

Tenable Cyber Exposure Study - Host Audit Data

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Host Audit Data Overview

Tenable has introduced key features and content that give you visualization of Compliance scan results through the built-in dashboards or custom dashboards using the newly added widgets. Detailed or summarized reports can also be generated in PDF format for the host audit findings. In support of these new features coming to Tenable Vulnerability Management, this guide serves as a tool to assist the user in utilizing the templates and filters to query host audit data. This study includes a detailed analysis section which breaks down data fields and gives example searches when querying the compliance data.

This Cyber Exposure Study provides guidance through the following subjects:

- Host Audit Data Analysis
- Benchmarks
 - Center for Internet Security
 - Defense Information Systems Agency
- Compliance Frameworks
- Host Audit Plugin Type
- Vendor-Based Audits

Host Audit Data Analysis

When scanning assets with Tenable Audit files, the finding returned is slightly different than a vulnerability finding. The first step in analyzing audit results is to first understand the source.

Key Data Fields

The audit file is an XML like file, which consists of several configuration checks. When the Tenable Research team examines the various benchmarks, for example Center for Internet Security (CIS), each CIS benchmark is broken into profiles (Level 1 and Level 2) and each profile is an item. The Tenable Audit files convert the "items" into XML like elements <item> or <custom_item> which then becomes an audit check name in Tenable Vulnerability Management or Tenable Security Center. From this point forward, <item> or <custom_item> in audit files are referred to as an audit check name, and the presence of an audit check name on an asset is called a finding.

More information on audit files can be found here:

- https://www.tenable.com/audits/documentationCenter for Internet Security
- https://docs.tenable.com/nessus/compliance-checks-reference/Content/GettingStarted.htm

```
<custom_item>
                  : "Linux"
      system
                  : FILE_CONTENT_CHECK
      type
      description: "5.3.3 Ensure password reuse is limited - system-auth"
                  : "The /etc/security/opasswd ---TEXT OMITTED--
      info
                  : "800-171|3.5.2,800-53|IA-5(1),800-53r5|IA-5(1),CSCv7|4.4,CSF|PR.AC-1,GDPR|
      reference
32.1.b,HIPAA|164.306(a)(1),HIPAA|164.312(a)(2)(i),HIPAA|164.312(d),ITSG-33|IA-5(1),LEVEL|
1S, NESA | T5.2.3, QCSC-v1 | 5.2.2, QCSC-v1 | 13.2, SWIFT-CSCv1 | 4.1"
                  : "https://workbench.cisecurity.org/files/2449"
      see_also
                  : "/etc/pam.d/system-auth"
      file
                  : "^[\\s]*password[\\s]+(sufficient[\\s]+pam_unix\\.so|required[\\s]
      regex
+pam_pwhistory\\.so).*remember"
                  : "remember[\\s]*=[\\s]*([5-9]|[1-9][0-9]+)"
      expect
   </custom item>
```

The description line becomes the audit check name, the other key field is the "reference" line, also known as the Cross Reference or XREF. The XREF is a mapping of this respective check to several compliance standards and benchmarks. Customers are able to search using the XREF in different methods based on the product, see below:

Product Search Term Example

t.io	800-53 ACCESS CONTROL	Compliance Framework= 800*53 Compliance Family= ACCESS CONTROL
t.sc	800-53 ACCESS CONTROL	Cross Reference = 800-53 AC*

To help customers verify the audit checks authority in the benchmark, the "see_also" field provides the location a customer can download the benchmark from the provider. This benchmark is used to consolidate audit checks by the correct benchmark and version.

https://workbench.cisecurity.org/files/2449

When an asset is scanned using an audit file, and a check becomes a finding, the finding is returned in one of the following states: PASSED, FAILED, ERROR, WARNING. The state is converted into a severity level for use with Tenable Security Center, and for Tenable Vulnerability Management the state is retained. The color coding for the state coincides with the color for the severity levels as displayed on the following table.

State	Tenable Security Center Severity	Tenable Vulnerability Management State	Descriptions
PASSED	Informational	Passed	The audit check was within the tested parameters.
FAILED	High	Failed	The audit check was not within the tested parameters.
ERROR	Medium	Error	The audit check is not supported on the

			asset.
WARNING	Medium	Warning	The audit check was successful, however compliance cannot be determined and needs to be reviewed manually.

Data Fields Explained

Now that we understand the key fields used for analysis there are a few other fields used to enhance search behaviors and are commonly used in the compliance dashboards and reports. In this section a detailed review of all the fields and how they work together are provided.

- · Tenable Vulnerability Management
- Tenable Security Center (6.3)

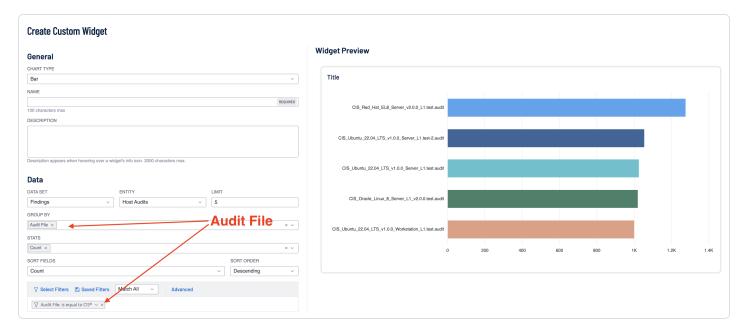
Audit File

The name of the Audit file the scanner used to perform the audit. Audit files are XML-based text files that contain the specific configuration, file permission, and access control tests to be performed. The audit file can be customized and should be changed if the customer edits the audit file. For example if the audit flee provided by Tenable is named "CIS_AlmaLinux_OS_8_Server_v3.0.0_L1.audit" and the customer edits the parameters of the audit file, then the customer might change the name to be "ACME-Mar24-CIS_AlmaLinux_OS_8_Server_v3.0.0_L1.audit." This name suggests that the ACME corp added this audit file in March of 2024. In doing this, analysts are able to easily find the audit files edited by the organization and apply the filters correctly.

While changing the name of an audit file is not required, here is helpful information to consider if choosing to do so. Note that the names of the audit file are not to be confused with benchmark. Tenable names the audit files to coincide with the benchmark, but the name is just a name. When choosing the name for the audit files, consider the operating system the audit file is intended for, the benchmark (including the version) used to create the audit file, and the date the audit file is added. Note that audit files that are custom, meaning imported by the customer, are not updated and therefore need to be maintained.

Tenable Vulnerability Management:

- Using the audit file name is supported in both the group-by options in the widget and in the filters.
- In the Bar Chart example, the bars represent the count of findings by the respective audit file.
 Other factors for example state, date, or etc. are not included.



Tenable Security Center:

- · Analysis using an Audit Files is only available in a filter.
- Organizations can use this filter to focus the results using charts and tables, however the audit
 file is not displayed, only the display columns based on the selected tool.
- Dashboard component documentation is found <u>here</u>.

Audit Check Name

The name Tenable assigned to the audit, as previously mentioned see figure 1, is the value in the **description** field in the audit file. In some cases, the compliance control may be listed as the prefix within the name. This is often combined with a nomenclature from the benchmark. In CIS benchmark, the name is prefixed with a number and DISA uses the STIG-ID. Just note that

regardless of the benchmark used to create the audit file, review the descriptions that are provided in the audit file for a list of possible audit check names.

Using grep or similar tool, the user can search audit files and return all the descriptions which are converted into the audit check name: grep -E '\s+description(\s):' *.audit

- CIS Example: "4.5.3.3 Ensure default user umask is configured"
- DISA Example: "WG050 W22 The web server service password(s) must be entrusted to the SA or Web Manager."

Tenable Vulnerability Management:

- The audit check name is available using group by and filtering similar to the audit file above.
- Use the "*" or wild card and the end of the string to search for all the audit check names that
 match the pre-fixed pattern. All the patterns below find audit check names with the relative
 pattern. Note, when using the * as the first character in the search you will match any pattern.
 The samples below match each of the examples shown above.

Pattern	Result
4.5.*	Strings that begin with 4 <period> 5 <period> and followed by any character</period></period>
WG*	Strings that begin with WG (case insensitive)
W22	String that begins with any character but contain W22 within the string, followed by any other characters
W*W22*	Strings that begin with "W" and contain W22

Tenable Security Center:

Audit Check Names become the plugin name. When an audit file is imported and used in a scan or filter, Tenable Security Center creates plugins for each of the <items> or <custom_items> in the audit file. The plugins have an ID > 1,000,000 and the plugin ID will be unique to the installation. Also note, if an audit file is updated and re-added, new plugins are created, this is another reason why it's often a good idea to name the audit file during import.



• The plugin name field supports regex patterns allowing for very complex and flexible pattern matching, here are some examples:

Pattern	Result
^4\.5.*	Strings that begin with 4 <period> 5 <period> and followed by any character</period></period>
^[Ww][Gg].*	Strings that begin with WG (case sensitive, but account for both upper and lower case)
^.*[Ww]22.*	String that begin with any character but contain W22 within the string, followed by any other characters
^[Ww].*[Ww]22.*	Strings that begin with "W" and contain W22

Benchmark

Benchmarks are published best practices released from source authorities, such as Center for Internet Security (CIS), United States Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA), and Microsoft. This filter provides a list of the supported benchmarks and the version of the benchmark. Tenable used the URL of the Benchmark to distinguish to which benchmark the audit file is mapped. The URL is stored in the SEE ALSO element found in the audit file.

- CIS: https://workbench.cisecurity.org/benchmarks/12695
- DISA: https://iasecontent.disa.mil/stigs/zip/U_Apache_2-2_WIN_V1R13_STIG.zip
- Microsoft: https://blogs.technet.microsoft.com/secguide/2018/04/30/security-baseline-forwindows-10-april-2018-update-v1803-final

CIS Benchmarks are linked directly with See Also URL, in this example CIS Windows Server 2016 version 2.0.0 can be accessed via https://workbench.cisecurity.org/benchmarks/12695. Each of the audit files that support the benchmark are focused on the different role or functions of the asset. In this example the DC is the domain controller, and MS is a member server. The L1 and L2 describing the level 1 or level 2 checks depicted in the benchmark. To obtain full coverage with a benchmark all audit files from the specific role needs to be added to the targeted scan. Be careful not to scan a domain controller with a member server audit file, and there are different checks and some coverage could be mis-represented. This benchmark is covered by 6 audit files:

- CIS Microsoft Windows Server 2016 Benchmark v2.0.0 DC NG.audit
- CIS_Microsoft_Windows_Server_2016_Benchmark_v2.0.0_L1_DC.audit
- CIS_Microsoft_Windows_Server_2016_Benchmark_v2.0.0_L1_MS.audit
- CIS_Microsoft_Windows_Server_2016_Benchmark_v2.0.0_L2_DC.audit
- CIS Microsoft Windows Server 2016 Benchmark v2.0.0 L2 MS.audit
- CIS Microsoft Windows Server 2016 Benchmark v2.0.0 MS NG.audit

For a DISA STIG, there can be situations where there are more that one version of an Audit file that makes the STIG. For example, DISA STIG Apache Server 2.4 Unix in the URL https://dl.dod.cyber.mil/wp-content/uploads/stigs/zip/U_Apache_Server_2-4_Unix_Y23M07_STIG.zip, contains several version files in version 2.4.0 and 2.6.0. Listed below are the audit files that comprise the STIG, much like the aforementioned CIS benchmark there can be different roles and the appropriate audit files should be deployed to targeted assets.

- DISA_STIG_Apache_Server-2.4_Unix_v2r6.audit
- DISA STIG Apache Server-2.4 Unix v2r6 Middleware.audit
- DISA_STIG_Apache_Site-2.4_Unix_v2r4.audit
- DISA STIG Apache Site-2.4 Unix v2r4 Middleware.audit"

After scanning with appropriate audit files here are examples on how to find the relevant data.

Tenable Vulnerability Management:

 In this field the benchmark name and version are combined into one string. Using regular search terms, the search can be limited to only the desired content.

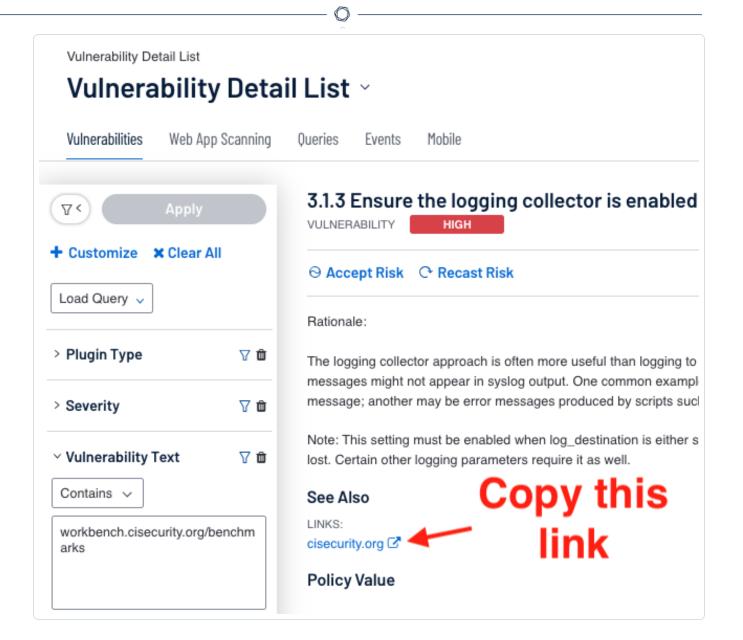
Pattern	Result
CIS*	Strings that begin with CIS <space> followed by any other character.</space>
CIS P*9*	Strings that begin with CIS <space>P followed by any other character but must contain a 9 in the string. Ex: CIS Palo Alto</space>

	^
	Firewall 9 v1.1.0
v1.0.0	Strings that begin with any character but contain v1.0.0 within
	the string, followed by any other characters

- For benchmarks that are no longer supported by Tenable, the "Deprecated prefix>
 Benchmark" is available
 - ° Example: Deprecated CIS Benchmark
- DISA_STIG_Apache_Site-2.4_Unix_v2r4.audit
 - ° CIS, DISA, MSCT, NetApp, TNS
- Custom audit files are also supported however the benchmark name will be "Custom"

Tenable Security Center:

- For notes on how to search for specific elements in Security Center, review this section <u>Tenable Security Center Compliance Elements:</u>
- To locate the benchmark using the Vulnerability text for contains "cisecurity" or other relevant string, and then copy the link shown under the See Also, as shown below.



- When the "cisecurity.org" link is copied, this would be the string that is collected.
 - ° https://workbench.cisecurity.org/benchmarks/12695
- The Vulnerability Test filter example: <cm:compliance-seealso>https://workbench.cisecurity.org/benchmarks/12695</cm:compliance-see-also>
 - https://workbench.cisecurity.org/benchmarks/12695
- Add the string with <cm:compliance-see-also>URL-HERE</cm:compliance-see-also> to the Vulnerability Text field.

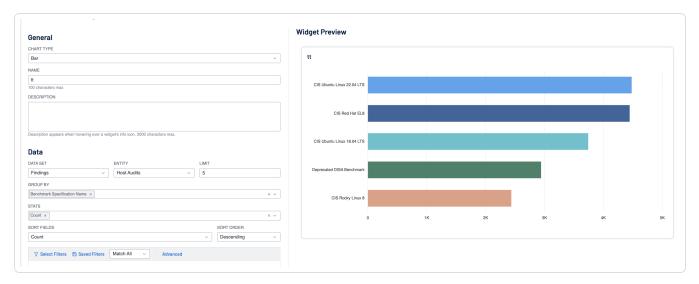
Benchmark Specification Name

The benchmark name is the same as previously described but does not contain the version. Using only the benchmark name in the search merges the data collected using all versions of the respective benchmark.

After scanning with appropriate audit files here are examples on how to find the relevant data.

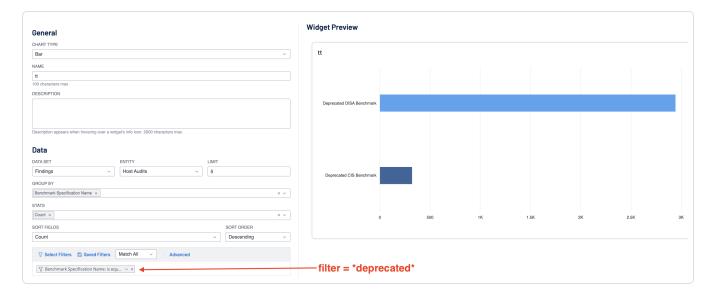
Tenable Vulnerability Management:

 Tenable Vulnerability management supports widgets using a "Group By" using the Benchmark Name, as shown below, the chart quickly shows the benchmarks in use, allowing for more filtering options.



 Note that when a benchmark becomes deprecated and is no longer supported by the benchmark name is changed to Depreciated <TYPE> Tenable. By adding the filter Benchmark Specification Name = "*deprecated*", you can see the use check found with deprecated audit

files.



Tenable Security Center:

- Use the same approach as before with Tenable Security Center, use the Vulnerability Text field and add the Benchmark Name.
- <cm:compliance-benchmark-name>some text here</cm:compliance-benchmark-name>

Benchmark Version

The benchmark version should only be used with the Benchmark Specification Name filters, and the version is unique to each benchmark and provider. For example, version 2.0.0 on a CIS Benchmark could be the latest version on one benchmark and a deprecated version on another.

Tenable Vulnerability Management:

• Use a string with or without wildcards just as other text-based search patterns

Tenable Security Center:

- Use the same approach as before with Tenable Security Center, use the Vulnerability Text field and add the Benchmark Version.
- Note that if you search using a regex to combine the benchmark name and version, the regex
 pattern must include the match for the version to come before the name and after the name.

The order of the CM elements in the Vulnerability text is not consistent, so both possible patterns should be searched.

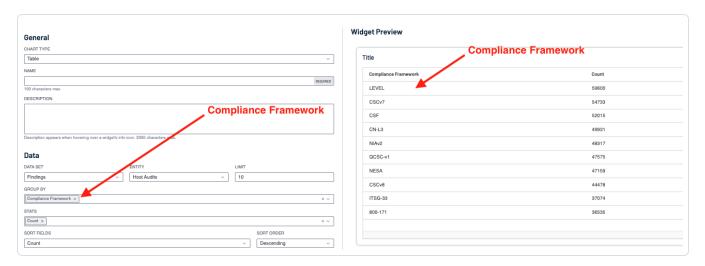
<cm:compliance-benchmark-version>some text here</cm:compliance-benchmark-version>

Compliance Framework

Tenable audits configuration compliance with a variety of standards including GDPR, ISO 27000, HIPAA, NIST 800-53, PCI DSS, and so on. This filter allows searching based on the respective framework.

Tenable Vulnerability Management:

- Creating a custom widget using a table or bar chart, you can quickly see the number of compliance frameworks identified by the audit files used in the scans.
- By adding other fields as filters, such as audit file, result, or benchmark, you are able to focus
 on the data returned.

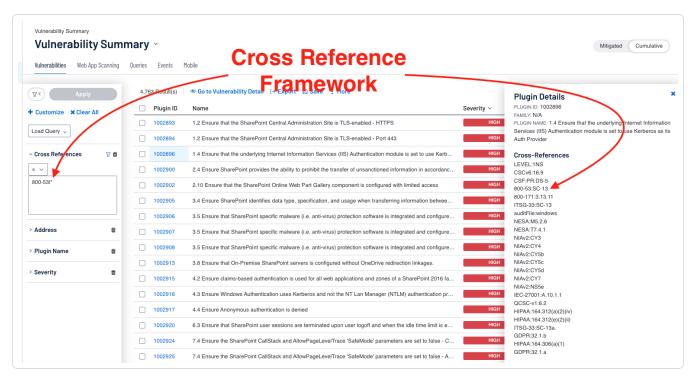


Tenable Security Center:

- The "Maintaining Data Protection Controls" Cyber Exposure Study has a good section that describes how to use the Cross Reference field.
 - https://docs.tenable.com/cyber-exposure-studies/dataprotection/Content/VerifyingDataProtectionControls.htm

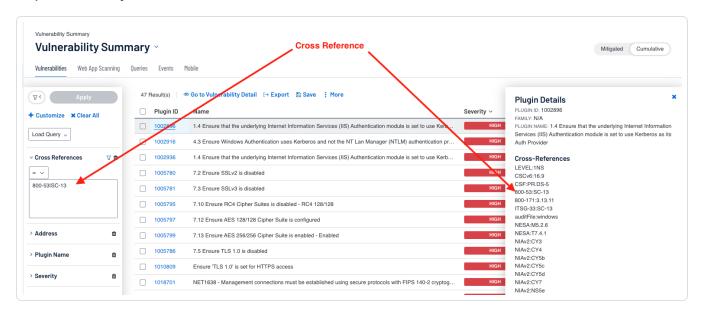


- Tenable audit checks contain a reference field that points to specific controls in a standard (ISO 27001), framework (NIST Cybersecurity Framework), or regulation (HIPAA) and is used by nearly all plugins. Any external reference can be identified using the Cross References field. References can be used to search or filter in Tenable Security Center. For example, the following References define requirements for the encryption of data at rest:
 - ° 800-171 3.13.16
 - 800-53 SC-28
- Searching with the Cross Reference Field as described in the study allows for mapping
 controls to the respective benchmarks. In the example below, the search pattern is 800-53|* for
 all audit checks for the framework NIST 800-53r4. By clicking on the Plugin ID, a window on
 the right is displayed showing plugin details, including the cross references.





 As mentioned in the <u>Key Data Fields</u> section and "Maintaining Data Protection Controls" Cyber Exposure Study, the search needs to be the full cross reference, as shown below.



Compliance Family Name

There are a series of designations within compliance frameworks that Tenable calls control. For example: ISO/IEC-27001:A.12.4.1, or CSF:DE.CM-1. This filter groups the controls into families for easier and more efficient queries. For example: A12 - Operations security or CSF:Detect. Use this filter in conjunction with the Compliance Framework filter.

Tenable Vulnerability Management:

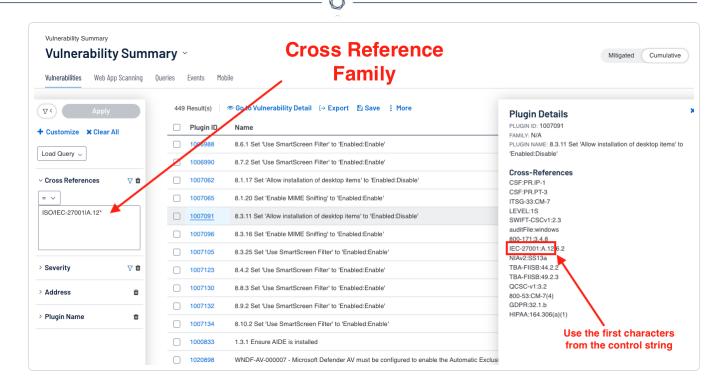
Listed in this section is a list of the supported frameworks and the corresponding families.
 Much like the Compliance Control filters, the Compliance Family Name should be used with framework filters.



 This example shows the benefit of combining the various aspects of the compliance filtering, and illustrates how Tenable Vulnerability Management is able to track the compliance with several frameworks and benchmarks at the same time.

Tenable Security Center:

 As mentioned in the <u>Key Data Fields</u> section and "Maintaining Data Protection Controls" Cyber Exposure Study, searching for families is accomplished by using wildcard patterns in the Cross Reference search.



• In this search example we are using "ISO/IEC-27001|A.12*" to search for the family ISO/IEC-27001: A12 - Operations security.

https://docs.tenable.com/vulnerability-management/Content/Explore/Findings/FindingsFilters.htm

Tenable Security Center Compliance Elements

- The compliance attributes are added to the plugin output as embedded XML elements.
- Using a grep command against a .nessus file, you can discover all the attributes in a scan result.
 - o cat host audit scan.nessus| grep "<cm:com" | sort | uniq | cut -d">" -f1|uniq
- Listed below are some of the common elements:
 - cm:compliance-actual-value>some text here</cm:compliance-actual-value>
 - cm:compliance-audit-file>some text here</cm:compliance-audit-file>
 - <cm:compliance-benchmark-name>some text here</cm:compliance-benchmark-name>
 - <cm:compliance-benchmark-profile>some text here</cm:compliance-benchmark-profile>
 - <cm:compliance-benchmark-version>some text here</cm:compliance-benchmark version>
 - cm:compliance-check-id>some text here</cm:compliance-check-id>
 - <cm:compliance-check-name>some text here</cm:compliance-check-name>
 - cm:compliance-control-id>some text here</cm:compliance-control-id>
 - <cm:compliance-error>some text here</cm:compliance-error>
 - cm:compliance-full-id>some text here</cm:compliance-full-id>
 - cm:compliance-functional-id>some text here</cm:compliance-functional-id>
 - cm:compliance-info>some text here</cm:compliance-info>
 - <cm:compliance-informational-id>some text here</cm:compliance-informational-id>
 - <cm:compliance-policy-value>some text here</cm:compliance-policy-value>
 - <cm:compliance-reference>some text here</cm:compliance-reference>
 - <cm:compliance-result>some text here</cm:compliance-result>



- cm:compliance-see-also>some text here</cm:compliance-see-also>
- cm:compliance-solution>some text here</cm:compliance-solution>
- <cm:compliance-source>some text here</cm:compliance-source>
- Using a regex pattern, you can search solutions with a keyword
 - Solution requires a firewall setting
 - regex: compliance-solution.*[fF]irewall.*compliance-solution
 - Solution requires a firewall setting and the firewall is not configured
 - regex: compliance-actual-value.*NULL.*cm:compliance-actual-value.*compliancesolution.*Firewall.*compliance-solution
- Note in both examples the regex searches for the open and close tag elements. This approach
 is best used to ensure there is a less likelihood of an incorrect match.
- The pluginText field is a single-line string when compared to the regex pattern. Shown in the image below is a sample pattern from the Security Center pluginText field.

<m:compliance-check-name>9.3.1 Ensure 'Windows Firewall: Public: Firewall state' is set to 'On (recommended)'<\/cm:compliance-check-name>\n<m:compliance-benchmark-version>1.0.0<\/cm:compliance-benchmark-version>\n<m:compliance-actual-value>NVCm:compliance-benchmark-version>\n<cm:compliance-actual-value>NVCm:compliance-benchmark-version>\n<cm:compliance-actual-value>NVCm:compliance-benchmark-version>\n
file>b56bb719-6959-514c-9840-4a7e9a52a64f-1710294-scfile_HR50tg<\/cm:compliance-audit-file>\n<cm:compliance-check-id>\n<cm:compliance-policy-value>\n
// cm:compliance-policy-value>\n
// cm:compliance-poliance-policy-value>\n
// cm:compliance-policy-value>\n
// will be able to access the system and an attacker may be more easily able to remotely exploit a weakness in a network service.

// n\n\n\n\n\n\n
// cm:compliance-informational-id>\n
//

- Note that the End of Line characters are stored as a "\n", as shown here:
 - o \n<cm:compliance-source>custom<\/cm:compliance-source>\n

Benchmarks

Tenable is partnered with two major organizations which provide and maintain compliance benchmarks, the Center for Internet Security (CIS) and Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA) Security Technical Implementation Guides (STIG). CIS developed a series of best practice benchmarks for a variety of applications, operating systems, servers, and databases used within organizations today. Each benchmark contains recommended security settings designed to harden systems and applications from attack while maintaining overall system functionality. Tenable has been certified by CIS to perform a wide variety of platform and application audits based on the best practice consensus benchmarks developed by CIS. Tenable submits example test cases for all of the criteria within each unique benchmark, and then submits our results to CIS personnel for official certification. Tenable has developed audit files based on the CIS Benchmarks tested on systems, and has been approved and certified by CIS staff members.

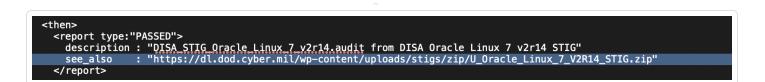
DISA's selection of Tenable as the foundation of its Assured Compliance Assessment Solution (ACAS) cements Tenable's standing as the undisputed leader in vulnerability management in the U.S. Federal government. The ACAS mission is simple: Assess DoD enterprise networks and connected IT systems against DoD standards, as well as identify any known system vulnerabilities.

For DISA and its constituents, ACAS, powered by Tenable, provides the sophistication and flexibility needed to satisfy the wide variety of security needs the Department of Defense must support, and provides the most comprehensive and integrated view of security posture to reduce risk and exceed DoD compliance. Both Tenable Security Center and Tenable Vulnerability Management support the creating, running, and importing of Policy Compliance scans.

Tenable Security Center CIS / DISA:

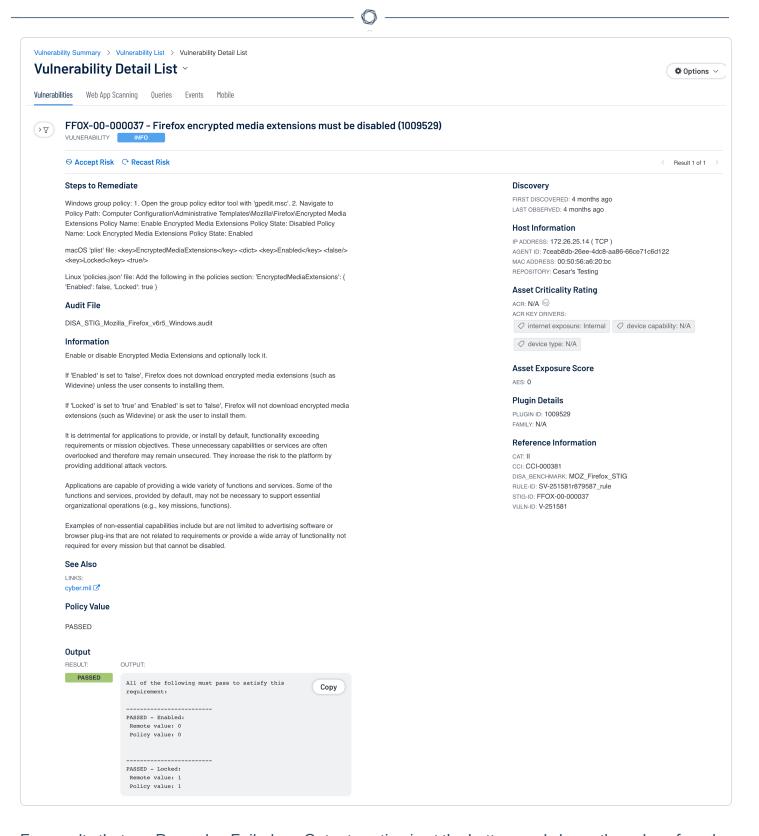
Tenable Security Center's CIS and DISA reports and widgets utilize the Vulnerability Text filter to parse through the policy compliance scan results for a specific tag called "see_also." The "see_also" tag is present in the audit files used in the policy compliance scans used and the tag describes the benchmark that the audit file relates to. The CIS MS Server 2012 R2 Level 1 v3.0.0 audit file and the DISA STIG Oracle Linux 7 v2r14 audit file snippets show what the see_also tag looks like.

```
<then>
  <report type:"PASSED">
    description : "CIS MS SERVER 2012 R2 Level 1 v3.0.0.audit from CIS Microsoft Windows Server 2012 R2 Benchmark"
    see_also : "https://workbench.cisecurity.org/benchmarks/15273"
  </report>
```



Reports and widgets also use severity filters to differentiate between the three possible result types of the benchmark. A passed benchmark result carries an Info level severity while a failed benchmark result carries a High level severity. The third and last benchmark result type is Manual; these are represented using Medium level severity and are given when the benchmark test requires manual verification. When manual verification is needed the actions required to follow are in the "Steps to remediate" section of the plugin followed by an "Information" section which gives some background on the benchmark.

In the **Vulnerability Detail List View** one can also see the steps to remediate for Passed, Failed, and Manual results.

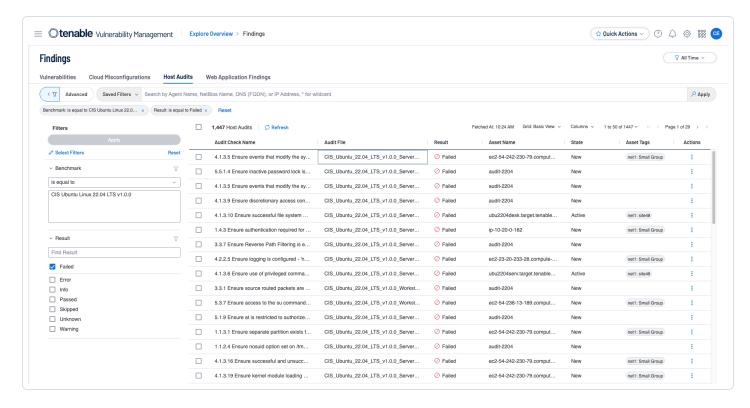


For results that are Passed or Failed, an Output section is at the bottom and shows the values found. For Manual verification results, represented as Medium level severity, there is no Output as the user needs to follow the Steps to Remediate to verify compliance with the benchmark.

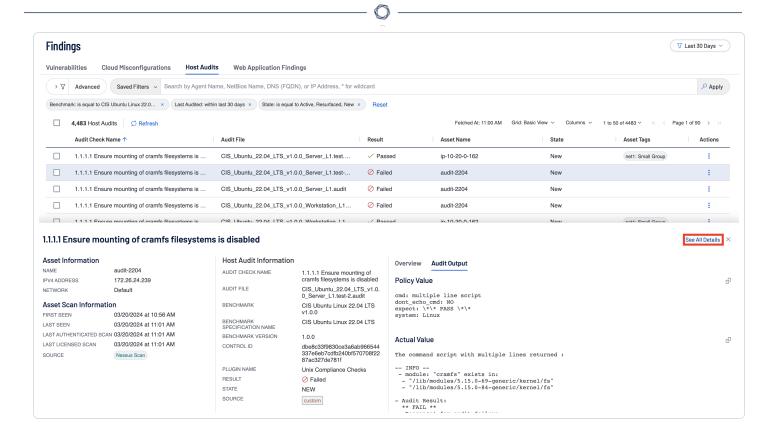


Tenable Vulnerability Management CIS / DISA:

Tenable Vulnerability Management Host Audit reports, chapters, and widgets utilize the Compliance Benchmark filter to search for the specific audit file or benchmark used in the scan. Compliance chapters and reports by default also filter on compliance benchmarks last observed within the last 90 days. The last observed filter means if the policy compliance scan was completed more than 90 days in the past, the result will not show up in the chapter or report being run. The **Tenable Vulnerability Management Findings View** can be used to look at compliance results easily by using the Benchmark filter.

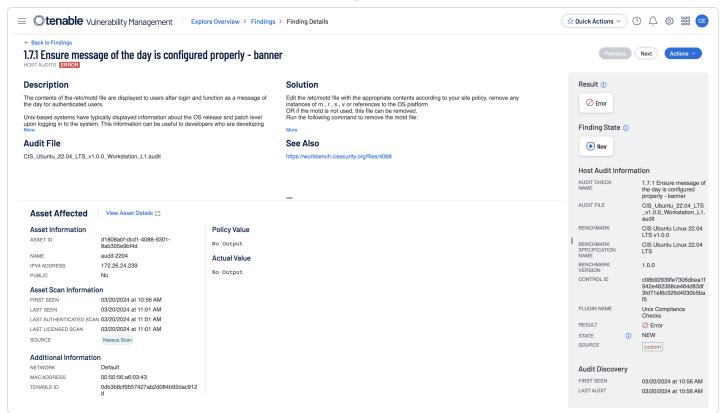


The user is able to further drill within the **Findings -> Host Audits** page into the results by selecting one from the list given and then clicking on 'See All details.' This action pulls up all the details of the selected audit check.



Within the **Finding Details** page, a user is able to view all relevant information about the selected audit check. The Solution section is present for all result types and can be used to correct any failed audit checks as well as manually verify checks that were neither passed or failed.





Compliance Frameworks

In response to increased cyberthreats, governments are enacting mandates and legislation. For example, in the U.S., Executive Order 14028 focuses on improving the security of the software supply chain. In the European Union, the Cyber Resilience Act – published by the European Commission in September 2022 – looks to ensure hardware and software products are placed on the market with fewer vulnerabilities. Such measures not only place new requirements on government agencies, they extend broadly to the organizations these agencies do business with, including cloud service providers, software development organizations, software as a service (SaaS) providers, hardware manufacturers, and virtually any organization creating digital products and services.

The legislative and regulatory changes in the U.S. are not limited to the federal government – they're also cascading down to state and local governments. Likewise, in addition to the E.U. regulations, nations within the union may also have their own requirements. In the United States, for example, 36 states have enacted new cybersecurity laws in the past two years, with many more in the works as the public sector looks to mitigate the risk of cyberthreats.

Adding to government regulations, industries have also begun to define their own mandates in an effort to improve security posture and minimize risk to consumers and investors. One example of this is PCI DSS in the payment card industry.

For the security teams that must implement these mandates, the challenge is in translating what are often general legislative guidelines and controls into specific policies, tools, and processes. Further, security teams are responsible for enforcing those policies in a scalable and consistent way across the enterprise. For security teams working in multinational enterprises, these challenges are compounded exponentially.

The regulatory environment impacts all aspects of cybersecurity, including traditional IT infrastructure and operational technology. In order to understand how the regulatory environment affects cloud security, you first need an understanding of which regulations apply to your particular business. The table below highlights several regulations with broad sweeping cloud security implications — and the risks that come with non-compliance. Regulations and penalties with cloud security implications.

CIS Critical Security Controls v8 (CSCv8)

Origin: On May 18, 2021 CIS published version 8 of their Critical Security Controls and they provide specific and actionable ways to protect against today's most pervasive and dangerous attacks.

Requirement: The Critical Security Controls are created for organizations of any size or sector.

TVM Compliance Family	TSC Cross Reference
Inventory and Control of Enterprise Assets	CSCv8 1.*
Inventory and Control of Software Assets	CSCv8 2.*
Data Protection	CSCv8 3.*
Secure Configuration of Enterprise Assets and Software	CSCv8 4.*
Account Management	CSCv8 5.*
Access Control Management	CSCv8 6.*
Continuous Vulnerability Management	CSCv8 7.*
Audit Log Management	CSCv8 8.*
Email and Web Browser Protections	CSCv8 9.*
Malware Defenses	CSCv8 10.*
Data Recovery	CSCv8 11.*
Network Infrastructure Management	CSCv8 12.*
Network Monitoring and Defense	CSCv8 13.*
Security Awareness and Skills Training	CSCv8 14.*
Service Provider Management	CSCv8 15.*
Application Software Security	CSCv8 16.*
Incident Response Management	CSCv8 17.*

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

Origin: Approved by the European Union in 2016, GDPR looks to enforce data protection guidelines for the collection and processing of personal information for anyone living in the European Union.

Requirement: Applies to any entity with a website that attracts European visitor traffic, whether that entity is actively marketing to EU residents or not. Data breaches must be reported within 72 hours.

TVM Search Pattern: Compliance Framework = GDPR

TVM Compliance Family	TSC Cross Reference
32 Security of processing	GDPR 32.*

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)

Origin: Passed by the U.S. Congress, the intent of the HIPAA Privacy Rule is to limit the use and disclosure of electronically protected healthcare information (ePHI), such as medical records, without explicit authorization by individuals.

Requirement: The regulation applies to healthcare providers, health plans, and healthcare clearinghouses that conduct healthcare transactions electronically.

TVM Search Pattern: Compliance Framework = HIPAA

TVM Compliance Family	TSC Cross Reference
164.306 Security standards: General rules	HIPAA 164.306*
164.308 Administrative safeguards	HIPAA 164.308*
164.312 Technical safeguards	HIPAA 164.312*

ISO/IEC 27001

Origin: Many organizations, especially multinationals, have chosen to utilize ISO/IEC 27001/27002 frameworks to help them continually identify security gaps, comply with numerous compliance requirements and obtain international certification.

Requirement: The ISO 27001, a broadly recognized standard for information security management systems (ISMS). While not directly provided by ISO, organizations can obtain third-party certification of compliance with ISO 27001.

TVM Search Pattern: Compliance Framework = ISO/IEC-27001

TVM Compliance Family	TSC Cross Reference
A 6 - Organization of information security	ISO/IEC-27001 A.6.*
A 8 - Asset management	ISO/IEC-27001 A.8.*
A 9 - Access control	ISO/IEC-27001 A.9.*
A10 - Cryptography	ISO/IEC-27001 A.10.*
A11 - Physical and environmental security	ISO/IEC-27001 A.11.*
A12 - Operations security	ISO/IEC-27001 A.12.*
A13 - Communications security	ISO/IEC-27001 A.13.*

IT Security Risk Management: A Lifecycle Approach (ITSG-33)

Origin: Released in November 2012, the ITSG-33 publication describes the roles, responsibilities, and activities that help (Government of Canada) GC departments manage IT security risks.

Requirement: The ITSG-33 was developed as a series of guidelines for security practitioners to manage information technology (IT) security risks for Government of Canada (GC) information systems.

Search Pattern: Compliance Framework =

TVM Compliance Family	TSC Cross Reference
CONFIGURATION MANAGEMENT	ITSG-33 CM*
AUDIT AND ACCOUNTABILITY	ITSG-33 AU*
MEDIA PROTECTION	ITSG-33 MP*
SYSTEM AND SERVICES ACQUISITION	ITSG-33 SA*
MAINTENANCE	ITSG-33 MA*
SECURITY ASSESSMENT AND AUTHORIZATION	ITSG-33 CA*
SYSTEM AND COMMUNICATIONS	ITSG-33 SC*

PROTECTION	
IDENTIFICATION AND AUTHENTICATION	ITSG-33 IA*
SYSTEM AND INFORMATION	ITSG-33 SI*
CONTINGENCY PLANNING (CONTINUITY PLANNING)	ITSG-33 CP*
RISK ASSESSMENT	ITSG-33 RA*
ACCESS CONTROL	ITSG-33 AC*
INCIDENT RESPONSE	ITSG-33 IR*
AWARENESS AND TRAINING	ITSG-33 AT*

Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI DSS)

Origin: Released in December 2004, PCI DSS was an industry-led initiative created to better manage cardholder data and reduce credit card fraud. The Standard was defined by the PCI Security Standards Council (PCI SSC), which includes American Express, Visa, MasterCard, Discover, and others.

Requirement: While not a federal regulation, the industry standard is mandatory for all entities that store, process, and/or transmit cardholder data. The standard includes specific cloud computing guidelines which provide guidance on the use of cloud technologies and for maintaining controls in cloud environments.

TVM Compliance Family	TSC Cross Reference
Build and Maintain a Secure Network and Systems	PCI-DSSV4.0 1.*
Protect Account Data	PCI-DSSV4.0 3.*
Maintain a Vulnerability Management Program	PCI-DSSV4.0 5.*
Implement Strong Access Control Measures	PCI-DSSV4.0 7.*
Regularly Monitor and Test Networks	PCI-DSSV4.0 10*

NIST Cyber Security Framework (CSF)

Origin: Developed by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), the NIST Cybersecurity Framework (CSF) is composed of best practice guidelines to help organizations identify, implement, and enhance their cybersecurity practices and use a common language to communicate issues to stakeholders.

Requirement: All federal government agencies and any federal contractors handling government data must be NIST-compliant. Contractors that fail to meet NIST compliance (or have a history of NIST non-compliance) risk losing future contracts.

TVM Compliance Family	TSC Cross Reference
Protect	CSF PR.*
Respond	CSF RS.*
Recover	CSF RC.*
Detect	CSF DE.*
Identify	CSF ID.*

NIST SP 800-171

Origin: NIST Special Publication 800-171, Protecting Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI) in Nonfederal Information Systems and Organizations, defines the type of security requirements service providers are likely to be contractually obligated to.

Requirement: The U.S. Government must safeguard Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI) and Covered Defense Information. Consequently, civilian agencies and the DoD contractually obligate many nonfederal organizations that process, store, or transmit protected information to comply with NIST SP 800-171. These nonfederal service providers must monitor and assess SP 800-171 controls to obtain permission to operate and safeguard CUI on an ongoing basis.

TVM Compliance Family	TSC Cross Reference
3. 1 ACCESS CONTROL	800-171 3.1.*
3. 2 AWARENESS AND TRAINING	800-171 3.2.*

3. 3 AUDIT AND ACCOUNTABILITY	800-171 3.3.*
3. 4 CONFIGURATION MANAGEMENT	800-171 3.4.*
3. 5 IDENTIFICATION AND AUTHENTICATION	800-171 3.5.*
3. 6 INCIDENT RESPONSE	800-171 3.6.*
3. 7 MAINTENANCE	800-171 3.7.*
3. 8 MEDIA PROTECTION	800-171 3.8.*
3.11 RISK ASSESSMENT	800-171 3.11.*
3.12 SECURITY ASSESSMENT	800-171 3.12.*
3.13 SYSTEM AND COMMUNICATIONS PROTECTION	800-171 3.13.*
3.14 SYSTEM AND INFORMATION INTEGRITY	800-171 3.14.*

NIST SP 800-53r5

Origin: The NIST 800-53 provides a catalog of security and privacy controls for federal information systems and organizations and a process for selecting controls to protect organizational operations.

Requirement: Most U.S. federal information systems must base their security and privacy controls in NIST Special Publication (SP) 800-53, Security and Privacy Controls for Federal Information Systems and Organizations. However, compliance is not limited to the federal government. Many other organizations are required to comply with SP 800-53.

TVM Compliance Family	TSC Cross Reference
AWARENESS AND TRAINING	800-53 AT*
INCIDENT RESPONSE	800-53 IR*
RISK ASSESSMENT	800-53 RA*
ACCESS CONTROL	800-53 AC*
IDENTIFICATION AND AUTHENTICATION	800-53 IA*

SYSTEM AND COMMUNICATIONS PROTECTION	800-53 SC*
CONTINGENCY PLANNING	800-53 CP*
MAINTENANCE	800-53 CA*
SECURITY ASSESSMENT AND AUTHORIZATION	800-171 3.11.*
SYSTEM AND SERVICES ACQUISITION	800-53 SA*
PLANNING	800-53 PL*
CONFIGURATION MANAGEMENT	800-53 CM*
AUDIT AND ACCOUNTABILITY	800-53 AU*
MEDIA PROTECTION	800-53 MP*
PROGRAM MANAGEMENT	800-53 PM*
SYSTEM AND INFORMATION INTEGRITY	800-53 SI*

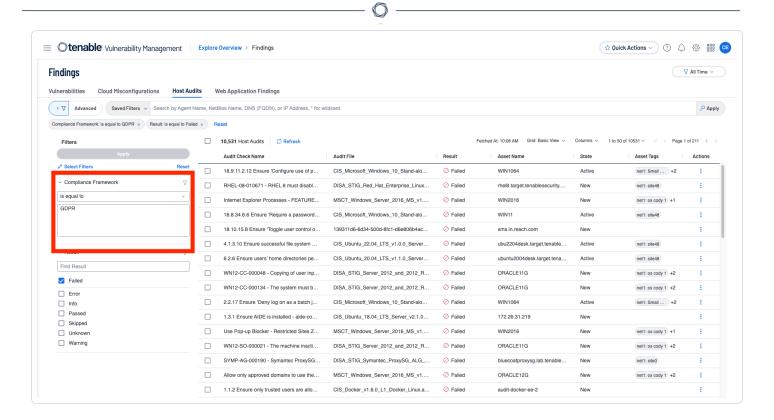
Fortunately, a number of federal and industry sponsored organizations have been established to help enterprise and government organizations improve their cybersecurity posture. These organizations collect best practices and define risk frameworks, as well as supporting cybersecurity controls and benchmarks.

Frameworks provide a set of processes, best practices, and specifications to help organizations assess and manage risk. They lay the foundation for effective cybersecurity programs.

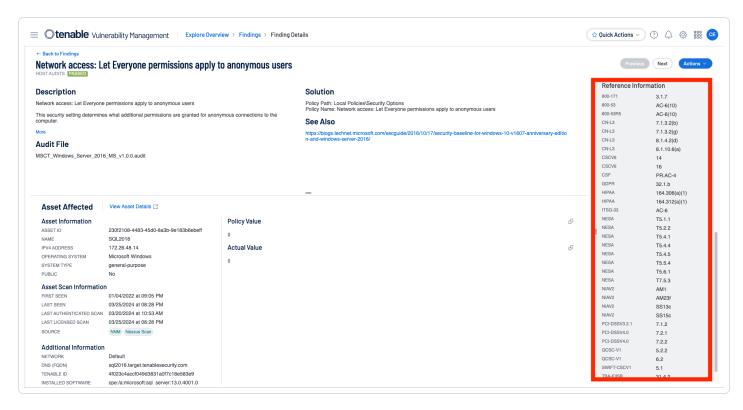
Controls identify 'what should happen' in order to mitigate a specific category of risk. Inventory of software assets, data protection, and secure configuration are examples of control categories. Each control category has a set of safeguards outlining what steps should be taken.

Benchmarks take the concept of controls to the next level, providing prescriptive guidance on how to implement and configure specific technology, such as cloud instances, applications, and identities, in a secure way.

In Tenable Vulnerability Management, a user is able to filter their compliance data by compliance framework by using the **Compliance Framework** filter.

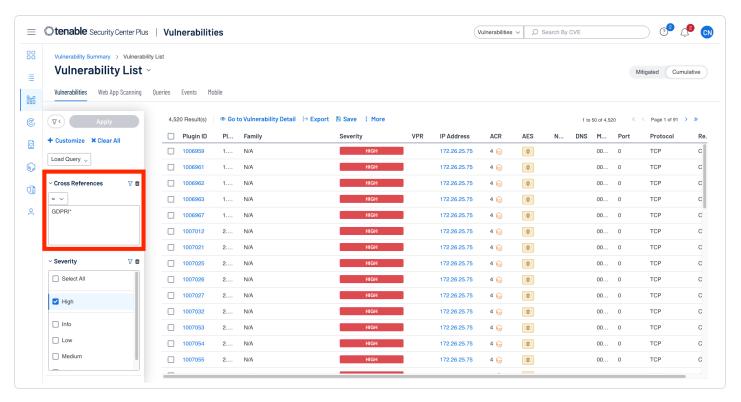


The Compliance Framework filter looks at the **Reference Information** section of the finding to determine which frameworks the audit check is related to.





In Tenable Security Center, a user is able to filter their compliance data by compliance framework by using the **Cross Reference**s filter.



Each of the audit file types has a corresponding plugin ID; however, in Tenable Security Center, the audit file plugin ID is not used. In Security Center when you install an audit file, a new plugin higher than plugin ID 1000000 is created for each check. To retain the audit file type, there is a cross reference called "auditFile." In the Reference Information of the Vulnerability Detail List tool, you can see the auditFile value. When adding a filter for the audit file type, the XREF Type, left side of the pipe (|), is the auditFile type. To the right of the pipe (|), the XREF ID is placed. For example, "auditFile|bluecoat" would locate any audit check used to audit a Bluecoat configuration. There are currently 47 auditFile types:

Discovery

FIRST DISCOVERED: Today LAST OBSERVED: Today

Host Information

IP ADDRESS: 172.26.25.122 (TCP)

AGENT ID: e0089e39-18f5-49c9-bb9e-d7a86956bdc5

DNS: desktop-bbdnfc3.lab.tenablesecurity.com

REPOSITORY: Individual Scan

Asset Criticality Rating

ACR: N/A 😡

ACR KEY DRIVERS:

device type: N/A

Asset Exposure Score

AES: 0

Plugin Details

PLUGIN ID: 1007017

FAMILY: N/A

Reference Information

LEVEL: 1A

CROSS REFERENCES: GDPR:32.1.b, HIPAA:164.306(a)(1), 800-171:3.1.9, TBA-FIISB:45.2.4, 800-53:AC-8, ITSG-33:AC-8, NESA:M1.3.6, LEVEL:1A,

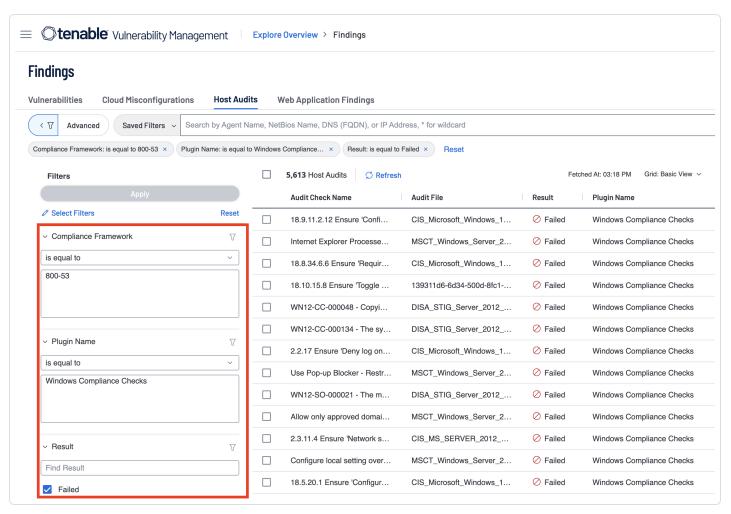
auditFile:windows, 800-53r5:AC-8



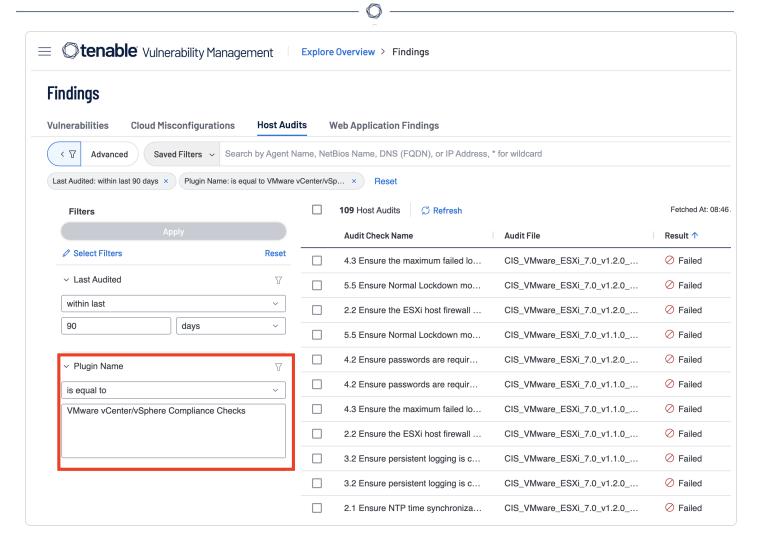
It is important to note that when looking at the cross references in the Vulnerability details section, the cross reference appears to be separated using a colon (GDPR:32.1b); to search for this specific cross reference you would replace the colon with a pipe (GDPR|32.1b).

Host Audit Plugin Type

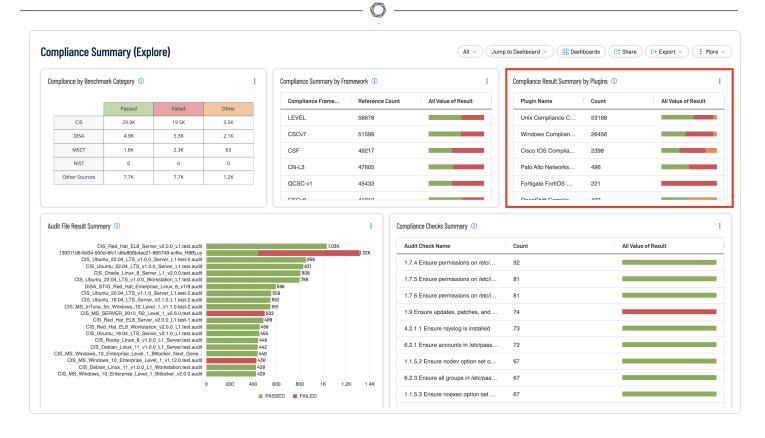
Within Tenable Vulnerability Management the Host Audits Section of the Findings page and inside custom widgets you're able to search for Host Audit by plugin type. The differences with Tenable Vulnerability Management and Tenable Security Center querying a similar query as the previous is: instead of the Cross References Filter inside of Security Center to single out audit file types we use the Plugin Name Filter: Instead of the Vulnerability Text filter to single out a specific compliance framework, we use the Compliance Framework Filter: and instead of using severity for failed results we simply use the Result Filter.



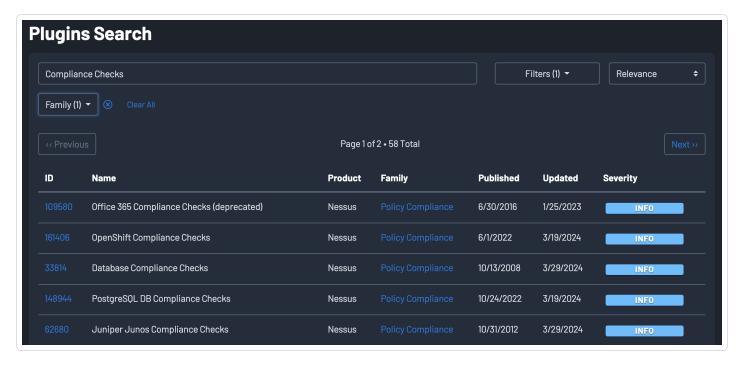
As mentioned, inside **Tenable Vulnerability Management** you're able to search for Host Audits by using the Plugin Name Filter within the Host Audits section of the Findings page; this search results in all audit checks that match the plugin name being displayed.



A user can quickly determine which compliance checks have been run by checking the **Compliance Result Summary by Plugins widget within the Compliance Summary dashboard**. This widget has no filters applied to it and instead is being grouped by plugin name and only host audit plugins. The widget is a quick way to determine which Host audit plugin type has had the most results (represented by the "Count" column) and a quick breakdown of the result types. Hovering over the bar displays the counts of Passed (green), failed (red), and Other (orange) result types.

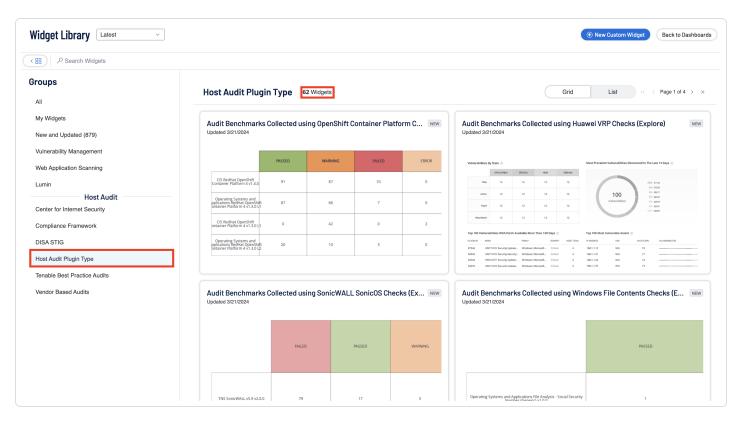


There are 58 available Compliance check plugins. All the possible Compliance check plugins can be seen by using <u>Tenable's Plugins Search</u> and searching for "Compliance Checks" and using the "Policy Compliance" Family filter.





A more detailed breakdown of Host Audit Plugin Types can be seen by navigating to the Widget Library and selecting the **Host Audit Plugin Type Group**. This action results in currently 62 widgets, four widgets come from the Compliance Summary dashboard and the other 58 widgets represent each of the 58 available compliance check plugins. Each of the 58 Compliance check widgets are laid out as a matrix and display benchmark run on the y-axis labels of the matrix, and the result types on the x axis. The counts inside the matrices represent the count of the specific result type for the benchmark which was selected.



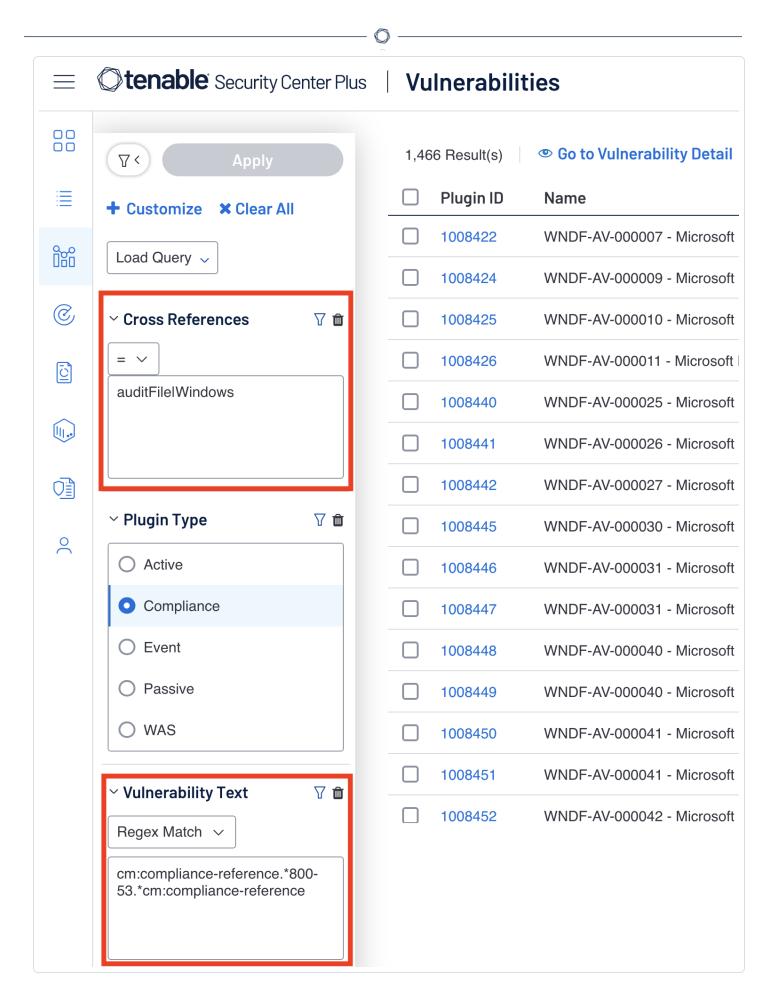
Within Tenable Security Center there are 47 Available Compliance Plugins that can be queried. All the available compliance plugins are below; the text in the parenthesis is the reader-friendly name of the plugin so, for example, when querying the plugin you'll want to use 'oracledb' for Oracle DB.

adtran (Adtran NetVanta)	mongodb (MongoDB)
alcatel (Alcatel TiMOS)	ms_sqldb (MS SQL DB)
amazon_aws (Amazon AWS)	mysqldb (MySQL DB)
arista (Arista EOS)	netapp (NetApp Data ONTAP)
arubaos (ArubaOS)	netapp_api (Netapp API)

as/400 (IBM iSeries)	openshift (OpenShift Container Platform)
bluecoat (BlueCoat ProxySG)	oracledb (Oracle DB)
brocade (Brocade FabricOS)	ovalUnix (OVAL Unix)
checkpoint (Check Point GAiA)	ovalWindows (OVAL Windows)
cisco (Cisco IOS)	palo_alto (Palo Alto Networks PAN-OS)
cisco_aci (Cisco ACI)	postgresqldb (PostgreSQL DB)
cisco_firepower (Cisco Firepower)	rhev (RHEV)
citrix_application_delivery (Citrix Application Delivery)	scapLinux (SCAP Linux)
database (Database)	scapWindows (SCAP Windows)
extreme_extremexos (Extreme ExtremeXOS)	sonicwall (SonicWALL SonicOS)
f5 (F5 Networks)	sybasedb (Sybase DB)
fortigate (Fortigate FortiOS)	watchguard (WatchGuard)
genericssh (Generic SSH)	windows (Windows)
hpprocurve (HP ProCurve)	windowsfiles (Windows File Contents)
huawei (Huawei VRP)	xenserver (Citrix XenServer)
ibm_db2db (IBM DB2 DB)	zte_rosng (ZTE ROSNG)
juniper (Juniper Junos)	

When trying to have a specific query unix and 800-53 benchmarks run, one would think utilizing the Cross Reference filter with 'auditFile|unix, 800-53|*' would work but this would not. The Cross Reference filter has an implied 'OR' operator to it. The above example would result in all unix audit file benchmarks as well as all benchmarks that have 800-53 as a reference including non-unix audit files. In this scenario we want to utilize the two filters;

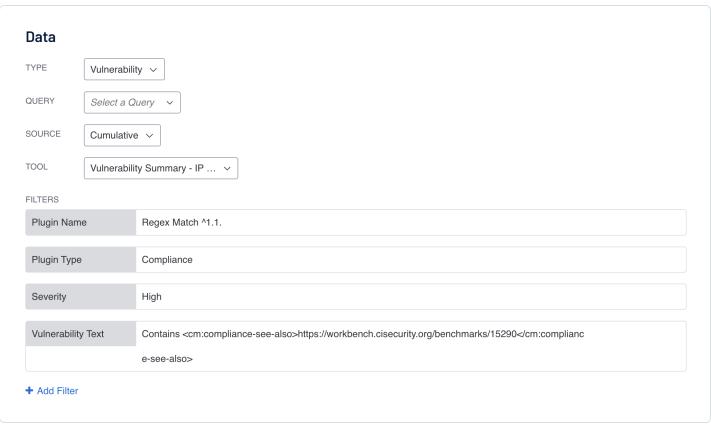
The Cross References Filter and the Vulnerability Text Filter.



Why the Cross References Filter for Windows audit files and not the framework? The Cross References filter is used for the 'auditFile|Windows' and a Regex Match paired with Vulnerability Text Filter to look for the tag 'cm:compliance-reference.*800-53.*cm:compliance-reference.' This query grabs all the Benchmark results that use a Windows Audit file and are related to the framework 800-53. It is important to note that while we can do 'auditFile|Windows' in the Cross References Filter and cm:compliance-reference.*800-53.*cm:compliance-reference' in the Vulnerability Text Filter, we cannot do the inverse; this would look like '800-53]*' in the Cross References Filter and cm:compliance-reference.*auditFile|Windows.*cm:compliance-reference.' The latter query would not result in anything as the plugin text does not include the 'auditFile' tag and instead the tag is inside of the 'xref' tag within the scan. In the Tenable Security Center Compliance Elements section some of the most common compliance elements are listed for ease of use in any regex query.

An example of a similar query is present in compliance reports and components. Inside the reports or components, the filters being used consistently are the Plugin Type and Vulnerability Text filters. In the following example, from the **CIS Windows Server 2012 v3.0.0** Report template, shows a table which shows results that have names starting with 1.1 (Plugin Name with regex match of ^1.1) that are Compliance Plugin Type, have failed (Severity equal to 'High'), and looks inside the vulnerability text to determine if the result originates from a CIS Windows Server 2012 v3.0.0 audit (the 'see_also' tag is a direct reference to the audit on CIS' website.





Vendor-Based Audits

Apart from DISA and CIS benchmarks Tenable also offers the support of audits based on vendors. Some of the Vendor Based Audits tenable provides are: VMware, Juniper, IBM, Microsoft Security Compliance Toolkit (MSCT), and more. The creation of these audit files originates from these vendors create guides or best practices based on some of their products. This is evident when opening and looking at the first description lines of the audit files. For example, in the Juniper Hardening Junos Devices audit file the description reads:

Description: This audit is based on the checklist for the book

"This Week: Hardening Junos Devices, Second Edition"

by John Weidley, available at http://www.juniper.net/dayone

The description mentions where the audit checks come from and if available =, the description also provides a link where the user can get more information on the topic.

Tenable Vulnerability Management splits the Vendor-Based Audits into two sections in the **Template Library**.

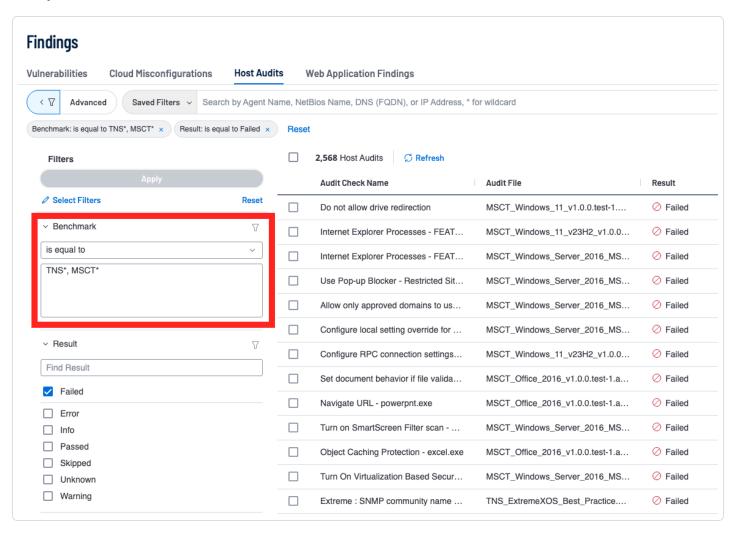


Groups ΑII My Widgets New and Updated (879) **Vulnerability Management** Web Application Scanning Lumin **Host Audit** Center for Internet Security Compliance Framework **DISA STIG** Host Audit Plugin Type Tenable Best Practice Audits **Vendor Based Audits**

Tenable Best Practice Audits include those benchmarks which were created by Tenable based on best practice guides of vendors. Within the Vendor-Based Audits section there are templates for benchmarks like the MSCT, which have been created based on baselines set by the vendor.

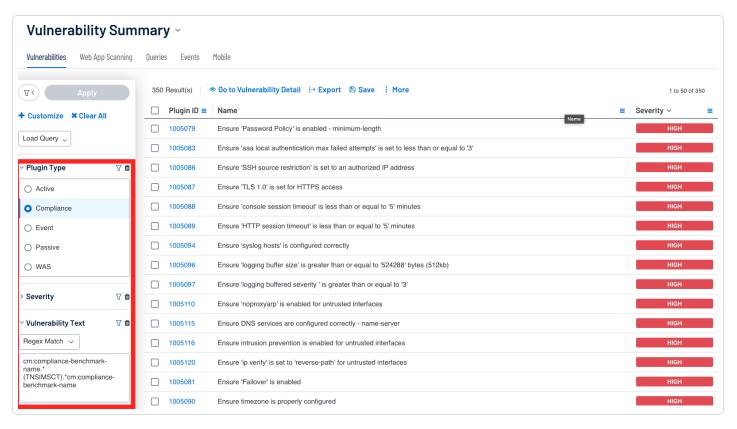
MSCT is a set of tools that allows enterprise security administrators to download, analyze, test, edit, and store Microsoft-recommended security configuration baselines for Windows and other Microsoft products. Tenable creates MSCT audit files that perform a detailed configuration review for these benchmarks. When scanning assets utilizing the appropriate MSCT audit file, the organization is able to perform detailed configuration checks. Tenable Vulnerability Management is able to perform a wide variety of platform and application audits based on the best practice consensus benchmarks developed by using these audit files. If more information is needed on auditing MSCT Baselines, this blog post provides more MSCT context.

In the other sections the Cross References and Vulnerability Text Filters have been mentioned and shown off to show how one could query their compliance data based on framework, plugin type, and frameworks like CIS or DISA; Vendor-Based Audit and Tenable Best Practice templates utilize the **Compliance Benchmark Filter**.



The benchmark filter within the Host Audits section of the Findings page can be used to find any benchmark by entering in the name, though the benchmark filter is also the best way to query all of Vendor Based Audits and/or Tenable Best Practice audits. The filter operator used in the screenshot above is equal too but the filter accepts an asterisk (*) to represent all characters after the given string. For example, "TNS*" would query every Benchmark with "TNS" in the start of the name. This behavior is the same as regular expression, though if you wanted to do multiple searches one would query something similar to the above ("TNS*, MSCT*). The search in the screenshot uses a comma to act as an OR within the query, this behavior results in all benchmarks matching the first value OR the other value coming up in one query search.

This query is also possible in Tenable Security Center by utilizing the Vulnerability Text Filter with a regular expression, as shown in the **Vulnerability Summary Tool** example.



In the example above we use a Regex Match with the Vulnerability Text Filter and set the text as cm:compliance-benchmark-name.*(TNS|MSCT).*cm:compliance-benchmark-name. The compliance benchmark name is what we target in the query to determine the name and filter out results. In the example above the text uses a pipe (|) as an OR operator to query any benchmark names with TNS OR MSCT in their name.

Learn More

Tenable Resources

- Auditing Microsoft Security Compliance Toolkit Baselines
- Plugins Search
- Tenable Vulnerability Management Findings Filters
- Tenable Security Center (6.3) Vulnerability Analysis Filter Components
- Audits Documentation
- Compliance Checks Reference

Compliance References

- CIS CSCv8 CIS Critical Security Controls Version 8
- GDPR General Data Protection Regulation
- HIPAA Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act
- PCI-DSS Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI DSS)
- ITSG-33 IT Security Risk Management: A Lifecycle Approach (ITSG-33)
- 800-171 NIST SP 800-171
- CSF NIST Cyber Security Framework (CSF)