

CyberRisk Validation Report – WatchGuard

Product Version: WatchGuard Firebox Cloud

Published: 22 March 2024

Revision 1.1: 03/25/2024

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1. Introduction

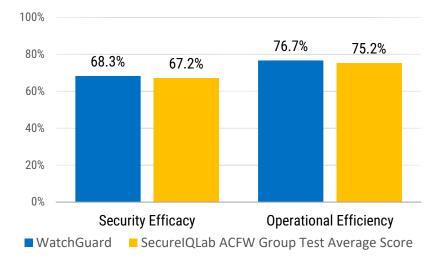


Figure 1. Summary Results for WatchGuard vs the ACFW Group Test Scores

Advanced Cloud Firewalls (ACFW) protect the infrastructure that organizations depend on. These firewalls serve as a virtual shield. ACFWs use a proactive approach and are designed to simplify security.

SecureIQLab conducted testing for 12¹ leading enterprise-class ACFW solutions. This test was conducted in accordance with the Anti-Malware Testing Standards Organization² (AMTSO) test Standard. The maps to version v1.6 of the SecureIQLab Advanced Cloud Firewall CyberRisk Validation Methodology, AMTSO Test ID: AMTSO-LS1-TP070. It is the most comprehensive evaluation of its kind ever performed.

As part of this test, SecureIQLab completed testing WatchGuard, WatchGuard Firebox Cloud. This report discusses the test results for the WatchGuard, WatchGuard Firebox Cloud, version 12.9.2B675817, and includes validation of the following security modules and components: Gateway Antivirus, Intrusion Prevention Service, Webblocker, Intelligent AV, File Exception, SpamBlocker, Botnet Detection, Tor Exit Node Detection, Application Control, and APT Blocker.

This report offers empirical data points on what to expect from the WatchGuard, WatchGuard Firebox Cloud, highlighting features and business considerations. SecurelQLab's testing showcases the overall organizational value of the WatchGuard Firebox Cloud in security effectiveness and operational efficiency. Figure 1 highlights WatchGuard's results in these two areas versus the group test averages.

As Figure 1 shows visually, WatchGuard Firebox Cloud was slightly above the average ACFW tested for Security Efficacy and Operational Efficiency.

In writing this report, SecurelQLab has made extensive efforts to guarantee the accuracy of the results while straightforwardly presenting them. However, the test results are necessarily simplified to be presented for review in a summary format.



¹ Testing was attempted on a total of 12 Advanced Cloud Firewall solutions. Please <u>click here</u> for details.

² Standards https://www.amtso.org/ conducted testing.

2. Report Summary

This 2024 Advanced Cloud Firewall CyberRisk Validation Report provides test results for the WatchGuard, WatchGuard Firebox Cloud. Table 1 summarizes the product's overall validation results around security effectiveness, resistance to false positives, operational efficiency, and SSL/TLS security efficacy of the WatchGuard Firebox Cloud solution validated against SecureIQLab ACFW v1.6 methodology.

| ACFW Test Categories | WatchGuard ACFW Score | SecurelQLab ACFW Group Test Average Score |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|--|
| Security Efficacy | 68.3% | 67.2% |
| Resistance to False Positives | 100.0% | 89.8% |
| Operational Efficiency | 76.7% | 75.2% |
| SSL/TLS Security Efficacy | 100.0% | 68.4% |

Table 1. WatchGuard ACFW Result Summary

Figure 2 presents the above table in visual format.

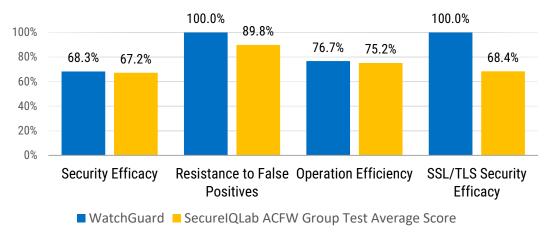


Figure 2. Overall Result Summary: WatchGuard vs SecureIQLab ACFW Group Test Average

Overall Result Summary: WatchGuard Firebox Cloud did exceptionally well compared to the overall SecureIQLab ACFW group test average in two of the primary enterprise categories as represented in the SecureIQLab ACFW validation methodology selection criteria.³



³ SecureIQLab ACFW v1.6 methodology

3. ACFW Test Overview

Advanced Cloud Firewalls (ACFWs) must effectively counter the emergence of advanced attack vectors, novel strategies, and new attack surfaces, thwarting threats that are complex and customized. Beyond merely being aware of application use of the internet, they should possess capabilities to inspect packet content and search for Indicators of Attack (IOA) within the data stream. This test was designed to confirm how well the tested ACFW was able to:

- Identify permitted applications and block prohibited applications.
- Identify and block threats attempting to use "known good" ports and protocols.
- Identify and block threats that attempt evasive tactics, such as non-standard ports or "port hopping."
- Identify and block threats encrypted with SSL/TLS.
- Identify users, groups, and locations, and apply policy regardless of I.P. address.
- Identify and block outbound data leaks.
- Identify and block outbound Botnet Command and Control communications.
- Enable secure business workflow with a high detection rate and low Signal-to-Noise ratio.
- Provide global visibility and granular policy management.
- Provide all necessary alerts and configuration recommendations based on best practices.

SecureIQLab defines prevention as a 24/7 automated response offering without human intervention. This can be achieved through various technologies and mechanisms, including signature-based models, policy-based models, behavior-based models, and machine learning (ML) or artificial intelligence (AI)-based models. This definition is technology-agnostic, focusing on outcomes of the various analyst workflows and scenarios rather than the specific prevention technology. ACFWs, when deployed in a stand-alone mode, are expected to prevent both initial and ongoing attacks while also providing robust reporting capabilities.

The SecurelQLab ACFW v1.6 validation methodology was tailored towards the prevention and reporting capabilities for security and compliance. Configurations typically included multiple security and compliance applications such as Vulnerability Protection, Anti-Spyware, Antivirus, URL Filtering, and DNS Security. By default, when configuring, "detect" settings were set to "protect" or "block". SecurelQLab then performed any required tuning according to recommended vendor best practices for operational scenarios involving cloud deployments⁴.

3.1 ACFW Deployment Overview

Per SecurelQLab's methodology, all ACFW vendors were requested to configure their products based on best practices that enterprises should implement when deploying the firewall in their organizations. The intent of this testing methodology is to mirror a successful customer experience during the deployment and management of the product.

During the evaluation, SecureIQLab ensured product updates and configuration changes were executed through a central management console: cloud or on-prem device portal. This approach aimed to cover all test scenarios from start to finish to the greatest extent possible.

For a more comprehensive understanding of our testing methods, refer to version 1.6 of the SecureIQLab 2023 <u>ACFW CyberRisk Validation Methodology</u> (AMTSO Test ID: AMTSO-LS1-TP070).



⁴ WatchGuard Firebox Cloud <u>deployment reference</u>.

4. Security Efficacy Results

Advanced Cloud firewalls should be designed to protect cloud-based resources and applications, shielding them from unauthorized access and prevalent cyber threats.

Each ACFW solution evaluated in this test underwent scrutiny across multiple distinct enterprise-centric categories, involving attack vectors of more than 1000 real-world operational scenarios. These scenarios used real world attacks that have targeted small-to-medium size businesses, enterprises, and other organizations. The comprehensive testing performed by SecureIQLab reflects our commitment to innovation and continuous improvement. Moving forward, SecureIQLab plans to continue to augment attack libraries and incorporate additional relevant operational metrics as needed in future iterations of this test.

The WatchGuard Firebox Cloud was tested against 13 attack types within four primary standard threat categories. Table 2 below presents the results of these tests. Figure 3 below presents an overview of the SecureIQLab findings during the security effectiveness validation and reporting of the WatchGuard, WatchGuard Firebox Cloud. This includes the standard threat category score, the advanced threat category score, the operational accuracy score, and the SSL/TLS threat efficacy score from the methodology. These sections of the methodology were selected for presentation because these sections tested each ACFW against the four primary standard threat categories.

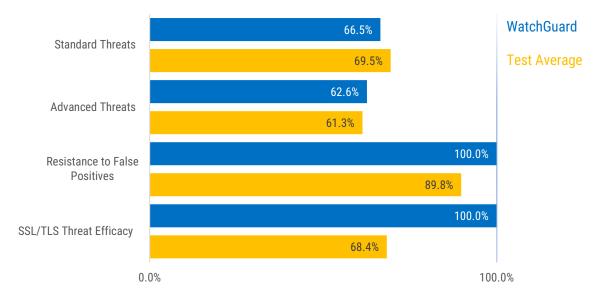


Figure 3. WatchGuard Advanced Cloud Firewall Security Effectiveness

4.1 Common Cloud Firewall Threat Categories (Standard Threats)

The Common Cloud Firewall Threat (Standard Threats) average scores are calculated by averaging the scores for each threat type together within their respective attack category.



| Standard Threat Types | WatchGuard ACFW Inspection Score | SecurelQLab ACFW Group Test Average Score |
|--|-------------------------------------|---|
| Application-Based Threats | | |
| Cross-Site Scripting (XSS) Attacks – HTTP | 94.6% | 75.5% |
| Cross-Site Scripting (XSS) Attacks – HTTPS | 6.2% | 67.1% |
| Malicious URL Attacks | 38.5% | 68.0% |
| Malware & Botnets | | |
| Malware Download over HTTPS | 99.1% | 61.3% |
| Compressed Malicious Files | 87.0% | 60.2% |
| Botnets | 2.7% | 58.3% |
| Browser-Based Threats | | |
| Browser Exploits | 100.0% | 74.0% |
| Cookie Stealing - HTTP | 50.0% | 85.0% |
| Cookie Stealing - HTTPS | 100.0% | 100.0% |
| Browser Version and Plugin-in Control | 50.0% | 60.0% |
| Obfuscated JavaScript | 100.0% | 90.0% |
| Data-loss and Leakage | | |
| Phishing Site-Based Attacks | 78.3% | 56.6% |
| Adware Site Prevention | PASS | PASS |
| Standard Threats Average Score | 66.5% | 69.5% |

Table 2. Standard Threats Protection Testing

The WatchGuard ACFW scored 100% in three of the five Browser-Based test cases and had an overall Standard Threats Average Score near the test average score.



4.2 Advanced Cloud Firewall Threat Categories

Advanced Cloud firewalls must extend their protective capabilities to counter advanced threats, which are often sophisticated, highly evolved, and challenging to detect or neutralize. Such threats may employ various tactics and techniques to circumvent traditional security measures. As a pivotal component of any organization's cybersecurity infrastructure, a robust cloud firewall should possess threat detection capabilities, be able to identify suspicious network traffic patterns and have the capacity to block in real time.

The WatchGuard Firebox Cloud was tested against eight attack types classified as advanced threats. Table 3 below provides the results from these tests.

| Advanced Threat Classification | WatchGuard ACFW Inspection Score | SecurelQLab ACFW Group Test Average Score |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|
| Advanced Evasive Techniques (Application-based) | 89.3% | 79.6% |
| Advanced Evasive Techniques (Network-based) | 100.0% | 75.0% |
| Known Malicious Files | 100.0% | 60.2% |
| Malicious Documents | 100.0% | 59.3% |
| Active Cloud-Based Threats (aka Active Threats) | 11.8% | 46.5% |
| Advanced Persistent Threats (APT) | 100.0% | 65.0% |
| Cloud-Centric Post Exploitation Techniques (Post-Exploitation – DNS Tunnelling) | Contact SecurelQLab | 45.0% |
| Cloud-Centric Post Exploitation Techniques (Post-Exploitation – ICMP Tunnelling) | Contact SecurelQLab | 60.0% |
| Advanced Threats Average Score | 62.6% | 61.3% |

Table 3. Advanced (Non-Standard) Threat Protection Testing

WatchGuard performed exceptionally well, with scores of 100.0%, in four of the 8 advanced attack types tested. Overall, WatchGuard performed slightly better than average for the Advanced Threats Average Score.

4.3 Operational Accuracy Category

False positive testing was included in the scope of this test because an Advanced Cloud Firewall that prevents 100% of malicious attacks but also prevents legitimate (non-malicious) actions can be vastly



disruptive. SecureIQLab used appropriate tools and techniques to ensure that the tested firewall products do not generate significant numbers of alerts with legitimate applications and processes in an enterprise environment. This section of the methodology was performed at the same time as and as part of the validation workflow and other independent sections wherever feasible. The aim is to ensure that the firewall products did not prevent malicious traffic at the expense of operational accuracy.

The WatchGuard Firebox Cloud was tested for operational accuracy under real-world scenarios during the entire test cycle, and Table 4 below provides the results from these tests.

| Operational Accuracy test | WatchGuard ACFW Score | SecurelQLab ACFW Group Test Average Score |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|--|
| Resistance to False Positive Test | 100.0% | 89.8% |

Table 4. Operational Accuracy

The WatchGuard Firebox Cloud performed above average in this test and achieved a perfect Operational Accuracy score.

4.4 ACFW SSL/TLS Support

Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP) and its secure analogue HTTPS have long been crucial internet protocols. HTTPS uses encryption to enhance browsing safety by establishing secure connections between browsers, applications, and websites. To identify the attacks or threats in encrypted connections, the firewall must inspect the encrypted traffic using SSL/TLS ciphers and the associated techniques for managing encrypted connections. To detect a threat concealed within encrypted data, the firewall must decrypt packets, inspect the content, and take necessary action.

For each ACFW tested, SecurelQLab tested 22 of the TLS v1.2 ciphers and 3 TLS v1.3 ciphers. The testing included combinations of ciphers between clients and servers to analyze firewall behavior with weak ciphers, to assess how the firewall behaved to communication using different ciphers, and to evaluate the ACFW's ability to fall back or enforce secure ciphers during communication.

The WatchGuard Firebox Cloud was tested for overall SSL/TLS threat efficacy and its ability to protect against attacks delivered through the supported ciphers in real-world scenarios. The WatchGuard ACFW successfully identified, detected, and prevented all the attacks throughout the entire SSL/TLS test cycle on all supported ciphers. Table 5 below presents the results of these tests.

| SSL/TLS Threat Efficacy Test | WatchGuard ACFW Overall Metric | SecurelQLab ACFW Group Test Average Score |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| Overall SSL/TLS Security Efficacy | 100.0% | 68.4% |

Table 5. SSL/TLS Threat Efficacy

The WatchGuard ACFW performed significantly better than average and obtained a perfect score. This is notable given that the average was so low.

The cipher suites for TLS v1.2, as highlighted in Table 6 below, were tested for the WatchGuard, WatchGuard Firebox Cloud.



| TLSv1.2 Ciphers | TLS Support | TLS Handshake Result | Attack Traffic Prevention within TLS Session | Operational Validation with Operational TLS Traffic |
|-------------------------------|----------------|----------------------------|--|--|
| AES128-GCM-SHA256 | Yes | Successful | Pass | Pass |
| AES128-SHA | Yes | Successful | Pass | Pass |
| AES256-GCM-SHA384 | Yes | Successful | Pass | Pass |
| AES256-SHA | Yes | Successful | Pass | Pass |
| AES256-SHA256 | Yes | Successful | Pass | Pass |
| DHE-RSA-AES128-SHA | Yes | Successful | Pass | Pass |
| DHE-RSA-AES256-SHA | Yes | Successful | Pass | Pass |
| DHE-RSA-AES256-SHA256 | Yes | Successful | Pass | Pass |
| DHE-RSA-CHACHA20-POLY1305 | Yes | Successful | Pass | Pass |
| ECDHE-ECDSA-AES128-GCM-SHA256 | Yes | Successful | Pass | Pass |
| ECDHE-ECDSA-AES128-SHA | Yes | Successful | Pass | Pass |
| ECDHE-ECDSA-AES128-SHA256 | Yes | Successful | Pass | Pass |
| ECDHE-ECDSA-AES256-GCM-SHA384 | Yes | Successful | Pass | Pass |
| ECDHE-ECDSA-AES256-SHA384 | Yes | Successful | Pass | Pass |
| ECDHE-ECDSA-CHACHA20-POLY1305 | Yes | Successful | Pass | Pass |
| ECDHE-RSA-AES128-GCM-SHA256 | Yes | Successful | Pass | Pass |
| ECDHE-RSA-AES128-SHA | Yes | Successful | Pass | Pass |
| ECDHE-RSA-AES128-SHA256 | Yes | Successful | Pass | Pass |
| ECDHE-RSA-AES256-GCM-SHA384 | Yes | Successful | Pass | Pass |
| ECDHE-RSA-AES256-SHA | Yes | Successful | Pass | Pass |
| ECDHE-RSA-AES256-SHA384 | Yes | Successful | Pass | Pass |
| ECDHE-RSA-CHACHA20-POLY1305 | Yes | Successful | Pass | Pass |

Table 6. TLS v1.2 cipher Support

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The WatchGuard ACFW passed all TLS v1.2 ciphers tested.

The cipher suites for TLS v1.3, as highlighted in Table 7 below, were tested for the WatchGuard, WatchGuard Firebox Cloud.

| TLSv1.3 Ciphers | TLS Support | TLS Handshake Result | Attack Traffic Prevention within TLS Session | Operational Validation with Operational TLS Traffic |
|--------------------------|----------------|----------------------------|--|--|
| AES256-GCM-SHA384 | Yes | Successful | Pass | Pass |
| CHACHA20-POLY1305-SHA256 | Yes | Successful | Pass | Pass |
| AES128-GCM-SHA256 | Yes | Successful | Pass | Pass |

Table 7. TLS v1.3 cipher Support

As can be seen from the above, the WatchGuard ACFW was able to successfully handle packet decryption and inspection.

5. Security Resiliency Results

Security products must demonstrate overall resiliency, as failure to do so can have significant consequences. The Department of Defense (DoD) defines security resilience as "The ability of systems to resist, absorb, and recover from or adapt to an adverse occurrence during operation that may cause harm, destruction, or loss of ability to perform mission-related functions."

SecureIQLab has adopted a novel approach to define the firewall resiliency metrics. Our security resiliency rating combines security efficacy with key operational and cloud-based performance metrics based on a real-world scenario. This holistic approach considers the firewall's security efficacy (threat protection) and operational efficiency metrics mapped to crucial capabilities and ACFW workflows relevant to enterprise use cases subjected to real-world traffic.

The security resiliency test used a simulated real-world cloud-based traffic mix. The traffic mix was based on internet use by eight specific industry verticals: Enterprise, Small-to-Medium Businesses (SMB), Remote Office Branch Office (ROBO), Healthcare and Educational organizations, Media and Entertainment, and Financial and Retail organizations. As outlined in v1.6 of the SecurelQLab Advanced Cloud Firewall CyberRisk Validation Methodology, the primary objective of the security resiliency-based test is NOT to push the cloud security solution under test to its maximum limits but to ensure it remains operationally and functionally viable up to at least at 50% of its throughput.

The ability of the WatchGuard Firebox Cloud to pass each stage of the security resiliency test was based on the following criteria:

- **PASS** = Security resiliency protection rate (%) must be ≥ 95% against all attacks under load.
- **PASS** = Overall solution throughput (%) must be ≥ 95% (at steady state) of the maximum tested ACFW cloud throughput numbers.



• **PASS** = Overall application traffic success rate (%) must be ≥ 95% of all real-world application traffic validated against a specific cloud-based scenario.

The WatchGuard Firebox Cloud was tested for security resiliency under real-world scenarios during the entire test cycle, and Table 8 below provides the results from these tests.

| Real World Cloud-based Traffic Scenario Mix | Security Resiliency Protection Rating | Overall Solution Throughput | Overall Application Traffic Success Rate |
|--|---|-----------------------------------|---|
| Media and Entertainment Companies | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| Healthcare Organization | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| Financial Institution | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| Enterprise | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| Small-to-Medium Business (SMB) | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| Educational Institution | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| Retail Companies | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| Remote office Branch Office (ROBO) | Pass | Pass | Pass |

Table 8. Security Resiliency

The WatchGuard ACFW passed all Security Resiliency tests.

6. Operational Efficiency Results

ACFW operational efficiency measures the tested ACFW's operating burden and complexity of setup and use. As such, the Operational Efficiency Score measures both the ability of the ACFW to detect and respond to cyber-attacks appropriately and ease of use. The operational efficiency was evaluated by considering factors such as:

- The ease of tuning the ACFW security policy and configuration (pre-and-post deployment)
- The solution's incident response and management intuitiveness from a policy and security configuration perspective
- Compliance check
- Risk assessment and mitigation capabilities
- Enhanced security metrics reporting capabilities
- The ease of managing and controlling assets and business continuity with appropriate configuration and policy backup (with restoration)

In the analysis, the WatchGuard Firebox Cloud was rated high, medium, or low across 12 operational efficiency categories, as identified in Table 8 below. For more details on each of the categories, please <u>contact SecureIQLab</u>.



The WatchGuard Firebox Cloud was tested for operational efficiency, considering real-world enterprise procurement, deployment, and active scenarios throughout the test life cycle. Table 9 below presents an overall operational efficiency score of 76.7%.

| Operational Efficiency | WatchGuard ACFW Score | SecurelQLab ACFW Group Test Average Score |
|---|-----------------------|--|
| Overall Operational Efficiency Score | 76.7% | 75.2% |

Table 9. Overall Operational Efficiency Score

WatchGuard Firebox Cloud solution had high operational efficiency capabilities in 8 the 12 validated categories of operational efficiency, as highlighted in Table 10 below.

| ACFW Operational Efficiency Metrics | WatchGuard Firebox Cloud | SecurelQLab ACFW Group Test Average Score |
|---|--------------------------|--|
| Security Policy Configuration | High | Med |
| Security Policy Management | Med | High |
| Asset Management | High | High |
| Access Control | Med | High |
| Compliance Management | High | High |
| Business Continuity Management | High | Med |
| Risk Assessment & Mitigation | High | Med |
| Security Metrics Reporting | High | High |
| Backup & Restore | Med | Med |
| Analytics | Med | Med |
| Customer Support | High | Med |
| License Management | High | High |

Table 10: Operational Efficiency Results.

Table 10 shows that the WatchGuard ACFW performed better than average in four of the 12 operational efficiency categories validated.



7. Key ACFW Solution Differentiators – Vendor Perspective

WatchGuard offers the following reasons for why customers choose WatchGuard Firebox Cloud firewalls:

Unified Network Security for Enhanced Defense. WatchGuard's Unified Security Platform architecture expands beyond network security by providing comprehensive protection for endpoints, identities, Wi-Fi, and more, with cross-product threat intelligence, centralized management, and operational agility. This provides a unified approach to blocking increasingly sophisticated and evolving threats.

Tap into Visible Insights. See network activity presented visually, in real time, in intuitive and interactive dashboards and reports. The elegant visualizations make it easy to identify potential threats, monitor Internet usage and gain critical insights about related traffic trends. See, at a glance, who is consuming the most bandwidth, if there are unusual traffic patterns, and what the most-visited websites are. Easily pivot, drill down, and filter to get exactly the info you need, when you need it.

Spot Patterns, Make Better Decisions. Choose from over 100 comprehensive reports and dashboards, with the ability to schedule reports for email delivery to key stakeholders – from C-level executives and IT directors, network managers and security analysts, to HR and department managers. Special reports are available for PCI, HIPAA, and KCSiE compliance. Also, for compliance mandates that require Personally Identifiable Information (PII) to be masked, Dimension offers a powerful User Anonymization feature.

WatchGuard Cloud Visibility. Provides scalable, high-performing logging and reporting. By moving to the Cloud, this service offers the insightful visibility of dimension. It is effortless to deploy and is fast, powerful, and scalable.

8. Conclusion

The WatchGuard Firebox Cloud, version 12.9.2.B675817, with modules Gateway Antivirus, Intrusion Prevention Service, Webblocker, Intelligent AV, File Exception, SpamBlocker, Botnet Detection, Tor Exit Node Detection, Application Control, and APT Blocker performed just over average for both Security Efficacy and Operational Efficiency. WatchGuard was one of four vendors that supported all tested TLS/SSL ciphers. In addition to supporting all tested ciphers, WatchGuard had an impressive score of 100% in the Overall SSL/TLS Security Efficacy test scenarios. Also notable was that WatchGuard generated 0.0% false positives thought testing.



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For more information about SecureIQLab and the testing methodologies, please visit our website.

SecureIQLab (March 2024)

1.1: Updated report header and TOC.

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