

Evaluation Report

Nicolai Müller

Ruhr University Bochum, Horst Görtz Institute for IT Security, Germany

E-Mail: nicolai.mueller@rub.de

Amir Moradi

University of Cologne, Institute for Computer Science, Germany

E-Mail: amir.moradi@uni-koeln.de

July 31, 2022

1 Target

1. Name: ascon_v4
2. Algorithm: Ascon-128
3. Authors: Robert Primas and Rishub Nagpal (Institute of Applied Information Processing and Communications (IAIK), Graz University of Technology, Austria)
4. URL: https://www.dropbox.com/s/8xygtv2u1hau9um/ASCON_IAIK.zip?dl=0&file_subpath=%2Fhardware%2Fascon_lwc%2Fsrc_rtl%2Fv4
5. Protection Method: Domain Oriented Masking [3]
6. Protection Order: 2

2 Setup

We evaluate the robust probing security of a given design, including the combined occurrence of glitches and transitions [1] by applying PROLEAD [4]. PROLEAD, a leakage detection tool publicly available at GitHub¹, performs logic simulations at the gate level and applies statistical methods to evaluate the robust probing security of a circuit. For more information regarding PROLEAD, we refer to the PROLEAD wiki² and the original paper [4].

3 Evaluation

3.1 Netlist Generation

To generate a gate-level netlist from the given rtl source code, we synthesize the design with design compiler version O-2018.06-SP4 for linux64 - Nov 27, 2018. As the ASCON round function was already verified by the authors by using COCO [2], we choose `CryptoCore_SCA` as the top module to cover the whole crypto core. Hence, the evaluation covers the complete encryption of a single plaintext. As the given source code contains several parts whose syntax is not supported by the design compiler, we rewrote the concerned parts in `CryptoCore_SCA.vhd` and `design_pkg.vhd` in such a way that the syntax is supported by the design compiler. However, this does not affect the security or functionality of the design. The modified rtl code and the resulting gate-level netlist are given in the supplementary material.

¹<https://github.com/ChairImpSec/PROLEAD>

²<https://github.com/ChairImpSec/PROLEAD/wiki>

3.2 Evaluation Settings

To configure PROLEAD, we simulate the given design with Vivado 2020.2. Figure 1 shows the first 80 clock cycles of the simulation.

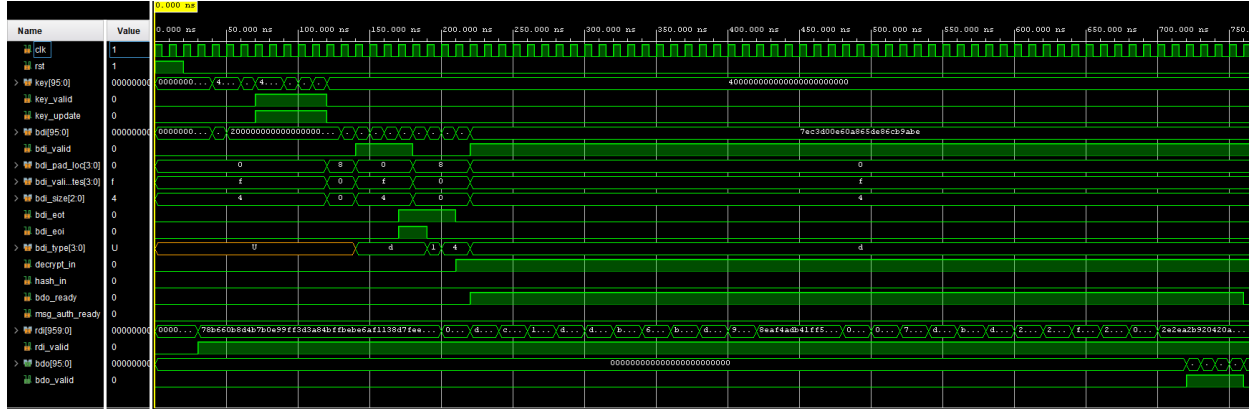


Figure 1: Simulation results encompassing the first key load and the first encryption procedure.

PROLEAD expects an initial sequence of inputs. Hence, we configure PROLEAD in a way that all inputs signals of `CryptoCore_SCA` are set the same as in the simulation. This means that PROLEAD initiates the run by loading a shared key and shared plaintext. Furthermore, we stop the simulation if the output signal `bdo_valid` goes high. This indicates that a single encryption procedure is finished. In short, PROLEAD simulates the loading and the complete encryption of a single plaintext. For the leakage detection, we perform a uniform and first-order fixed vs. random G -test conducting around 100 million simulations.

3.3 Results

For the first experiment, we evaluate the security under the glitch-extended probing model (without considering transitions). We detect strong first-order leakage by simulating around 1 million encryptions. The probe, causing the leakage, was placed on wire `n41367` which is the input wire of the register that stores the `msg_auth` signal. Hence, it becomes clear that a probe on `n41367` causes leakage as the tag checking procedure is unprotected. The results and the reports generated by PROLEAD are given in `results_compact0`. Since we want to ignore the unprotected tag checking for the following experiment, we exclude the probe on `n41367` from the evaluation. Moreover, we include the occurrence of transitions to the verification. As evaluating second-order probing security is computationally expensive, we focus the evaluation on the second-order security of the first round. Moreover, we first evaluate the circuit using a reduced number of simulations, e.g., 1 million (cf. `results_compact1`), and then consider a reduced set of most leaking probing sets and re-run the evaluations using 100 million simulations (cf. `results_compact2`). We end up with a $-\log_{10}(p)$ -value of 1.550161 which is under the internal 5.0 threshold. In summary, we did not find any leakage in the protected parts of the `CryptoCore_SCA` module. We, therefore, assume that the `CryptoCore_SCA` module (except for the tag checking procedure) is robust probing secure.

References

- [1] FAUST, S., GROSSO, V., POZO, S. M. D., PAGLIALONGA, C., AND STANDAERT, F. Composable Masking Schemes in the Presence of Physical Defaults & the Robust Probing Model. *IACR TCHES 2018*, 3 (2018), 89–120.
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- [3] GROSS, H., MANGARD, S., AND KORAK, T. Domain-Oriented Masking: Compact Masked Hardware Implementations with Arbitrary Protection Order. In *TIS@CCS 2016* (2016), B. Bilgin, S. Nikova, and V. Rijmen, Eds., ACM, p. 3.
- [4] MÜLLER, N., AND MORADI, A. PROLEAD - A Probing-Based Hardware Leakage Detection Tool. Cryptology ePrint Archive, Paper 2022/965, 2022. <https://eprint.iacr.org/2022/965>.