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Subject: Re: [PATCH] mark read\_crX() asm code as volatile  
Posted by [Nick Piggin](#) on Tue, 02 Oct 2007 12:14:54 GMT  
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On Wednesday 03 October 2007 04:27, Chuck Ebbert wrote:  
> On 10/02/2007 11:28 AM, Arjan van de Ven wrote:  
> > On Tue, 02 Oct 2007 18:08:32 +0400  
> >  
> > Kirill Korotaev <dev@openvz.org> wrote:  
> >> Some gcc versions (I checked at least 4.1.1 from RHEL5 & 4.1.2 from  
> >> gentoo) can generate incorrect code with read\_crX()/write\_crX()  
> >> functions mix up, due to cached results of read\_crX().  
> >  
> > I'm not so sure volatile is the right answer, as compared to giving the  
> > asm more strict constraints....  
> >  
> > asm volatile tends to mean something else than "the result has  
> > changed"....  
>  
> It means "don't eliminate this code if it's reachable" which should be  
> just enough for this case. But it could still be reordered in some cases  
> that could break, I think.  
>  
> This should work because the result gets used before reading again:  
>  
> read\_cr3(a);  
> write\_cr3(a | 1);  
> read\_cr3(a);  
>  
> But this might be reordered so that b gets read before the write:  
>  
> read\_cr3(a);  
> write\_cr3(a | 1);  
> read\_cr3(b);  
>  
> ?

I don't see how, as write\_cr3 clobbers memory.

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Subject: [PATCH] mark read\_crX() asm code as volatile  
Posted by [Kirill Korotaev](#) on Tue, 02 Oct 2007 14:04:42 GMT  
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Some gcc versions (I checked at least 4.1.1 from RHEL5 & 4.1.2 from gentoo)  
can generate incorrect code with read\_crX()/write\_crX() functions mix up,  
due to cached results of read\_crX().

The small app for x8664 below compiled with -O2 demonstrates this (i686 does the same thing):

```
----- cut -----
static inline unsigned long read_cr3(void)
{
    unsigned long cr3;
    asm("movq %%cr3,%0" : "=r" (cr3));
    return cr3;
}

static inline void write_cr3(unsigned long val)
{
    asm volatile("movq %0,%%cr3" :: "r" (val) : "memory");
}

void main()
{
    unsigned long c;
    c = read_cr3();
    write_cr3(c | 0x80);
    c = read_cr3();
    write_cr3(c | 0x100);
}
----- cut -----
```

# objdump -dr tst

```
....
000000000400430 <main>:
400430: 0f 20 d8      mov  %cr3,%rax
400433: 48 89 c2      mov  %rax,%rdx
400436: 80 ca 80      or   $0x80,%dl
400439: 0f 22 da      mov  %rdx,%cr3
40043c: 80 cc 01      or   $0x1,%ah
40043f: 0f 22 d8      mov  %rax,%cr3
400442: c3           retq
....
```

As one can notice, cr3 value is incorrectly read only once, and finally updated with only one bit set.

So better be on the safe side and mark all asm statements in read\_crX() functions as volatile which helps. i686 already has most of these functions marked as volatile already.

I faced this bug myself in i686 arch code when did code rearrangement in 2.6.18.

Signed-Off-By: Kirill Korotaev <dev@openvz.org>  
Acked-By: Pavel Emelianov <xemul@openvz.org>

---

asm-i386/system.h | 2 +-  
asm-x86\_64/system.h | 8 +++++-  
2 files changed, 5 insertions(+), 5 deletions(-)

```
--- ./include/asm-i386/system.h.ve4321 2007-10-02 17:09:53.000000000 +0400
+++ ./include/asm-i386/system.h 2007-10-02 17:39:40.000000000 +0400
@@ -141,7 +141,7 @@ static inline unsigned long native_read_
{
    unsigned long val;
    /* This could fault if %cr4 does not exist */
- asm("1: movl %%cr4, %0 \n"
+ asm volatile("1: movl %%cr4, %0 \n"
    "2: \n"
    ".section __ex_table,\"a\" \n"
    ".long 1b,2b \n"
--- ./include/asm-x86_64/system.h.ve4321 2007-09-18 12:42:19.000000000 +0400
+++ ./include/asm-x86_64/system.h 2007-10-02 17:40:17.000000000 +0400
@@ -85,7 +85,7 @@ static inline void write_cr0(unsigned lo
static inline unsigned long read_cr2(void)
{
    unsigned long cr2;
- asm("movq %%cr2,%0" : "=r" (cr2));
+ asm volatile("movq %%cr2,%0" : "=r" (cr2));
    return cr2;
}

@@ -97,7 +97,7 @@ static inline void write_cr2(unsigned lo
static inline unsigned long read_cr3(void)
{
    unsigned long cr3;
- asm("movq %%cr3,%0" : "=r" (cr3));
+ asm volatile("movq %%cr3,%0" : "=r" (cr3));
    return cr3;
}

@@ -109,7 +109,7 @@ static inline void write_cr3(unsigned lo
static inline unsigned long read_cr4(void)
{
    unsigned long cr4;
- asm("movq %%cr4,%0" : "=r" (cr4));
+ asm volatile("movq %%cr4,%0" : "=r" (cr4));
    return cr4;
```

```
}
```

```
@@ -121,7 +121,7 @@ static inline void write_cr4(unsigned lo
static inline unsigned long read_cr8(void)
{
    unsigned long cr8;
- asm("movq %%cr8,%0" : "=r" (cr8));
+ asm volatile("movq %%cr8,%0" : "=r" (cr8));
    return cr8;
}
```

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Subject: Re: [PATCH] mark read\_crX() asm code as volatile

Posted by [Andi Kleen](#) on Tue, 02 Oct 2007 14:17:44 GMT

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On Tuesday 02 October 2007 16:08:32 Kirill Korotaev wrote:

> Some gcc versions (I checked at least 4.1.1 from RHEL5 & 4.1.2 from gentoo)  
> can generate incorrect code with read\_crX()/write\_crX() functions mix up,  
> due to cached results of read\_crX().

added thanks

-Andi

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Subject: Re: [PATCH] mark read\_crX() asm code as volatile

Posted by [Arjan van de Ven](#) on Tue, 02 Oct 2007 15:28:56 GMT

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On Tue, 02 Oct 2007 18:08:32 +0400

Kirill Korotaev <dev@openvz.org> wrote:

> Some gcc versions (I checked at least 4.1.1 from RHEL5 & 4.1.2 from  
> gentoo) can generate incorrect code with read\_crX()/write\_crX()  
> functions mix up, due to cached results of read\_crX().  
>

I'm not so sure volatile is the right answer, as compared to giving the  
asm more strict constraints....

asm volatile tends to mean something else than "the result has  
changed"....

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Subject: Re: [PATCH] mark read\_crX() asm code as volatile

Posted by [Nick Piggin](#) on Tue, 02 Oct 2007 15:49:24 GMT

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On Wednesday 03 October 2007 16:18, H. Peter Anvin wrote:

> Nick Piggin wrote:

> >> This should work because the result gets used before reading again:

> >>

> >> read\_cr3(a);

> >> write\_cr3(a | 1);

> >> read\_cr3(a);

> >>

> >> But this might be reordered so that b gets read before the write:

> >>

> >> read\_cr3(a);

> >> write\_cr3(a | 1);

> >> read\_cr3(b);

> >>

> >> ?

> >

> > I don't see how, as write\_cr3 clobbers memory.

>

> Because read\_cr3() doesn't depend on memory, and b could be stored in a

> register.

How does the compiler know it doesn't depend on memory?

How do you say it depends on memory? You really need something as heavy as volatile?

---

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Subject: Re: [PATCH] mark read\_crX() asm code as volatile

Posted by [Chuck Ebbert](#) on Tue, 02 Oct 2007 18:27:37 GMT

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On 10/02/2007 11:28 AM, Arjan van de Ven wrote:

> On Tue, 02 Oct 2007 18:08:32 +0400

> Kirill Korotaev <dev@openvz.org> wrote:

>

>> Some gcc versions (I checked at least 4.1.1 from RHEL5 & 4.1.2 from

>> gentoo) can generate incorrect code with read\_crX()/write\_crX()

>> functions mix up, due to cached results of read\_crX().

>>

>

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> asm more strict constraints....

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> asm volatile tends to mean something else than "the result has

> changed"....

It means "don't eliminate this code if it's reachable" which should be just enough for this case. But it could still be reordered in some cases that could break, I think.

This should work because the result gets used before reading again:

```
read_cr3(a);
write_cr3(a | 1);
read_cr3(a);
```

But this might be reordered so that b gets read before the write:

```
read_cr3(a);
write_cr3(a | 1);
read_cr3(b);
```

?

---

Subject: Re: [PATCH] mark read\_crX() asm code as volatile

Posted by [hpa](#) on Tue, 02 Oct 2007 19:21:22 GMT

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Arjan van de Ven wrote:

> On Tue, 02 Oct 2007 18:08:32 +0400

> Kirill Korotaev <dev@openvz.org> wrote:

>

>> Some gcc versions (I checked at least 4.1.1 from RHEL5 & 4.1.2 from

>> gentoo) can generate incorrect code with read\_crX()/write\_crX()

>> functions mix up, due to cached results of read\_crX().

>>

>

> I'm not so sure volatile is the right answer, as compared to giving the

> asm more strict constraints....

>

> asm volatile tends to mean something else than "the result has

> changed"....

>

One of the aspect of volatility is "the result will change in ways you (gcc) just don't understand."

-hpa

---

Subject: Re: [PATCH] mark read\_crX() asm code as volatile

Posted by [hpa](#) on Wed, 03 Oct 2007 06:18:22 GMT

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Nick Piggin wrote:

```
>>
>> This should work because the result gets used before reading again:
>>
>> read_cr3(a);
>> write_cr3(a | 1);
>> read_cr3(a);
>>
>> But this might be reordered so that b gets read before the write:
>>
>> read_cr3(a);
>> write_cr3(a | 1);
>> read_cr3(b);
>>
>> ?
>
> I don't see how, as write_cr3 clobbers memory.
```

Because read\_cr3() doesn't depend on memory, and b could be stored in a register.

-hpa

---

---

Subject: Re: [PATCH] mark read\_crX() asm code as volatile

Posted by [Kirill Korotaev](#) on Wed, 03 Oct 2007 08:22:57 GMT

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Arjan,

I can experiment with any constraints if you suggest which one.

>From our experiments with gcc, it compares asm strings (sic!!!) to find matches to be merged! Sigh...

Below are 2 programs which differ in one space in read\_cr3\_b() asm statement. The first one compiles incorrectly, while 2nd one - correctly.

My personal feeling is that comparing asm strings is simply a "misfeature".

```
----- cut -----
static inline unsigned long read_cr3_a(void)
{
    unsigned long cr3;
    asm("movq %%cr3,%0" : "=r" (cr3));
    return cr3;
```

```

}

static inline unsigned long read_cr3_b(void)
{
    unsigned long cr3;
    asm("movq %%cr3,%0" : "=r" (cr3));
    return cr3;
}

static inline void write_cr3(unsigned long val)
{
    asm volatile("movq %0,%%cr3" :: "r" (val) : "memory");
}

void main()
{
    unsigned long c;
    c = read_cr3_a();
    write_cr3(c | 0x80);
    c = read_cr3_b();
    write_cr3(c | 0x100);
}
----- cut -----

```

```

----- cut -----
static inline unsigned long read_cr3_a(void)
{
    unsigned long cr3;
    asm("movq %%cr3,%0" : "=r" (cr3));
    return cr3;
}

static inline unsigned long read_cr3_b(void)
{
    unsigned long cr3;
    asm("movq %%cr3,%0" : "=r" (cr3));
    return cr3;
}

static inline void write_cr3(unsigned long val)
{
    asm volatile("movq %0,%%cr3" :: "r" (val) : "memory");
}

void main()
{
    unsigned long c;

```



```
c = read_cr3_a();
write_cr3(c | 0x80);
c = read_cr3_b();
write_cr3(c | 0x100);
}
----- cut -----
```

Kirill

Arjan van de Ven wrote:

> On Tue, 02 Oct 2007 18:08:32 +0400

> Kirill Korotaev <dev@openvz.org> wrote:

>

>

>>Some gcc versions (I checked at least 4.1.1 from RHEL5 & 4.1.2 from

>>gentoo) can generate incorrect code with read\_crX()/write\_crX()

>>functions mix up, due to cached results of read\_crX().

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>

> I'm not so sure volatile is the right answer, as compared to giving the

> asm more strict constraints....

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> asm volatile tends to mean something else than "the result has

> changed"....

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>

---

Subject: Re: [PATCH] mark read\_crX() asm code as volatile

Posted by [Andi Kleen](#) on Wed, 03 Oct 2007 08:45:05 GMT

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>

> How does the compiler know it doesn't depend on memory?

When it has no m (or equivalent like g) constrained argument  
and no memory clobber.

> How do you say it depends on memory?

You add any of the above.

> You really need something as heavy as volatile?

You could do a memory clobber, but it would be heavier than the volatile  
because the memory clobber clobbers all cached variables. volatile essentially  
just says "don't remove; has side effects". Normally gcc does that automatically

for something without outputs, but this one has.

Besides a CRx access does not actually clobber memory.

-Andi

---