Public-only tokens bypass private-resource restrictions on the admin API

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Content

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- Advisory: GHSA-37xv-m4w7-j2fh
- CVE: CVE-2026-117635
- Severity: high
- Published: 2026-11-01
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Affected

- `gitea.dev` (go): <= 28.2.0

Description

Summary

A token created with the `public-only` scope is refused on `/api/v1/orgs/{private-org}` but returns that same organization on `/api/v1/admin/orgs`. The restriction is dropped on the whole admin API. The token can list every user's email, create private organizations, mint a runner registration token, and create a new site admin account.

This is the same defect you fixed for other route groups in 1.26.2 (GHSA-wrr5-99h5-gq57, `/api/v1/user`) and 1.27.0 (GHSA-fq2p-5p22-8g6j orgs, GHSA-h56g-4qw7-2mxg teams). The admin group is the one that was left.

Details

`tokenRequiresScopes()` (`routers/api/v1/api.go:323`) does not enforce anything, it only sets `ctx.PublicOnly`. Enforcement is per route, via `checkTokenPublicOnly()` (`:248`) or `rejectPublicOnly()` (`:305`).

The admin group attaches neither of them.

```
// routers/api/v1/api.go:1854
}, tokenRequiresScopes(auth_model.AccessTokenScopeCategoryAdmin), reqToken(),
reqSiteAdmin())
```

`checkTokenPublicOnly()` would be a no-op here anyway. Its switch has cases for `Repository`, `Issue`, `Organization`, `User`, `ActivityPub`, `Notification` and `Package`, but none for `Admin`. The handlers do not read the flag either. `admin.GetAllOrgs` (`routers/api/v1/admin/org.go:104-110`) passes `Visible: {Public, Limited, Private}` unconditionally.

Unchanged on `main` (`cb79bb367eef`).

The token must be issued by a site admin. `reqSiteAdmin()` (`routers/api/v1/api.go:409-416`) blocks non-admins. I checked that a normal user's token with `write:admin`, and with `all`, gets 403 on every admin route, and that `sudo` is admin-only.

Impact

The holder gets private organizations, every user's email, private org creation, a runner registration token and a new site admin account. Revoking the token does not undo that last one, the account stays.

I would suggest `CVSS:3.1/AV:N/AC:L/PR:L/UI:N/S:U/C:H/I:H/A:N` (8.1, High), the vector you used for GHSA-wrr5-99h5-gq57, the same defect on the `/api/v1/user` routes.

I used an LLM to help analyse the code and narrow this down. Every request and response above was reproduced by hand on a local 1.27.1 instance, and the line references were checked against the v1.27.1 tag and `main`.

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