blockade Documentation

Release 0.4.0

Quest

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Blockade is a utility for testing network failures and partitions in distributed applications. Blockade uses Docker containers to run application processes and manages the network from the host system to create various failure scenarios.

A common use is to run a distributed application such as a database or cluster and create network partitions, then observe the behavior of the nodes. For example in a leader election system, you could partition the leader away from the other nodes and ensure that the leader steps down and that another node emerges as leader.

Blockade features:

- A flexible YAML format to describe the containers in your application
- Support for dependencies between containers, using named links
- A CLI tool for managing and querying the status of your blockade
- When run as a daemon, a simple REST API can be used to configure your blockade
- Creation of arbitrary partitions between containers
- Giving a container a flaky network connection to others (drop packets)
- Giving a container a slow network connection to others (latency)
- While under partition or network failure control, containers can freely communicate with the host system so you can still grab logs and monitor the application.

Blockade was originally developed by the Dell Cloud Manager (formerly Enstratius) team. Blockade is inspired by the excellent Jepsen article series.

Get started with the *Blockade Guide*!

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CHAPTER 1

Reference Documentation

1.1 Requirements

You need an accessible Docker Engine API, and the ability to launch privileged containers with host networking. Docker can be local or remote. If remote, set DOCKER_HOST and the other environment variables to configure the URL and credentials. Generally, if the docker cli works, so should Blockade.

Docker Swarm is not supported at this time.

1.2 Installing

Blockade can be installed via pip or easy_install:

\$ pip install blockade

1.2.1 macOS or Windows

Blockade works on macOS either natively pointing to a remote Docker Engine API or via Docker for Mac.

Blockade does not support Windows native containers. Nor is it known to work with Docker for Windows, but this may be possible. One option is to run Blockade itself in a container, in daemon mode, and talk to it via the *REST API*.

Another great option is Vagrant, to run Blockade and Docker in a Linux VM. Use the included Vagrantfile or another approach to get Docker and Blockade installed into a Linux VM. If you have Vagrant installed, running vagrant up from the Blockade checkout directory should get you started. Note that this may take a while, to download needed VMs and Docker containers.

1.3 Blockade Guide

This guide walks you through a simple example that highlights the power of Blockade. We will start a fake "application" consisting of three Docker containers. The first runs a simple sleep command. The other two containers ping the first. With this simple structure, we can easily see what happens when we introduce partitions and network failures between the containers.

1.3.1 Check your Blockade install

To check your install, run the following commands:

```
# check docker
$ docker info

# check blockade
$ blockade -h
```

If you get an error from either command, you'll need to fix this before proceeding. See the Docker installation docs and *Requirements*.

1.3.2 Set up your Blockade config

Now create a new directory and in it create a blockade. yaml file with these contents:

```
containers:
    c1:
        image: ubuntu:trusty
        command: /bin/sleep 300000
        ports: [10000]

c2:
        image: ubuntu:trusty
        command: sh -c "ping $C1_PORT_10000_TCP_ADDR"
        links: ["c1"]

c3:
        image: ubuntu:trusty
        command: sh -c "ping $C1_PORT_10000_TCP_ADDR"
        links: ["c1"]
```

This configuration specifies the three containers we described above. Note that we rely on Docker named links which require at least one open port. Hence our sleeping c1 container has a fake port 10000 open. The ubuntu:trusty image must exist in your Docker installation. You can download it using the docker pull command sudo docker pull ubuntu:trusty.

1.3.3 Start the Blockade

Now use the blockade up command to stand up our containers:

```
$ blockade up

NODE CONTAINER ID STATUS IP NETWORK PARTITION
c1 b9794aaeed42 UP 172.17.0.2 NORMAL
```

c2	875885f54593	UP	172.17.0.4	NORMAL
с3	9b7227b42466	UP	172.17.0.3	NORMAL

You should see output like above. Note that you get the local IP address and Docker container ID for each container.

Now let's take a look at the output of c2, which is pinging c1. We'll use the blockade logs command, but pipe it through tail so we just get the last several lines:

```
$ blockade logs c2 | tail
64 bytes from 172.17.0.2: icmp_req=59 ttl=64 time=0.067 ms
64 bytes from 172.17.0.2: icmp_req=60 ttl=64 time=0.077 ms
64 bytes from 172.17.0.2: icmp_req=61 ttl=64 time=0.077 ms
64 bytes from 172.17.0.2: icmp_req=62 ttl=64 time=0.073 ms
64 bytes from 172.17.0.2: icmp_req=63 ttl=64 time=0.076 ms
64 bytes from 172.17.0.2: icmp_req=64 ttl=64 time=0.070 ms
64 bytes from 172.17.0.2: icmp_req=65 ttl=64 time=0.078 ms
64 bytes from 172.17.0.2: icmp_req=65 ttl=64 time=0.073 ms
64 bytes from 172.17.0.2: icmp_req=66 ttl=64 time=0.073 ms
64 bytes from 172.17.0.2: icmp_req=67 ttl=64 time=0.073 ms
```

The blockade logs command is the same as the docker logs command, it grabs any stderr and or stdout output from the container.

1.3.4 Mess with the network

Now let's try a couple network filters. We'll make the network to c2 be slow and the network to c3 be flaky.

```
$ blockade slow c2
$ blockade flaky c3
$ blockade status
              CONTAINER ID STATUS IP
                                                           PARTITION
NODE
                                                 NETWORK
             b9794aaeed42 UP 172.17.0.2
c1
                                                 NORMAL
             875885f54593 UP
                                  172.17.0.4
c2
                                                 SLOW
              9b7227b42466 UP 172.17.0.3
с3
                                                  FLAKY
```

Now look at the logs for c2 and c3 again:

```
$ blockade logs c2 | tail
64 bytes from 172.17.0.2: icmp_req=358 ttl=64 time=126 ms
64 bytes from 172.17.0.2: icmp_req=359 ttl=64 time=0.077 ms
64 bytes from 172.17.0.2: icmp_req=360 ttl=64 time=64.5 ms
64 bytes from 172.17.0.2: icmp_req=361 ttl=64 time=265 ms
64 bytes from 172.17.0.2: icmp_req=362 ttl=64 time=158 ms
64 bytes from 172.17.0.2: icmp_req=363 ttl=64 time=64.8 ms
64 bytes from 172.17.0.2: icmp_req=364 ttl=64 time=3.47 ms
64 bytes from 172.17.0.2: icmp_req=365 ttl=64 time=90.2 ms
64 bytes from 172.17.0.2: icmp_req=366 ttl=64 time=0.067 ms
$ blockade logs c3 | tail
64 bytes from 172.17.0.2: icmp_req=415 ttl=64 time=0.075 ms
64 bytes from 172.17.0.2: icmp_req=416 ttl=64 time=0.079 ms
64 bytes from 172.17.0.2: icmp_req=419 ttl=64 time=0.063 ms
64 bytes from 172.17.0.2: icmp_req=420 ttl=64 time=0.065 ms
64 bytes from 172.17.0.2: icmp_req=421 ttl=64 time=0.063 ms
64 bytes from 172.17.0.2: icmp_req=425 ttl=64 time=0.062 ms
64 bytes from 172.17.0.2: icmp_req=426 ttl=64 time=0.079 ms
```

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```
64 bytes from 172.17.0.2: icmp_req=427 ttl=64 time=0.056 ms
64 bytes from 172.17.0.2: icmp_req=428 ttl=64 time=0.066 ms
```

Note how the time value of the c2 pings is erratic, while c3 is missing many packets (look at the icmp_req value – it should be sequential).

Now let's use blockade fast to fix the network:

1.3.5 Partition the network

Blockade can also create partitions between containers. This is valuable for testing split-brain behaviors. To demonstrate, let's partition node c2 off from the other two containers. It will no longer be able to ping c1, but c3 will continue unhindered.

Partitions are specified as groups of comma-separated container names:

\$ blockade partition c1,c3 c2					
\$ blockade status					
NODE	CONTAINER ID	STATUS	IP	NETWORK	PARTITION
c1	6367a903f093	UP	172.17.0.2	NORMAL	1
c2	35efaf92bba0	UP	172.17.0.4	NORMAL	2
с3	e8ed611a38de	UP	172.17.0.3	NORMAL	1

Note the partition column: c1 and c3 are in partition #1 while c2 is in partition #2.

You can now use blockade logs to check the output of c2 and c3 and see the partition in effect.

Restore the network with the join command:

```
$ blockade join
$ blockade status
           CONTAINER ID STATUS IP
                                               NETWORK
                                                        PARTITION
            6367a903f093 UP 172.17.0.2
c1
                                              NORMAL
c2
            35efaf92bba0 UP
                                172.17.0.4
                                              NORMAL
             e8ed611a38de UP
                               172.17.0.3
c3
                                               NORMAL
```

1.3.6 Tear down the Blockade

Once finished, kill the containers and restore the network with the destroy command:

```
$ blockade destroy
```

1.3.7 Next steps

Next, check out the reference details in Configuration and Commands.

1.4 Configuration

The blockade configuration file is conventionally named blockade. yaml and is used to describe the containers in your application. Here is an example:

```
containers:
  c1:
    image: my_docker_image
    command: /bin/myapp
   volumes: {"/opt/myapp": "/opt/myapp_host"}
   expose: [80]
   ports: {8080: 80}
    environment: {"IS_MASTER": 1}
  c2:
    image: my_docker_image
    command: /bin/myapp
    volumes: ["/data"]
    links: {c1: master}
  c3:
    image: my_docker_image
    command: /bin/myapp
   links: {c1: master}
network:
  flaky: 30%
  slow: 75ms 100ms distribution normal
```

The format is YAML and there are two important sections: containers and network.

1.4.1 Containers

Containers are described as a map with the key as the Blockade container name (c1, c2, c3 in the example above). This key is used for commands to manipulate the Blockade and is also used as the hostname of the container.

Each entry in the containers section is a single Docker container in the Blockade. Each container parameter controls how the container is launched. Most are simply pass-throughs to Docker. Many valuable details can be found in the Docker run command documentation.

1.4.2 image

image is required and specifies the Docker image name to use for the container. The image must exist in your Docker installation.

1.4.3 command

command is optional and specifies the command to run within the container. If not specified, a default command must be part of the image you are using. You may include environment variables in this command, but to do so you must typically wrap the command in a shell, like sh -c "/bin/myapp \$MYENV".

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1.4.4 volumes

volumes is optional and specifies the volumes to mount in the container, *from the host*. Volumes can be specified as either a map or a list. In map form, the key is the path *on the host* to expose and the value is the mountpoint *within the container*. In list form, the host path and container mountpoint are assumed to be the same. See the Docker volumes documentation for details about how this works.

1.4.5 expose

expose is optional and specifies ports to expose from the container. Ports must be exposed in order to use the Docker named links feature.

1.4.6 links

links is optional and specifies links from one container to another. A dependent container will be given environment variables with the parent container's IP address and port information. See named links documentation for details.

1.4.7 ports

ports is optional and specifies ports published to the host machine. It is a dictionary from external port to internal container port.

1.4.8 environment

environment is optional and specifies environment variables for command. See more details in command section above.

1.4.9 hostname

hostname is optional and gives the ability to redefine hostname of a container.

1.4.10 dns

dns is optional and specifies a list of DNS-servers for container.

1.4.11 start_delay

start_delay is optional and specifies a number of seconds to wait before starting a container. This can be used as a stopgap way to ensure a dependent service is running before starting a container.

1.4.12 count

count is optional and specifies the number of copies of the container to launch.

1.4.13 cap_add

cap_add is optional and specifies additional root capabilities

1.4.14 container name

container_name is optional and specifies a custom container name, instead of letting blockade generate one. Use caution with this setting, because Docker enforces uniqueness of names across all containers.

When this parameter is combined with count, an underscore and index will be suffixed to this name. For example "app" becomes "app_1", "app_2", etc.

1.4.15 **Network**

The network configuration block controls the settings used for network filter commands like slow and flaky. If unspecified, defaults will be used. There are two parameters:

1.4.16 slow

slow controls the amount and distribution of delay for network packets when a container is in the Blockade slow state. It is specified as an expression understood by the tc netem traffic control delay facility. See the man page for details, but the pattern is:

```
TIME [ JITTER [ CORRELATION ] ]
[ distribution { uniform | normal | pareto | paretonormal } ]
```

TIME and JITTER are expressed in milliseconds while CORRELATION is a percentage.

1.4.17 flaky

flaky controls the lossiness of network packets when a contrainer is in the Blockade flaky state. It is specified as an expression understood by the tc netem traffic control loss facility. See the man page for details, but the simplified pattern is:

```
random PERCENT [ CORRELATION ]
```

PERCENT and CORRELATION are both expressed as percentages.

1.4.18 driver

driver specifies docker network stack. default will use standard Docker networking, that allows to connect containers by links. Other option is udn. It will enable user defined network, that performs dns resolution of running containers and allows to create any-to-any communications. In case of udn network environment variables with links will not bet set.

1.5 Commands

The Blockade CLI is built to make it easy to manually manage your containers, and is also easy to wrap in scripts as needed. All commands that produce output support a - -json flag to output in JSON instead of plain text.

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For the most up to date and detailed command help, use the built-in CLI help system (blockade --help).

1.5.1 up

```
usage: blockade up [--json]

Start the containers and link them together

--json Output in JSON format
```

1.5.2 destroy

```
usage: blockade destroy

Destroy all containers and restore networks
```

1.5.3 status

```
usage: blockade status [--json]

Print status of containers and networks

optional arguments:

--json Output in JSON format
```

1.5.4 start

```
usage: blockade start [--all] [CONTAINER [CONTAINER ...]]

Start some or all containers

CONTAINER Container to select

--all Select all containers
--random Select a random container
```

1.5.5 stop

```
usage: blockade stop [--all] [CONTAINER [CONTAINER ...]]
Stop some or all containers

CONTAINER Container to select

--all Select all containers
--random Select a random container
```

1.5.6 kill

1.5.7 restart

```
usage: blockade restart [--all] [CONTAINER [CONTAINER ...]]

Restart some or all containers

CONTAINER Container to select

--all Select all containers
--random Select a random container
```

1.5.8 logs

```
usage: blockade logs CONTAINER

Fetch the logs of a container

CONTAINER Container to fetch logs for
```

1.5.9 flaky

```
usage: blockade flaky [--all] [CONTAINER [CONTAINER ...]]

Make the network flaky for some or all containers

CONTAINER Container to select

--all Select all containers
--random Select a random container
```

1.5.10 duplicate

```
usage: blockade duplicate [--all] [CONTAINER [CONTAINER ...]]

Introduce packet duplication into the network of some or all containers
```

1.5. Commands

```
CONTAINER Container to select

--all Select all containers
--random Select a random container
```

1.5.11 slow

```
usage: blockade slow [--all] [CONTAINER [CONTAINER ...]]
Make the network slow for some or all containers

CONTAINER Container to select

--all Select all containers
--random Select a random container
```

1.5.12 fast

```
usage: blockade fast [--all] [CONTAINER [CONTAINER ...]]

Restore network speed and reliability for some or all containers

CONTAINER Container to select

--all Select all containers
--random Select a random container
```

1.5.13 partition

```
usage: blockade partition [--random] [PARTITION [PARTITION ...]]

Partition the network between containers

Replaces any existing partitions outright. Any containers NOT specified in arguments will be globbed into a single implicit partition. For example if you have three containers: c1, c2, and c3 and you run:

blockade partition c1

The result will be a partition with just c1 and another partition with c2 and c3.

Alternatively, ``--random`` may be specified, and zero or more random partitions will be generated by blockade.

PARTITION Comma-separated partition

--random Randomly select zero or more partitions of containers
```

1.5.14 join

```
usage: blockade join

Restore full networking between containers
```

1.5.15 add

```
usage: blockade add [CONTAINER [CONTAINER ...]]

Add existing Docker containers to a Blockade

CONTAINER Container to add
```

1.6 Changelog

1.6.1 0.4.0 (2017-06-26)

- Added new chaos functionality. When used, blockade will randomly select containers to impair with partitions, slow network, etc. Contributed by John Bresnahan (@buzztroll) of Stardog Union.
- Added an event trail that logs all blockade events that are run against a blockade over its lifetime. This can be helpful in correlating blockade events to application errors. Contributed by John Bresnahan (@buzztroll) of Stardog Union.
- Substantially improved overall performance by using a cached container for all host commands.
- #62: Fixed bug with using blockade commands against a restarted container. Contributed by John Bresnahan (@buzztroll) of Stardog Union.
- Updated Docker SDK and API version. Contributed by Vladimir Borodin (dev1ant).

1.6.2 0.3.1 (2016-12-09)

- #43: Restore support for loading from blockade.yml config file.
- #26: Improved error messages when running blockade without access to the Docker API.
- #25: Improved error messages when determining container host network device fails.
- #40: Fixed kill command (broken in 0.3.0).
- #1: Fixed support for configuring Docker API via DOCKER_HOST env.
- #36: Truncate long blockade IDs to avoid iptables limits.
- Switched to directly inspecting /sys for container network devices instead of via ip. This means containers no longer need to have ip installed.
- Improved Blockade Python API by returning names of the containers a command has operated on. Contributed by Gregor Uhlenheuer (@kongo2002).
- Fixed Vagrantfile to also work on Windows. Contributed by Oresztesz Margaritisz (@gitaroktato).
- Documentation fix contributed by Konrad Klocek (@kklocek).

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- Added new version command that prints Blockade version and exits.
- Added cap_add container config option, for specifying additional root capabilities. Contributed by Maciej Zimnoch (@Zimnx).

1.6.3 0.3.0 (2016-10-29)

- Reworks all network commands to run in Docker containers. This allows Blockade to be run without root privileges, as long as the user can access Docker.
- Introduces a REST API and daemon mode that allows creation and management of blockades remotely.
- Adds ability to add a container to a running blockade, via add command.
- Adds support for Docker user-defined networks to allow any-to-any communication between containers, without links. Contributed by Stas Kelvich (@kelvich).
- Adds ability to configure DNS servers for containers in a blockade. Contributed by Vladimir Borodin (@dev1ant).
- Adds a generic —random flag for many commands to allow easier randomized chaos testing. Contributed by Gregor Uhlenheuer (@kongo2002).
- Introduces a new kill command for killing containers in a blockade.
- Fixed links to Docker documentation. Contributed by @joepadmiraal.
- Fixed links of named containers. Contributed by Gregor Uhlenheuer (@kongo2002).

1.6.4 0.2.0 (2015-12-23)

- #14: Support for docker >1.6, with the native driver. Eliminates the need to use the deprecated LXC driver. Contributed by Gregor Uhlenheuer.
- #12: Fix port publishing. **Breaking change**: the order of port publishing was swapped to be {external: internal}, to be consistent with the docker command line. Contributed by aidanhs.
- Introduces new duplicate command, which causes some packets to a container to be duplicated. Contributed by Gregor Uhlenheuer.
- Introduces new start, stop, and restart commands, which manage specified containers via Docker. Contributed By Gregor Uhlenheuer.
- Introduces new random partition behavior: blockade partition —random will create zero or more random partitions. Contributed By Gregor Uhlenheuer.
- Reworked the blockade ID generation to be more like docker-compose, instead of using randomly-generated IDs. If --name is specified on the command line, this is used as the blockade ID and is prefixed to container names. Otherwise the blockade name is taken from the basename of the current working directory.
- Numerous other small fixes and features, many contributed by Gregor Uhlenheuer. Thanks Gregor!

1.6.5 0.1.2 (2015-1-28)

- #6: Change ports config keyword to match docker usage. It now publishes a container port to the host. The expose config keyword now offers the previous behavior of ports: it makes a port available from the container, for linking to other containers. Thanks to Simon Bahuchet for the contribution.
- #9: Fix logs command for Python 3.

• Updated dependencies.

1.6.6 0.1.1 (2014-02-12)

• Support for Python 2.6 and Python 3.x

1.6.7 0.1.0 (2014-02-11)

• Initial release of Blockade!

1.7 REST API

The REST API is provided by the Blockade daemon and exposes most of the Blockade commands. In particular, it can be helpful for automated test suites, allowing them to setup, manipulate, and destroy Blockades through the API.

Check the help for Blockade daemon options blockade daemon -h

1.7.1 Create a Blockade

Example request:

Response:

```
204 No content
```

1.7.2 Execute an action on a Blockade (start, stop, restart, kill)

Example request:

```
POST /blockade/<name>/action
Content-Type: application/json
{
```

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```
"command": "start",
   "container_names": ["c1"]
}
```

Response:

```
204 No content
```

1.7.3 Change the network state of a Blockade (fast, slow, duplicate, flaky)

Example request:

```
POST /blockade/<name>/network_state
Content-Type: application/json

{
    "network_state": "fast",
    "container_names": ["c1"]
}
```

Response:

```
204 No content
```

1.7.4 Partition the network between containers

Example request:

```
POST /blockade/<name>/partitions
Content-Type: application/json
{
    "partitions": [["c1"], ["c2", "c3"]]
}
```

Response:

```
204 No content
```

1.7.5 Delete all partitions for a Blockade and restore full connectivity

Example request:

```
DELETE /blockade/<name>/partitions
```

Response:

```
204 No content
```

1.7.6 List all Blockades

Example request:

```
GET /blockade
```

Response:

```
"blockades": [
    "test_blockade1",
    "test_blockade2"
]
```

1.7.7 Get Blockade

Example request:

```
GET /blockade/<name>
```

Response:

```
"containers": {
       "c1": {
            "container_id":
-"729a67bc126f597b563410b8b5478929da04ba81c0ce4519c2d7eb48599a4406",
            "device": "veth035b534",
            "ip_address": "172.17.0.7",
           "name": "c1",
           "network_state": "NORMAL",
           "partition": null,
           "status": "UP"
       },
       "c2": {
            "container_id":
→ "ee84117d7b6fd806279ee0e5a2a3737a8d21a1e5129df31d3e0f1dee22d94d35",
           "device": "veth304bac6",
           "ip_address": "172.17.0.6",
            "name": "c2",
            "network_state": "NORMAL",
           "partition": null,
           "status": "UP"
       }
   }
```

1.7.8 Add an existing Docker container to a Blockade

Example request:

```
PUT /blockade/<name>
Content-Type: application/json
```

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```
{
    "containers": ["docker_container_id"]
}
```

Response:

```
204 No content
```

1.7.9 Delete a Blockade

Example request:

```
DELETE /blockade/<name>
```

Response:

```
204 No content
```

Chaos REST API

Users wishing to start *chaos* on their blockade can use this REST API. Based on the parameters given the *chaos* feature will randomly select containers in the blockade to perform blockade events (duplicate, slow, flaky, or partition) upon.

1.7.10 Start chaos on a Blockade

Began performing chaos operations on a given blockade. The user can control the number of containers that can be effected in a given degradation period as well as what possible events can be selected. A *degradation* period will start sometime between *min_start_delay* and *max_start_delay* milliseconds and it will last for between *min_run_time* and *max_run_time* milliseconds.

Example request:

```
POST /blockade/<name>/chaos
Content-Type: application/json

{
    "min_start_delay": 30000,
    "max_start_delay": 300000,
    "min_run_time": 30000,
    "max_run_time": 300000,
    "max_run_time": 300000,
    "min_containers_at_once": 1,
    "max_containers_at_once": 2,
    "event_set": ["SLOW", "DUPLICATE", "FLAKY", "STOP", "PARTITION"]
}
```

Response:

```
201 Successfully started chaos on <name>
```

1.7.11 Update chaos parameters on a Blockade

This operation takes the same options as the create.

Example request:

```
PUT /blockade/<name>/chaos
Content-Type: application/json

{
    "min_start_delay": 30000,
    "max_start_delay": 300000,
    "min_run_time": 30000,
    "max_run_time": 300000,
    "min_containers_at_once": 1,
    "max_containers_at_once": 2,
    "min_events_at_once": 2,
    "max_events_at_once": 2,
    "event_set": ["SLOW", "DUPLICATE", "FLAKY", "STOP", "PARTITION"]
}
```

Response:

```
200 Updated chaos on <name>
```

1.7.12 Get the current status of chaos

Example request:

```
GET /blockade/<name>/chaos
```

Response:

```
{
    "state": "DEGRADED"
}
```

1.7.13 Stop chaos on a give blockade

Example request:

```
DELETE /blockade/<name>/chaos
```

Response:

```
Deleted chaos on <name>
```

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Development and Support

Blockade is available on github. Bug reports should be reported as issues there.

CHAPTER	.3

License

Blockade is offered under the Apache License 2.0.