



Empowering Organisations: Procuring a Secure Software Supply Chain

September 2024

Anthony Harrison (Founder)

anthony@aph10.com



APH10

- A career delivering mission critical solutions across multiple sectors
- Founder and Director APH10
- Open Source Software
- STEM Ambassador
- Mentor











Agenda

Understanding the Supply Chain

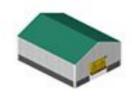
Empowered Development

Conclusions



Supply Chain Diagram













Raw Materials -> Supplier -> Manufacturer -> Distributor -> Retailer -> Consumer



Software Supply Chain



Developer / Foundation / Consolidator -> Integrator -> Customer



Understanding Software Supply Chain

- The traditional supply chain
 - Linear
 - Risks
 - Disruption
 - Quality
 - Failure
 - Alternative sources of supply

- Software Supply Chain
 - Non-linear
 - Risks
 - Disruption
 - Quality
 - Failure
 - Alternative sources of supply?



Understanding Software Supply Chain







Delivering an Empowered Life Cycle

Product Development

Product Support

Procure Develop Integrate Acceptance Supplier Monitoring Vulnerability Management Communication

Product Development

Risk Management Secure-by-Design/Default Documentation

Product Support

Risk Management Secure Update Documentation

Reactive to Proactive



What does good look like?

Product Development

- Secure by Design/Default
- Security Controls
- Control of supplier access

Product Support

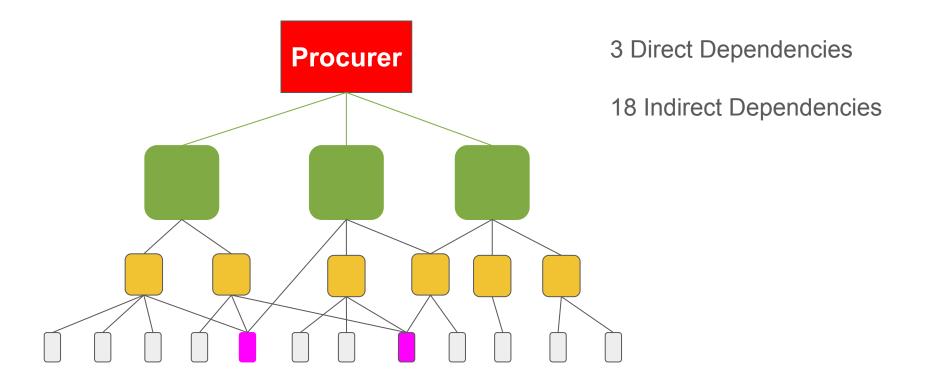
- Vulnerability Management
- Incident Management
- Security Updates
- Customer Support

Organisation

- Secure Development Lifecycle
- Supplier Transparency
- Security Support
- Adopt Industry Standards
- Data Management



Supply Chain Relationships





Procurement

Procure

Multi-Disciplined Team

Evaluation

Selection

Negotiation

Procurement - Evaluation

Procure

Ask for an SBOM

Key indicator of quality of software development

Recognise contractual constraints (NDA etc)

Which SBOM?

What's an SBOM?



Procurement - Evaluation

Procure

Need a Risk Management Process to assess SBOMs

Licenses, Component vulnerabilities, Component debt, Suppliers, Unmaintainable software, Unsupportable software

Share results with provider

- Build a relationship
- Understand the viewpoint of product management and security
- Regular security update?
- How out of band/critical updates handled



Procurement - Evaluation

Procure

Understand why? Indicator of development practice

Explain the benefits of greater transparency

- Build a relationship
- Understand the viewpoint of product management and security



Procurement - Selection

Procure

- SBOM won't be only criteria
- Be transparent with how SBOMs used in evaluation
- Understand the key components of the whole supply chain not just the immediate/direct business relationships
- Understand business impact of failure of critical software suppliers



Procurement - Negotiation

Procure

Model Contract

- Expectations about timeliness and consistency of security support
- Secure by Design/Default and product capabilities
- Security Controls
- Supplier Access Management
- Expectations about behaviours and development practices



Development and Integration

Develop

Integrate

- Continuous SBOM generation and monitoring
- Proactively share with upstream and downstream
- Understand and monitor changing risk profile
- Always know where you are so you can respond to stakeholders on demand



Acceptance

Acceptance

DO

- Define criteria to identify which vulnerabilities need to be fixed
- Expect all KNOWN vulnerabilities to be assessed
- Work with all upstream and downstream partners to coordinate fixes

DON'T

- Expect NO KNOWN VULNERABILITIES
- Demand fix all HIGH or CRITICAL vulnerabilities
- Demand fix immediately

Define criteria in Contract

Understand that vulnerabilities are dynamic and are constantly appearing/changing



Operational

Supplier Monitoring Vulnerability Management

Communication

Same approach to risk management as during development

Ensure contract has identified actions related to vulnerabilities

- If new vuln identified (proactively report)
- If new vuln and not exploitable (share assessment)
- If new vuln and expolit (proactively share and agree remediation approach)

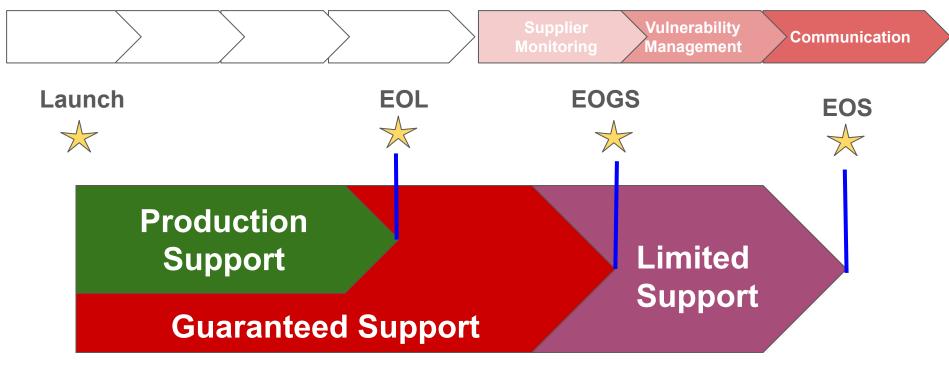
Supplier monitoring and incident reporting

Monitor EOX

- Start looking at approach probably 2 years before EOL/EOS
- Risk and Service life will dictate approach



Operational - EOX



EOL - Product no longer sold

EOS - Product no longer supported

EOGS - Product no longer guaranteed support



Conclusions

- The need for greater transparency to provide a clear picture of what is being acquired
- How to perform an effective due diligence on suppliers to ensure that expectations are understood by all parties
- The importance of relationships and partnerships within the supply chain
- The approach to be followed to ensure effective oversight of the supply chain is performed to manage the evolving risk landscape







GitHub

LinkedIn



Anthony Harrison anthony@aph10.com

