Standard Operating Procedure: SOP-NET-007

Title: SonicWall Configuration Restore **Version:** 1.0 **Author:** Jeremy Smith
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1.0 Purpose

To establish a standardized procedure for restoring a SonicWall firewall configuration from a backup (.exp) file. This procedure is used for disaster recovery, device replacement, or rollback after failed changes.

2.0 Scope

This procedure applies to all Network Technicians and Engineers responsible for:
- Disaster recovery of SonicWall firewalls - Restoring configuration after firmware issues - Rolling back failed configuration changes - Device replacement (same model only)

3.0 Prerequisites

- **Backup File:** Valid `.exp` configuration backup file (see SOP-NET-006)
- **Access:** Administrative credentials to the SonicWall device
- **Compatibility:**
    - Backup must be from the **same device model** (e.g., TZ 270 → TZ 270)
    - Target firmware should be **same or newer** than backup source
- **Network:** Active connection to the SonicWall management interface

4.0 When to Use This Procedure

Scenario	Use Restore?	Notes
Device bricked after firmware upgrade	Yes	Restore after firmware rollback
Configuration change caused outage	Yes	Restore pre-change backup
Device RMA/replacement (same model)	Yes	Restore to new device
Moving config to different model	No	Manual reconfiguration required

Scenario	Use Restore?	Notes
Factory reset performed	Yes	Restore from backup

5.0 Procedure

5.1 Pre-Restore Checklist

1. **Verify Backup File:**
   - Confirm you have the correct `.exp` file
   - Check file size is reasonable (50KB - 500KB typically)
   - Verify file is not corrupted (open in text editor, should show XML)
2. **Document Current State:**
   - Note current firmware version
   - Note current WAN IP (if accessible)
   - Export current config as additional backup (if device is accessible)
3. **Verify Compatibility:**
   - Confirm backup is from same device model
   - Confirm target firmware is same or newer than backup source firmware

5.2 Restore Configuration

1. **Access SonicWall Management Interface:**
   - Navigate to the SonicWall management IP
   - Log in with administrative credentials
   - If device is factory reset, use default IP `192.168.168.168`
2. **Navigate to Import Settings:**
   - Go to **Device > Settings > Firmware & Backups**
   - Locate the **Import/Export Configuration** section
3. **Import Configuration:**
   - Click **Import Settings** (or **Import Configuration**)
   - Browse to and select your `.exp` backup file
   - Click **Import**
4. **Review Import Summary:**
   - Review the import summary showing what will be restored
   - Confirm settings look correct
   - Click **OK** or **Confirm** to proceed
5. **Wait for Reboot:**
   - The firewall will automatically reboot to apply configuration
   - This typically takes 3-5 minutes
   - Do NOT power off during this process

5.3 Post-Restore Verification

1. **Verify Access:**

- Log back into the management interface
- Note: Management IP may have changed to restored configuration

2. **Verify Critical Settings:**
   ☐ WAN interface configured correctly
   ☐ LAN interface and DHCP working
   ☐ Internet connectivity functional
   ☐ Firewall rules restored
   ☐ VPN configurations (if applicable)

3. **Re-authenticate Services:**
   - Navigate to **Device > Settings > MySonicWall**
   - Re-enter MySonicWall credentials if prompted
   - Verify license synchronization

4. **Test Connectivity:**
   - Test internet access from LAN
   - Test any VPN connections
   - Verify critical applications accessible

6.0 Restore to Factory Reset Device

If restoring to a device that has been factory reset:

1. **Connect to Default IP:**
   - Set your computer to static IP: `192.168.168.2`
   - Connect to firewall LAN port
   - Navigate to `http://192.168.168.168`

2. **Complete Initial Setup:**
   - Log in with default credentials (`admin` / `password`)
   - Change admin password when prompted
   - Select **Manual Setup**

3. **Register Device (if needed):**
   - Complete device registration per SOP-NET-001 Section 6.2
   - Registration must complete before config can be fully applied

4. **Import Configuration:**
   - Follow Section 5.2 above
   - Note: Some settings may require re-entry (MySonicWall credentials, certificates)

7.0 Restore to Replacement Device (RMA)

When replacing a failed device with new hardware (same model):

1. **Register New Device:**
   - Register new device in MySonicWall portal
   - Transfer licenses from old device if needed (contact SonicWall support)

2. **Update Firmware:**
   - Upgrade new device to match firmware version of backup
   - Or upgrade to latest stable release

3. **Import Configuration:**
   - Follow Section 5.2 above
4. **Update WAN Settings:**
   - If WAN IP is static, verify ISP settings are correct
   - May need to update MAC address with ISP
5. **Re-establish VPNs:**
   - Site-to-site VPNs may need to be re-established
   - Notify remote sites of device replacement

8.0 Troubleshooting

Issue	Resolution
Import fails with error	1. Verify .exp file not corrupted 2. Check firmware compatibility 3. Try different browser
Cannot access device after restore	1. Check if management IP changed 2. Connect to LAN and try default gateway IP 3. Factory reset and retry
Licenses not showing after restore	1. Re-enter MySonicWall credentials 2. Click Synchronize in Licenses section 3. Reboot device
VPN not connecting after restore	1. Verify WAN IP correct 2. Re-exchange keys with remote site 3. Check firewall rules restored
Services not enabled after restore	1. Sync licenses with MySonicWall 2. Manually enable services 3. Verify subscription active

9.0 Important Warnings

WARNING: Restoring a configuration will **overwrite all current settings**. Always export current configuration before restoring.

WARNING: Configurations are **device-model specific**. A TZ 270 backup cannot be restored to a TZ 370 or other model.

WARNING: If restoring to older firmware than the backup source, some settings may not apply correctly. Always restore to same or newer firmware.

10.0 Related Documents

- SOP-NET-001: Initial SonicWall Firewall Setup
- SOP-NET-004: Register Device in MySonicwall
- SOP-NET-006: SonicWall Configuration Backup

End of Document