



DATA ARTICLE TEMPLATE V.18 (APRIL 2024)

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2 ARTICLE INFORMATION

3 Article title

- 4 A Dataset to Train Intrusion Detection Systems based on Machine Learning Models for Electrical
- 5 Substations
- 6
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22 Keywords

23 cybersecurity, critical infrastructure, testbed, IEC61850, IEC60870-5-104, IEC104

24 Abstract

25 The growing integration of Information and Communication Technology into Operational Technology 26 environments in electrical substations exposes them to new cybersecurity threats. This paper presents 27 a comprehensive dataset of substation traffic, aimed at improving the training and benchmarking of 28 Intrusion Detection Systems (IDS) installed in these facilities that are based on machine learning 29 techniques. The dataset includes raw network captures and flows from real substations, filtered and 30 anonymized to ensure privacy. It covers the main protocols and standards used in substation 31 environments: IEC61850, IEC104, NTP, and PTP. Additionally, the dataset includes traces obtained 32 during several cyberattacks, which were simulated in a controlled laboratory environment, providing 33 a rich resource for developing and testing machine learning models for cybersecurity applications in 34 substations. A set of complementary tools for dataset creation and preprocessing are also included to



- 35 standardize the methodology, ensuring consistency and reproducibility. In summary, the dataset
- 36 addresses the critical need for high-quality, targeted data for tuning IDS at electrical substations and
- 37 contributes to the advancement of secure and reliable power distribution networks.

38 SPECIFICATIONS TABLE

Subject	Artificial Intelligence
Specific subject area	[This work focuses on using machine learning to enhance intrusion detection systems for cybersecurity in electrical substations.]
Type of data	Network captures: Raw and Processed
Data collection	Data was collected from two real substations in Ukraine and Spain by capturing network traffic using embedded software and tcpdump over a seven-day period. Additionally, cyberattack traces were generated in a controlled lab environment using testbeds simulating attacks such as Denial of Service, packet flooding, fuzzing, and replay. The data was filtered, anonymized, and processed to extract relevant features using scripts, ensuring privacy and consistency for machine learning model training and testing.
Data source location	 [Data was obtained from: Real electrical substation located in Iltsi (Ukraine) Real electrical substation located in Granada (Spain) Laboratory testbeds located in Zaragoza (Spain). The data is available on Zenodo: <u>https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.13898982</u>
Data accessibility	Repository name: Dataset to Train Intrusion Detection Systems based on Machine Learning Models for Electrical Substations Data identification number: [10.5281/zenodo.13898982] Direct URL to data: <u>https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.13898982</u> The data is accompanied by a code repository for processing: <u>https://github.com/esguti/cybersecurity-datasets/</u>]
Related research article	

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41 VALUE OF THE DATA

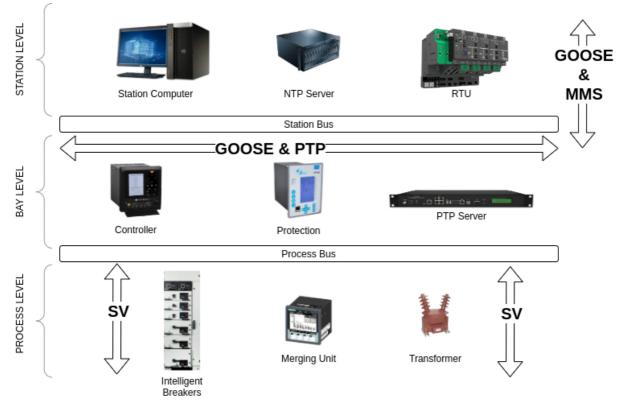
- Training and Benchmarking ML Models: Researchers can use the dataset to train 42 43 machine learning models for tasks such as intrusion and anomaly detection in substation environments. Given the scarcity of publicly available datasets based on 44 45 real substation traffic [1] [2], this dataset fills a critical gap, providing realistic data that faithfully reflects actual operating conditions. It enables the benchmarking of multiple 46 models, allowing researchers to evaluate and compare their accuracy, reliability, and 47 robustness under the same conditions. This helps develop more effective machine 48 49 learning algorithms, improving the overall security and resilience of substation 50 systems against cyber threats.
- Feature Engineering and Algorithm Development: The dataset provides raw PCAP
 files (network captures), allowing researchers to perform custom preprocessing and
 feature extraction. This flexibility supports the development of new algorithms
 designed to detect specific threats or improve existing detection methods.
- Standardize the process of files: The dataset is accompanied by a set of scripts
 specifically designed to standardize the processing of the files in the dataset. These
 scripts are available in the repository [3]. This standardization is essential given the
 notable absence of a documented methodology for processing such files in the
 existing literature.
- Extending to Other Critical Infrastructure: While the dataset primarily focuses on
 electrical substations, it can be adapted for research in other critical infrastructure
 scenarios, such as water treatment plants or transportation systems, helping to
 generalize solutions across sectors.
- 64 Collaborative Studies and Comparative Analysis: Researchers can use the dataset to
 65 conduct collaborative studies, compare results, and validate findings with other
 66 datasets, fostering innovation and improving overall cybersecurity practices.
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70 BACKGROUND

Substations play a fundamental role in the electrical grid. They are responsible for converting electrical voltage to levels suitable for transmission and distribution, manage system protection and interconnection to keep the network grid stable and secure, and support fault isolation and maintenance through sophisticated switching operations. The digitalization of substations, through standards such as IEC61850 [4] and IEC60870-5-104 [5] (also known as IEC104), is essential for communication and automation in electrical substations, but introduces new security problems [3] [4].



Substations are typically organized into three levels: *Station, Bay,* and *Process,* connected by the
 Station and *Process bus* (see Figure 1). Each level is explained in more detail below.



80 Figure 1 Substation architecture diagram

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81 The Station Level is responsible for monitoring, controlling, and communicating with external systems 82 such as control centers and other substations. Typical protocols used at this level are IEC104, Network 83 Time Protocol (NTP), and Precision Time Protocol (PTP). This level typically includes: a Supervisory 84 Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system for real-time monitoring and control of the entire 85 substation through a Remote Terminal Unit (RTU); a Human-Machine Interface (HMI) that allows 86 operators to interact with the substation control systems, providing graphical displays of operations 87 and controls; other servers and workstations that host software applications for data processing, 88 visualization, and control; time synchronization servers; and a router to connect to the control center. 89 The Bay Level is responsible for the control and protection of individual sections (or "bays") of the

90 substation, i.e., transformers, feeders, and busbars. It executes control commands and protection 91 algorithms, and includes the following components: Intelligent Electronic Devices (IEDs), responsible 92 for controlling specific bays; protection relays capable of detecting faults and initiating corresponding 93 protective actions (e.g., tripping a circuit breaker); and control panels and a local HMI, for operation 94 and control of bay equipment.

- 95 The **Process Level** directly interacts with the physical electrical equipment. It performs real-time data
 96 acquisition from sensors and actuators and sends control commands to the primary equipment (e.g.,
 97 transformers and circuit breakers). It may include multiple merging units, which digitize the electrical
- signal and share these measurements via the Sampled Values protocol (defined by IEC61850).





99 Substation Communication Protocols: IEC61850 and IEC104

100 IEC61850 is a comprehensive standard designed to modernize substation automation, emphasizing 101 interoperability and open system architectures. It enables seamless integration between devices from 102 different manufacturers and supports real-time communication and data modeling within substations. 103 This standard uses an object-oriented approach to represent each device as a collection of logical 104 nodes, facilitating efficient performance even in complex and large-scale environments. It also includes 105 the definition of several network protocols. In particular: Manufacturing Message Specification (MMS), which is used for client-server communication between IEDs and control systems, allowing the 106 107 exchange of data, control commands, and status information in real time via TCP/IP; Generic Object 108 Oriented Substation Event (GOOSE), which is designed to support real-time protection and automation 109 functions and has very strict delay constraints (3 milliseconds in some cases), so it is sent directly over 110 Ethernet. Finally, Sampled Values (SV) is used to transmit digitized analog data, such as current and 111 voltage measurements, from merging units to protective relays and other IEDs. Like GOOSE, it is sent 112 over Ethernet.

113 IEC104 extends the IEC60870-5 standard to include network access via Ethernet, focusing on remote

114 control and monitoring of substations. It is especially useful for telecontrol tasks, using the standard

115 TCP/IP stack to leverage existing network infrastructures.

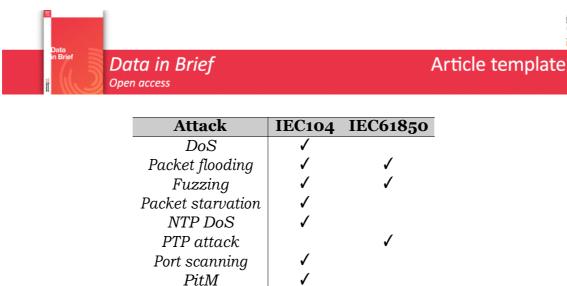
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117 DATA DESCRIPTION

118 The core of the dataset consists of network traffic captures and flow files. The content of each file is 119 self-described in its name, which is composed of:

- file type: it can be *captured61850* or *captured104*, depending on whether it contains
 IEC61850 or IEC104 protocol captures;
- attack: it can have no attacks (*attackfree*) or a specific attack name (see Error! Reference
 source not found.);
- function: optionally, if there are additional details about the captured functionality
 (normalfault) or specific protocol capture (PTP); and
- **file extension**: it can be PCAP (network capture) or CSV (flow file).

Additionally, two file types have been added: one containing all the features found in the CSV files
(*headers_[iec104/iec61850]_all.txt*) and another with a selection of relevant features
(*headers_[iec104/iec61850].txt*) used in the example described in the section "Illustrative Example".
All these files can be found in [8] and are released under the CC BY-NC-SA 4.0 license [9].



132 Table 1 Attacks included in the testbed traces.

133 The dataset is accompanied by a set of scripts specifically designed to standardize the processing of 134 dataset files, available in our software repository [3] under the GNU/GPLv3 license [10]. The scripts 135 are organized into two folders:

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- ids: contains the Python scripts for running the machine learning algorithms to test the datasets.
- 138 **tools**: tools to process the dataset files.
- 139

140 EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN, MATERIALS AND METHODS

Replay

The dataset provides operational data collected from two substations. The data obtained from the first substation includes frames corresponding to the IEC104 and NTP protocol. The second substation provided data using IEC61850 standard and PTP. We will call this data "real substation traces" (see section "Real Substation Traces"). In addition, the dataset also contains attack traces. To obtain them, a testbed with specific hardware has been implemented in our laboratory. We will call them "testbed traces" (see section "Testbed Traces").

147 Real Substation Traces

These traces were obtained in two real substations. Specifically, the IEC104 data belongs to a facility located in Iltsi (Ukraine) and operated by JSC ("Prykarpattyaoblenergo") within regional power distribution networks with a capacity of 110/35/10 kV, while the IEC61850 data belongs to a substation placed in Granada (Spain), which houses two 30 MVA transformers operating at 66/20 kV and contains two 20 kV bars with a total of 14 output lines (7 per busbar), supplying electricity to several municipalities. For confidentiality reasons, we cannot disclose internal schematics of the substations.

The IEC104 and IEC61850 data captures correspond to a seven-day period, spanning 24 hours each day, within the internal network of the Iltsi (for IEC104) and Granada (for IEC61850) substations. The traffic was filtered to include only IEC104, IEC61850, PTP and NTP protocols. The files were anonymized, and in the case of IEC104, also processed to obtain a listing of the TCP connections. The resulting files are called *flows* and are stored in CSV files.

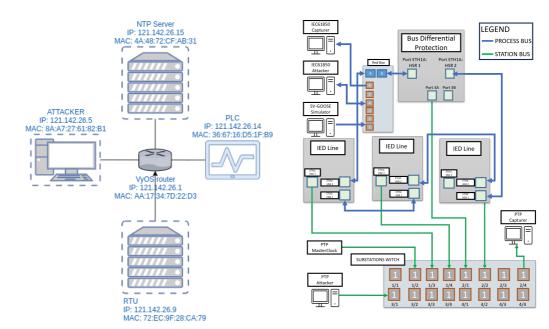


160 Testbed Traces

161 To obtain attack traces, it was necessary to perform attack simulations in a controlled laboratory 162 environment, since conducting these tests in real substations is infeasible due to the critical nature of 163 the infrastructure. In this sense, laboratory simulators provide a safe and controlled environment to 164 test and analyze the effects of various cyberattack scenarios, avoiding any real-world consequences. 165 The attack traces have been obtained using two specifically prepared test environments: the IEC104 166 and IEC61850 testbeds.

167 The IEC104 testbed (detailed in Figure 2a) consists of five virtual machines: two of them simulate 168 specific industrial devices (specifically, an RTU and a Programmable Logic Controller or PLC), while the 169 remaining ones correspond to the networking infrastructure: an NTP server and a VyOS [7] router, and 170 finally, a machine controlled by the attacker. All components are connected to the same local network.

171 The IEC61850 testbed (in Figure 2b) consists of two virtual machines (one controlled by the attacker 172 and a GOOSE/SV simulator), two embedded devices (a GOOSE/SV capturer and a PTP capturer), and 173 four IEDs. These devices are interconnected through two different networks. The first one is dedicated to the transmission of power grid control packets, including GOOSE, SV, and MMS protocols, while the 174 second one carries PTP messages for time synchronization purposes. The IEDs protect the substation 175 176 equipment against overcurrent faults. They monitor SV frames, which carry samples of electrical signals, for anomalies indicative of failure. Initially, the system operates for about 3000 milliseconds 177 178 without faults, followed by a "line to ground" fault (known as an AG fault) which triggers the protection 179 mechanism and opens the line. This scenario is then repeated under the condition of a cyberattack to 180 observe the impact on the protection process.



(a) Substation model for IEC104 testbed (b) Substation model for IEC61850 testbed Figure 2 Testbeds used to generate attack traces.



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184 Error! Reference source not found. summarizes the attacks included in this dataset, specifying the
 185 testbed where they were generated. Each of them is stored in a separate file for easy labeling.

DoS refers to a DoS attack against the PLC (IEC104 testbed), where numerous TCP SYN packets are 186 187 sent skipping the subsequent SYN+ACK response. The **packet flooding** attack in the IEC61850 dataset 188 floods the Bus Differential Protection (BDP) with packets, thereby inducing a fault within the 189 substation electrical network and disrupting the flow of electricity. In the IEC104 dataset, it floods the 190 RTU with messages from the PLC. In the **fuzzing** attack, random commands are sent to cause failures 191 in the RTU (IEC104 dataset) or the BDP (IEC61850 dataset). During the packet starvation attack, the 192 RTU is overwhelmed with connections until it stops responding. Similarly, NTP DoS also involves 193 attacking the NTP server to disrupt the operation of the service. In the **PTP attack**, a new time source 194 is introduced into the network, which disrupts the master clock and messes up the time settings. The 195 Port scanning attack involves reconnaissance attack on the PLC, RTU, NTP server, and VyOS router 196 (IEC104 dataset). In the **PitM** attack (IEC104 dataset), ARP poisoning is conducted to isolate and drop 197 traffic between the RTU and the PLC. Finally, the **Replay** attack tricks an IED into failing based on a 198 repeated (replayed) packet, leading to operational issues such as opening an electrical circuit breaker 199 at an unexpected time.

200 Preprocessing

The PCAP files available in the dataset are appropriately filtered and anonymized to prevent the disclosure of sensitive information such as topology or equipment models, which could be used to attack the critical infrastructure used for the creation of the dataset. This process is followed by a feature extraction process, during which CSV files are generated.

Filtering was performed using *tshark* [8]. Due to issues with handling large files, we first split the files into 10GB chunks, which were then merged after preprocessing. Splitting and filtering were performed using the *filter_and_split.sh* script, and subsequent merging was performed using the *merge_pcap.sh* script. Both scripts are available in our software repository [3]. After this, the anonymization process is performed using the script *anonymize.sh*, which is based on *Sanicap* [9].

- 210 The final stage in the preprocessing process is feature extraction. Below, we provide an illustrative
- example of feature selection and extraction. Additionally, our dataset provides the original PCAP filesto allow users to perform their custom feature processing.
- The IEC104 protocol operates on top of the transport layer (specifically, over TCP/IP protocol), unlike 213 214 the IEC61850 protocol that operates on top of the link layer. This disparity requires the use of distinct 215 features for training algorithms. To extract TCP/IP flows relevant to IEC104, we have used the 216 *CICFlowMeter* [10] tool. Additionally, *tshark* was used to extract crucial features from IEC61850 frames. 217 Our dataset provides scripts for feature extraction in each protocol: generatecsv iec104.sh and 218 generatecsv_iec61850.sh. A final step in the feature extraction process is labeling: an additional 219 column, called "Label", is appended to each CSV file and stores the attack type, or lack thereof, which 220 is derived from the file name.

221 Illustrative Example

- 222 An example of usage is provided in the Python script *pycaret_ids.py*, created to facilitate the execution
- and comparison of various machine learning algorithms, specifically those used for classification tasks.



In particular, this script leverages the PyCaret [11] library, an open-source tool that simplifies andautomates the process of developing machine learning models.

Data in Brief

Open access

The script reads all the CSV files from the dataset, using the "Label" column to categorize the data, removes invalid values, and runs several classification models to compare them. Finally, it stores the model with the best results found for future predictions.

229 We have employed a variety of machine learning models for our analysis, covering multiple algorithmic 230 categories: Linear Models (Logistic Regression and Ridge Classifier), Nearest Neighbors (K Neighbors 231 Classifier), Support Vector Machines (Linear Support Vector Machine), Decision Trees and Ensembles 232 (Decision Tree Classifier, Random Forest Classifier, Extra Trees Classifier, Gradient Boosting Classifier, 233 Light Gradient Boosting Machine and Extreme Gradient Boosting), Naive Bayes (Naive Bayes Classifier), 234 Discriminant Analysis (Linear Discriminant Analysis and Quadratic Discriminant Analysis) and Dummy 235 *Classifier* (just for benchmarking). This selection allowed us to explore a wide range of approaches to 236 identify the most effective model for each anomaly detection task.

237 The Area Under the ROC Curve (AUC) is often recommended for comparing models [12], particularly 238 with imbalanced datasets, as it provides a balanced view of performance across all thresholds. F1-239 Score (F1) is also very valuable in such scenarios, as it balances the importance of Precision (Prec.) and 240 Recall. Furthermore, the Matthews's Correlation Coefficient (MCC) is beneficial for a comprehensive 241 evaluation of classifiers, considering all aspects of the confusion matrix. Using these three metrics, we 242 can conclude that the Linear Discriminant Analysis model performs better than the rest of the models. 243 The table also shows the Accuracy, the Cohen's kappa coefficient (κ), and the Training Time (in seconds; 244 TT).

We ran this script on subsets of our dataset to show how it facilitates model comparison. We have employed zscore normalization and StratifiedKFold validation, with a 70% partition for the training data. These experiments were run on a machine with two Intel Xeon Gold @2.20GHz and 128GB of RAM. For IEC104, all available traces have been used to detect the attacks described in **Error! Reference source not found.** (multiclass classification). For IEC61850, a single attack (binary classification) has been carried out to illustrate another type of classification. More details and additional examples can be found in [8].

252 Error! Reference source not found. provides the results for the IEC104 data. The results indicate that 253 classifier models such as Extra Trees and Random Forest achieve an excellent balance between 254 predictive performance and training time, positioning them as the most suitable for real-world 255 applications in this context. In particular, the Extra Trees classifier exhibited the highest accuracy 256 (0.8217) and competitive results in AUC (0.8297), with a moderate training time of 2.620 seconds. 257 Similarly, Random Forest performed well in both AUC (0.9127) and F1-score (0.8059), while 258 maintaining a relatively short training time (1.989 s), making it a strong candidate for practical 259 deployment.

Likewise, Table 3 illustrates the detection of fuzzy attacks on the IEC61850 dataset. LightGBM and Extreme Gradient Boosting offer the best predictive performance, although they incur higher computational costs. Linear Discriminant Analysis offers a solid balance between performance and efficiency, making it a good choice in situations where fast training is essential. Models such as Ridge





- 264 Classifier and SVM underperform, while simple models such as Naive Bayes and K-Neighbors are also
- 265 viable alternatives in this context.
- 266

Model	Accuracy	AUC	Recall	Prec.	F1	к	MCC	TT (s)
Dummy Classifier	<mark>0.8592</mark>	0.5000	0.8592	0.7383	0.7942	0.0000	0.0000	<mark>0.4640</mark>
Ridge Classifier	0.8586	0.0000	0.8586	0.7879	0.8148	0.1714	0.2154	0.6540
Logistic Regression	0.8584	0.9454	0.8584	0.7978	0.8217	0.2253	0.2572	7.2600
SVM - Linear Kernel	0.8566	0.0000	0.8566	0.8222	0.8345	0.3263	0.3390	2.1980
Linear Discriminant Analysis	0.8566	0.9286	0.8566	0.8532	0.8546	<mark>0.4264</mark>	0.4266	1.4800
Gradient Boosting Classifier	0.8551	0.9506	0.8551	0.7979	0.8217	0.2339	0.2588	76.4960
Light Gradient Boosting Machine	0.8482	0.9370	0.8482	0.7934	0.8170	0.2207	0.2394	1400.
Extreme Gradient Boosting	0.8419	0.9484	0.8419	0.7943	0.8167	0.2394	0.2494	4.0510
Naive Bayes	0.8409	0.8314	0.8409	0.8198	0.8126	0.2668	0.2809	0.6700
K Neighbors Classifier	0.8292	0.8785	0.8292	0.7920	0.8094	0.2147	0.2200	7.7830
Extra Trees Classifier	0.8247	0.8297	0.8247	0.7730	0.7964	0.1377	0.1458	2.6200
Decision Tree Classifier	0.8245	0.8238	0.8245	0.7682	0.7941	0.1267	0.1351	0.7070
Random Forest Classifier	0.8245	0.9127	0.8245	0.7888	0.8059	0.2090	0.2128	1.9890
Quadratic Discriminant Analysis	0.6505	0.8668	0.6505	0.8770	0.7329	0.1895	0.2299	1.1370

Table 2 Comparison of different machine learning models evaluating IEC104 on our dataset. The best results for each metric
 have been highlighted in bold with an orange background.

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Model	Accuracy	AUC	Recall	Prec.	F1	κ	MCC	TT (s)
Dummy Classifier	0.8768	0.5000	0.8768	0.7688	0.8192	0.0000	0.0000	6.9830
Ridge Classifier	0.8766	0.0000	0.8766	0.8540	0.8515	0.2334	0.2521	<mark>6.3390</mark>
Logistic Regression	0.8768	0.7111	0.8768	0.8618	0.8670	0.3442	0.3522	8.0220
SVM - Linear Kernel	0.8767	0.0000	0.8767	0.8078	0.8307	0.0857	0.0866	6.9760
Linear Discriminant Analysis	0.8768	0.7152	0.8768	0.8768	0.8768	<mark>0.4297</mark>	<mark>0.4297</mark>	7.5940
Gradient Boosting Classifier	0.8765	0.7424	0.8765	0.8470	0.8517	0.2247	0.2554	80.1890
Light Gradient Boosting Machine	0.8764	0.7435	0.8764	0.8430	0.8458	0.1822	0.2201	186.9080
Extreme Gradient Boosting	0.8761	0.7427	0.8761	0.8512	0.8577	0.2709	0.2904	13.3200
Naive Bayes	0.8761	0.7134	0.8761	0.8765	0.8763	0.4281	0.4282	7.0930
K Neighbors Classifier	0.8742	0.6968	0.8742	0.8470	0.8539	0.2473	0.2685	130.1370
Extra Trees Classifier	0.8758	0.7412	0.8758	0.8509	0.8576	0.2708	0.2898	68.6430
Decision Tree Classifier	0.8757	0.7411	0.8757	0.8509	0.8576	0.2708	0.2898	8.4140
Random Forest Classifier	0.8758	0.7414	0.8758	0.8506	0.8572	0.2680	0.2876	103.6080
Quadratic Discriminant Analysis	0.8761	0.7130	0.8761	0.8764	0.8763	0.4280	0.4280	7.4910

Table 3 Comparison of different machine learning models evaluating IEC61850 on our dataset. The best results for each metric
 have been highlighted in bold with an orange background.





274 LIMITATIONS

275 None

276

277 ETHICS STATEMENT

The authors have read and follow the ethical requirements for publication in Data in Brief and confirming that the current work does not involve human subjects, animal experiments, or any data collected from social media platforms.

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282 CRedit AUTHOR STATEMENT

Esteban Gutiérrez: Conceptualization, Methodology, Software, Validation, Formal analysis,
 Investigation, Resources, Data Curation, Writing - Original Draft, Writing - Review & Editing,
 Visualization, Jose Saldana: Supervision, Writing - Review & Editing Ricardo J. Rodríguez:
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 Writing - Review & Editing.

288

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305

306 DECLARATION OF COMPETING INTERESTS

307 The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships

- 308 that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.
- 309



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