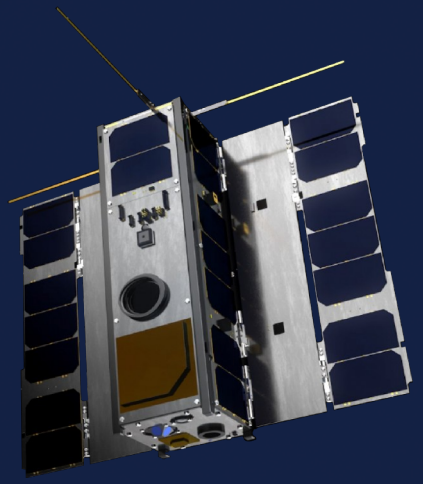
Objectives

1. Bypass COM Protection
2. Dangerous / Vulnerable TC
3. Hijack Bus Control Flow
4. Full Bus Privileges

Satellite Case Studies







Approach

Approach

Approach

System Design

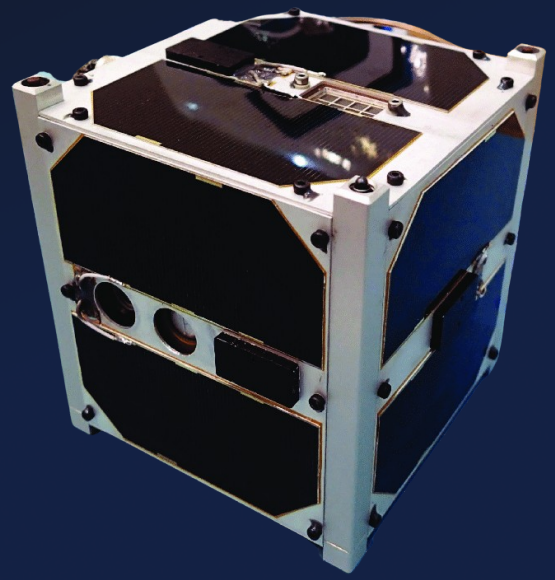
Protocols

Approach

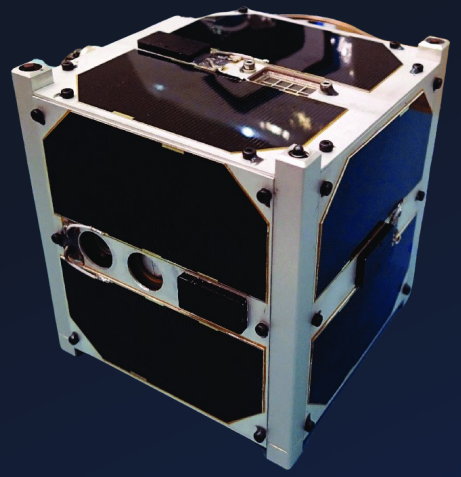
System Design

Protocols

ESTCube-1

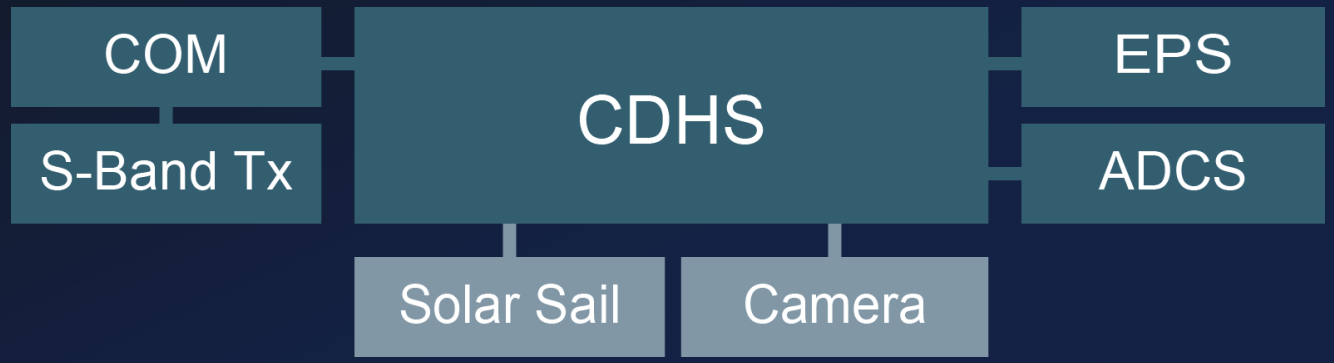


ESTCube-1



ESTCube-1

Developed by
University of Tartu



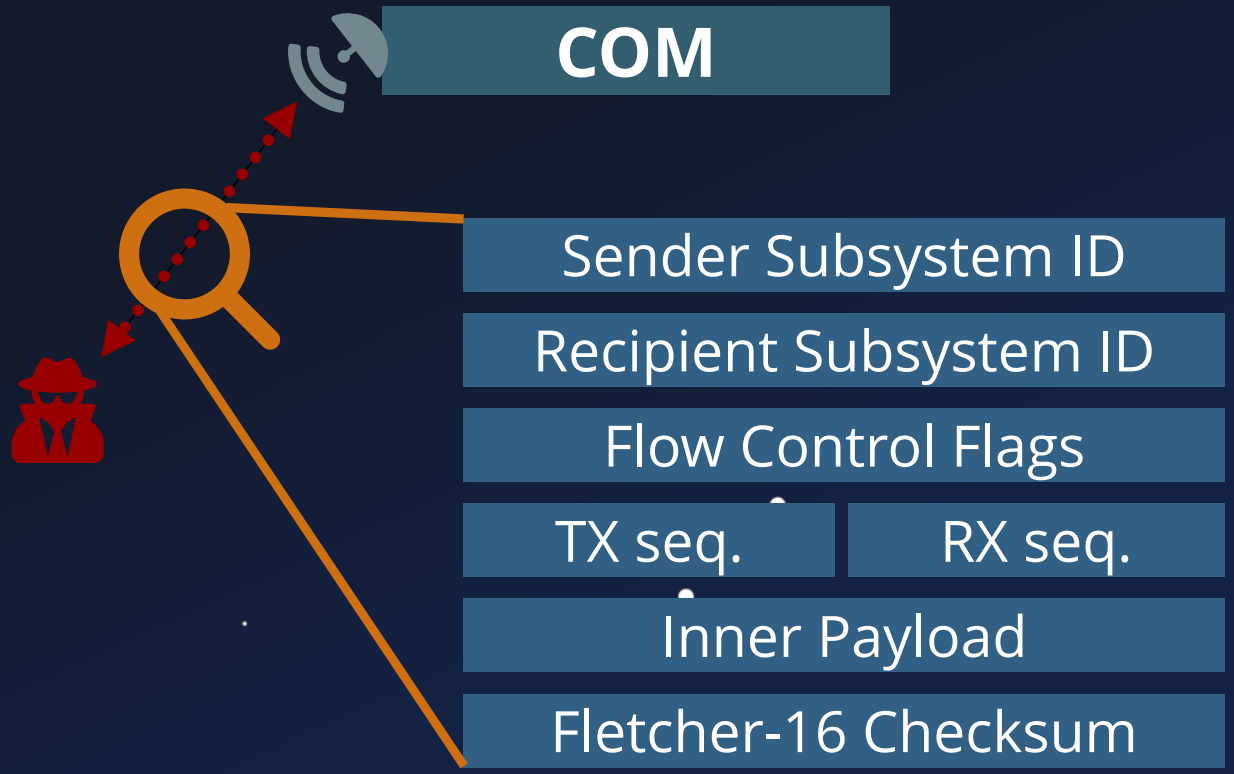
E-Sail (E. Solar Wind Sail) Propulsion

Peripherals

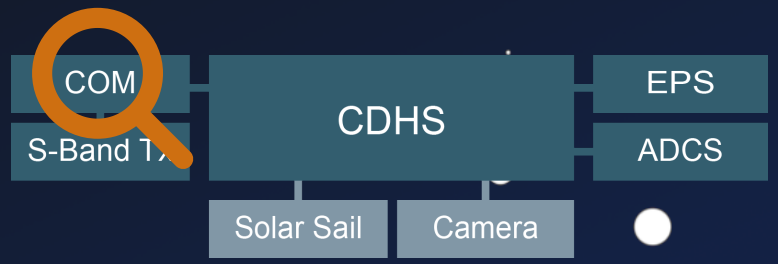
ARM STM32

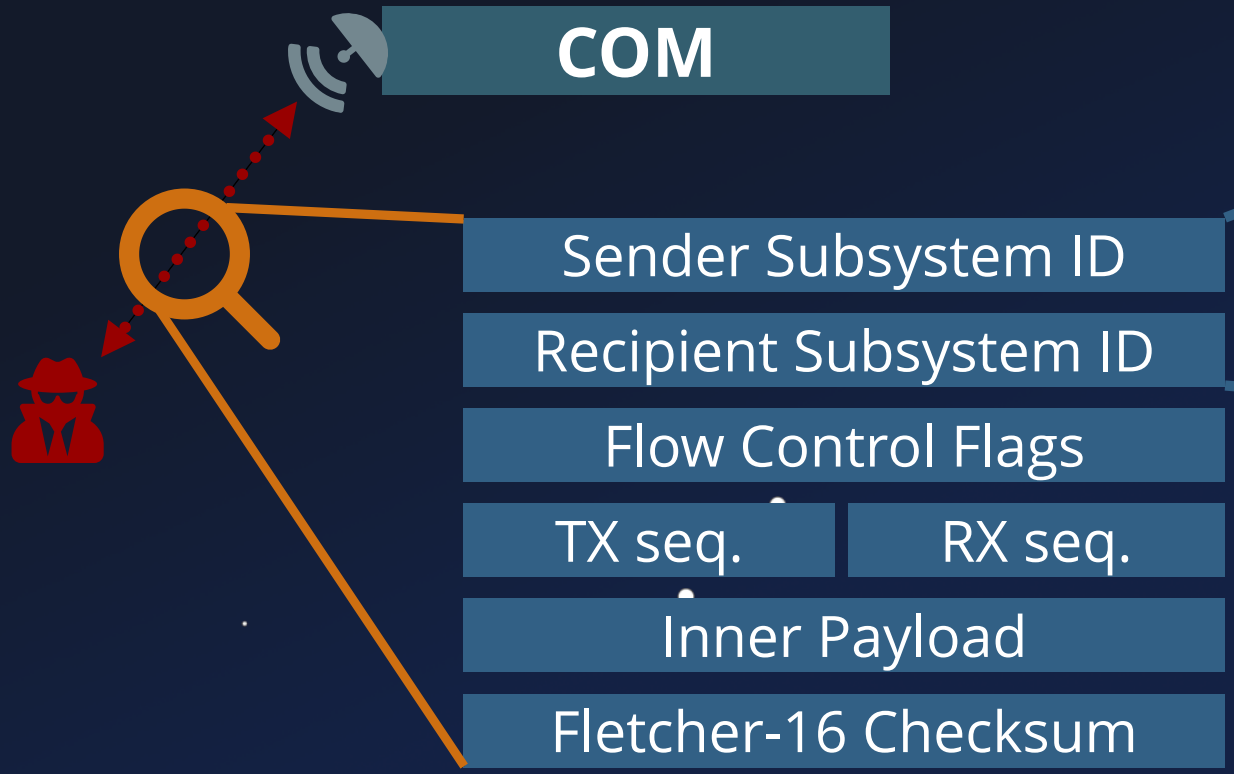
Bus Platform

Custom Protocol



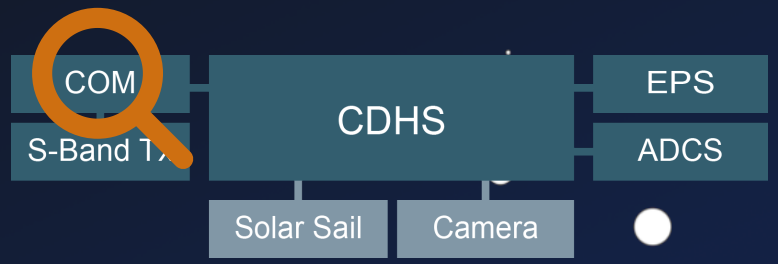
Custom Protocol

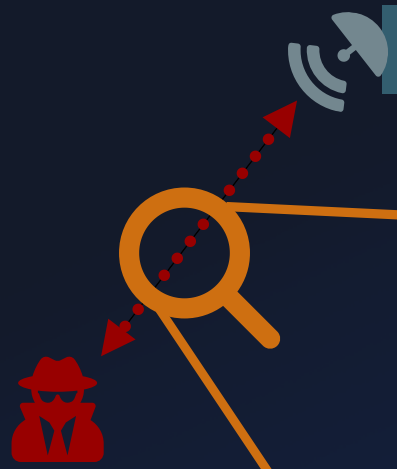




ID	Subsystem
0	EPS
1	COM
2	CDHS
...	
5	Ground Station

Custom Protocol





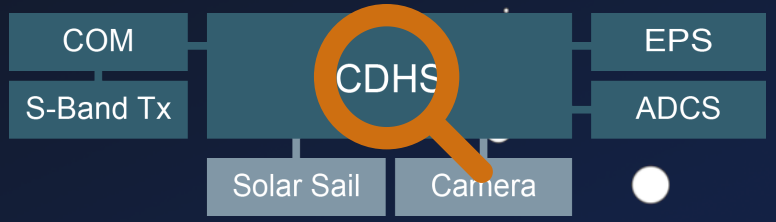
COM

- Sender Subsystem ID
- Recipient Subsystem ID
- Flow Control Flags
- TX seq. | RX seq.
- Inner Payload
- Fletcher-16 Checksum

ID	Subsystem
0	EPS
1	COM
2	CDHS
...	
5	Ground Station

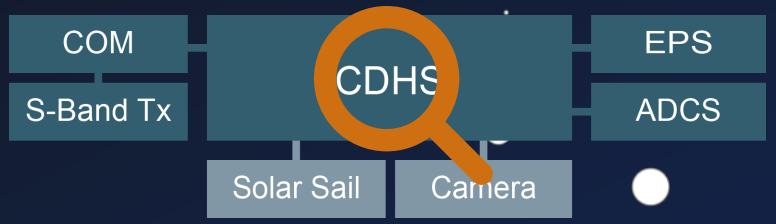
	bit 0	bit 1	bit 2	bit 3	bit 4	bit 5	bit 6	bit 7
Byte 0	Command Identifier (MSB)							
Byte 1	Command Identifier (LSB)							
Byte 2	Source				Block ID			
Byte 3	Length							
...	Args							

Security Analysis



	bit 0	bit 1	bit 2	bit 3	bit 4	bit 5	bit 6	bit 7
Byte 0	Command Identifier (MSB)							
Byte 1	Command Identifier (LSB)							
Byte 2	Source				Block ID			
Byte 3	Length							
...	Args							

Security Analysis



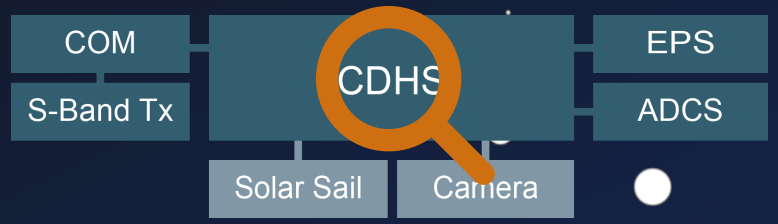
COM → **CDHS**

- Bypass COM Protection
  - Missing TC Protection

	bit 0	bit 1	bit 2	bit 3	bit 4	bit 5	bit 6	bit 7
Byte 0	Command Identifier (MSB)							
Byte 1	Command Identifier (LSB)							
Byte 2	Source				Block ID			
Byte 3	Length							
...	Args							

```c
int sch_handle_command(scheduler_packed_cmd_t *pCmd) {
 // ! simplified !
 sch_unpack_command(&g_command, pCmd);
 // ...
 handler_func = &handler_table[g_command.handler_func_index] ;
 // ...
 retval = (*handler_func) (&g_command) ;
}
```

Security Analysis



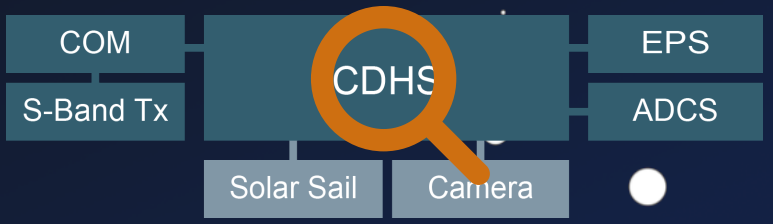
COM → **CDHS**

- Bypass COM Protection
  - Missing TC Protection

	bit 0	bit 1	bit 2	bit 3	bit 4	bit 5	bit 6	bit 7
Byte 0	Command Identifier (MSB)							
Byte 1	Command Identifier (LSB)							
Byte 2	Source				Block ID			
Byte 3	Length							
...	Args							

```
1 int sch_handle_command(scheduler_packed_cmd_t *pCmd) {
2  // ! simplified !
3  sch_unpack_command(&g_command, pCmd);
4  // ...
5  handler_func = &handler_table[g_command.handler_func_index] ;
6  // ...
7  retval = (*handler_func) (&g_command) ;
8 }
```

Security Analysis



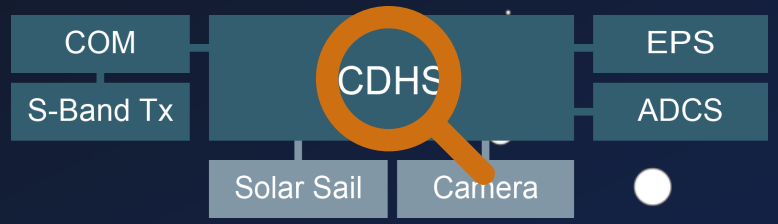
COM → **CDHS**

- Bypass COM Protection
  - Missing TC Protection

```c
int sch_handler_set_raw_memory(scheduler_cmd_t* pCmd) {
  raw_mem_access_cmd_t* pAddr = pCmd->pCmdArgs;
  char* pWriteData;

  if (pAddr) {
    if (g_sch_exec_mode != 1 ) {
      /* exception and return */
    }
    char* pWriteData = &pAddr->start_of_data_buf;
    if (pAddr->filesystem_target) {
      // [...]
    } else {
      memcpy(pAddr->targetAddr,
             &pAddr->start_of_data_buf,
             pAddr->writeLength);
    }
  }
  // ...
}
```

Security Analysis



COM → **CDHS**

- Bypass COM Protection
  - Missing TC Protection

```c
int sch_handler_set_raw_memory(scheduler_cmd_t* pCmd) {
  raw_mem_access_cmd_t* pAddr = pCmd->pCmdArgs;
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  if (pAddr) {
    if (g_sch_exec_mode != 1 ) {
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    }
    char* pWriteData = &pAddr->start_of_data_buf;
    if (pAddr->filesystem_target) {
      // [...]
    } else {
      memcpy(pAddr->targetAddr,
             &pAddr->start_of_data_buf,
             pAddr->writeLength);
    }
  }
  // ...
}
```
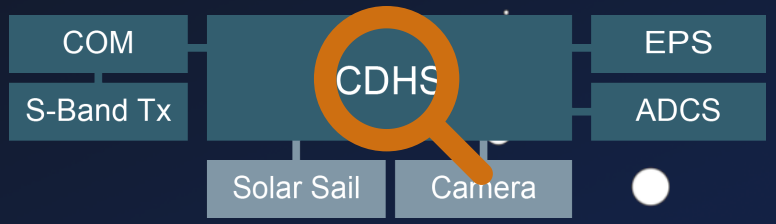

Real-World Test



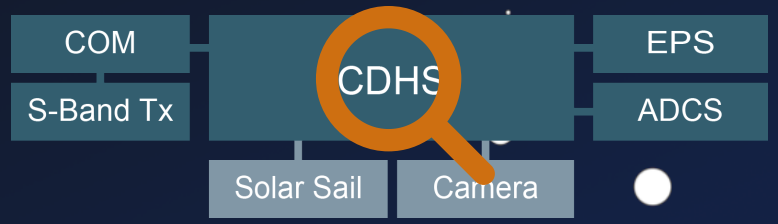
COM

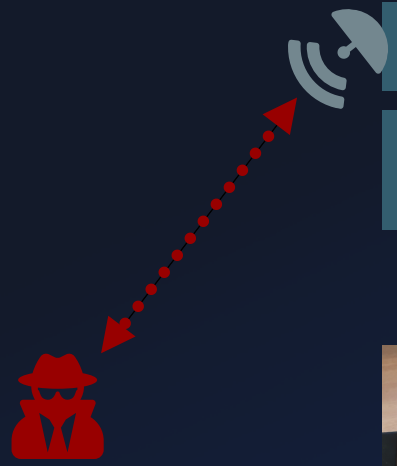
- Bypass COM Protection
  - Missing TC Protection

CDHS

- Deploy Attacker Payload
  - Dangerous TC

Real-World Test



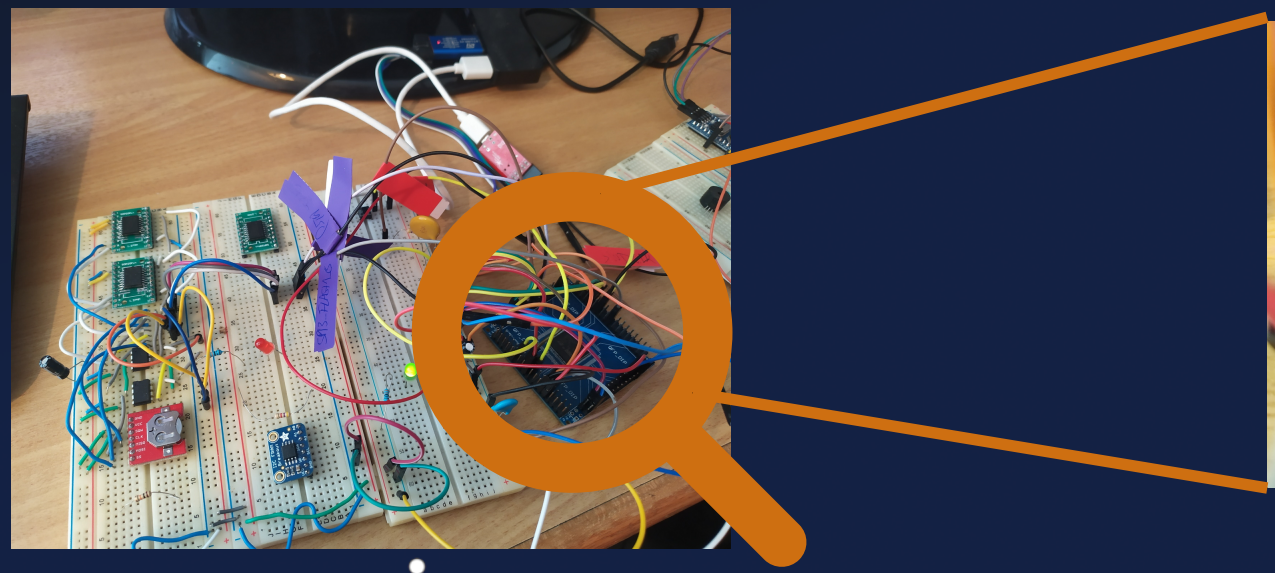


COM

- Bypass COM Protection
  - Missing TC Protection

CDHS

- Deploy Attacker Payload
  - Dangerous TC



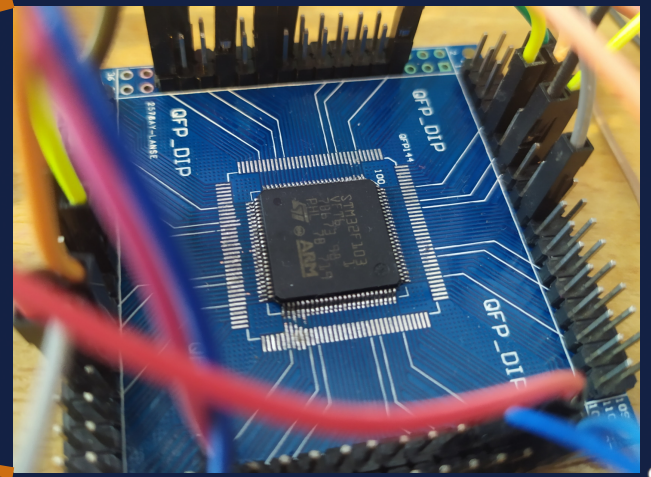
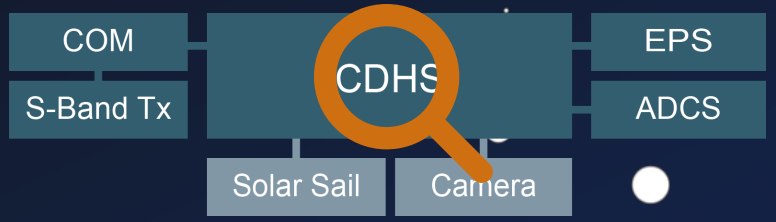


Image Source: Maximilian Gerhardt, Reverse Engineering Satellite Firmware for Security Evaluation, 13. Dec. 2021

Real-World Test



COM

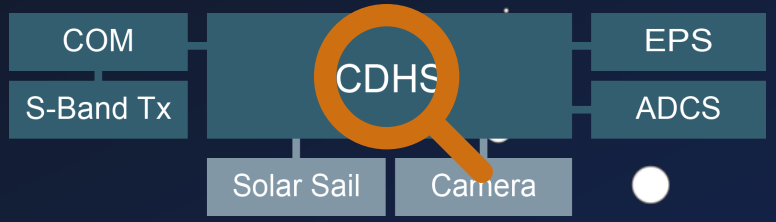
- Bypass COM Protection
  - Missing TC Protection

CDHS

- Deploy Attacker Payload
  - Dangerous TC

Bus

Real-World Test



COM

- Bypass COM Protection
  - Missing TC Protection

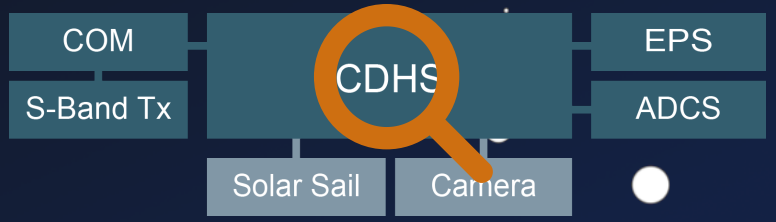
CDHS

- Deploy Attacker Payload
  - Dangerous TC

Bus

- Hijack Bus Control Flow
  - ?

Real-World Test



COM

- Bypass COM Protection
  - Missing TC Protection

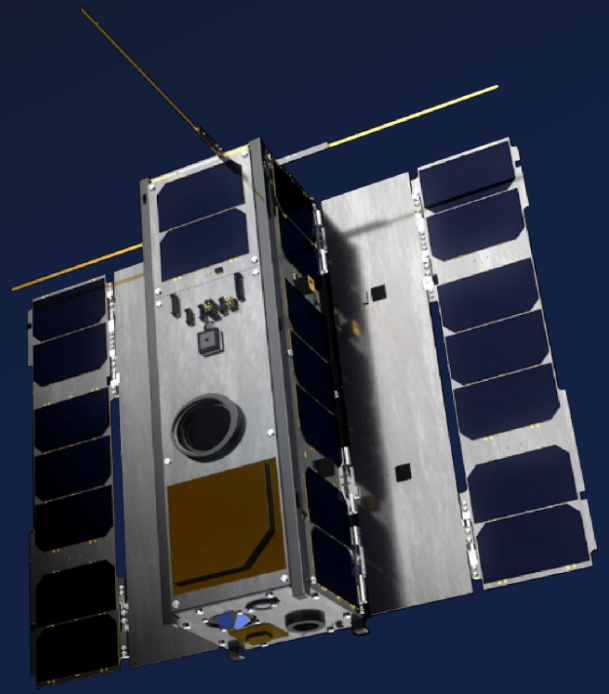
CDHS

- Deploy Attacker Payload
  - Dangerous TC

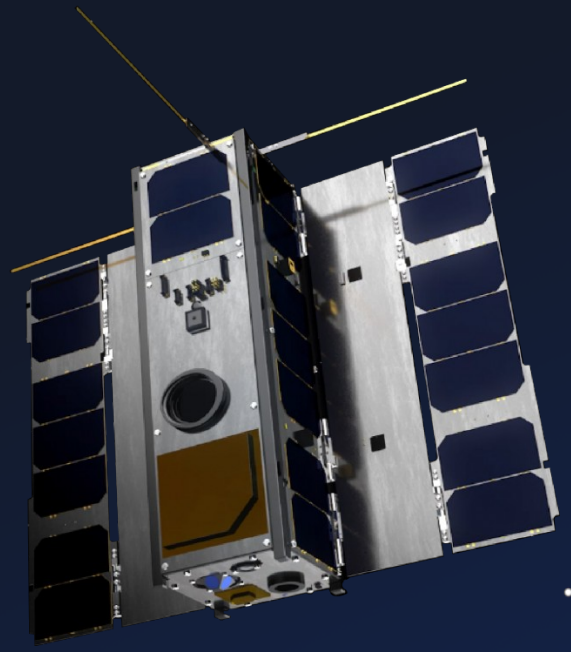
Bus

- Hijack Bus Control Flow
  - ?
- Full Bus Privileges
  - ?

OPS-Sat



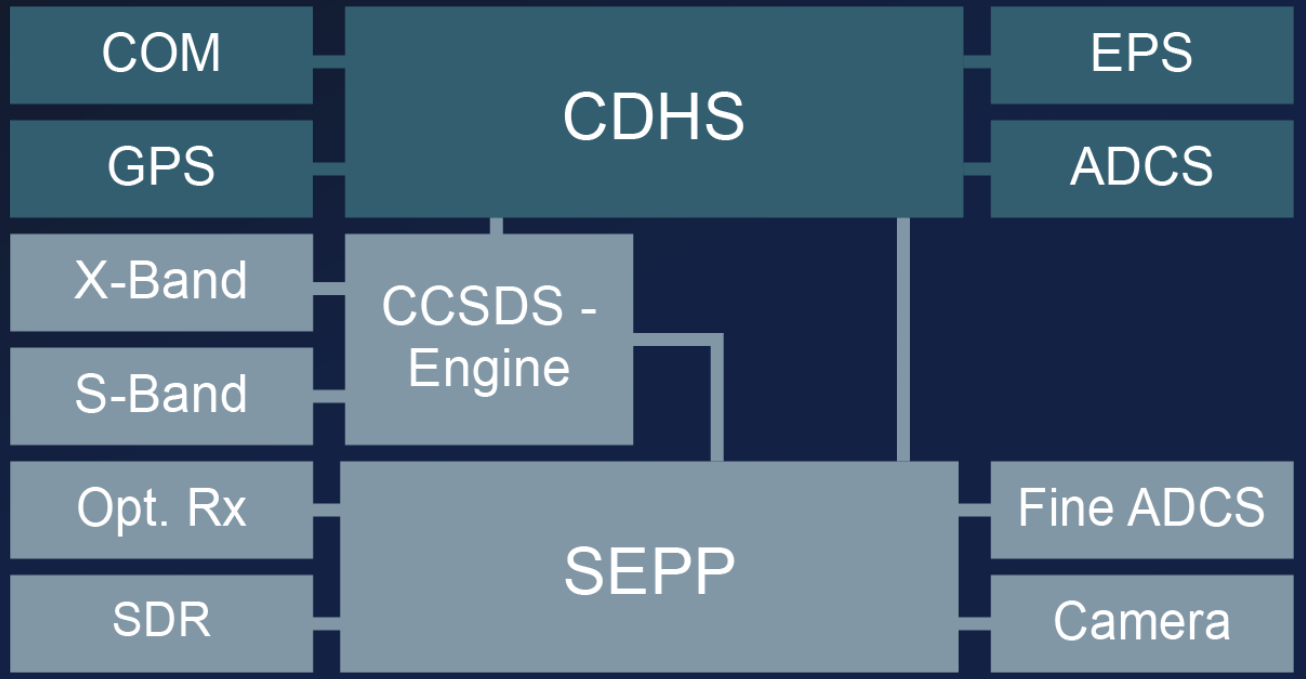
System Chart



Experimenter

Operated by ESA

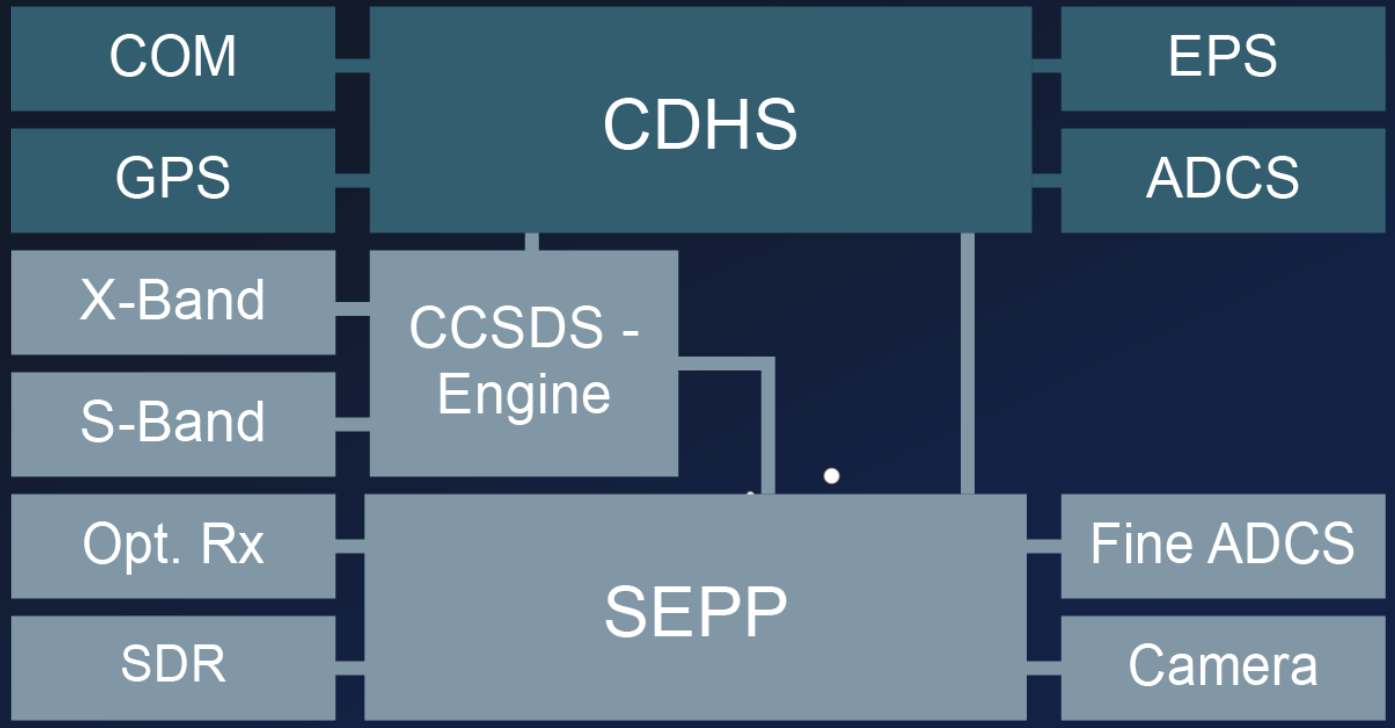
Open for Research



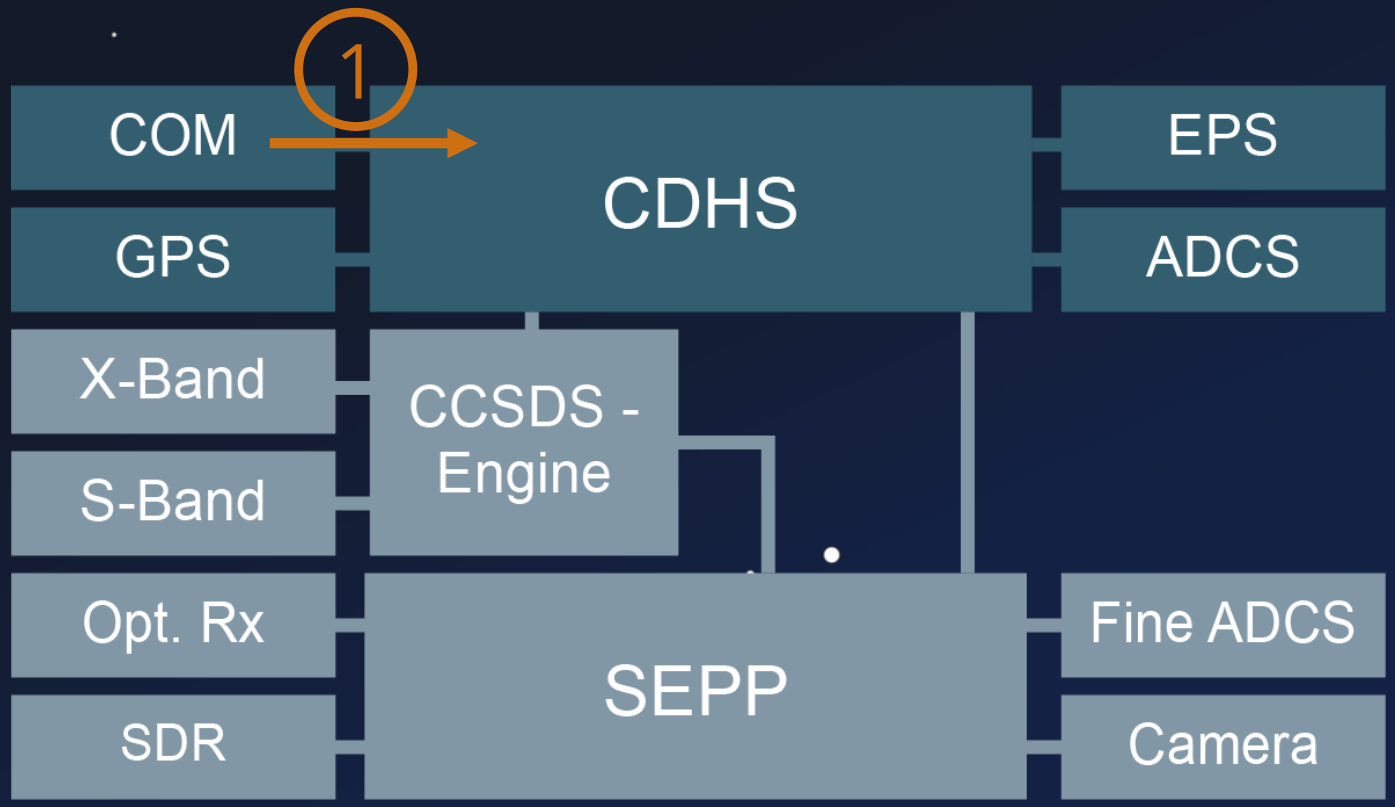
S-/X-Band, SDR, Optical Rx., Camera, ...

Peripherals

System Chart

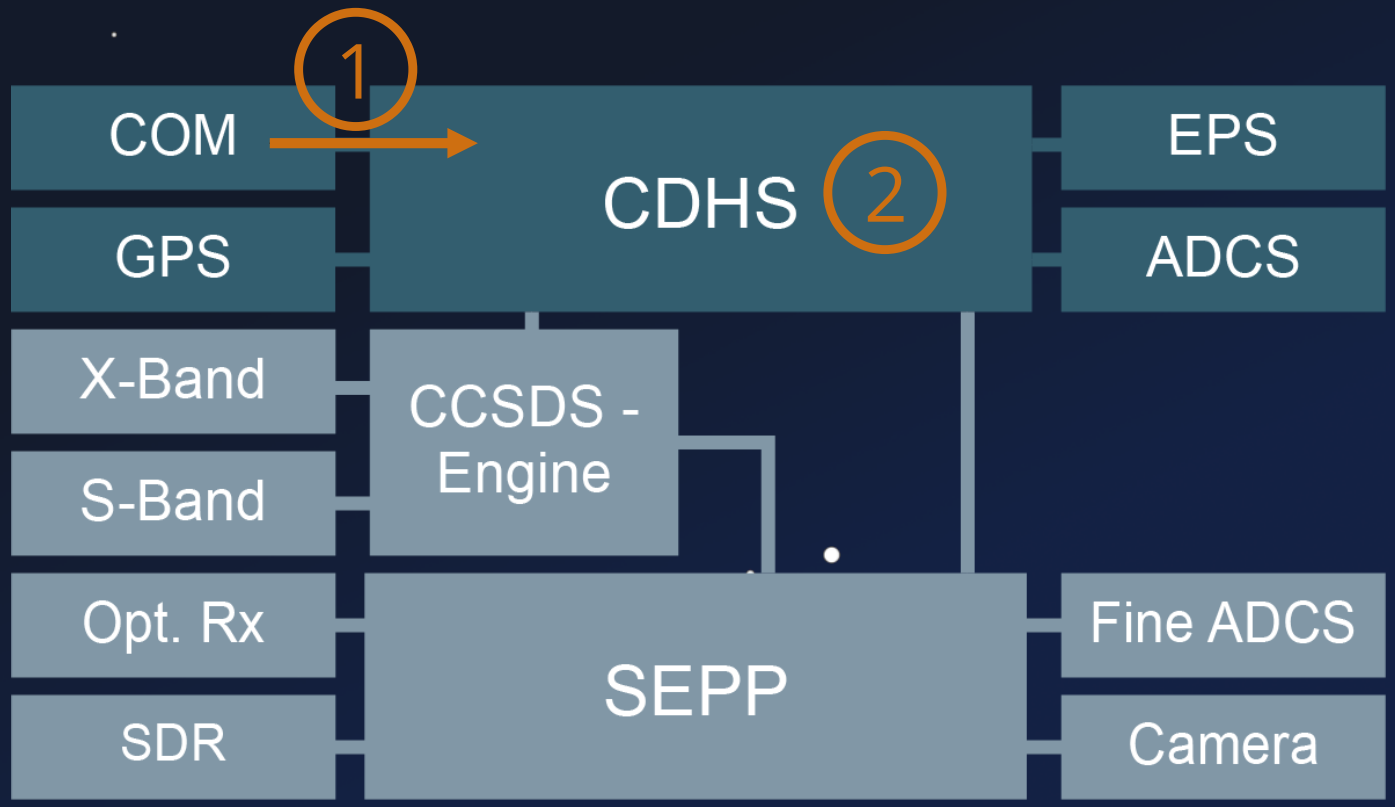


System Chart



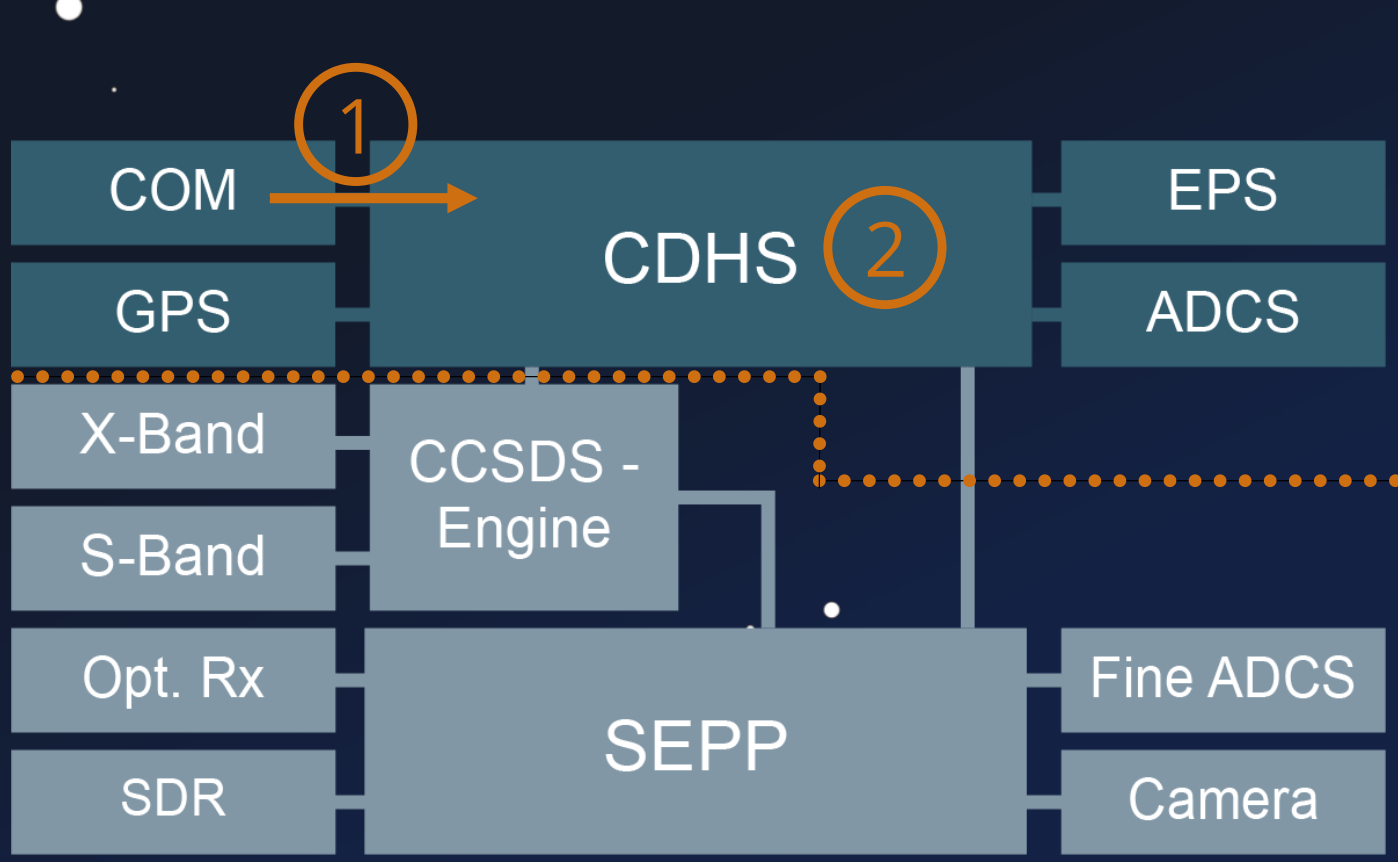
1 Cubesat Space Protocol (CSP)

System Chart



1. Cubesat Space Protocol (CSP)
2. AVR32 AT32UTC3, FreeRTOS

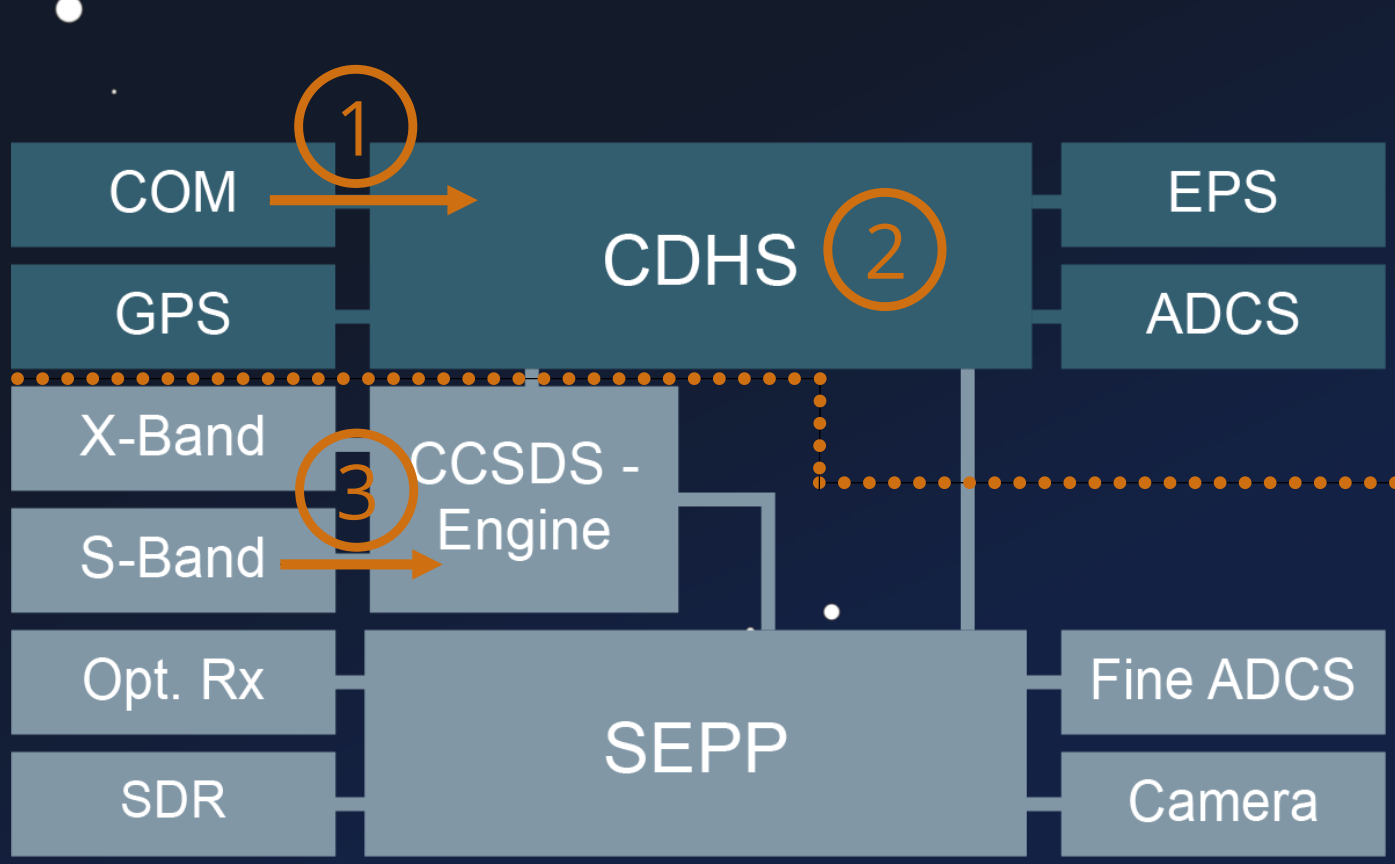
System Chart



1 Cubesat Space Protocol (CSP)

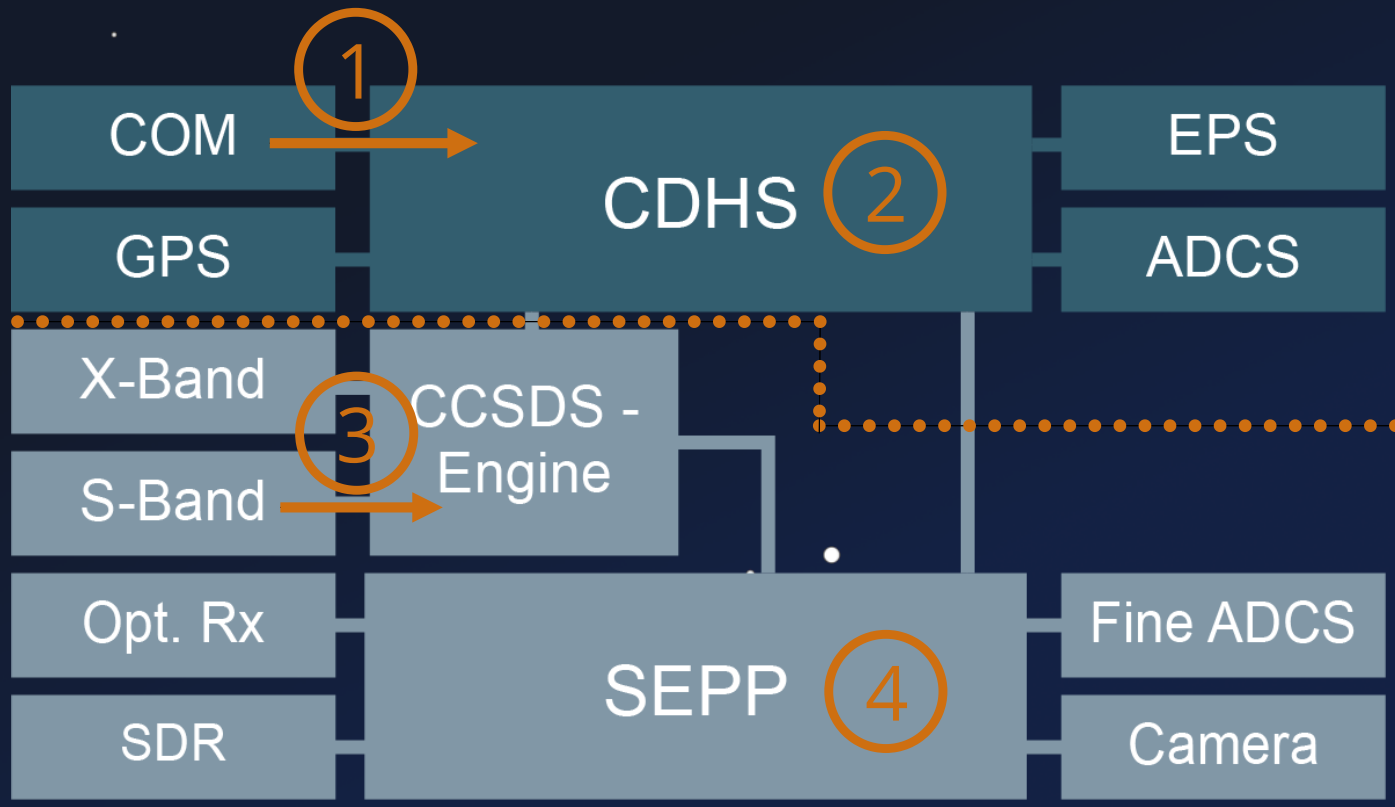
2 AVR32 AT32UTC3, FreeRTOS

System Chart



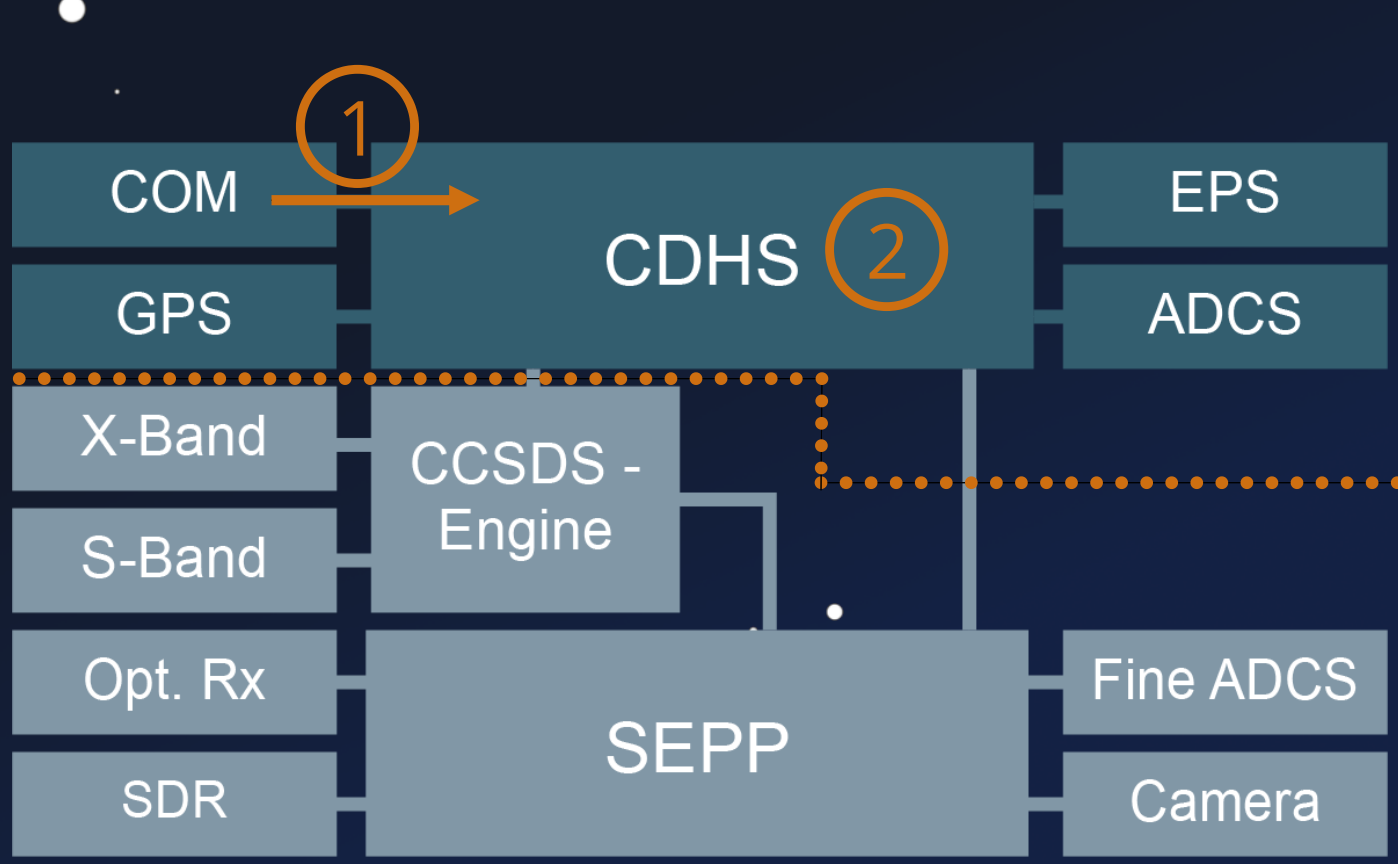
1. Cubesat Space Protocol (CSP)
2. AVR32 AT32UTC3, FreeRTOS
3. CCSDS Protocol Stack

System Chart



1. Cubesat Space Protocol (CSP)
2. AVR32 AT32UTC3, FreeRTOS
3. CCSDS Protocol Stack
4. ARM Cortex A9, Yocto Linux

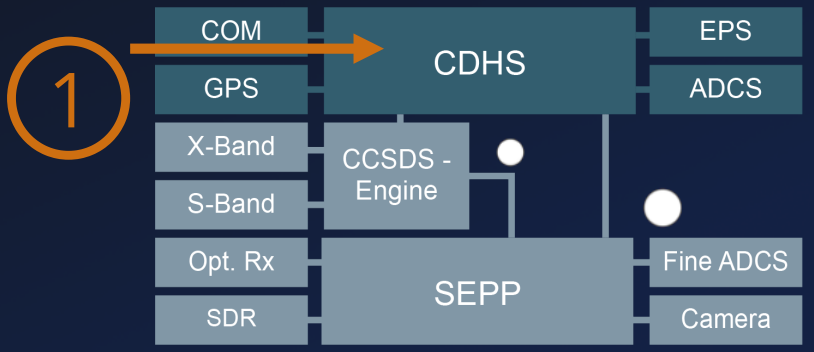
System Chart



1 Cubesat Space Protocol (CSP)

2 AVR32 AT32UTC3, FreeRTOS

UHF-Stack



Cubesat Space Protocol (CSP) v1

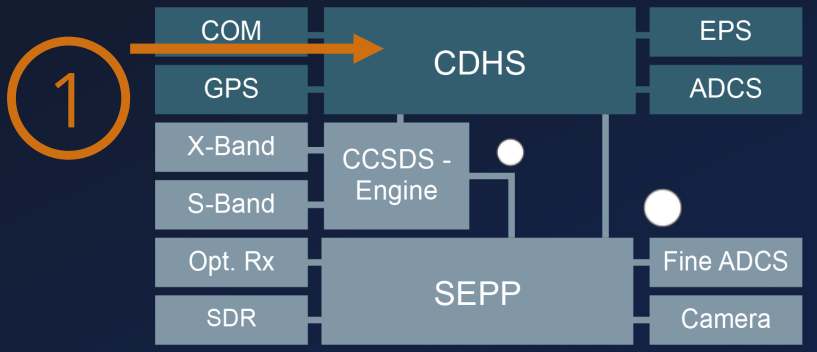
TCP/IP Oriented Design

CSP Header 1.x																													
Bit offset	31	30	29	28	27	26	25	24	23	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
0	Priority		Source					Destination					Destination Port						Source Port						Reserved				HMAC	XTEA	RDP	CRC
32	Data (0 – 65,535 bytes)																															

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cubesat_Space_Protocol

/ libcsp

UHF-Stack



Cubesat Space Protocol (CSP) v1

Security Features

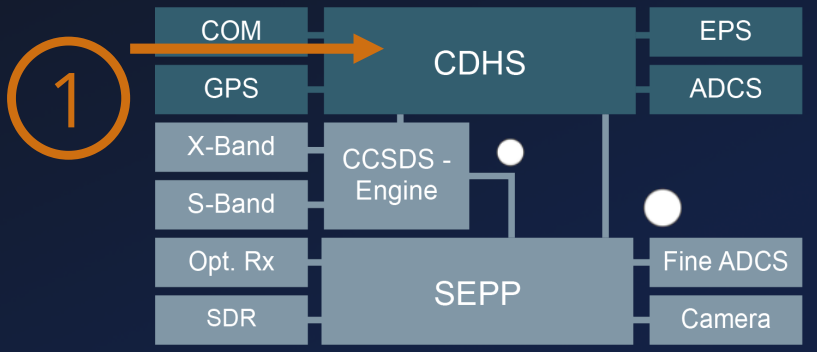
- HMAC-SHA1 Authentication
- XTEA Encryption Support

Security Issues

1. MAC comparison leaks timing data #44
   - `memcmp` to compare the digest
2. HMAC doesn't protect headers #45
   - Same problem for the CRC checks
3. XTEA encrypt packet nonce too predictable #162
   - `const uint32_t nonce = (uint32_t)rand();`

Authors: Issues fixed in libcsp v2

UHF-Stack



Cubesat Space Protocol (CSP) v1

Security Features

- HMAC-SHA1 Authentication
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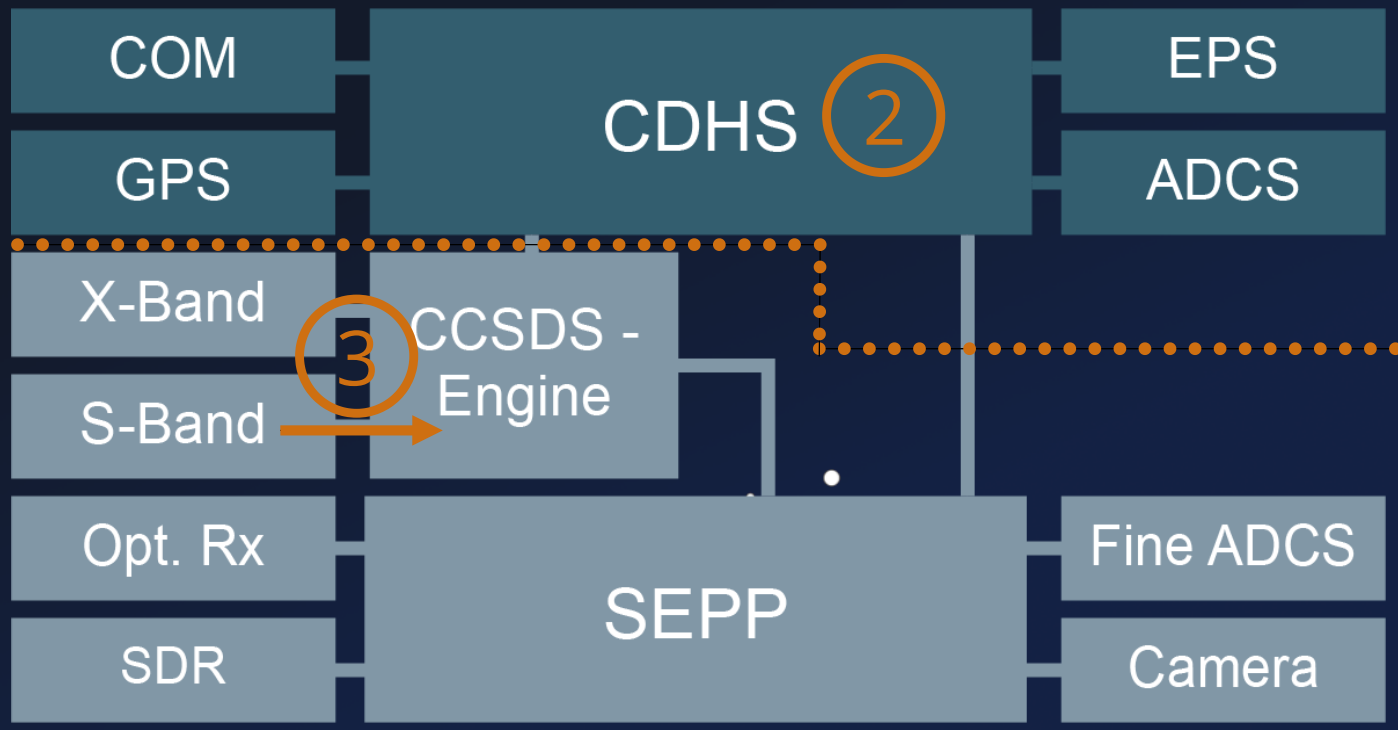
2. HMAC doesn't protect headers #45
   - Same problem for the CRC checks
3. XTEA encrypt packet nonce too predictable #162
   - `const uint32_t nonce = (uint32_t)rand();`

Authors: Issues fixed in libcsp v2

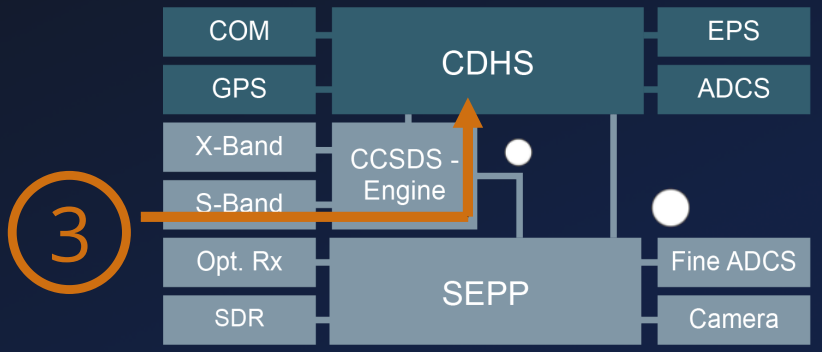
System Chart



2 AVR32 AT32UTC3, FreeRTOS

3 CCSDS Protocol Stack

S-Band Stack



CCSDS - Protocol Stack

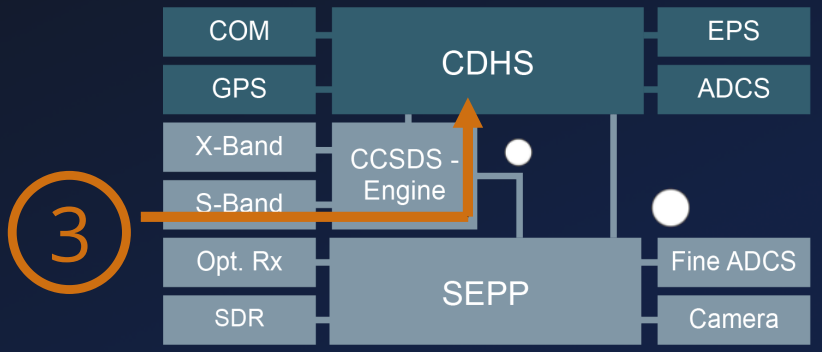
Message Abstraction | ... | IPSec

Space Packet Protocol | IP

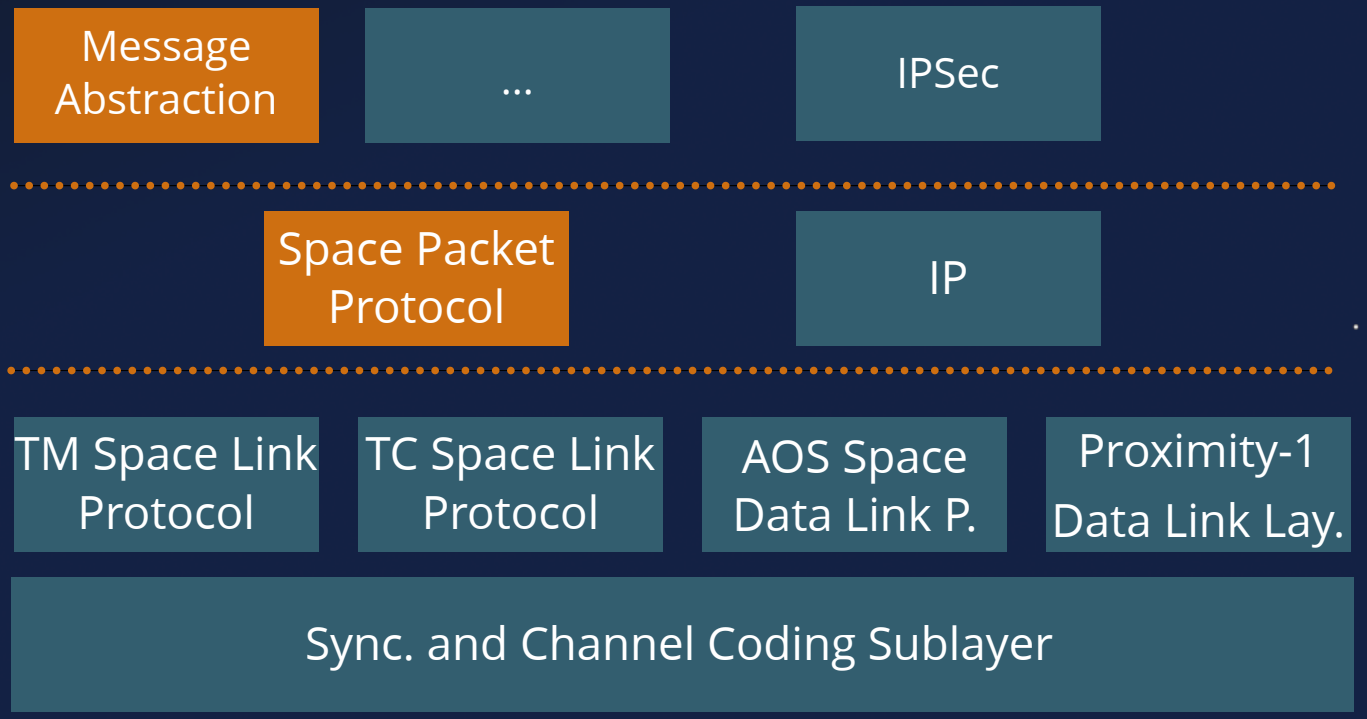
TM Space Link Protocol | TC Space Link Protocol | AOS Space Data Link P. | Proximity-1 Data Link Lay.

Sync. and Channel Coding Sublayer

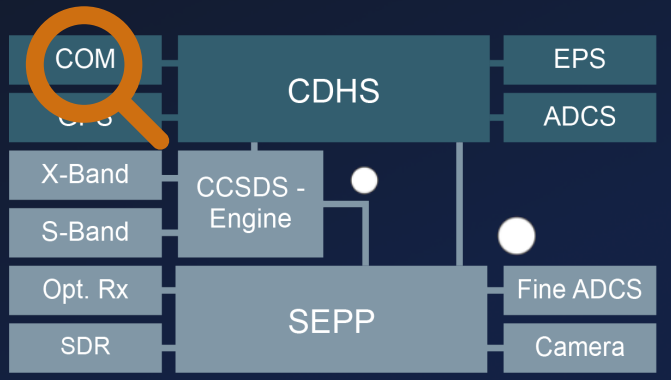
S-Band Stack



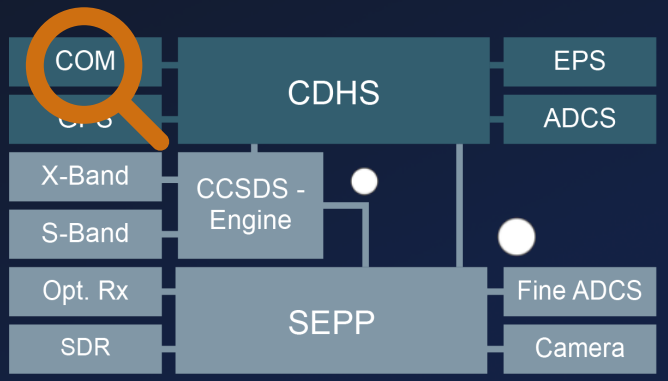
CCSDS - Protocol Stack



Unprotected TCs



Unprotected TCs



COM

```c
int csp_route_security_chek(...) {
  if (packet->id.flags & CSP_FXTEA) {
    csp_log_error("Received XTEA encrypted packet, but CSP was compiled without XTEA support. Discarding packet");
  }

  // ...

  if (packet->id.flags & CSP_FHMAC) {
    csp_log_error("Received packet with HMAC, but CSP was compiled without HMAC support. Discarding packet");
  }

   // ...
}
```

Unprotected TCs

COM → **CDHS**

- Bypass COM Protection
  - Missing TC Protection

```c
int sch_handler_set_raw_memory(scheduler_cmd_t* pCmd) {
  raw_mem_access_cmd_t* pAddr = pCmd->pCmdArgs;
  char* pWriteData;

  if (pAddr) {
    if (g_sch_exec_mode != 1 ) {
      /* exception and return */
    }
    char* pWriteData = &pAddr->start_of_data_buf;
    if (pAddr->filesystem_target) {
      // [...]
    } else {
      memcpy(pAddr->targetAddr,
             &pAddr->start_of_data_buf,
             pAddr->writeLength);
    }
  }
  // ...
}
```

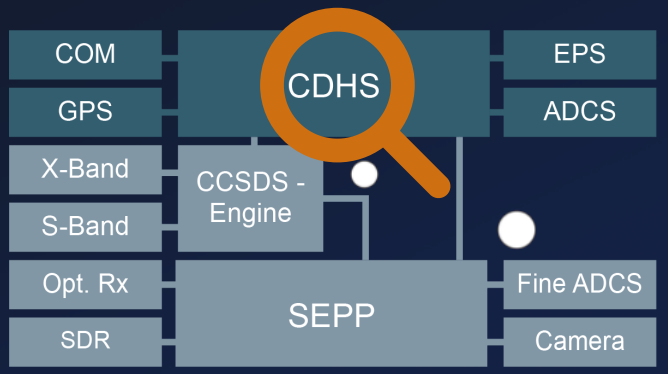
Unprotected TCs

COM → **CDHS**

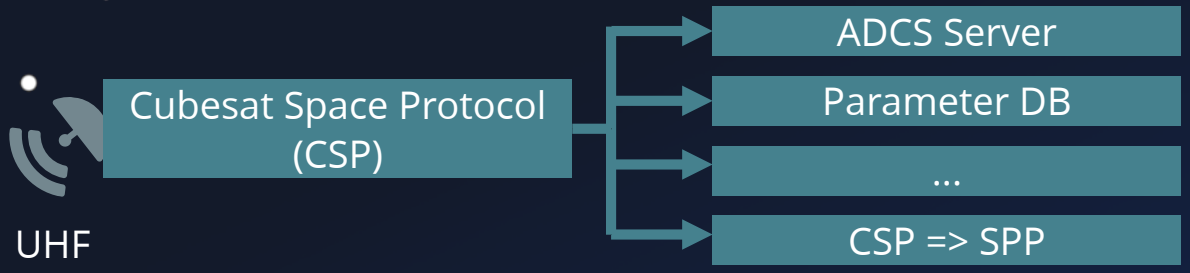
- Bypass COM Protection
  - Missing TC Protection

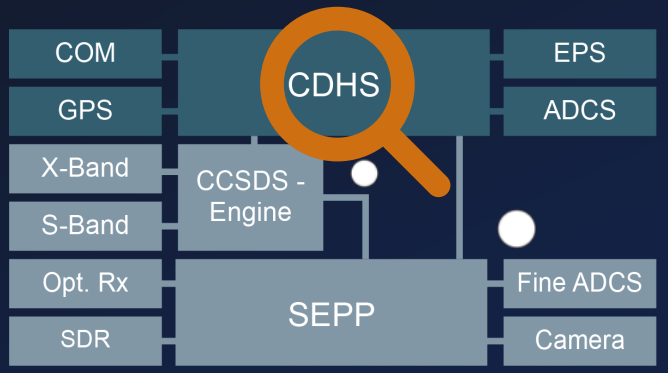
```
1  int sch_handler_set_raw_memory(scheduler_cmd_t* pCmd) {
2    raw_mem_access_cmd_t* pAddr = pCmd->pCmdArgs;
3    char* pWriteData;
4
5    if (pAddr) {
6      if (g_sch_exec_mode != 1 ) {
7        /* exception and return */
8      }
9      char* pWriteData = &pAddr->start_of_data_buf;
10     if (pAddr->filesystem_target) {
11       // [...]
12     } else {
13       memcpy(pAddr->targetAddr,
14              &pAddr->start_of_data_buf,
15              pAddr->writeLength);
16     }
17   }
18   // ...
19 }
```

Vulnerable TC

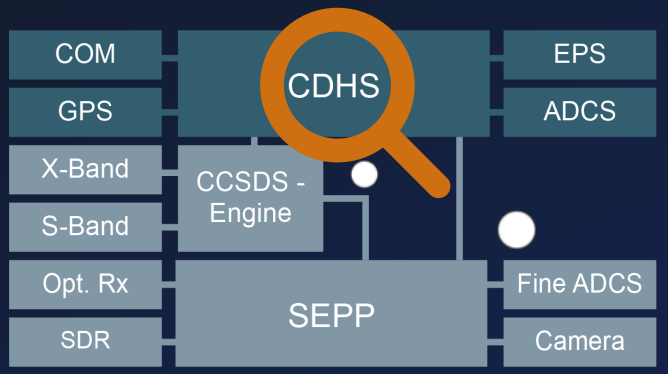


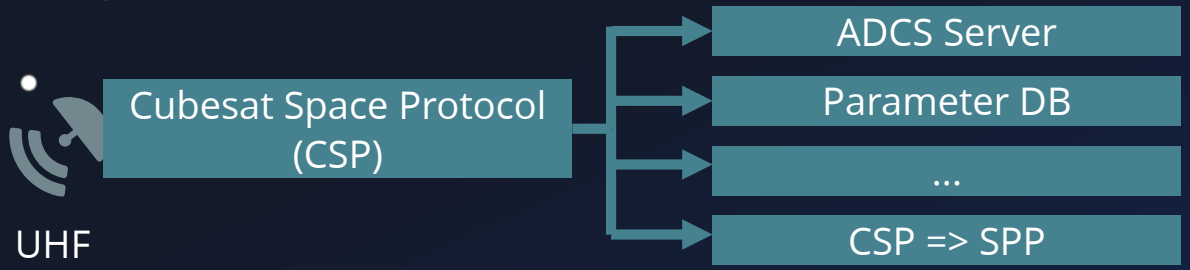
Vulnerable TC

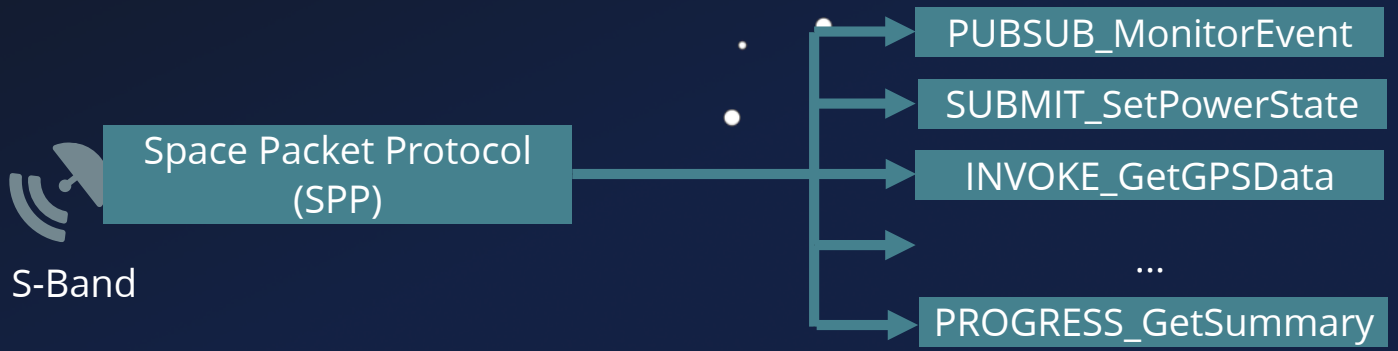




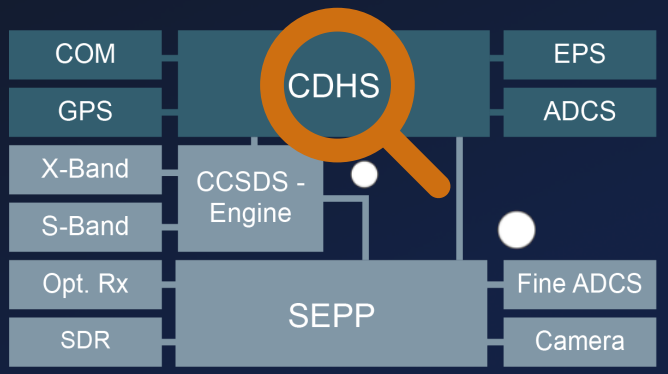
Vulnerable TC

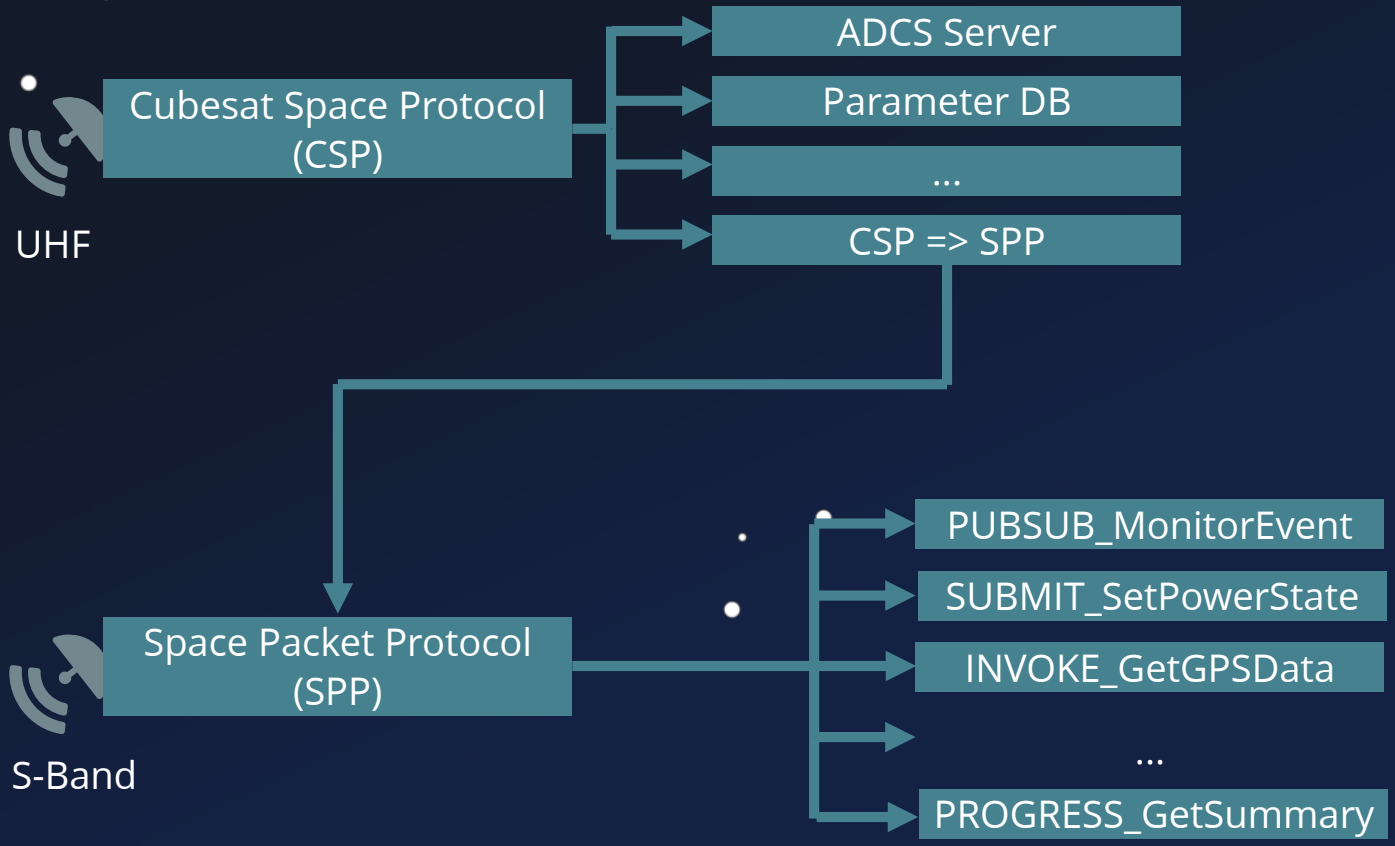




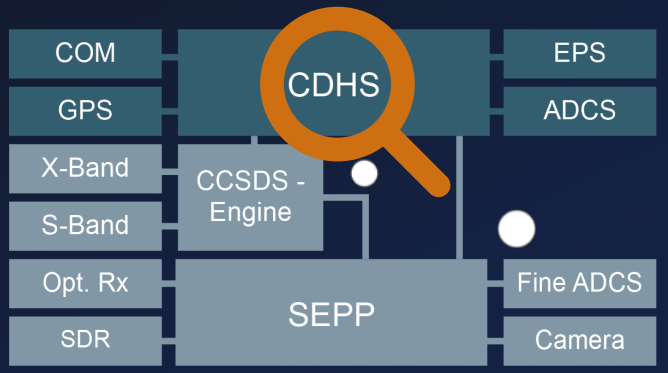


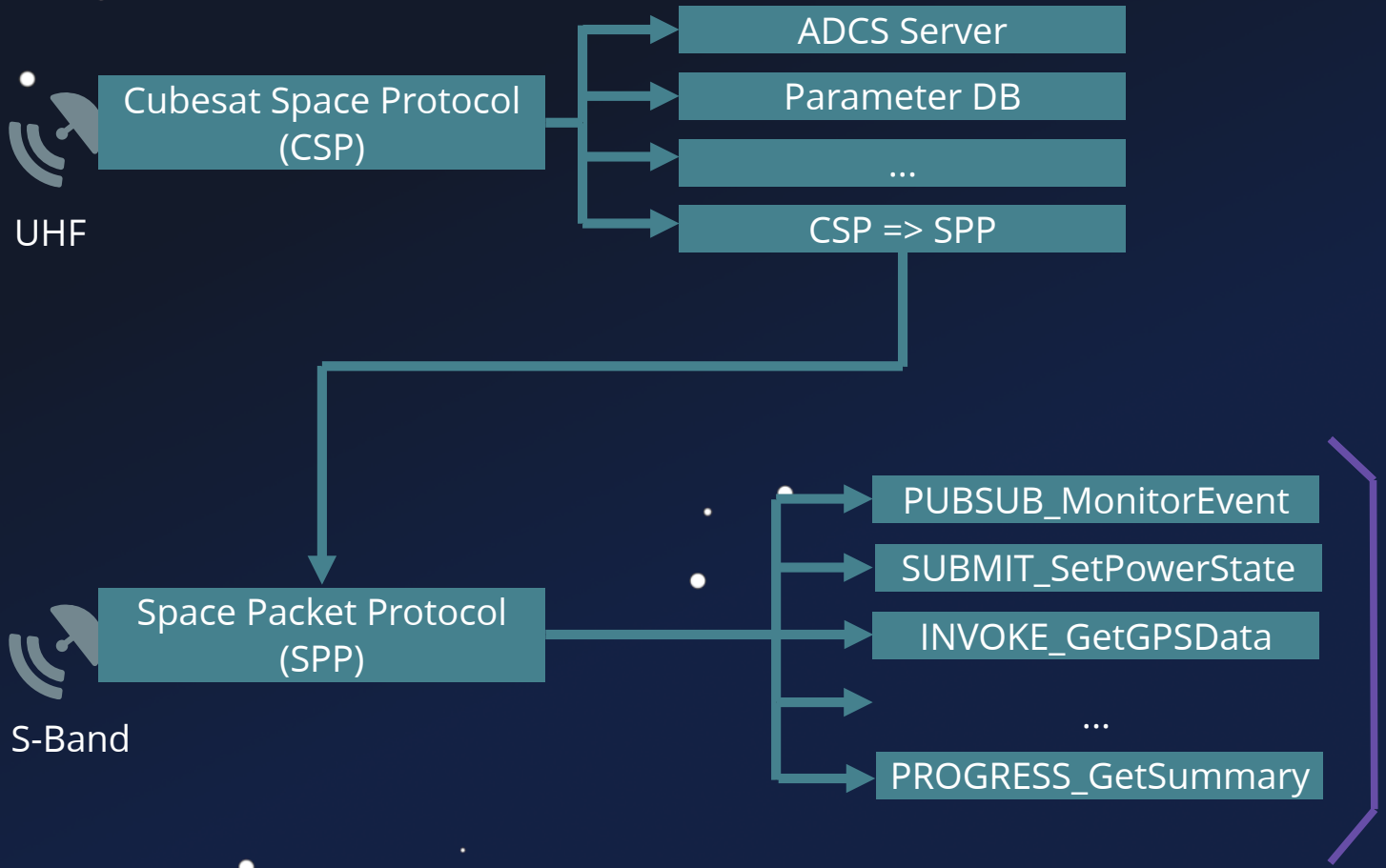
Vulnerable TC





Vulnerable TC

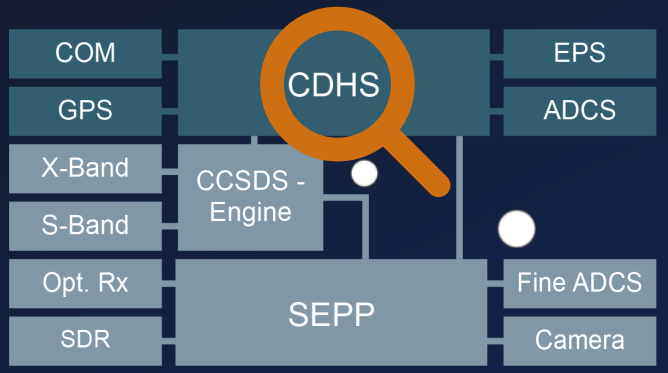


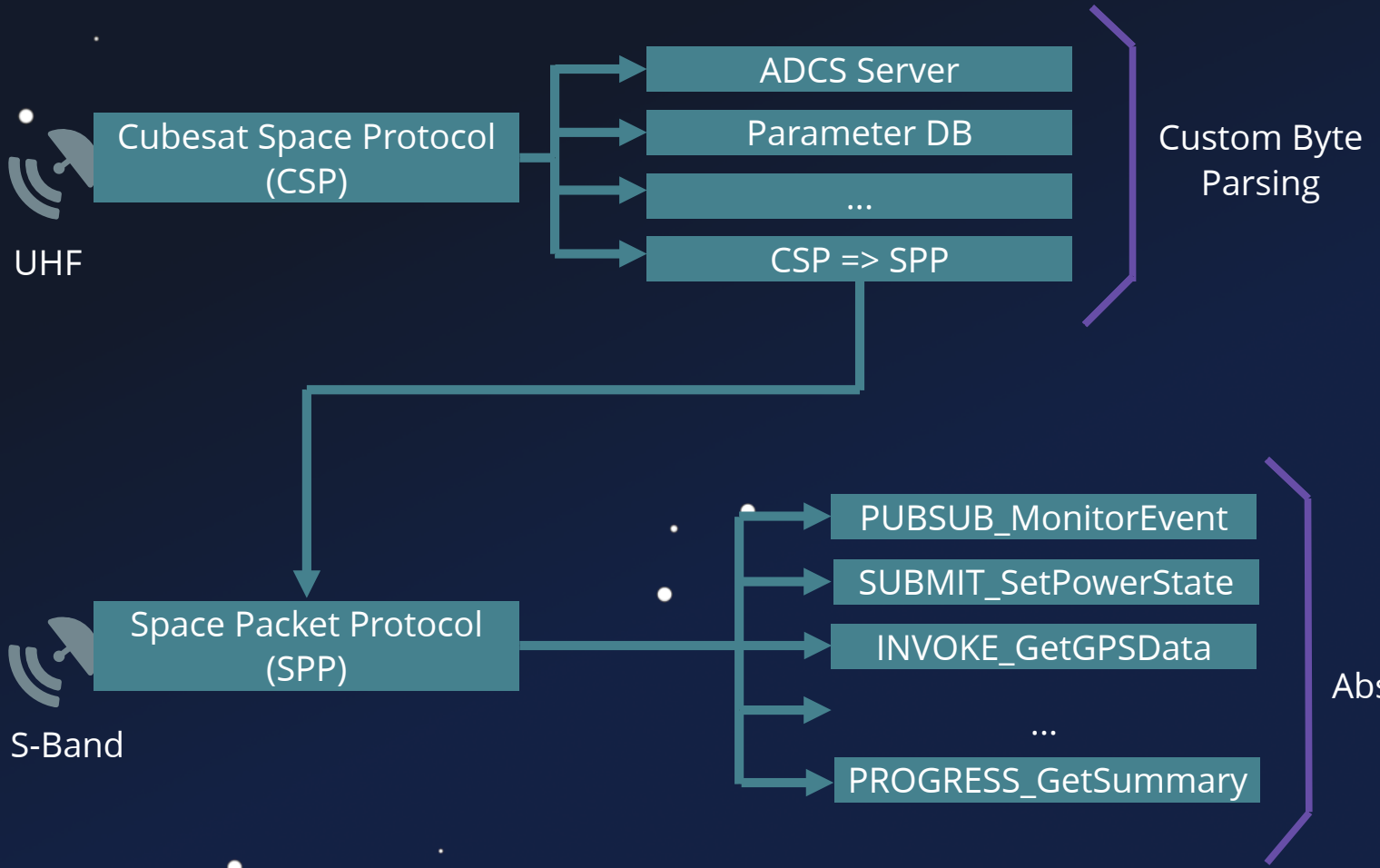


Message Abstraction

Space Packet Protocol

Vulnerable TC

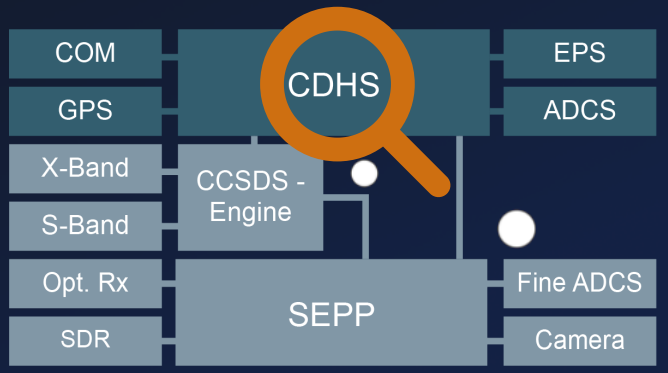


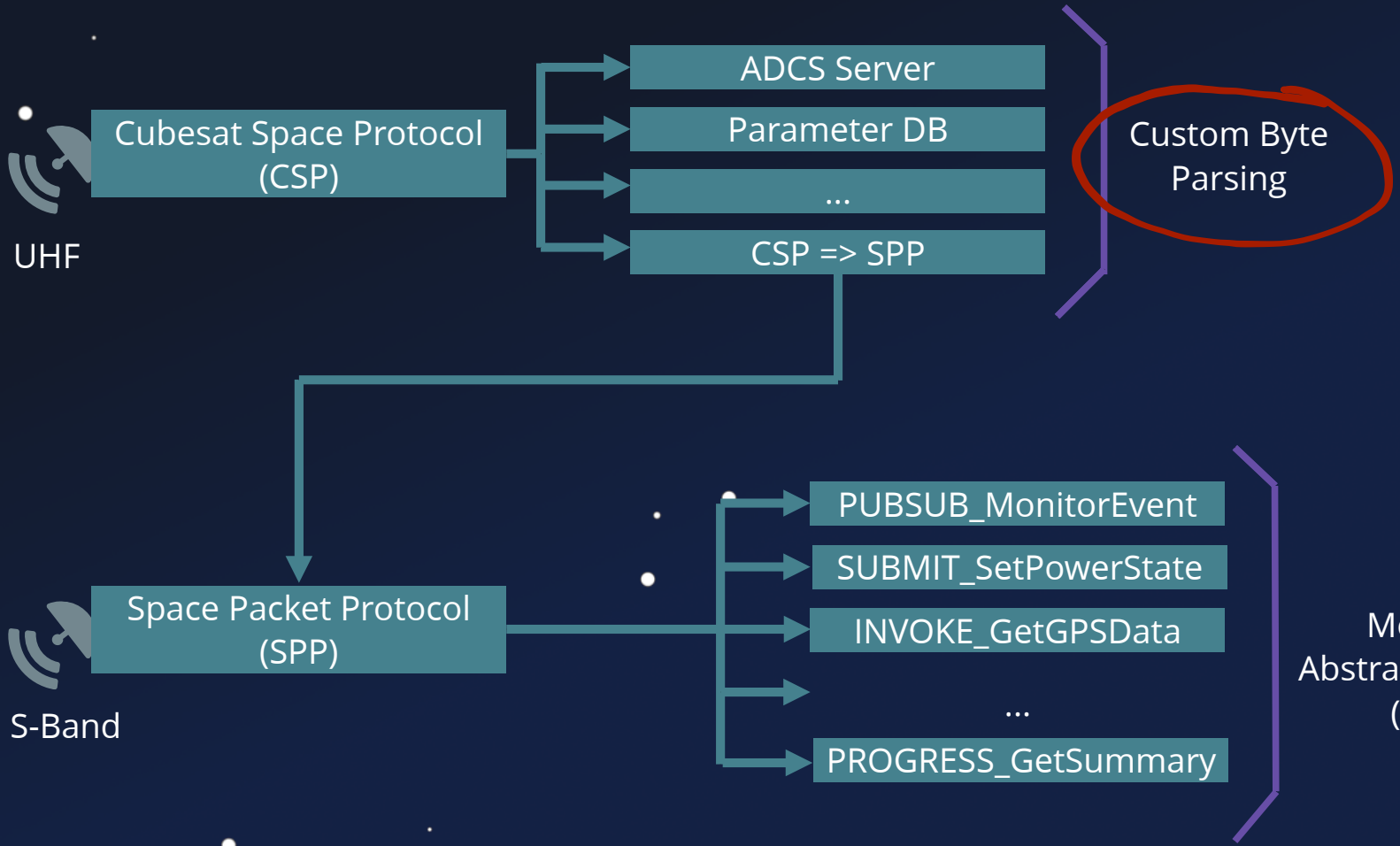


Message Abstraction

Space Packet Protocol

Vulnerable TC



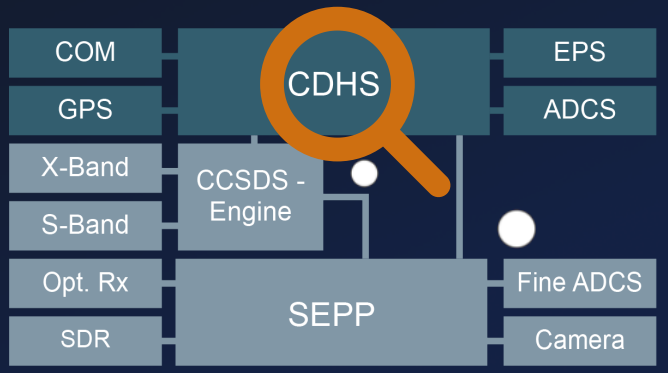


Message Abstraction

Space Packet Protocol

Vulnerable TC

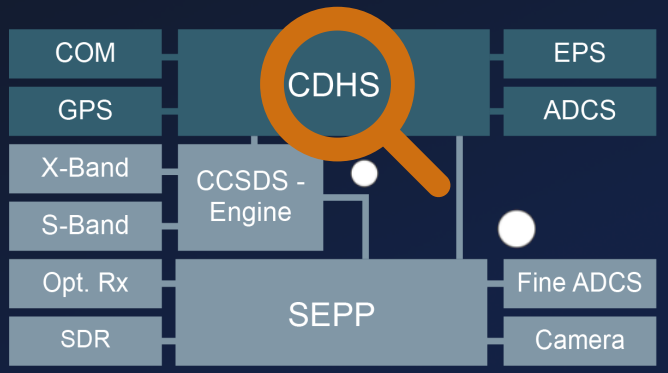
Cubesat Space Protocol (CSP) → ADCS Server




```c
void task_adcs_servr() {
  char log_file_name [32];

  csp_listen(socket, 10);
  csp_bind(socket, port);

  do {
    do {
      conn = csp_accept(socket, 0xff);
    } while (do_wait_for_conn);

    packet = csp_read(conn, 10);
    if (packet) {
      packet_data = packet->data;
      switch(*packet_data) {
        // [...]
        case SET_LOGFILE: {
          packet_data = packet->data + 0xf;
          log_file_name[0] = '\0';
          strcat(log_file_name,packet_data);
          // ...
        }
      }
    }
  }
```

Vulnerable TC

Cubesat Space Protocol (CSP) → ADCS Server

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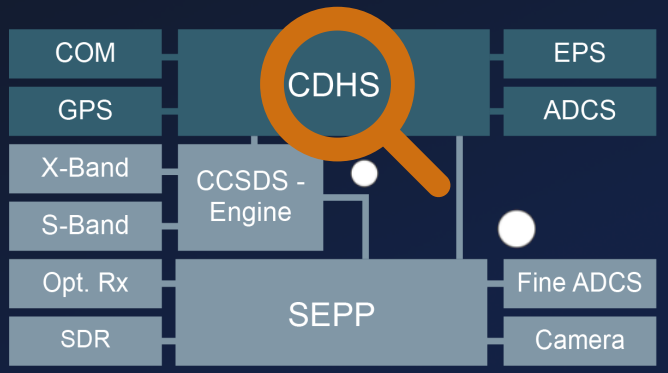
```

Vulnerable TC

Cubesat Space Protocol (CSP) → ADCS Server

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          log_file_name[0] = '\0';
          strcat(log_file_name,packet_data);
          // ...
        }
      }
    }
  }
```
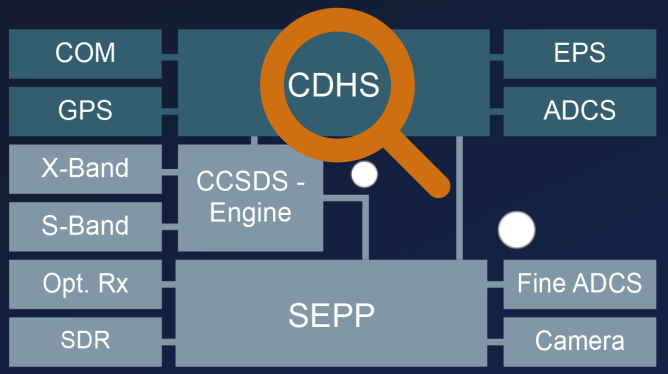

Defenses - 404?



COM

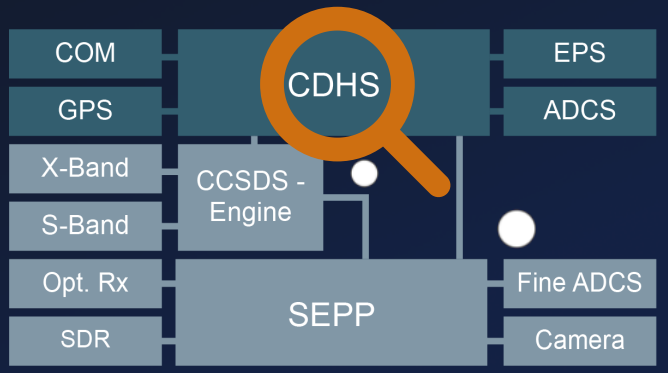
- Bypass COM Protection
  - Missing TC Protection

CDHS

- Deploy Attacker Payload
  - Vulnerable TC

Bus

Defenses - 404?



COM

- Bypass COM Protection
  - Missing TC Protection

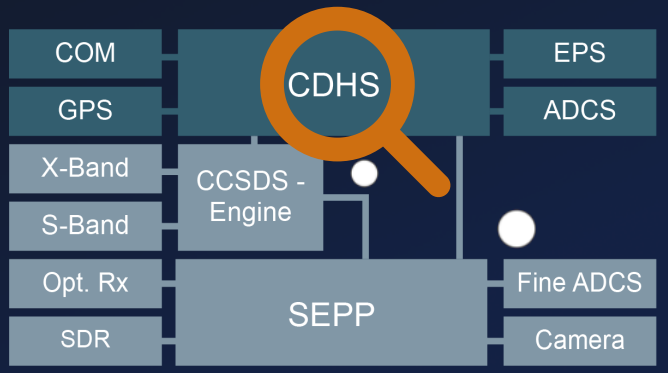
CDHS

- Deploy Attacker Payload
  - Vulnerable TC

Bus

- Hijack Bus Control Flow

Defenses - 404?



COM

- Bypass COM Protection
  - Missing TC Protection

CDHS

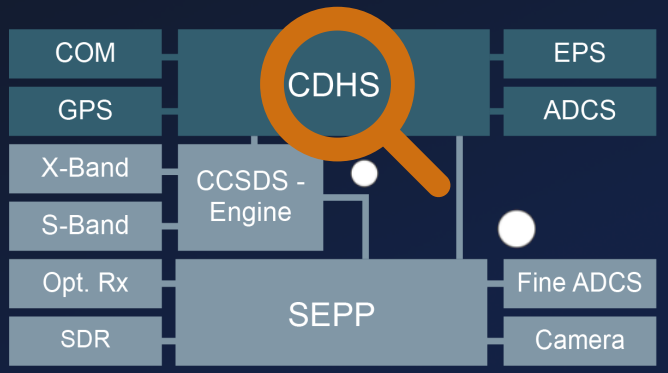
- Deploy Attacker Payload
  - Vulnerable TC

Bus

- Hijack Bus Control Flow

- No OS-Defenses
  - ASLR
  - NX Stack

Defenses - 404?



COM

- Bypass COM Protection
  - Missing TC Protection

CDHS

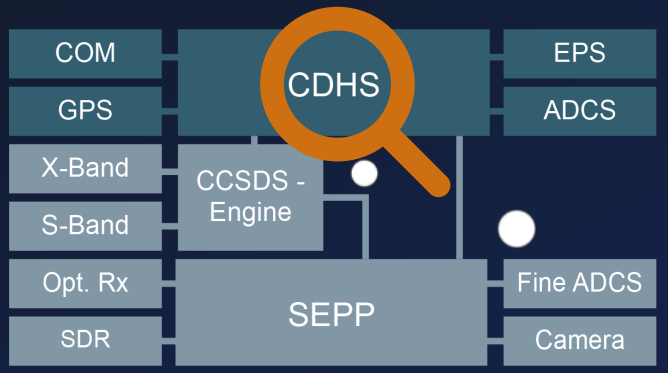
- Deploy Attacker Payload
  - Vulnerable TC

Bus

- Hijack Bus Control Flow

- No OS-Defenses
  - ASLR
  - NX Stack
- No SW-Defenses
  - Stack Cookies

Defenses - 404?



COM

- Bypass COM Protection
  - Missing TC Protection

CDHS

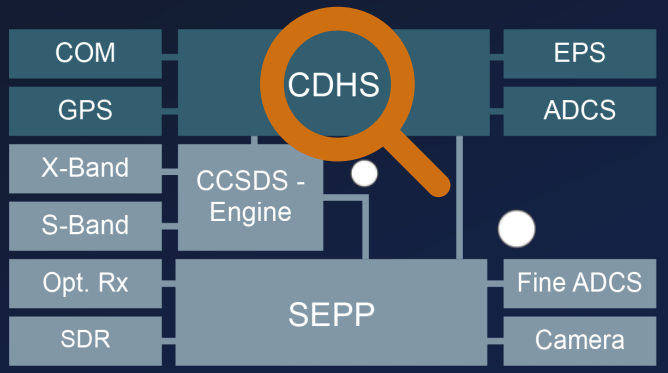
- Deploy Attacker Payload
  - Vulnerable TC

Bus

- Hijack Bus Control Flow
- Full Bus Privileges

- No OS-Defenses
  - ASLR
  - NX Stack
- No SW-Defenses
  - Stack Cookies

Defenses – 404?



COM

- Bypass COM Protection
  - Missing TC Protection

CDHS

- Deploy Attacker Payload
  - Vulnerable TC

Bus

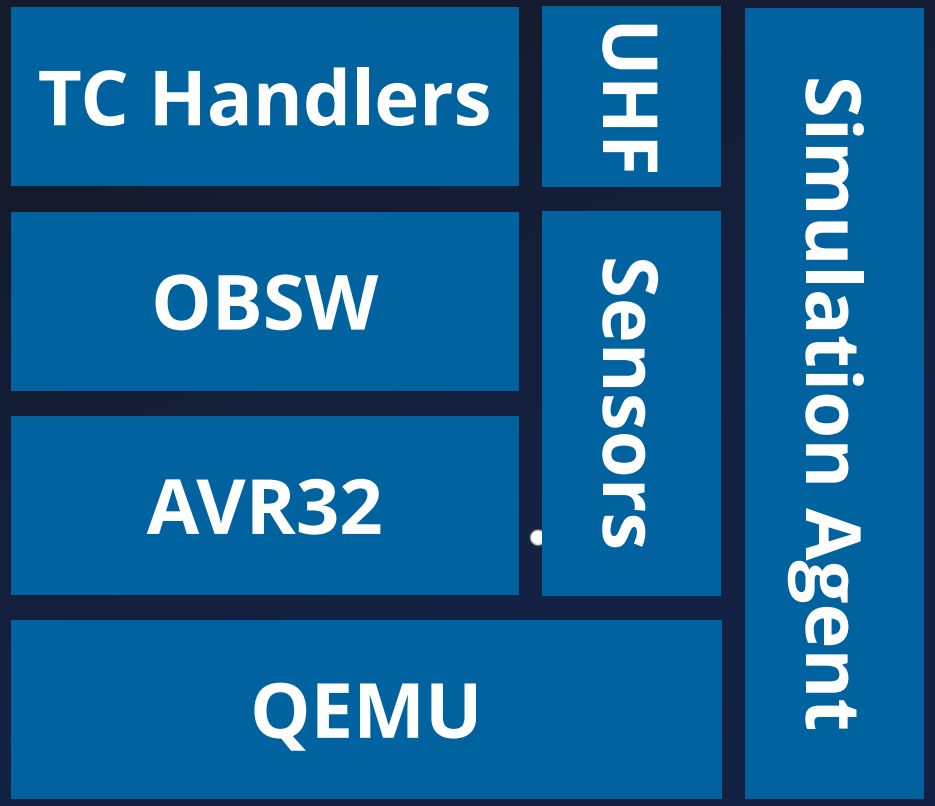
- Hijack Bus Control Flow
- Full Bus Privileges

- No OS-Defenses
  - ASLR
  - NX Stack
- No SW-Defenses
  - Stack Cookies

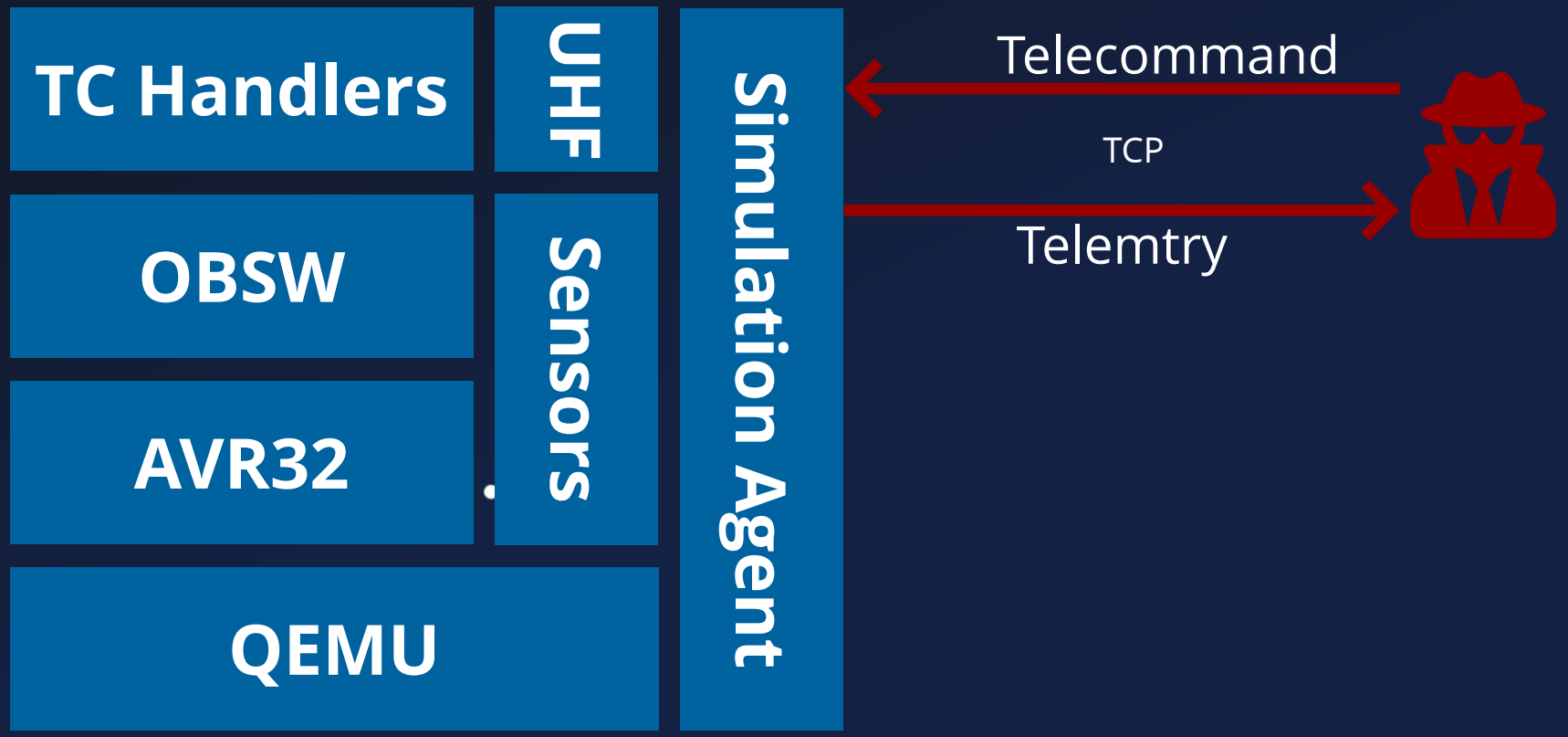
- Privilege-free RTOS

Test Setup

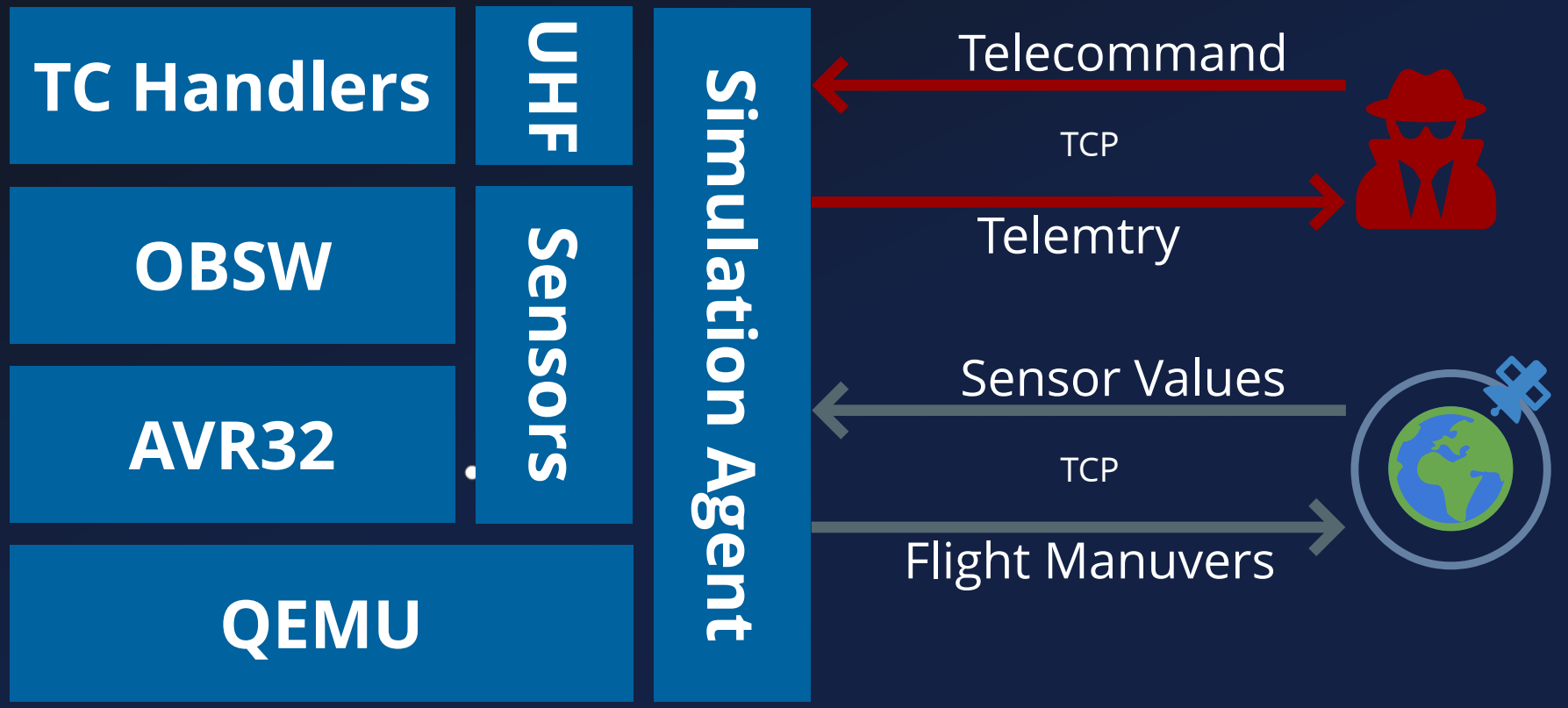
Emulation Overview



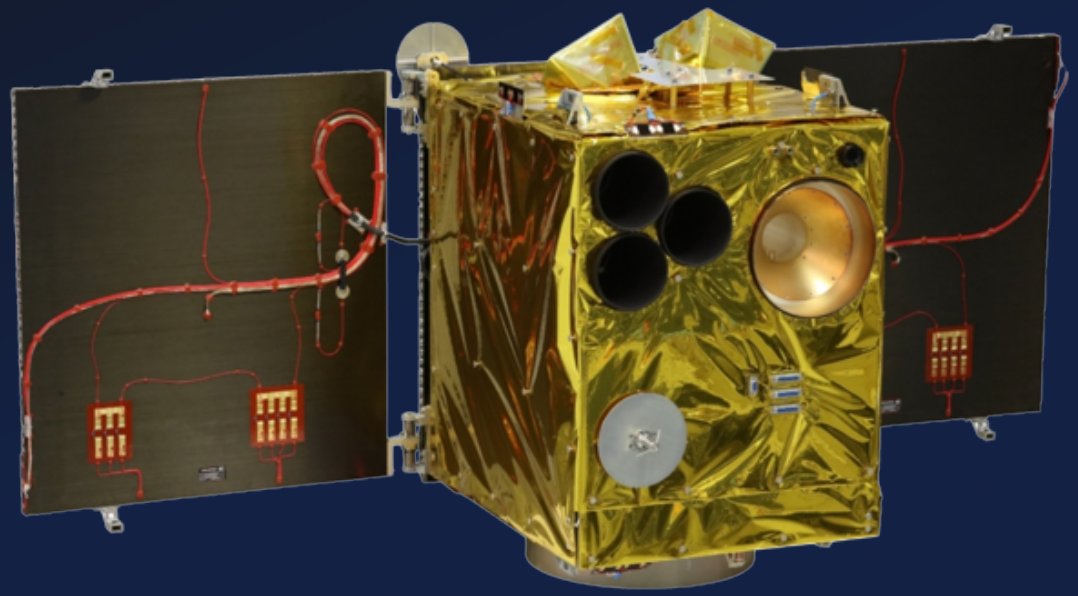
Emulation Overview



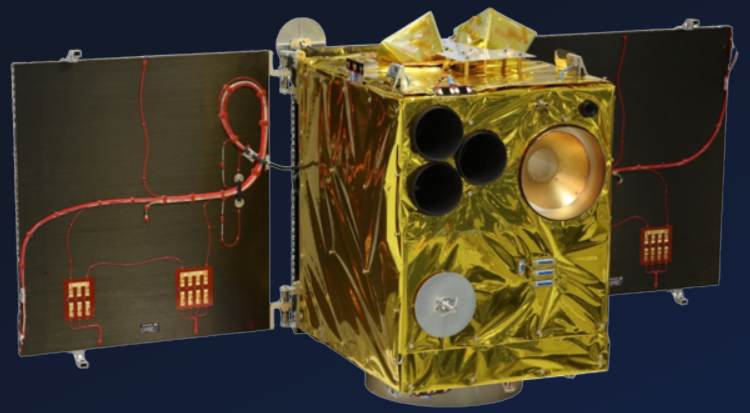
Emulation Overview

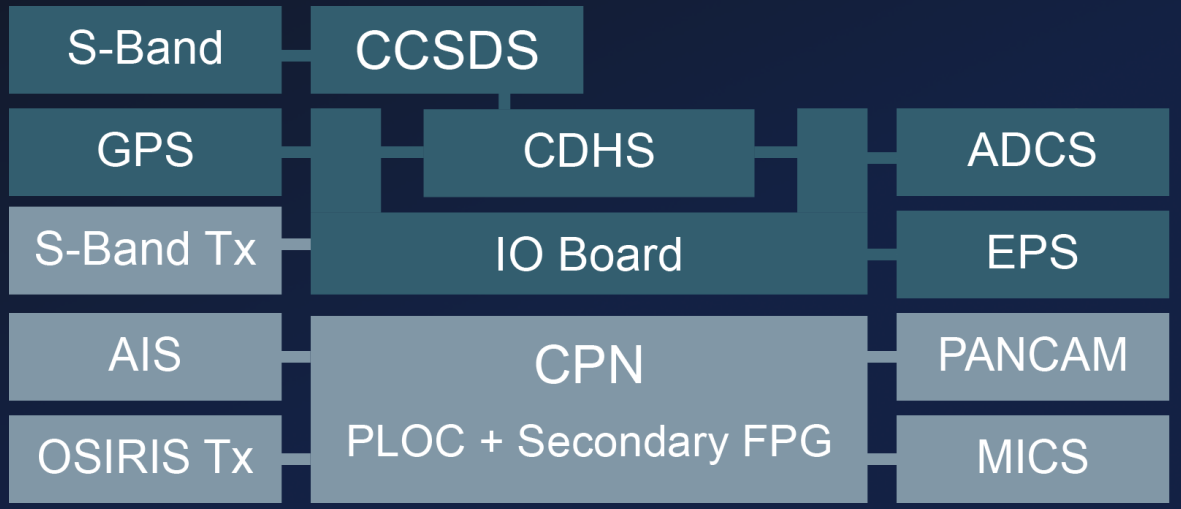


Flying Laptop



Flying Laptop





Technology Tester

Co-Developed by
Airbus Space & Defense

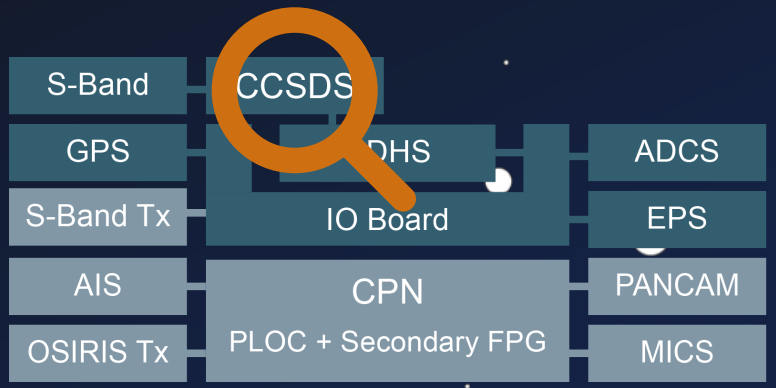
De-orbit mechanism, AIS, Camera, etc...

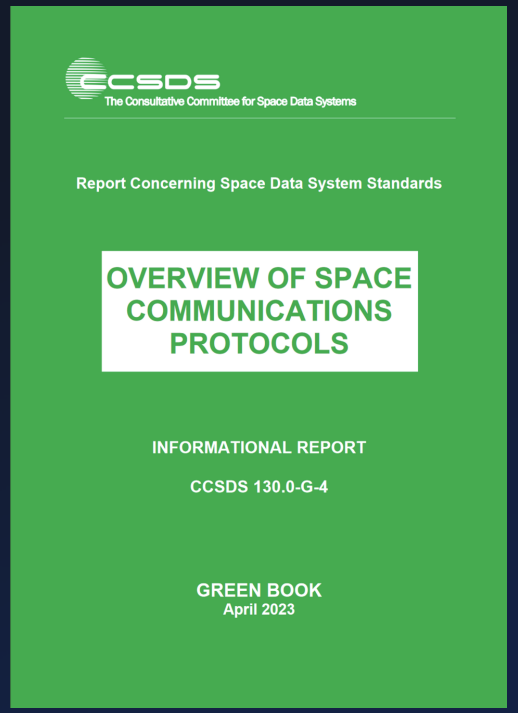
Peripherals

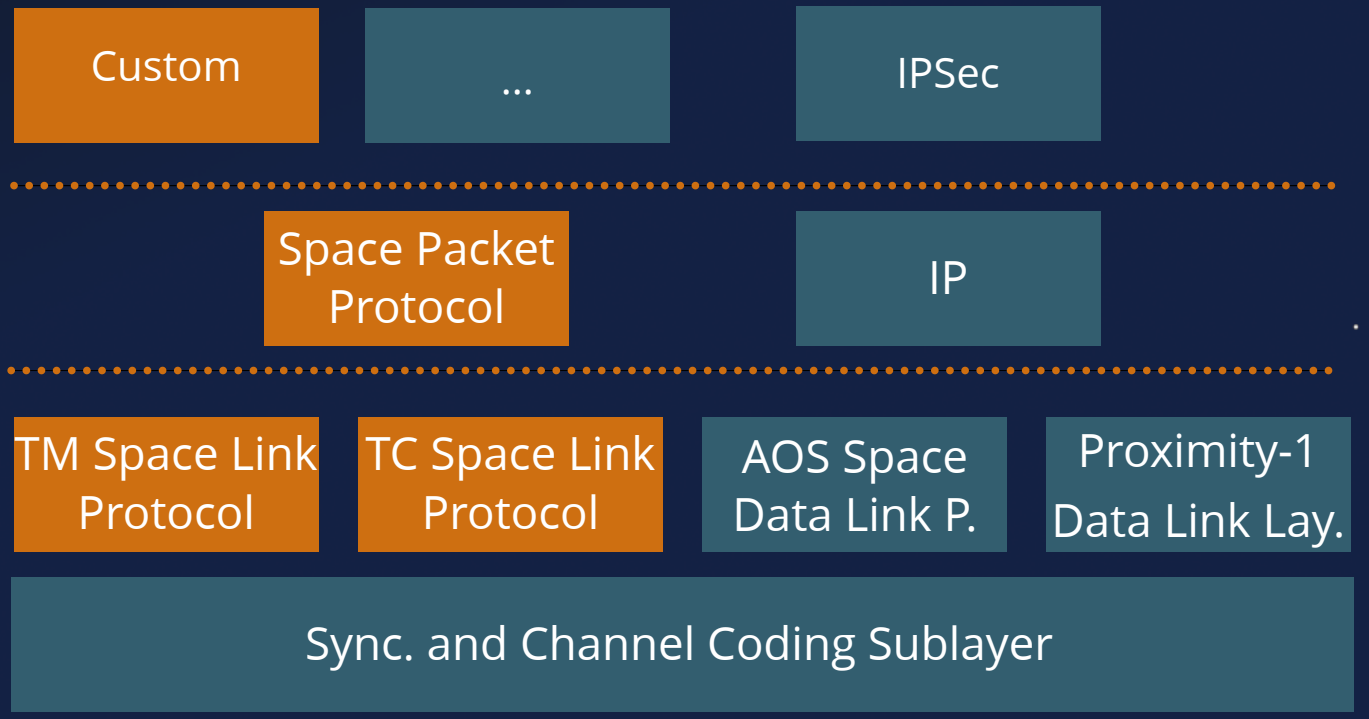
SPARC LEON 3 - OBC from Airbus S&D

Bus Platform

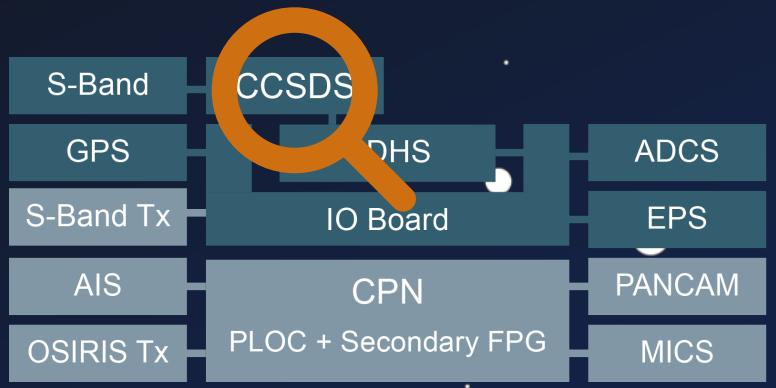
CCSDS

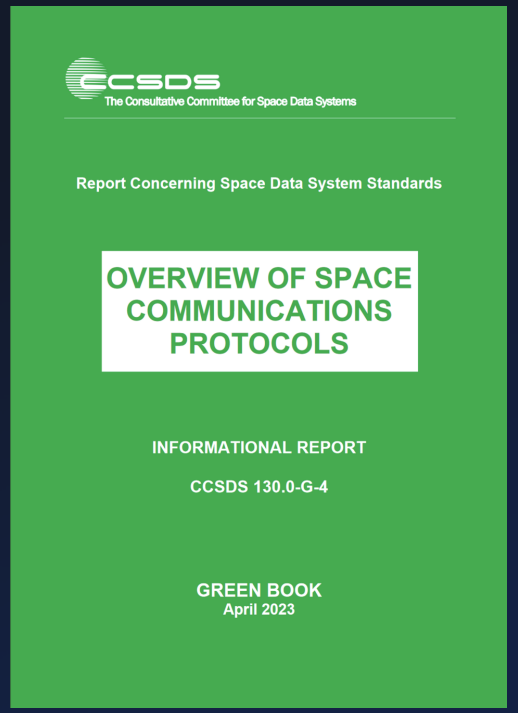

S-Band
GPS
S-Band Tx
AIS
OSIRIS Tx
CCSDS
OBDH
IO Board
CPN
PLOC + Secondary FPG
ADCS
EPS
PANCAM
MICS


CCSDS
The Consultative Committee for Space Data Systems
Report Concerning Space Data System Standards
OVERVIEW OF SPACE COMMUNICATIONS PROTOCOLS
INFORMATIONAL REPORT
CCSDS 130.0-G-4
GREEN BOOK
April 2023


Custom
...
IPSec
Space Packet Protocol
IP
TM Space Link Protocol
TC Space Link Protocol
AOS Space Data Link P.
Proximity-1 Data Link Lay.
Sync. and Channel Coding Sublayer

CCSDS


S-Band
CCSDS
GPS
DHS
ADCS
S-Band Tx
IO Board
EPS
AIS
CPN
PANCAM
OSIRIS Tx
PLOC + Secondary FPG
MICS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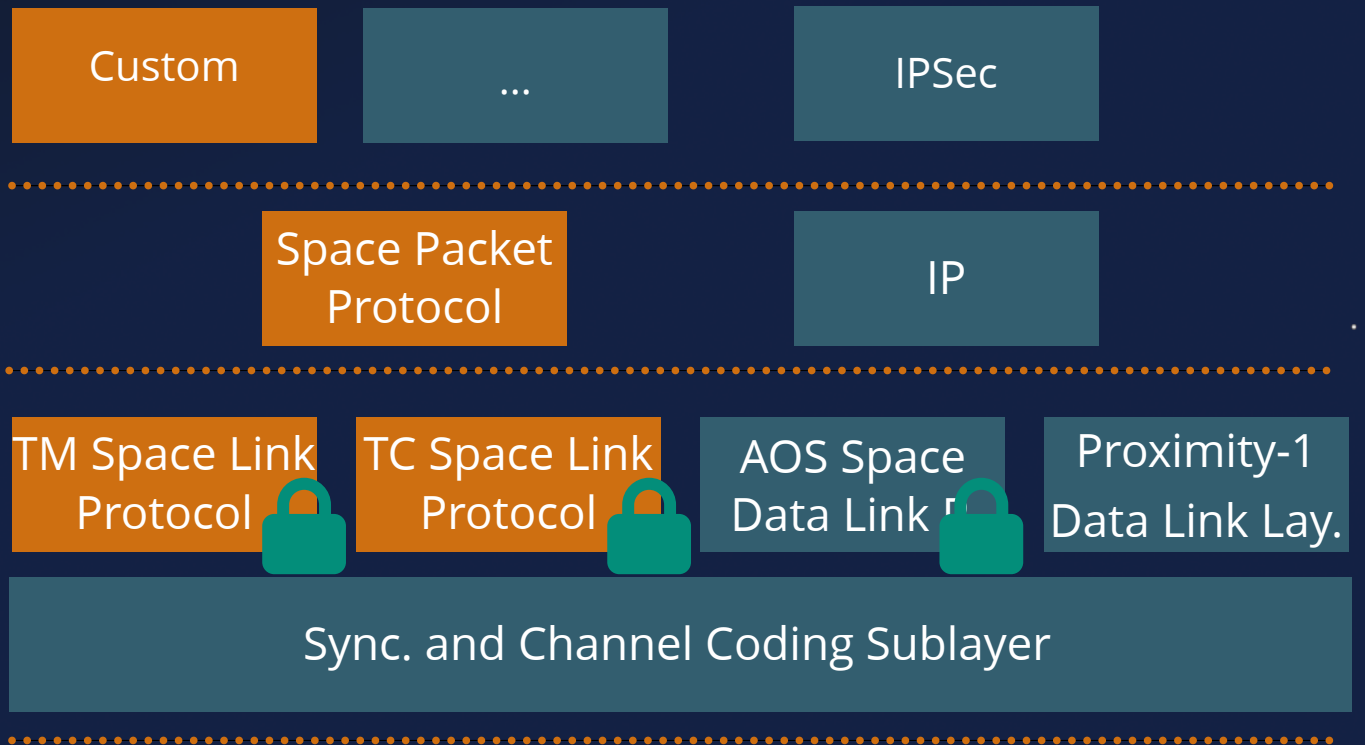
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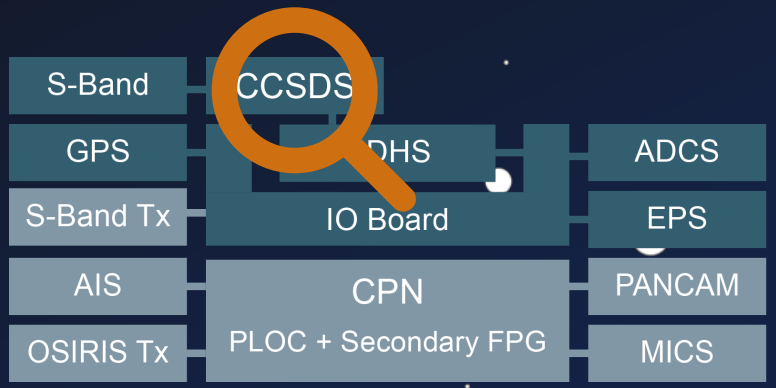
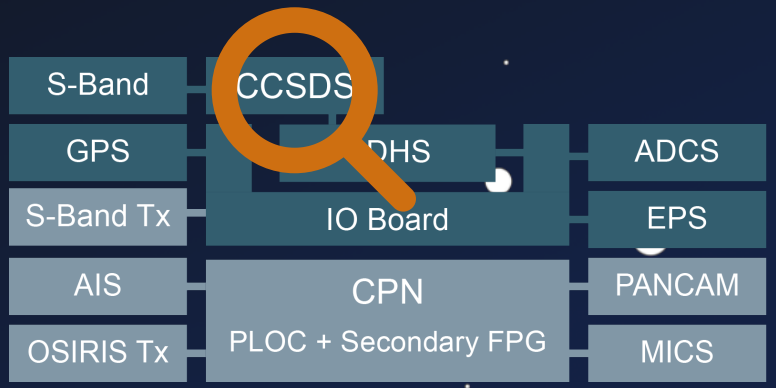
CCSDS - SDLP



Space Link Protocol Header	Frame Data	Space Link Protocol Trailer

CCSDS - SDLS



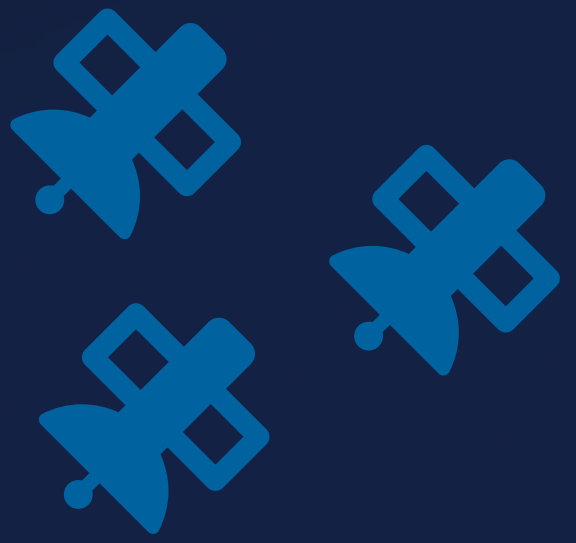
Space Link Protocol Header	Security Header	Frame Data	Security Trailer	Space Link Protocol Trailer

Bigger Picture

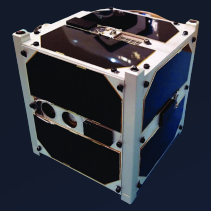
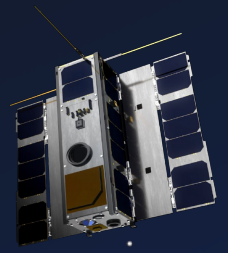
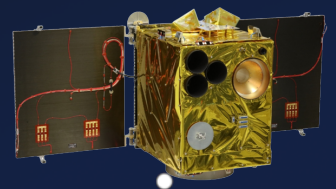
“ But it's different for […] satellites.

“ But it's different for […] satellites, …. right?

Developer Survey



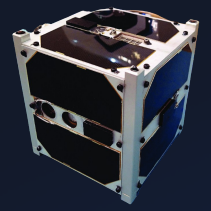
TC Protocols

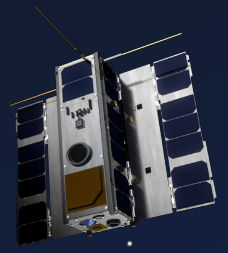
	Custom	Standard	Weight
	✓	✗	~ 1.3 kg
	~	✓	~ 5.4 kg
	✗	✓	~ 120 kg

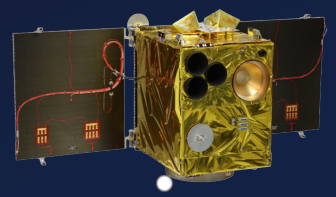
Weight ≈ Money

TC Protocols

Custom / Standard





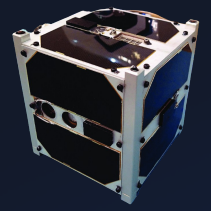


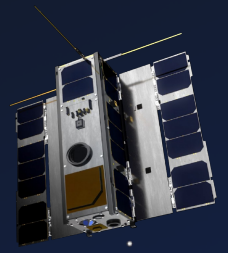
	1-50 kg	50-100 kg	> 100 kg
Standard	1	1	**4**
Custom	**6**	1	0
Abstains	3	0	1
∑	10	2	5

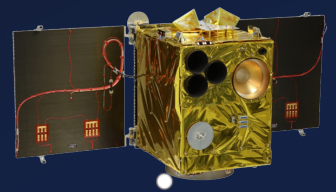
Weight ≈ Money

TC Protocols

Custom / Standard







	1-50 kg	50-100 kg	> 100 kg
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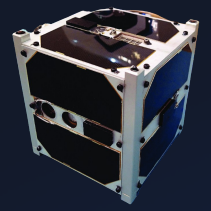
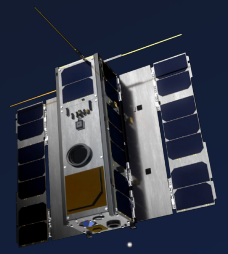
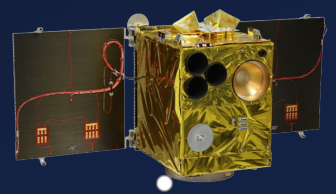
TC Protocols

Custom / Standard







	1-50 kg	50-100 kg	> 100 kg
Standard	1	1	**4**
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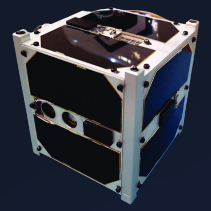
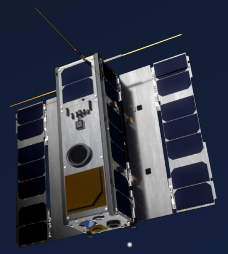
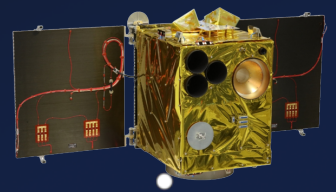
Weight ≈ Money

TC Protocols

Custom / Standard







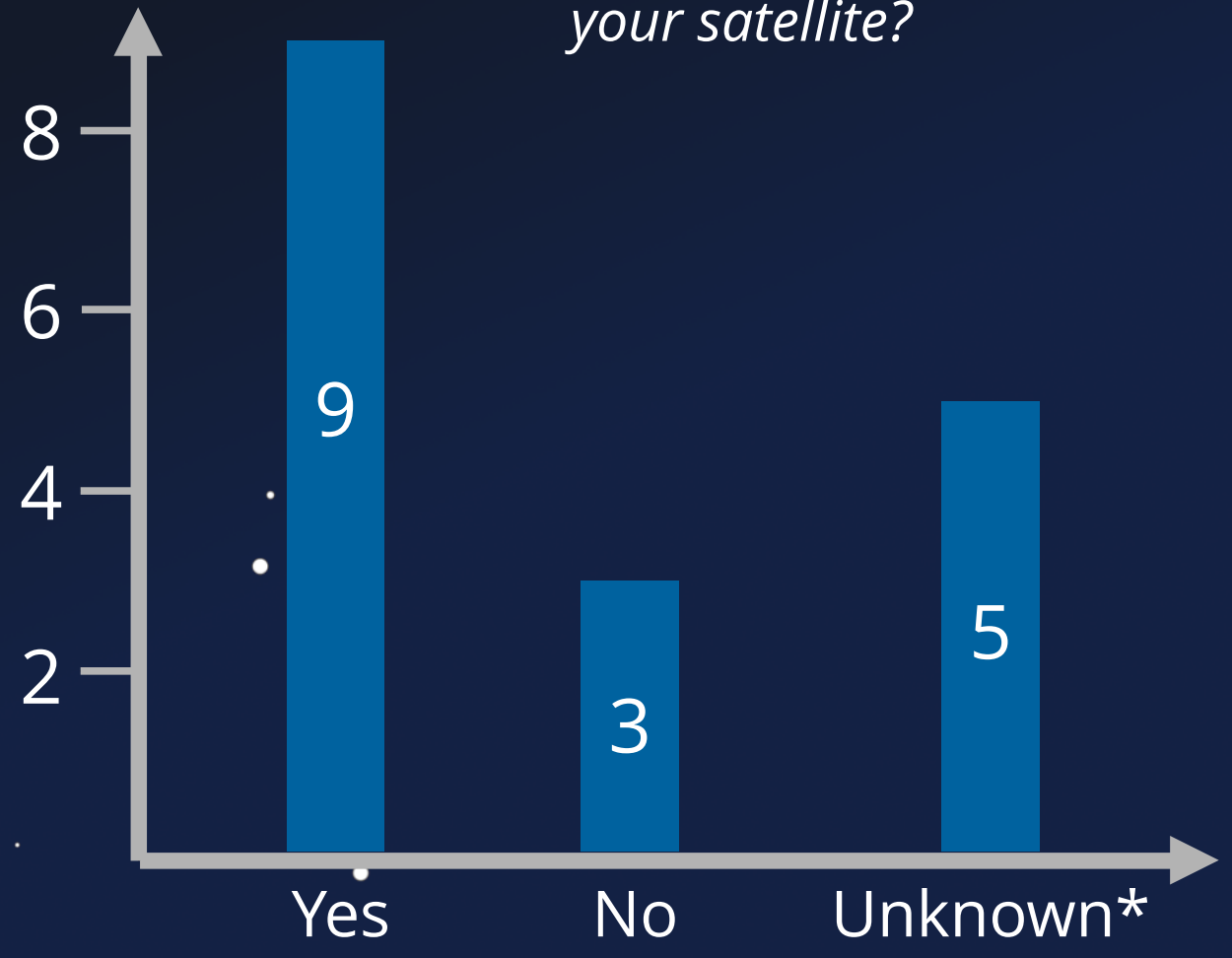
	1-50 kg	50-100 kg	> 100 kg
Standard	1	1	**4**
Custom	**6**	1	0
Abstains	3	0	1
∑	10	2	5

Weight ≈ Money

=> Inaccessible Standard

TC Protection

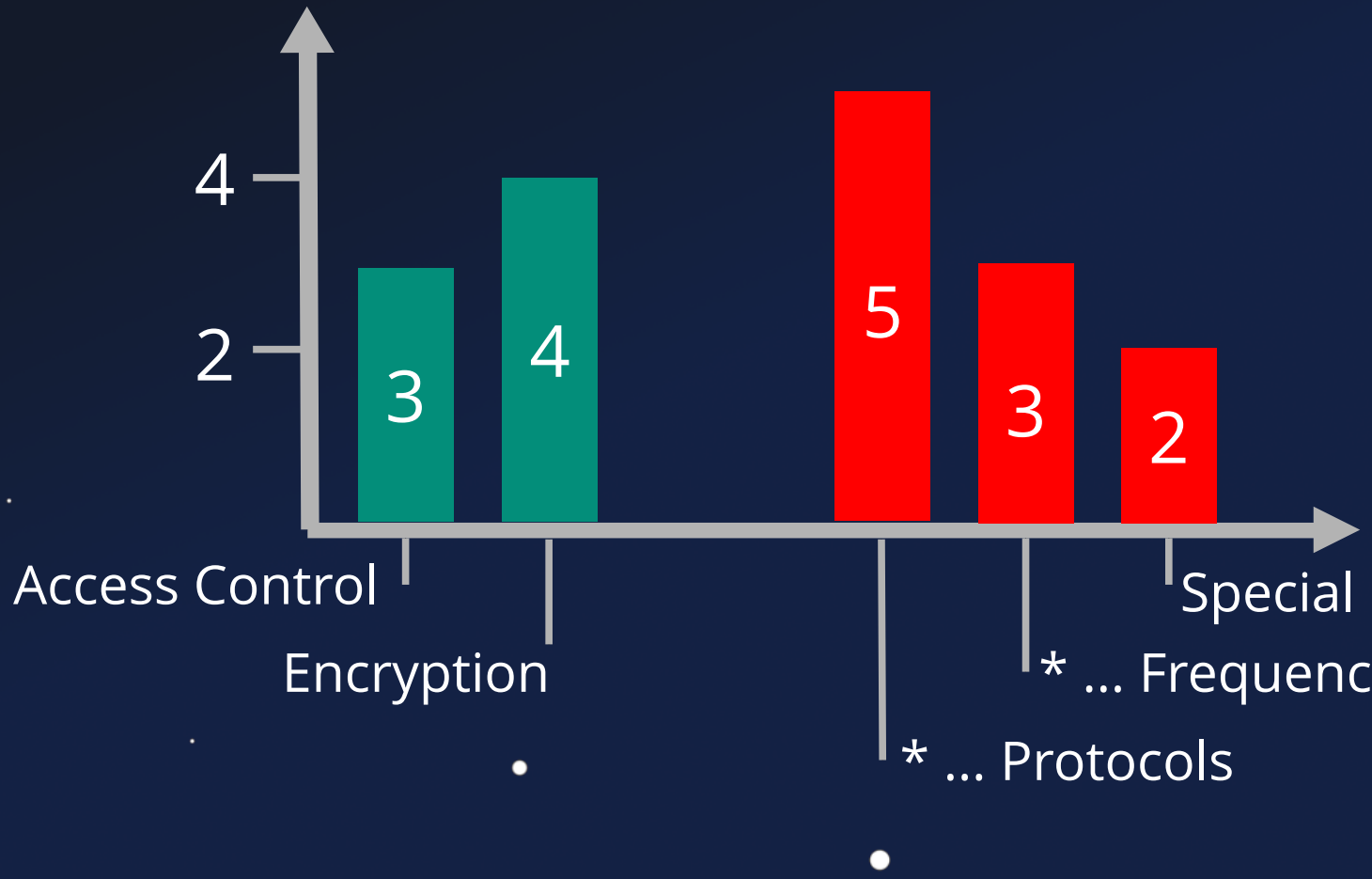
Question: *Are **any measures deployed** to prevent 3rd parties from controlling your satellite?*



Unknown*:
Prefer not to say / Don't know

TC Obscurity

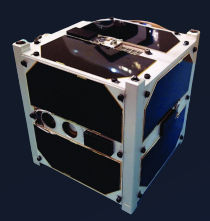
Question: ***What measures*** *are deployed to prevent 3rd parties from controlling your satellite? (Multiple Answers)*

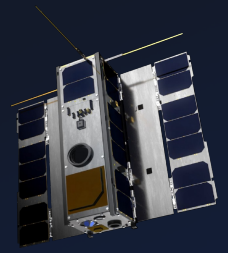


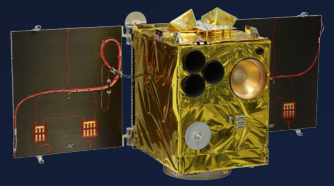
Road to IOD

Road to IOD

Road to IOD



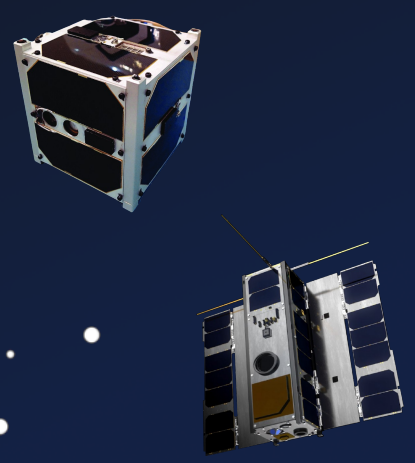




Static Analysis

Road to IOD

Static Analysis

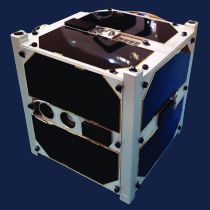


Emulation

Road to IOD

Static Analysis

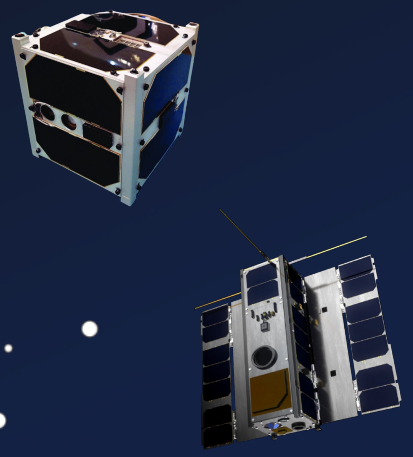
Emulation



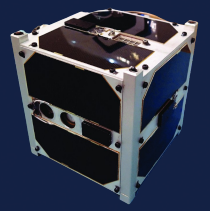
Hardware Tests

Road to IOD

Static Analysis



Emulation



Hardware Tests

In Orbit

Why no IOD?

Nobody
said Yes

Limited
Academic Value

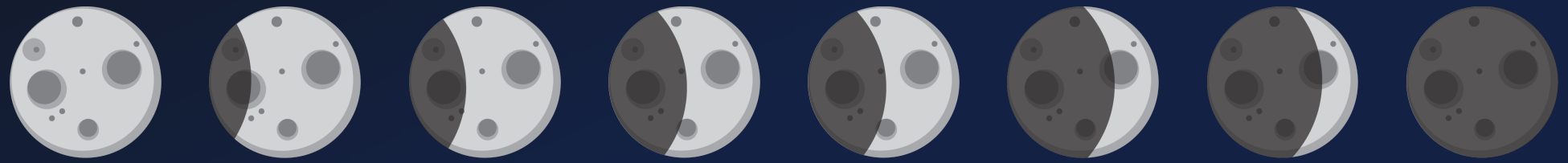
Why IOD?

Enormous Educational Value

Huge Public Impact

More convincing than Emulation

Lesson Learnt



Lessons Learnt

Firmware Attacks on Satellites are a Thing

ViaSat Incident != Satellite Firmware Attack

Common Sat Protocols lack Security

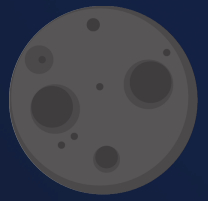
Security by Obscurity

Lessons Learnt

Missing TC Protection

Missing State-of-the-Art Defenses

Long Road to IODs



Reasons for and against IODs

Thanks!

- Firmware Attacks on Satellite
- Satellite Exploitation Objectives
- Three Satellite Case Studies
- Satellite Developer Survey
- Road to IODs

/jwillbold

Johannes Willbold - johannes.willbold@rub.de

[1] ESTCube-1 Image: https://www.eoportal.org/satellite-missions/estcube-1
[2] OPS-Sat Image: https://www.esa.int/ESA_Multimedia/Videos/2019/12/OPS-SAT_ESA_s_flying_lab_open_to_all
[3] Flying Laptop Image: https://www.irs.uni-stuttgart.de/en/research/satellitetechnology-and-instruments/smallsatelliteprogram/flying-laptop/