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Additional Information

THE BATTLE OF THE ATTACK DETECTION ALGORITHMS

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3 ABSTRACT

4 The BATtle of the Attack Detection ALgorithms (BATADAL) is the most recent competition
5 on planning and management of water networks undertaken within the Water Distribution
6 Systems Analysis Symposium. The goal of the battle was to compare the performance of
7 algorithms for the detection of cyber-physical attacks, whose frequency increased in the
8 past few years along with the adoption of smart water technologies. The design challenge
9 was set for C-Town network, a real-world, medium-sized water distribution system operated
10 through Programmable Logic Controllers and a Supervisory Control And Data Acquisition
11 (SCADA) system. Participants were provided with datasets containing (simulated) SCADA
12 observations, and challenged with the design of an attack detection algorithm. The effec-
13 tiveness of all submitted algorithms was evaluated in terms of classification performance
14 and time-to-detection. Seven teams participated in the battle and proposed a variety of
15 successful approaches leveraging data analysis, model-based detection mechanisms, and rule
16 checking. Results were presented at the Water Distribution Systems Analysis Symposium
17 (World Environmental & Water Resources Congress), in Sacramento, on May 21-25, 2017.
18 This paper summarizes the BATADAL problem, proposed algorithms, results, and future
19 research directions.

20 **Keywords:** Water distribution systems, Cyber-physical attacks, Cyber security, EPANET,
21 Smart water networks, Attack detection

22 INTRODUCTION

23 The past decades witnessed the transition of water distribution systems from traditional
24 physical infrastructures to *cyber-physical systems* that combine physical processes with com-
25 putation and networking: physical assets—such as pipes, pumps, and valves—work in unison
26 with networked devices that monitor and coordinate the operations of the entire system.
27 These devices include Programmable Logic Controllers (PLCs), Supervisory Control And

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28 Data Acquisition (SCADA) systems, Remote Terminal Units (RTUs), static and mobile
29 sensor networks, and smart meters (Hill et al. 2014; Gong et al. 2016; Sønderlund et al.
30 2016). The adoption of such smart water technologies plays a pivotal role in enhancing the
31 reliability and autonomy of water distribution systems, but simultaneously exposes them
32 to cyber-physical attacks (Rasekh et al. 2016)—namely the deliberate exploitation of com-
33 puter systems aimed at accessing sensitive information or compromising the operations of
34 the underlying physical system. Water (and wastewater) systems represent one of the sixteen
35 critical infrastructure sectors identified by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (U.S.
36 Department of Homeland Security 2017), according to which the number of reported attacks
37 on water infrastructures has been growing steadily (ICS-CERT 2014; ICS-CERT 2015; ICS-
38 CERT 2016)—making them the third highest targeted sector after critical manufacturing
39 and energy (ICS-CERT 2016).

40
41 Protecting water distribution systems from cyber attacks requires (as with other cyber-
42 physical systems) a combination of proactive and reactive mechanisms (Cardenas et al. 2008).
43 Proactive mechanisms comprise all tools that reduce the ‘attack surface’ available to hack-
44 ers, such as appropriate measures for traffic authentication and confidentiality protection,
45 access control, and device hardening (Graham et al. 2016). Since it is not possible to rule
46 out all attacks, cyber-physical systems should also be equipped with intrusion detection
47 schemes that assist with the recovery phase (Anderson 2010). Disclosing cyber attacks—
48 without issuing false alarms—is thus crucial. Unfortunately, this does not come without
49 some system-specific challenges. First, the definition of anomalous behaviours should not
50 only be related to ‘outliers’—i.e., data points lying beyond some specific thresholds—since
51 cyber-physical attacks can tamper one or multiple network components while keeping the
52 performance characteristics within the historical bounds (Abokifa et al. 2017). This im-
53 plies that detection schemes should be capable of disclosing both outliers and contextual
54 anomalies—i.e., data points that do not conform with normal operating conditions. Second,

55 the same hydraulic response of a water network (e.g., low water levels in a tank) can be ob-
56 tained through different attacks (Taormina et al. 2017). Therefore, detection schemes should
57 also identify the cyber components that have been attacked; a non-negligible challenge in
58 large water networks. Third, all networked devices, including SCADA systems, represent
59 potential targets. This means that the information provided by SCADA systems may not
60 be fully reliable.

61
62 As the field of intrusion detection continues to grow, so too does the need of an objective
63 comparison of attack detection algorithms for water distribution systems. The BATtle of
64 the Attack Detection ALgorithms (BATADAL) was organized for this purpose. Participants
65 were provided with datasets containing (simulated) SCADA data for a water distribution
66 system victim of cyber attacks, and were tasked with the design of an online attack detection
67 mechanism. The design goals of a detection algorithm were to: (1) disclose the presence of
68 an ongoing attack in the minimum time possible, (2) avoid issuing false alarms, and (3)
69 identify which components of the system have been compromised (optional). Seven teams,
70 from both academia and industry, contributed with novel solutions, which were evaluated
71 using specific evaluation criteria—i.e., time-to-detection and accuracy. BATADAL results
72 were presented at a special session of the Water Distribution Systems Analysis Symposium
73 (World Environmental & Water resources Congress), in Sacramento, on May 21-25, 2017.

74
75 This paper summarizes the main solutions and outcomes of the BATADAL, and proposes
76 future research directions for event detection in the realm of cyber-physical security. The
77 remainder of the paper describes: (1) the BATADAL problem, data, and evaluation criteria;
78 (2) a synopsis of the proposed attack detection algorithms; (3) an analysis of the results;
79 and (4) conclusions and future research directions.

80 **PROBLEM DESCRIPTION**

81 The operators of C-Town water distribution system have observed anomalous behaviors

82 in some hydraulic components, e.g., tank overflows, reduction in pump speed, anomalous
83 activation/deactivation of pumps. They suspect that the anomalies are attributable to cyber-
84 physical attacks that interfered with the system operations and tampered with the readings
85 recorded by the SCADA system. The participants’ aim was to develop an attack detection
86 mechanism that detects the presence of attacks—in the shortest amount of time—from the
87 available SCADA data. In particular, attack detection algorithms must classify the system
88 state as either ‘safe’ or ‘under attack’. A summary description of C-Town is provided below,
89 along with the development data and evaluation criteria. BATADAL rules, problem details,
90 and data are available in the supplemental material of the paper.

91 **C-Town Network**

92 C-Town water distribution system is based on a real-world, medium-sized network, first in-
93 troduced for the *Battle of the Water Calibration Network* (Ostfeld et al. 2011). The network
94 consists of 429 pipes, 388 junctions, 7 storage tanks, 11 pumps (distributed across 5 pump-
95 ing stations), 5 valves, and a single reservoir (see Figure 1). Water consumption is fairly
96 regular throughout the year. These physical assets were augmented with a network of nine
97 Programmable Logic Controllers (PLCs), which are located in proximity of pumps, storage
98 tanks, and valves. As shown in Table 1, most of the PLCs controlling the pumps receive
99 the information needed by the control logic from other PLCs—for instance, PLC1 controls
100 pump PU1 and PU2 on the basis of tank T1 water level, which is monitored by PLC2.
101 PLCs controlling pumps and valves record information on the device status (ON/OFF or
102 OPEN/CLOSED), the flow passing through it, and the suction and discharge pressures.
103 The cyber network includes a SCADA system, whose role is to coordinate the operations
104 and store the readings provided by the PLCs. All information regarding the distribution
105 system were incorporated into the EPANET2 (Rossman 2000) input file *C-Town.inp*.

106 **Development data**

107 Participants were provided with three datasets containing SCADA readings for 43 system
108 variables, i.e., tank water levels (7 variables), inlet and outlet pressure for one actuated valve

109 and all pumping stations (12 variables), as well as their flow and status (24 variables). All
110 variables are continuous, with the exception of the valve and pumps' status, represented
111 by binary variables. The datasets were generated via simulation with *epanetCPA*, a Matlab
112 toolbox that allows to design a variety of cyber attacks and simulate, with EPANET2 (version
113 2.0.12), the hydraulic response of a water distribution network; see Taormina et al. (2017)
114 for further details. The first two datasets, hereafter named *Training dataset 1* and *Training*
115 *dataset 2*, were provided at the beginning of the competition, while the third one (*Test*
116 *dataset*) was subsequently used to evaluate and rank the attack detection algorithms.

- 117 • *Training dataset 1* was generated with a simulation horizon and hydraulic time step
118 of 365 days and one hour, respectively. A key aspect of the dataset is the absence
119 of cyber attacks, which made it suitable for studying the operations of the water
120 distribution system under normal operating conditions.
- 121 • *Training dataset 2* contains seven attacks, spanning over 492 hourly time steps. One
122 attack was entirely revealed to the participants (by appropriately labelling the cor-
123 responding time steps), while the remaining attacks were either partially revealed or
124 hidden; see Table 2 for additional details. This corresponds to a post-attack scenario,
125 in which forensics experts carry out an investigation to determine whether, when, and
126 where the water distribution system has been affected.
- 127 • *Test dataset* contains seven additional attacks, spanning over 407 hourly time steps
128 (see Table 3). Naturally, no information regarding the attacks was revealed. Partici-
129 pants were required to run the detection algorithms on the *Test dataset* and to submit
130 a detection report containing the following information: number of attacks detected,
131 start and end time of each attack (in *DD-MM-YYYY hh* format), and the label of
132 the attacked device(s) (optional).

133 The operations of the water system were altered through malicious activation of hydraulic
134 actuators, change of actuator settings, and *deception* attacks—amongst the most common

135 for cyber-physical systems (Cardenas et al. 2009). The latter were aimed at manipulating
 136 the information sent or received by sensors and PLCs, with the ultimate goal of affecting the
 137 operations of an actuator (Urbina et al. 2016). Note that deception attacks were also used to
 138 alter the information received by SCADA, therefore concealing the real, physical outcomes
 139 of the attacks. SCADA concealment was performed by either replacing actual traffic infor-
 140 mation between PLCs and SCADA with previously-recorded data (*replay attacks*) or adding
 141 an offset to the transmitted sensor readings (Urbina et al. 2016). Figure 2 illustrates attack
 142 #3 (Training dataset 2), where both pump operations and SCADA data are compromised.
 143 In this case, a deception attack manipulates Tank T1 water level readings sent by PLC2
 144 to PLC1, resulting in an excessive use of pumps PU1 and PU2. This causes Tank T1 to
 145 overflow. A second deception attack alters the signal sent by PLC2 to SCADA by adding a
 146 time-varying offset.

147 **Evaluation criteria**

148 The evaluation of the attack detection algorithms was based on two scores that account for
 149 (1) the time taken to detect an attack, and (2) the algorithm classification performance. The
 150 two scores were eventually combined into an overall ranking score, as explained next.

151 *Time-to-detection*

152 The time-to-detection (*TTD*) is the time needed by an algorithm to disclose a threat. It is
 153 defined as the difference between the time t_d at which the attack is detected and the time t_0
 154 at which the attack started:

$$155 \quad TTD = t_d - t_0. \quad (1)$$

156 The lower the value of *TTD*, the better the algorithm performs. If an attack is detected, we
 157 then have:

$$158 \quad 0 \leq TTD \leq \Delta t, \quad (2)$$

159 where Δt is the total duration of the attack. If the attack is not detected while it is ongoing
 160 (or at all), we set $TTD = \Delta t$. To facilitate the comparison of all algorithms under different

161 attack scenarios, the following performance score (S_{TTD}) was computed:

$$162 \quad S_{TTD} = 1 - \frac{1}{n_a} \sum_i^{n_a} \frac{TTD_i}{\Delta t_i}, \quad (3)$$

163 where n_a is the number of attacks contained in a dataset, TTD_i the time-to-detection relative
164 to the i -th attack, and Δt_i the corresponding duration. S_{TTD} varies between 0 and 1, with
165 $S_{TTD} = 1$ being the ideal case in which all attacks are immediately detected, and $S_{TTD} = 0$
166 the case in which none of the attacks is detected.

167 *Classification performance*

168 We determined the accuracy of an algorithm as its ability to disclose threats without raising
169 false alarms. In the context of binary classification problems—like BATADAL—the ability
170 to identify threats is generally assessed with the *True Positive Rate* (TPR , also known as
171 *recall* or *sensitivity*), which is defined as:

$$172 \quad TPR = \frac{TP}{TP + FN}, \quad (4)$$

173 where TP and FN represent the number of True Positives and False Negatives, respectively.
174 In other words, the True Positive Rate is the ratio between the number of time steps cor-
175 rectly classified as under attack and the total number of time steps during which the system
176 is under attack.

177
178 The ability to avoid false alarms is measured with the *True Negative Rate* (TNR , or *speci-*
179 *ficity*), defined as

$$180 \quad TNR = \frac{TN}{FP + TN}, \quad (5)$$

181 where FP and TN represent the number of False Positives and True Negatives, respectively.
182 The True Negative Rate is thus the ratio between the number of time steps correctly classi-
183 fied as safe conditions and the total number of time steps during which the system is in safe

184 conditions.

185
186 To ease the comparison across all algorithms, the True Positive and True Negative Rate were
187 combined into a single classification performance score (S_{CLF}), defined as the mean between
188 TPR and TNR , namely:

$$189 \quad S_{CLF} = \frac{TPR + TNR}{2}. \quad (6)$$

190 This score, also known as *area under the curve* (Powers 2011), accounts for both correct de-
191 tection and false alarms, so it is suited for binary classification problems in which the sample
192 distribution is biased towards one of the two classes—i.e., safe conditions, in BATADAL.
193 The value of S_{CLF} varies between 0 and 1, with 1 representing a perfect classification.

194 *Ranking score*

195 The time-to-detection and accuracy scores were finally merged into an overall ranking score
196 (S), defined as:

$$197 \quad S = \gamma \cdot S_{TTD} + (1 - \gamma) \cdot S_{CLF}, \quad (7)$$

198 where γ ($0 \leq \gamma \leq 1$) determines the relative importance of the two evaluation scores. The
199 coefficient γ was set to 0.5 for the analysis reported below; so, early detection and accurate
200 classification were equally weighed. Note that a naïve detection mechanism that predicts the
201 system to be always in safe conditions gets a score S equal to 0.25 ($S_{TTD} = 0$, $S_{CLF} = 0.5$).
202 On the other hand, flagging the system as always under attack yields a value of S equal to
203 0.75 ($S_{TTD} = 1$, $S_{CLF} = 0.5$). This reflects the fact that S is intrinsically biased towards
204 attack identification, since the the consequences of failing to disclose an attack are deemed
205 more costly than issuing false alarms.

206 **ATTACK DETECTION ALGORITHMS**

207 Seven teams participated in BATADAL. Here, we provide a brief description of each team’s
208 attack detection algorithm.

- 209 • Aghashahi et al. (2017) adopted a two-step approach. First, a spectral domain
210 method was used to extract the important characteristics of the observed data and
211 make them independent of time; then, a supervised machine learning technique (i.e.,
212 Random Forests, Breiman (2001)) was used to classify the system state as safe or
213 under attack.
- 214 • Brentan et al. (2017) reduced the dimensionality of the problem by exploiting the
215 division of C-Town network in District Metered Areas (DMAs). For each DMA, the
216 authors used data on normal operating conditions to create Recurrent Neural Net-
217 works that forecast tank water levels as a function of pump flow, upstream pressure
218 (of the corresponding pump station), and hour of the day (Díaz et al. 2016). A statis-
219 tical control process was finally used to identify abrupt changes in the neural networks
220 error time series when the latter were applied to data containing cyber attacks (Gu-
221 ralnik and Srivastava 1999). The rationale behind this approach is that it is plausible
222 to expect an increase in the error time series when the system is under attack, since
223 all neural networks are trained with data pertaining to normal operations.
- 224 • Chandy et al. (2017) developed two detection models running sequentially. The first
225 one uses features of the SCADA data (e.g., combined flow of pump stations, volume
226 pumped and stored) to check whether physical and/or operating rules have been
227 violated (e.g., tank levels within the bounds, hydraulic relationships between nodes
228 hold). The outcome of this model is a set of flagged events, which are confirmed by the
229 second model. The latter is a Convolutional Variational Auto-Encoder—belonging to
230 the family of deep learning methods (Kingma and Welling 2013; Doersch 2016)—that
231 calculates the reconstruction probability of the data: the lower the probability, the
232 higher the chance of the data being anomalous.
- 233 • Giacomoni et al. (2017) proposed two detection methods. The first one verifies
234 the integrity of the actuator rules and SCADA data—by (1) checking whether the
235 SCADA readings are consistent with the actuator rules defined for the water distri-

236 bution system, and (2) comparing the data for all variables to identify values falling
237 below or above thresholds created by analyzing data corresponding to normal oper-
238 ating conditions. The second method builds on a convex optimization routine, which
239 unveils low-dimensionality components in the available data as well as the sparse na-
240 ture of anomalies, thereby facilitating the separation of anomalies from the overall
241 data (Mardani et al. 2013). (The results reported below for Giacomoni et al. (2017)
242 correspond to the first detection method.)

- 243 • Abokifa et al. (2017) introduced a three-stages detection method, with each stage tar-
244 geting a specific class of anomalies. The first step features outlier detection techniques
245 to find statistical outliers in the data, thereby focusing on local anomalies that affect
246 each sensor individually. The second stage employs an Artificial Neural Network—in
247 the form of a Multi-Layer Perceptron—to detect contextual anomalies that do not
248 conform to normal operating conditions. The third stage targets global anomalies
249 that simultaneously affect multiple sensors. To disclose these anomalies, the layer
250 uses Principal Component Analysis to decompose the high-dimensional datasets of
251 sensor measurements into two sub-spaces representing normal and anomalous condi-
252 tions (Lee et al. 2013).
- 253 • Pasha et al. (2017) presented an algorithm consisting of three main interconnected
254 modules working on control rules and consistency checks, pattern recognition, and
255 hydraulic and system relationships. The first module checks the consistency of the
256 data against the set of control rules characterizing the water system, while the second
257 one uses statistical analysis to identify patterns for single hydraulic parameters and
258 combination thereof. The idea is that patterns under cyber attacks may not follow the
259 original ones. The anomalous behaviors detected by the first two modules are finally
260 confirmed by the third one, which develops relationships for some physical quantities
261 (e.g., tank levels, flows) and compares their estimates against those reported by the
262 first two modules.

263 • Housh and Ohar (2017b) proposed a model-based approach that employs EPANET to
264 simulate the hydraulic processes of the water distribution systems, and then uses the
265 error between EPANET simulated values and the available SCADA readings to detect
266 anomalous behaviors. The approach consists of three main steps: first, available
267 SCADA readings are used in a Mixed-Integer Linear Program to estimate the water
268 demand in all nodes of C-Town; second, EPANET is used to generate two sets of
269 simulated values (i.e., with and without attacks); and third, a multi-level classification
270 approach is implemented to classify the obtained simulation errors into outliers and
271 normal errors. A similar approach was successfully developed by Housh and Ohar
272 (2017a) to detect contamination events in water distribution systems.

273 RESULTS

274 Algorithms performance

275 Table 4 reports the values of the ranking, time-to-detection, and classification score (S ,
276 S_{TTD} , and S_{CLF}) obtained by the competing algorithms on the test dataset. The table also
277 reports the number of attacks detected and the elements of the confusion matrix yielding
278 the classification score (i.e., TP , FP , TN , and FN). A visual comparison of S , S_{TTD} , and
279 S_{CLF} is given in the scatter plot of Figure 3.

280
281 Figure 3 highlights a cluster of four high-performing algorithms, all achieving a ranking score
282 S higher than (or close to) 0.90. The group is led by the algorithm proposed by Housh and
283 Ohar (2017b), which shows the best overall performance ($S = 0.970$). Note that this algo-
284 rithm is the top scorer in terms of both time-to-detection S_{TTD} and classification score S_{CLF} .
285 Indeed, the detection trajectory depicted in Figure 4(a) shows that all attacks were imme-
286 diately detected, with the exception of the last one, which was disclosed a few hours after
287 its starting time. The algorithm of Abokifa et al. (2017) comes a close second, with S equal
288 to 0.949. This method was almost as quick as Housh and Ohar (2017b) one in identifying

289 the attacks, but it was more prone to false alarms. As shown in Figure 4(b), Abokifa et al.
290 (2017) algorithm disclosed Attack #10 and #11 as a single continuous episode, erroneously
291 flagging the system as under attack for the period in between. The algorithm proposed
292 by Giacomoni et al. (2017) has the same number of false positives and true negatives as
293 that of Housh and Ohar (2017b)—meaning that both algorithms were the most successful in
294 avoiding false alarms. However, Giacomoni et al. (2017) algorithm is less sensitive, resulting
295 in a higher number of false negatives and minor timing errors (see Figure 4(c)) that lead to a
296 score S equal to 0.927. With a value of S equal to 0.896, the algorithm proposed by Brentan
297 et al. (2017) can also be regarded as a strong performer. As shown in Figure 4(d), this
298 algorithm was able to consistently and accurately detect most of the attacks, but it failed to
299 identify the last one.

300
301 Although outdistanced by the leading group, the contributions of Chandy et al. (2017)
302 and Pasha et al. (2017) are still sensibly better than the naïve detection mechanisms de-
303 scribed in Section 2. Their score S is equal to 0.802 and 0.773, respectively. As illustrated in
304 Figure 4(e,f), these two detection algorithms appear to suffer from opposite problems. The
305 algorithm of Chandy et al. (2017) turned out to be over-sensitive—meaning that it was able
306 to identify most of the attack instances, but at the cost of issuing numerous false alarms.
307 On the other hand, the algorithm of Pasha et al. (2017) issued just a few false alarms, but
308 it lacked sensitivity, thus failing to flag the system as under attack for the entire duration of
309 the events. Finally, the contribution of Aghashahi et al. (2017) detected only three attacks,
310 leading to a score S equal to 0.534.

311 **General Observations**

312 The main insights from the results presented above can be summarized as follows:

- 313 • All algorithms but one achieved a ranking score S larger than 0.75, meaning that
314 they performed better than naïve detection mechanisms. Yet, we observed a large

315 variability in the algorithm performance.

- 316 • Both time-to-detection and classification score are important aspects of performance.
317 Logically, the algorithms that performed consistently well for both metrics achieved
318 a higher ranking score. With the exception of Brentan et al. (2017) and Pasha et al.
319 (2017), there appears to be a strong correlation between these two metrics (see Fig-
320 ure 3).
- 321 • Only a few algorithms provided information on the attacked devices. Among these,
322 the algorithms proposed by Brentan et al. (2017) and Giacomoni et al. (2017) were
323 the most accurate.
- 324 • Interestingly, the BATADAL was won by the only model-based approach. The idea
325 of estimating the water demands to simulate system dynamics with EPANET, and
326 then measure the errors with respect to SCADA readings, proved successful. In this
327 regard, it is important to note that BATADAL demand patterns were fairly regular
328 and consistent across the three datasets. Similarly, the participants were given the
329 same computational model of the C-Town network that was used to generate the
330 SCADA data. Therefore, successful application of this approach in real-world settings
331 might be hindered by the intrinsic variability of demand patterns or the unavailability
332 of a reliable system model.
- 333 • We can probably conclude that both model-based and data-driven approaches are
334 suitable for attack detection problems, although their performance would probably
335 vary with the modelling context at hand.
- 336 • Detection algorithms adopting a ‘multivariate’ approach may be best suited than
337 algorithms analyzing a single time series per time. The inherent interdependence
338 of the elements in the water network should theoretically allow for the detection of
339 anomalies, even when the adversary tries to conceal his (her) actions by altering the
340 SCADA readings of one or a few deployed sensors.
- 341 • Most teams presented multi-stage detection methods. Comparing and confirming the

342 detection issued by different modules can help decrease classification errors.

- 343 • The adoption of supervised classification algorithms that learn how to classify the
344 system state (as either safe or under attack) may not be ideal, since the number of
345 attacks in the available data is generally limited. Supervised classification algorithms
346 should always be combined with cross-validation schemes.
- 347 • It appears that consistency checks and the analysis of control rules should lead to the
348 identification of the simplest attacks.

349 FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

350 The BATADAL highlighted the following gaps that may need additional research efforts:

- 351 • *Robustness analysis.* The evaluation of BATADAL algorithms can be seen as a deter-
352 ministic analysis carried out on three specific datasets, which represent only a small
353 portion of the entire set of cyber-attacks that could threaten a water distribution
354 system. Hence, the generation of different attacks is likely to produce different re-
355 sults; a limitation observed in other battles (e.g., Ostfeld et al. (2008)). To evaluate
356 the robustness of an algorithm, it is thus advisable to generate stochastic simulation
357 scenarios comprising varying hydraulic conditions (i.e., water demand, initial tank
358 levels) and multiple attack sequences.
- 359 • *Use of real SCADA data.* A major limitation of the current research on cyber-security
360 is the absence of detailed information on cyber attacks to water utilities (e.g., timing,
361 compromised devices, hydraulic response of the system). Access to such information
362 and to the corresponding SCADA data—perhaps, in some anonymized forms—would
363 drastically enhance our understanding on skills and limitations of detection algo-
364 rithms. Another challenge with SCADA data is that they often contain noise and
365 measurement errors, so attack detection algorithms should be coupled with data pre-
366 processing techniques.
- 367 • *Pressure deficient conditions and water quality problems.* A limitation of this battle

368 is its reliance of data generated with a demand-driven engine (Taormina et al. 2017).
369 The range of attacks should be thus extended to include pressure-deficient conditions,
370 water quality problems, and adversarial attempts aimed at threatening emergency re-
371 sponses, such as firefighting operations. In the absence of real SCADA data, sim-
372 ulated data could be generated by combining *epanetCPA* with more sophisticated
373 hydraulic engines (e.g., Sayyed et al. (2015)) or water quality models (e.g., EPANET-
374 MSX, Shang et al. (2007)).

- 375 • *Sensitivity analysis.* The definition of the cut-off criteria defining outliers regulates the
376 trade-off between True Positive and True Negative Rate for most of the algorithms, so
377 there is a need to adopt or develop sensitivity analysis tools that draw the appropriate
378 line between normal and anomalous data (Abokifa et al. 2017). This step should
379 always precede the application of an algorithm to new datasets—or its deployment in
380 a SCADA system.
- 381 • *Computational requirements and scalability to large networks.* The algorithms pre-
382 sented in this paper were applied to a medium-sized water distribution system com-
383 prising one SCADA system and nine PLCs. Since attack detection algorithm are
384 meant to run in real-time, it is necessary to evaluate their computational require-
385 ments as well as their scalability to larger networks.
- 386 • *Attack localization.* To facilitate and hasten incident resolution, an ideal detection
387 mechanism should be able to identify which components of the network are being
388 attacked. This is a rather challenging task due to the intrinsic correlation among the
389 hydraulic variables.
- 390 • *Integration with other fault detection mechanisms.* Since attack detection mecha-
391 nisms aim to disclose outliers and contextual anomalies in the system behavior, they
392 may accidentally disclose anomalous behaviors that are not necessarily caused by
393 cyber attacks. Hence, there is a need to disclose the nature of each problem be-
394 ing identified—for example, by combining the attack detection algorithms with fault

395 detection mechanisms that monitor PLCs operations.

- 396 • *Cost effectiveness of attack detection.* In BATADAL, the different algorithms were
397 evaluated based on their responsiveness and classification performance. Although
398 these metrics provide some insights on the potential benefits of deploying an attack
399 detection mechanism, a more comprehensive evaluation is needed. For example, one
400 could try to estimate the cost associated to each cyber-physical attack and the corre-
401 sponding cost savings guaranteed by a detection algorithm.

402 CLOSURE

403 The BATADAL is the first *battle competition* dealing with the emerging topic of cyber-
404 physical security of water distribution systems. This battle gave an opportunity to develop,
405 test, and compare attack detection algorithms for SCADA data. The solutions provided by
406 seven teams suggest that timely and accurate detection can be obtained by both model-
407 based and data-driven approaches, usually made of multiple sequential stages. While the
408 data and algorithms presented here provide a first step towards an objective comparison of
409 attack detection algorithms for water distribution systems, they do not represent the entire
410 spectrum of modelling contexts that practitioners and researchers would encounter. Hence,
411 we hope that the availability of a dedicated website (www.batadal.net) will help share more
412 datasets and case studies.

413 SUPPLEMENTAL DATA

414 The supplemental data include the following files, which are available online in the ASCE
415 Library (www.ascelibrary.org):

- 416 • *BATADAL rules.pdf*—competition rules, available to participants;
- 417 • *C-Town.inp*—EPANET input file, version 2.00.12, available to participants;
- 418 • *Training dataset 1.dat*—data without attacks, available to participants;
- 419 • *Training dataset 2.dat*—data with attacks and corresponding labels, available to the
420 participants with partial labels;

- 421 • *Test dataset.dat*—data with attacks and corresponding labels, available to the partic-
422 ipants without labels;
- 423 • *Detection reports.dat*—detection reports submitted by the participants.

424 Additional details about BATADAL are available at <http://batadal.net>.

425 **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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TABLE 1. Sensors and actuators (pumps, valves) monitored/controlled by the PLCs. For each PLC, we also report the corresponding controlling sensor, which provides the information needed to operate the actuators. Note that a PLC-to-PLC connection is established whenever an actuator and the corresponding control sensor are connected to two different PLCs.

PLC	Sensor	Actuators (Controlling sensor)
PLC1	-	PU1(T1), PU2(T1)
PLC2	T1	-
PLC3	T2	V2(T2), PU4(T3), PU5(T3), PU6(T4), PU7(T4)
PLC4	T3	-
PLC5	-	PU8(T5), PU9(-), PU10(T7), PU11(T7)
PLC6	T4	-
PLC7	T5	-
PLC8	T6	-
PLC9	T7	-

TABLE 2. Attacks featured in Training dataset 2.

ID	Starting time [dd/mm/YY HH]	Ending time [dd/mm/YY HH]	Duration [hours]	Attack description	SCADA concealment	Labeled [hours]
1	13/09/2016 23	16/09/2016 00	50	Attacker changes L_T7 thresholds (which controls PU10/PU11) by altering SCADA transmission to PLC9. Low levels in T7.	Replay attack on L_T7.	42
2	26/09/2016 11	27/09/2016 10	24	Like Attack #1.	Like Attack #1 but replay attack extended to PU10/PU11 flow and status.	0
3	09/10/2016 09	11/10/2016 20	60	Attack alters L_T1 readings sent by PLC2 to PLC1, which reads a constant low level and keeps pumps PU1/PU2 ON. Overflow in T1.	Polyline to offset L_T1 increase.	60
4	29/10/2016 19	02/11/2016 16	94	Like Attack #3.	Replay attack on L_T1, PU1/PU2 flow and status, as well as pressure at pumps outlet.	37
5	26/11/2016 17	29/11/2016 04	60	Working speed of PU7 reduced to 0.9 of nominal speed causes lower water levels in T4.		7
6	06/12/2016 07	10/12/2016 04	94	Like Attack #5, but speed reduced to 0.7.	L_T4 drop concealed with replay attack.	73
7	14/12/2016 15	19/12/2016 04	110	Like Attack #6.	Replay attack on L_T1, as well as PU1/PU2 flow and status.	0

TABLE 3. Attacks featured in the Test dataset.

ID	Starting time [dd/mm/YY HH]	Ending time [dd/mm/YY HH]	Duration [hours]	Attack description	SCADA concealment
8	16/01/2017 09	19/01/2017 06	70	Attacker changes L_T3 thresholds (which control PU4/PU5) by gaining control of PLC3. Low levels in T3.	Replay attack on L_T3, as well as PU4/PU5 flow and status.
9	30/01/2017 08	02/02/2017 00	65	Attack alters L_T2 readings arriving to PLC3, which reads a low level and keeps valve V2 OPEN, leading T2 to overflow.	Polyline to offset L_T2 increase.
10	09/02/2017 03	10/02/2017 09	31	Malicious activation of pump PU3	
11	12/02/2017 01	13/02/2017 07	31	Similar to Attack #10	
12	24/02/2017 05	28/02/2017 08	100	Similar to Attack #9	Replay attack on L_T2, V2 flow and status, as well as V2 inlet + outlet pressure readings (P_J14, P_J422)
13	10/03/2017 14	13/03/2017 21	80	Attacker changes L_T7 thresholds (which control PU10/PU11) by gaining control of PLC5, causing the pumps to switch ON/OFF continuously.	Replay attack on L_T7, PU10/PU11 flow and status, as well as inlet + outlet pressure readings (P_J14, P_J422). Inlet pressure concealment terminates before that of other variables.
14	25/03/2017 20	27/03/2017 01	30	Alteration of T4 signal arriving to PLC6. Overflow in T6.	

TABLE 4. Performance of all attack detection algorithms, assessed in terms of number of attacks detected, overall ranking score (S), time-to-detection (S_{TTD}), accuracy (S_{CLF}), and number of True Positives (TP), False Positives (FP), True Negatives (TN) and False Negatives (FN). The algorithms are ranked according to their overall ranking score.

Rank	Team	# Attacks detected	S	S_{TTD}	S_{CLF}	TP	FP	TN	FN
1	Housh and Ohar	7	0.970	0.965	0.975	388	5	1677	19
2	Abokifa et al.	7	0.949	0.958	0.940	375	69	1613	32
3	Giacomoni et al.	7	0.927	0.936	0.917	341	5	1677	66
4	Brentan et al.	6	0.894	0.857	0.931	362	45	1637	45
5	Chandy et al.	7	0.802	0.835	0.768	349	541	1141	58
6	Pasha et al.	7	0.773	0.885	0.660	134	14	1668	273
7	Aghashahi et al.	3	0.534	0.429	0.640	161	195	1487	246

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538		T1 water level readings (continuous black line) sent by PLC2 to PLC1, which
539		reads a constant low level (dotted black line) and keeps Pumps PU1/PU2 ON.
540		This causes an overflow in Tank T1 (thick gray line). To conceal the action,
541		the attacker alters the signal sent by PLC2 to SCADA (dashed black line)
542		by adding a time-varying offset (continuous gray line). The duration of the
543		entire attack is highlighted by the light gray line on the horizontal axis. . . . 31
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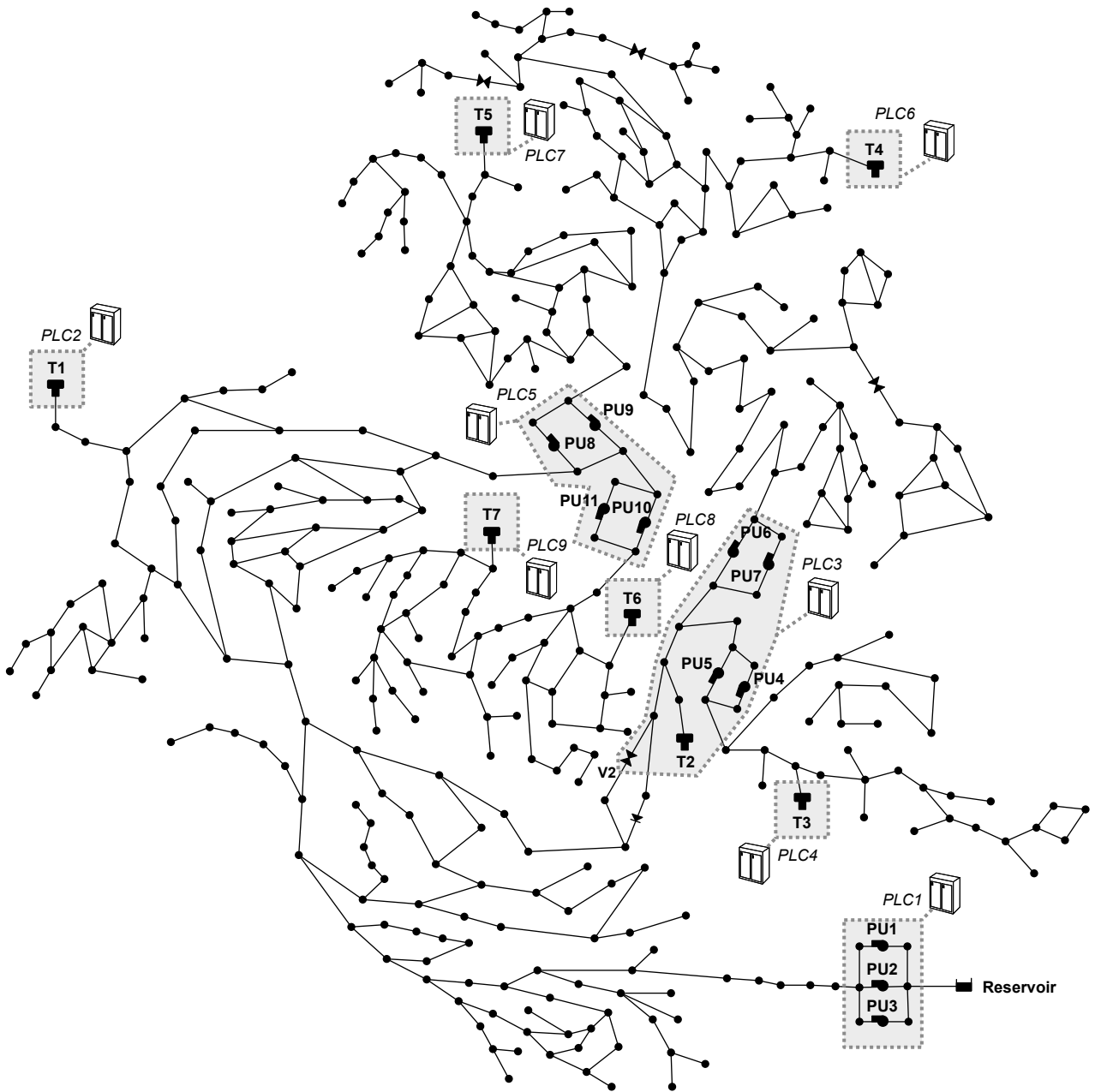


FIG. 1. Graphical representation of C-Town water distribution system (adapted from Taormina et al. 2017).

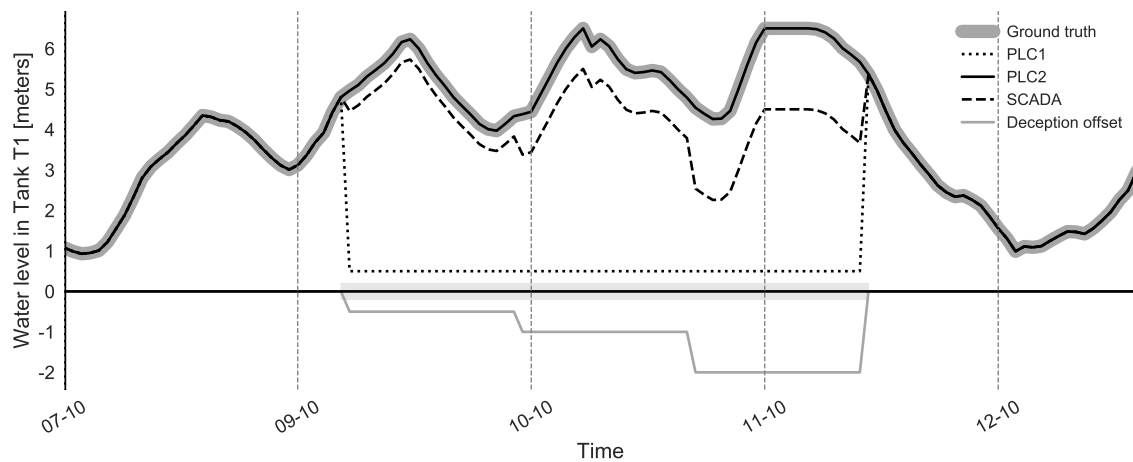


FIG. 2. Illustration of attack #3 (from Training dataset 2). The attacker alters Tank T1 water level readings (continuous black line) sent by PLC2 to PLC1, which reads a constant low level (dotted black line) and keeps Pumps PU1/PU2 ON. This causes an overflow in Tank T1 (thick gray line). To conceal the action, the attacker alters the signal sent by PLC2 to SCADA (dashed black line) by adding a time-varying offset (continuous gray line). The duration of the entire attack is highlighted by the light gray line on the horizontal axis.

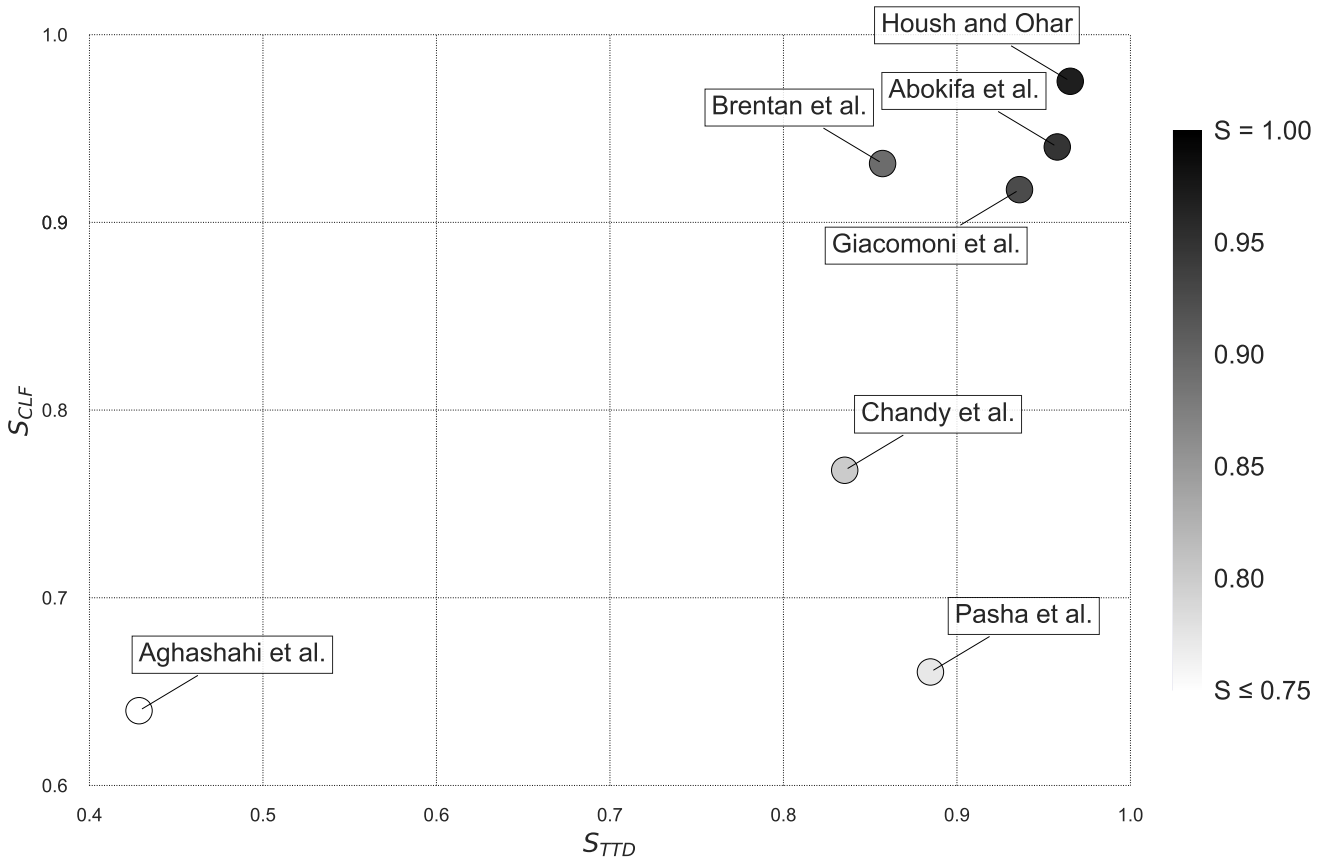


FIG. 3. Graphical representation of the algorithm performance, measured in terms of time-to-detection (S_{TTD} , horizontal axis), classification performance (S_{CLF} , vertical axis), and overall ranking score (S , color-bar).

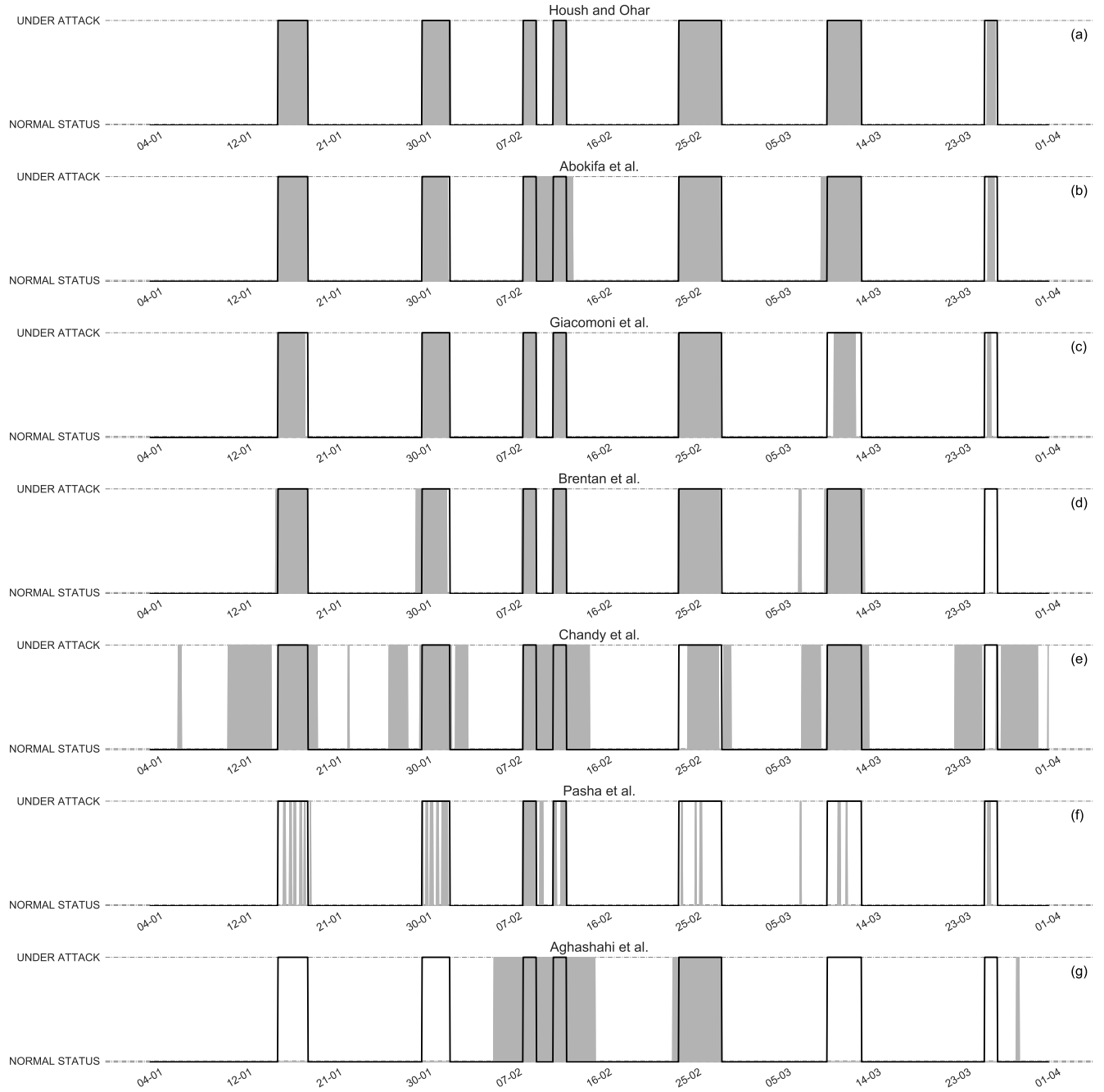


FIG. 4. Comparison between actual and detected attacks (gray area and black line, respectively) for the *Test dataset*. Each panel corresponds to a different attack detection algorithm.