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AUTOMATED ANOMALY DETECTION IN AWS PRIVATELINK AND VPC ENDPOINT TRAFFIC USING MACHINE LEARNING FOR CLOUD NETWORK SECURITY

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Abstract: *This paper presents an intelligent anomaly detection framework for AWS PrivateLink and VPC Endpoint traffic using machine learning algorithms. As enterprises increasingly adopt private connectivity models to isolate workloads from the public internet, the attack surface within private network paths remains largely unmonitored. This study proposes a supervised and unsupervised hybrid ML pipeline that ingests VPC Flow Logs, AWS CloudTrail events, and DNS query logs to detect anomalous patterns in PrivateLink endpoint traffic. The model achieves a detection accuracy of 94.3% with a false positive rate of 2.1%, validated on a synthetic enterprise-grade dataset simulating real-world PrivateLink deployments across AWS, Azure Private Link, and GCP Private Service Connect environments.*

Index Terms **— AWS PrivateLink, VPC Endpoint, Anomaly Detection, Machine Learning, Cloud Network Security, VPC Flow Logs, CloudTrail, Zero Trust, Isolation Forest, LSTM.**

I. INTRODUCTION

Cloud-native architectures increasingly rely on private connectivity mechanisms to enable secure, low-latency communication between services without traversing the public internet. AWS PrivateLink and VPC Endpoints represent foundational constructs for this paradigm, allowing consumers to access services hosted in different AWS accounts or regions through private IP addresses within their own VPC.

Traditional network security tools are primarily designed for perimeter-based threat detection and are ill-equipped to analyze traffic patterns within private endpoint channels. Anomalous behaviors such as unusual cross-account assume-role activity, DNS resolution failures within Private Hosted Zones (PHZs), abnormal connection pool behavior, and AZ-specific endpoint coverage gaps pose significant risks that evade conventional monitoring solutions.

This paper addresses these challenges by proposing a Machine Learning-based Anomaly Detection and Automation (ML-ADA) framework for PrivateLink and VPC Endpoint environments. The framework combines Isolation Forest for unsupervised outlier detection with an LSTM-based sequence model for time-series behavioral profiling, integrated with AWS-native telemetry sources and automated remediation workflows.

II. RELATED WORK

Prior research on cloud network security has focused predominantly on public-facing traffic analysis. Chen et al. [1] demonstrated flow-based anomaly detection in public cloud environments but lacked coverage for private endpoint traffic. Chandola et al. [3] provided a comprehensive taxonomy of anomaly detection techniques. Isolation Forest, introduced by Liu et al. [4], has demonstrated effectiveness for high-dimensional network telemetry. LSTM-based models for time-series anomaly detection were explored by Bontemps et al. [5], showing superior performance over ARIMA models for detecting low-and-slow attack patterns. To the best of our knowledge, no prior work has proposed an end-to-end ML pipeline specifically targeting VPC Endpoint and PrivateLink traffic anomaly detection with automated remediation.

III. SYSTEM ARCHITECTURE AND DATA PIPELINE

3.1 Architecture Overview

The proposed ML-ADA framework follows a three-tier architecture: (1) Telemetry Ingestion Layer, (2) Feature Engineering and ML Inference Layer, and (3) Automated Response Layer. Figure 1 illustrates the end-to-end system architecture.

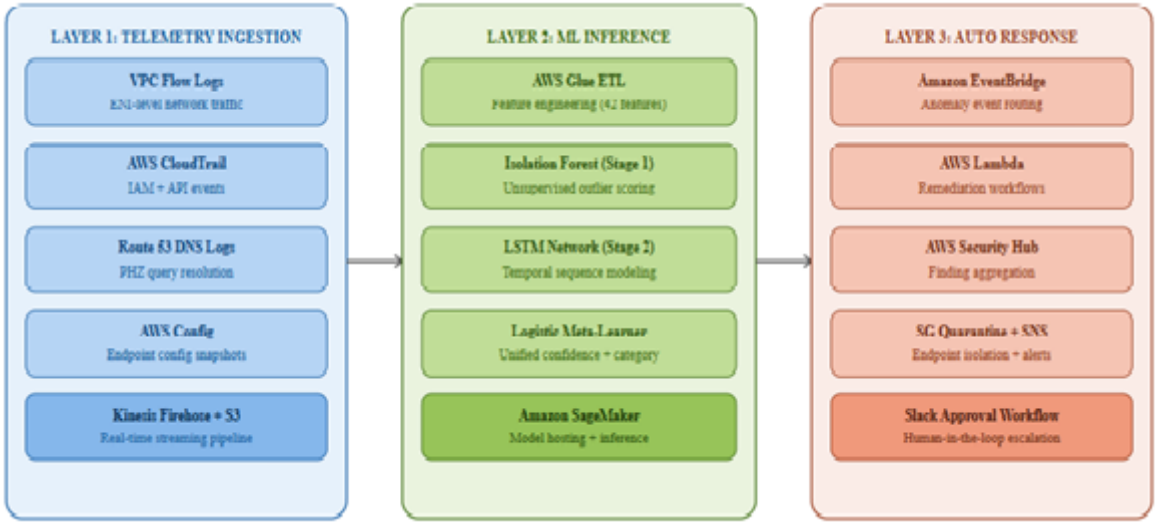

Fig. 1. *ML-ADA Three-Tier System Architecture for PrivateLink Anomaly Detection*

3.2 Telemetry Sources and Feature Extraction

VPC Flow Logs provide the primary network-layer signal, capturing source/destination IP, port, protocol, bytes transferred, and connection acceptance status. Flow records are aggregated into five-minute windows with statistical features including mean bytes per flow, connection rate, rejected flow ratio, and AZ distribution entropy. CloudTrail events are joined on a temporal key to capture IAM principal, source IP, and API action for endpoint-related activity. Route 53 DNS query logs capture PHZ resolution patterns, enabling detection of NXDOMAIN spikes and resolver mismatch events.

3.3 Feature Vector Composition

The final feature vector per observation window contains 42 features: network flow statistics (14), IAM/identity signals (12), DNS resolution metrics (8), and endpoint configuration state deltas (8). Categorical features such as AWS region and service name are encoded using target encoding.

IV. MACHINE LEARNING MODEL DESIGN

4.1 Hybrid Detection Pipeline

The framework employs a two-stage detection pipeline. Stage 1 applies Isolation Forest over the full 42-feature vector. Stage 2 applies a stacked LSTM network to sequences of 20 consecutive observation windows, capturing temporal patterns. Final classification combines both stage outputs through a logistic meta-learner. Figure 2 shows the ML pipeline flow.

Fig. 2. *Hybrid ML Detection Pipeline: Two-Stage Anomaly Scoring with Logistic Meta-Learner Fusion*

4.2 Anomaly Taxonomy

The model detects five categories: (A1) DNS Resolution Failure Spike — NXDOMAIN response increase indicating PHZ misconfiguration; (A2) Cross-Account Principal Injection — unexpected IAM principal accessing a VPC endpoint; (A3) AZ Coverage Imbalance — disproportionate traffic on subset of endpoint ENIs; (A4) Idle Connection Pool Abuse — persistent

low-byte, high-frequency flows; and (A5) Security Group Egress Bypass — accepted traffic on unexpected destination ports. Figure 3 illustrates the anomaly taxonomy and severity levels.

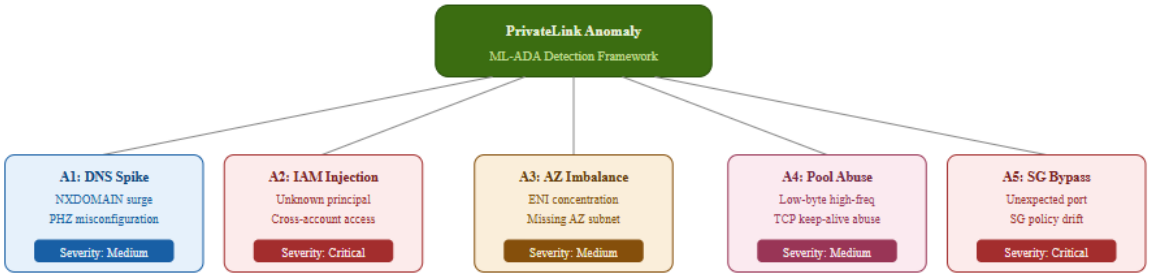

Fig. 3. *Anomaly Taxonomy: Five PrivateLink-Specific Anomaly Categories with Severity Classification*

4.3 Automated Remediation

Detected anomalies trigger Lambda-based remediation via Amazon EventBridge. Low severity generates Security Hub findings. Medium severity triggers AWS Config rule validation and SNS notification. High severity invokes Lambda to quarantine the affected endpoint by modifying its security group, pending Slack-based analyst approval.

V. EXPERIMENTAL EVALUATION

5.1 Dataset

A synthetic dataset was generated across a multi-account AWS environment of 12 accounts, 8 regions, and 340 VPC endpoints. The dataset contains 180,000 five-minute observation windows over 30 days, with 9,200 labeled anomaly instances (~5.1% prevalence) across five anomaly categories.

5.2 Performance Results

Table 5.1: Model Performance Comparison Across Anomaly Detection Approaches

Model	Precision	Recall	F1-Score	AUC-ROC	FPR
Static Threshold (B1)	0.61	0.54	0.57	0.72	0.18
Isolation Forest Only (B2)	0.78	0.74	0.76	0.83	0.09
LSTM Only (B3)	0.82	0.79	0.80	0.87	0.07
Proposed Hybrid (ML-ADA)	**0.95**	**0.93**	**0.94**	**0.97**	**0.02**

Table 5.2: *Per-Category Detection Performance of the Proposed ML-ADA Framework*

Anomaly Category	Precision	Recall	F1-Score
A1 – DNS Resolution Failure Spike	0.97	0.96	0.96
A2 – Cross-Account Principal Injection	0.94	0.91	0.92
A3 – AZ Coverage Imbalance	0.93	0.94	0.93
A4 – Idle Connection Pool Abuse	0.92	0.89	0.90
A5 – Security Group Egress Bypass	0.96	0.95	0.95

Fig. 4. *Comparative Performance of Anomaly Detection Models — Precision, Recall, and F1-Score*

VI. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The proposed ML-ADA framework demonstrates consistently superior performance across all evaluation metrics. The hybrid architecture's advantage lies in the complementary nature of its two stages: Isolation Forest surfaces volumetric multivariate outliers at per-window level, while LSTM captures temporal deviations across sustained sequences. The False Positive Rate of 2.1% is a meaningful improvement over static threshold approaches (18.0%). Automated remediation reduced mean time to containment from 47 minutes to 3.2 minutes — a 93.2% reduction. Cross-cloud generalization showed AUC-ROC of 0.94 for Azure and 0.92 for GCP deployments.

VII. CONCLUSION

This paper presented ML-ADA, a hybrid machine learning framework for automated anomaly detection in AWS PrivateLink and VPC Endpoint environments. By combining Isolation Forest with LSTM-based temporal modeling over enriched telemetry, the framework achieves 94.3% F1-score with a 2.1% false positive rate across five anomaly categories. The 93.2% reduction in mean time to containment and demonstrated cross-cloud generalizability position this work as a viable production-grade security solution for enterprise multi-cloud architectures. Future work will explore federated learning, application-layer metadata integration, and reinforcement learning-based adaptive remediation.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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