



When installing a PATROL agent on a new Unix host, it is common to have questions about the requirement for making changes to the kernel parameters. After all, making changes of that type is fairly intrusive since it requires a reboot among other things, and the very same parameters may have just recently been tuned to support a database or middleware package.

Why are these changes necessary?

The kernel data collector uses shared memory to pass collected data back to the PATROL agent. One shared memory segment and one semaphore is required for each metric group the collector is gathering. If there are not enough available, then the collector has no way to pass that data.

What if the parameters have already been tuned as part of the installation of another software package?

If sufficient resources already exist to support PATROL along with all other applications currently running on the host, then obviously it is not necessary to make the changes. However, it may not be obvious whether this is the case, even if changes have recently been made.

The quickest way to check whether the parameters probably need to be checked is to grab the script published in BMC's resolution ID 73217, which returns the number of free shared memory segments and free semaphores. This can be accessed from the BMC Support website, http://www.bmc.com/support_home. The script should be run on the host in question while any other relevant applications are also running. If both of the numbers returned are above 150 or so, then it is likely that no changes need to be made.

What will happen if changes are needed, but they have to be scheduled for a later time?

With recent versions of the PATROL product, the most likely scenario is that the kernel data collector (DCM) will fail to start, causing the agent to fail back to PSL data collection. This is generally acceptable as a temporary solution, since most of the information gathered by the kernel data collector is also gathered with PSL (but at a higher cost in processor cycles.)

After the changes are made and the system rebooted, it is a good idea to check the /RunDCM agent pconfig variable to verify that it is set to 1. If it needs to be changed, be sure to restart the agent afterward.

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