

Reusing Definitions Across Repositories



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Overview

- OVAL has always strived to facilitate reuse
- Reuse was a major focus for Version 5
 - easier to write new definitions
 - designed numerous opportunities for optimization into the language
 - simplified content maintenance
- Definitions are the focal point of reuse across repositories



Reuse Shortcoming

- Reuse is possible within a single document only
 - No simple mechanism for using a CPE inventory definition from repository A in a vulnerability definition from repository B.
- Forces content authors to duplicate definitions
 - Maintenance nightmare



Reuse Challenges

- Keep in sync
 - Referenced definitions have their own lifecycle
- Know what you are referencing
 - A bug fix may change the meaning of a definition
 - XP Inventory definition example
- Resolving a referenced definition
 - During evaluation, for display, ...



Reuse Challenges (cont)

- Maintaining authority
 - Need to trust a repository's moderator
- Certify a set of definitions