

# Dovecot – server for pop and imap

AfNOG CHIX

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(Materials developed by Joel Jaeggli For AfNOG)

# What is Dovecot?

- High-performance POP and IMAP server
- Developed by Timo Sirainen
- Unlike say UW IMAP it wasn't written in the 80s
- Transparently index's mailbox contents (Why is this important?)
- Supports both mbox and maildir formats
- Capable of operating in an environment with minimal locking. (Why is this important)
- Graceful around failures (index repair for example)

# Let's install it the FreeBSD way

- `cd /usr/ports/mail/dovecot`
- `make`
- Note all the options for databases!
  - It is typical for small applications to do authentication of users using the unix password file or PAM.
  - Big mail installations can use an SQL database interface for the storage of user credentials.
- The defaults are ok for our purposes

# FreeBSD install cont

- `make install`
- Take a look at `/usr/local/etc/rc.d/dovecot`
- Edit `/etc/rc.conf`
- `dovecot_enable="YES"`
- Ok, now we could start it but we really need to configure it first.
- Look at `/usr/local/etc/dovecot.conf`

# Dovecot Configuration

- Find the lines: *(Only do this if you have successfully created SSL keys in the previous Cryptography Lab Session)*
  - `#ssl_cert_file = /etc/ssl/certs/dovecot.pem`
  - `#ssl_key_file = /etc/ssl/private/dovecot.pem`
- Uncomment them, Then amend them to point at the certificate and keyfile that we created during the apache webserver tutorial.
- Disable plaintext authentication by altering:
  - `disable_plaintext_auth = no`
  - Note: unencrypted connections can still be made from localhost!

# Dovecot Configuration 2

- Note that the default listening services are:
  - `protocols = imap imaps pop3 pop3s`
  - TCP listeners are on 110 143 993 and 995
  - If you need the unencrypted versions of the protocol for some reason (e.g. a webmail application) then you should firewall them off from the rest of your end users (end-user clients should never be allowed to connect insecurely)
  - Otherwise disable `imap` and `pop3` **\*\* Please leave them on for this AfCHIX Workshop \*\***

# Dovecot Configuration – mailbox location

- The mail storage by default on Exim is in `/var/mail/`
- The storage format is also Mbox and we shall keep this format as well for purposes of this exercise.
- To change this to use a different storage format and location
- Locate the line:
  - `mail_location = mbox:~/mail/:INBOX=/var/mail/%u`
  - See examples in file above this line for Maildir option
- Ok we should have a sufficiently tuned dovecot to be able to start it.
- `/usr/local/etc/rc.d/dovecot start`

# Done

- If everything works correctly you should be able to point an imap client towards your system at port 993.