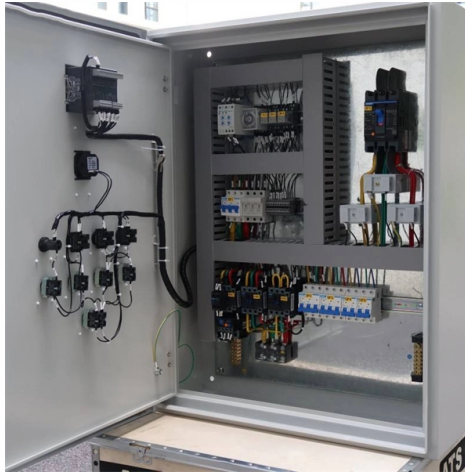


Network Security Equipment Baseline



Article Overview

A network security equipment baseline includes standardized configurations, access controls, monitoring, and policies to ensure secure and consistent operation of network devices.

Key Components of a Network Security Baseline

1. **Device Configuration Standards** Network devices such as firewalls, routers, and switches should have secure, hardened configurations. This includes disabling unnecessary services, enforcing strong passwords, and applying vendor-recommended hardening guides like CIS Benchmarks or DISA STIGs . Firewall and router rules should be clearly defined, reviewed regularly, and aligned with organizational security policies .
2. **Network Segmentation and Access Control** Segmenting the network into zones (e.g., DMZ, internal network, database servers) helps limit lateral movement in case of a breach. Access control measures should include authentication, authorization, and accounting (AAA), role-based access control (RBAC), and multi-factor authentication (MFA) for administrative access .
3. **Encryption and Data Protection** All sensitive data should be encrypted in transit and at rest. This includes using TLS for network communications, VPNs for remote access, and encrypting storage on critical devices .
4. **Monitoring and Baseline Validation** Regular monitoring of device performance and security events is essential. Baselines should define normal operating parameters for CPU, memory, link utilization, and traffic patterns. Deviations from these baselines can indicate misconfigurations or attacks . Automated tools like network management systems (NMS) can help collect metrics and validate compliance with the baseline .
5. **Patch Management and Updates** Devices should be regularly updated with security patches and firmware u...

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