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VomsSnooper - a tool for managing VOMS records

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VomsSnooper is a tool that provides an easy way to keep documents and sites up to date with the newest VOMS records from the Operations Portal, and removes the need for manual edits to security configuration files.

Yaim is used to configure the middle-ware at grid sites. Specifically, Yaim processes variables that define which VOMS services are used to authenticate users of any VO. The data for those variables is administered centrally at the Operations Portal, and it is made available in XML format.

It was necessary at each site to manually convert the XML data to make it suitable for Yaim. At Liverpool, we wrote VomsSnooper to partly automate this process by checking and creating new VOMS records directly from the portal, providing a bridge between the Operations Portal and the site configuration. The tool is also used to automatically obtain and publish online the VOMS data of thirty GridPP Approved VOs in the GridPP wiki.

This tool solves several problems for Liverpool and the wider GridPP community.

Firstly, the VOMS records for GridPP Approved VOs were available from two sources that were not necessarily consistent, i.e. the Operations Portal and the GridPP wiki. So the first use case for VomsSnooper was to periodically synchronise the data on the GridPP wiki to the canonical source of the data in the Operations Portal, making both data sources compatible. The Approved VOs wiki now receives reliable, accurate, semi-automatic updates on a weekly basis, and long-term staleness has been eliminated. Sites can now update their records from either data source with more confidence.

Once a process was developed to automatically extract and format the VOMS records from the XML, it was apparent that the intermediate step of reading the Approved VOs wiki could be eliminated altogether. To this end, use cases were developed to both check the VOMS records at any site, and create new records directly from the Operations Portal. Sites who choose this approach can keep their records update to date in a semi-automatic manner, without reference to the Approved VOs wiki, and without manual edits to the security configuration files.

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