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MANDALAY BAY / LAS VEGAS





# Sensor and Process Fingerprinting in Industrial Control Systems

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*Singapore University of  
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## Martín:

- Head of Research, Cyxtera TFP
- Previously Assistant Professor in Bogotá and SUTD, Singapore.
- Ph.D. in CS, background in Math and Systems Engineering.
- Interested in software and systems security applications to ICS, IoT.



## Mujeeb:

- Ph.D. student at SUTD in Singapore.
- Thesis on sensor fingerprinting in ICS.
- Background in Electronic Engineering.



# ICS Security is important



# Water also...



**Software**

## Hacker jailed for revenge sewage attacks

Job rejection caused a bit of a stink

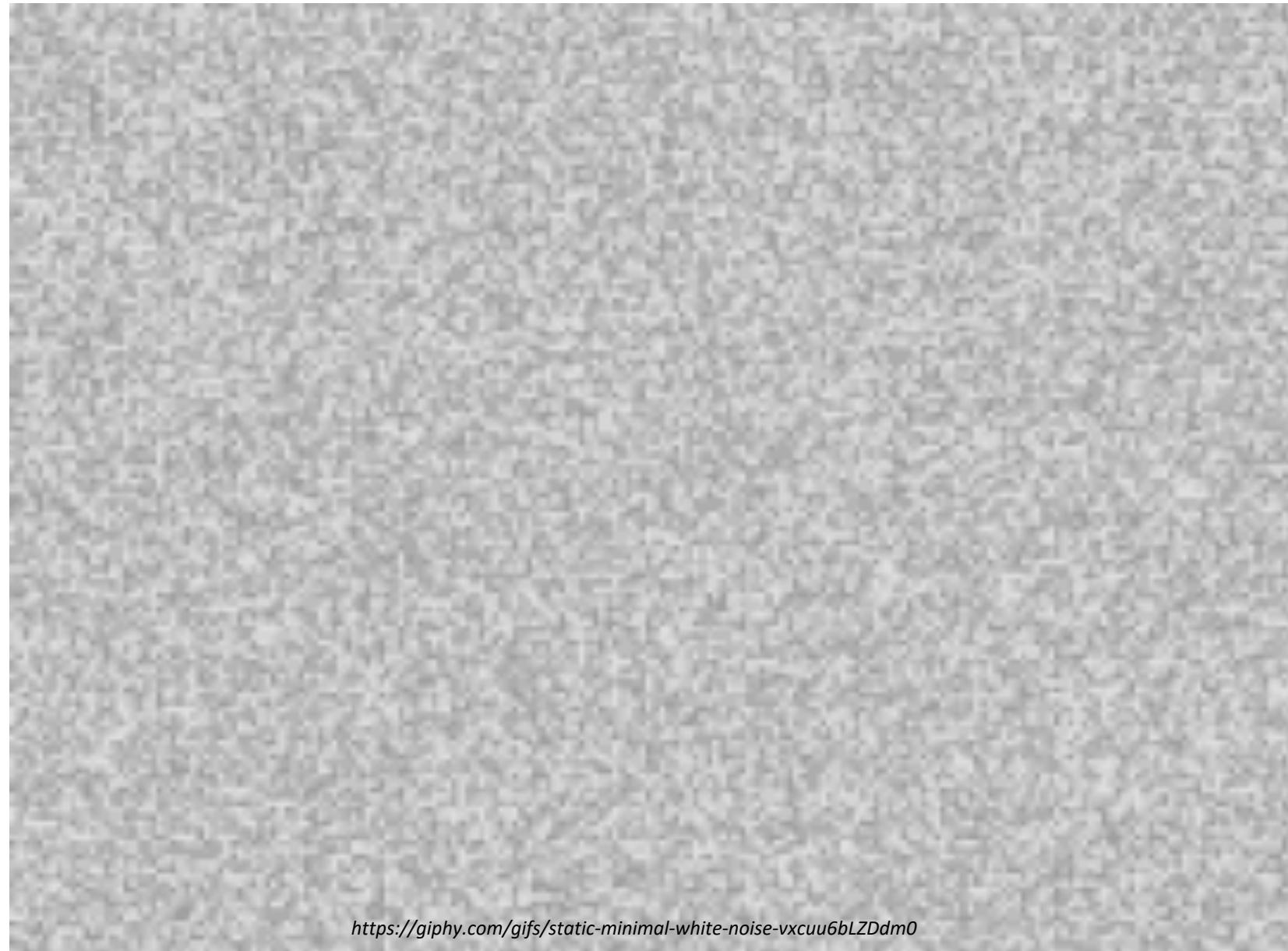
By Tony Smith 31 Oct 2001 at 15:55

SHARE ▾

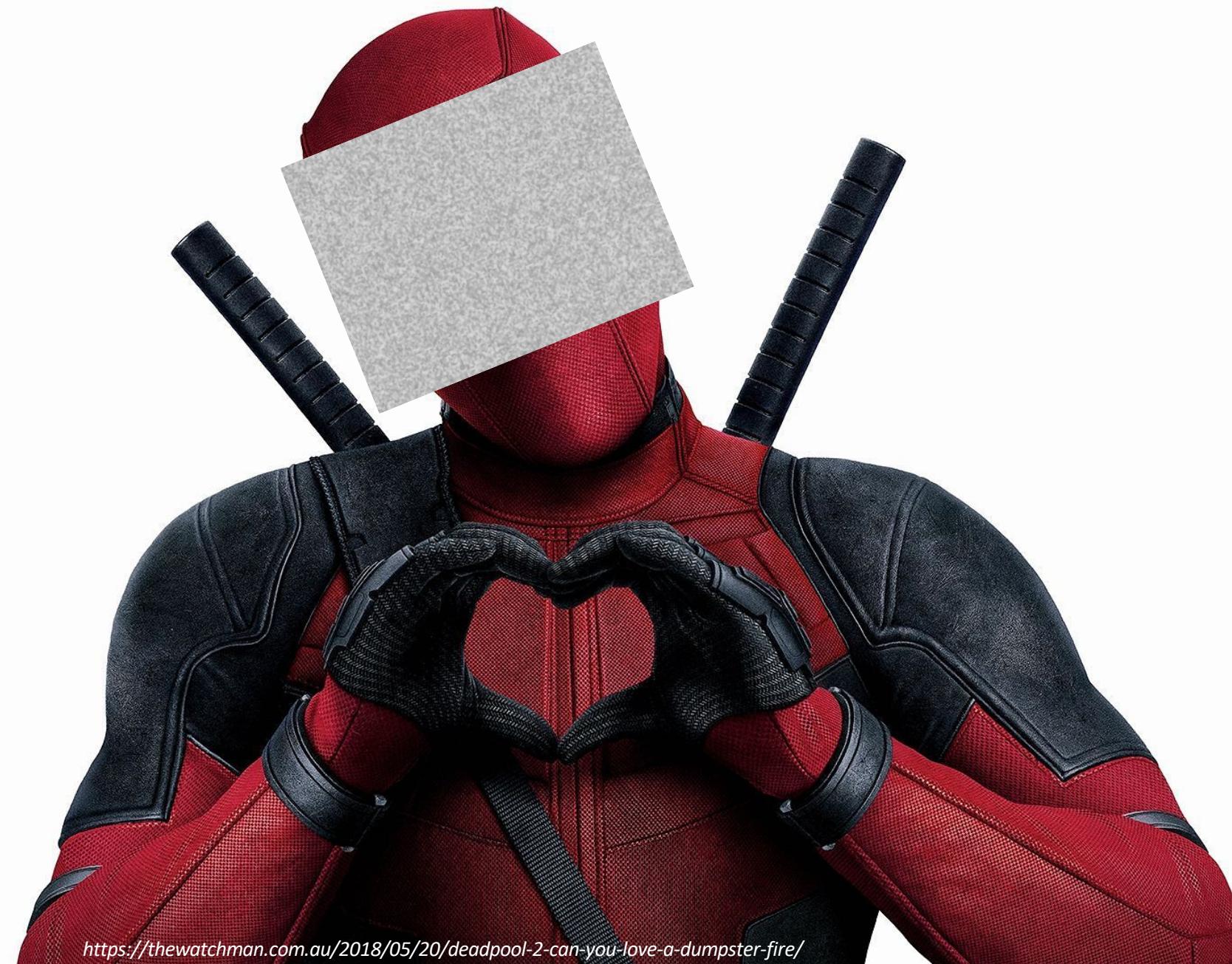
An Australian man was today sent to prison for two years after he was found guilty of hacking into the Maroochy Shire, Queensland computerised waste management system and caused millions of litres of raw sewage to spill out into local parks, rivers and even the grounds of a Hyatt Regency hotel.

"Marine life died, the creek water turned black and the stench was unbearable for residents," said Janelle Bryant of the Australian Environmental Protection Agency.

# Noise is bad...



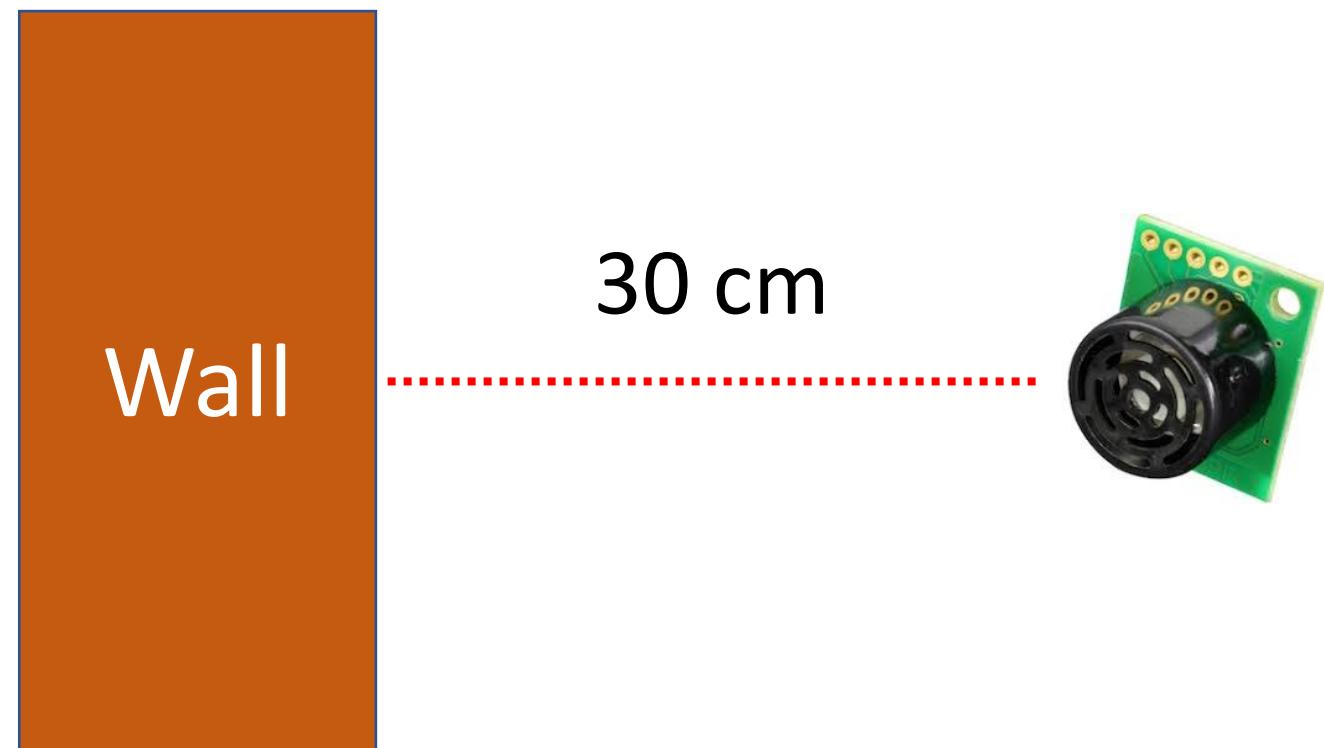
# Noise is good!



<https://thewatchman.com.au/2018/05/20/deadpool-2-can-you-love-a-dumpster-fire/>

Sensor and Process Fingerprinting in ICS

# What kind of noise?

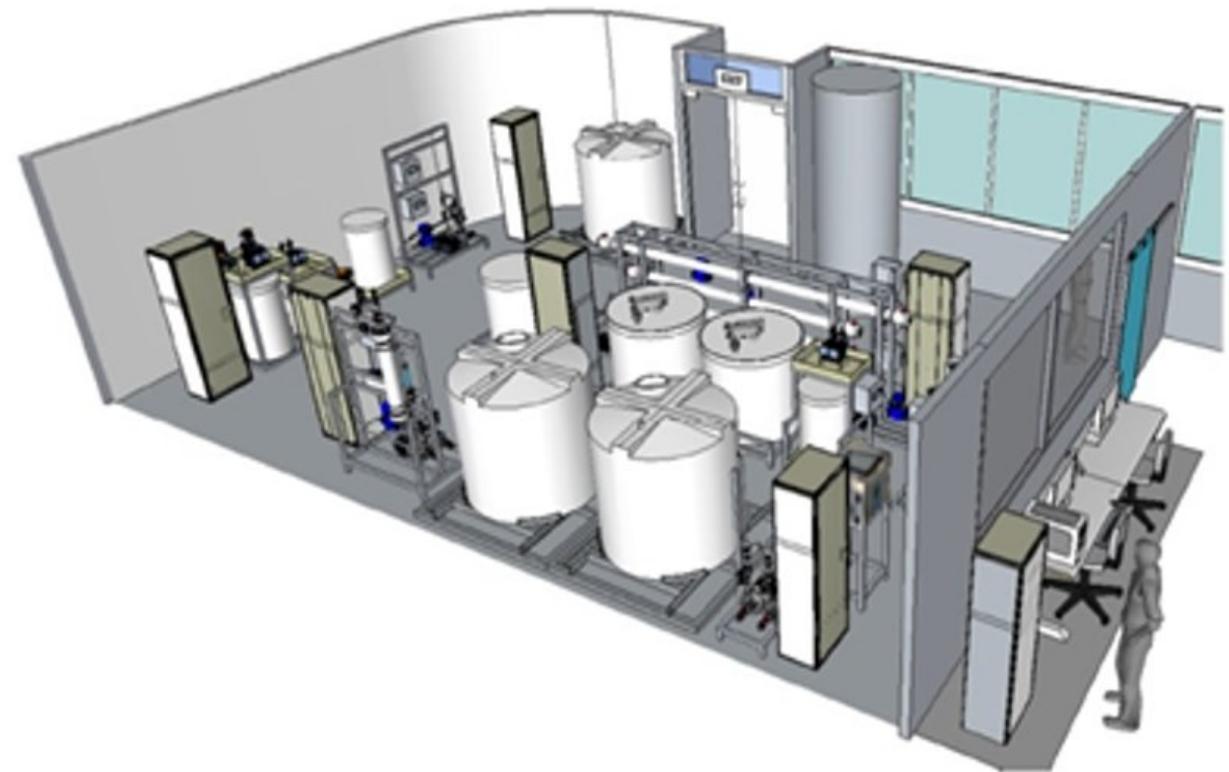


Measured values

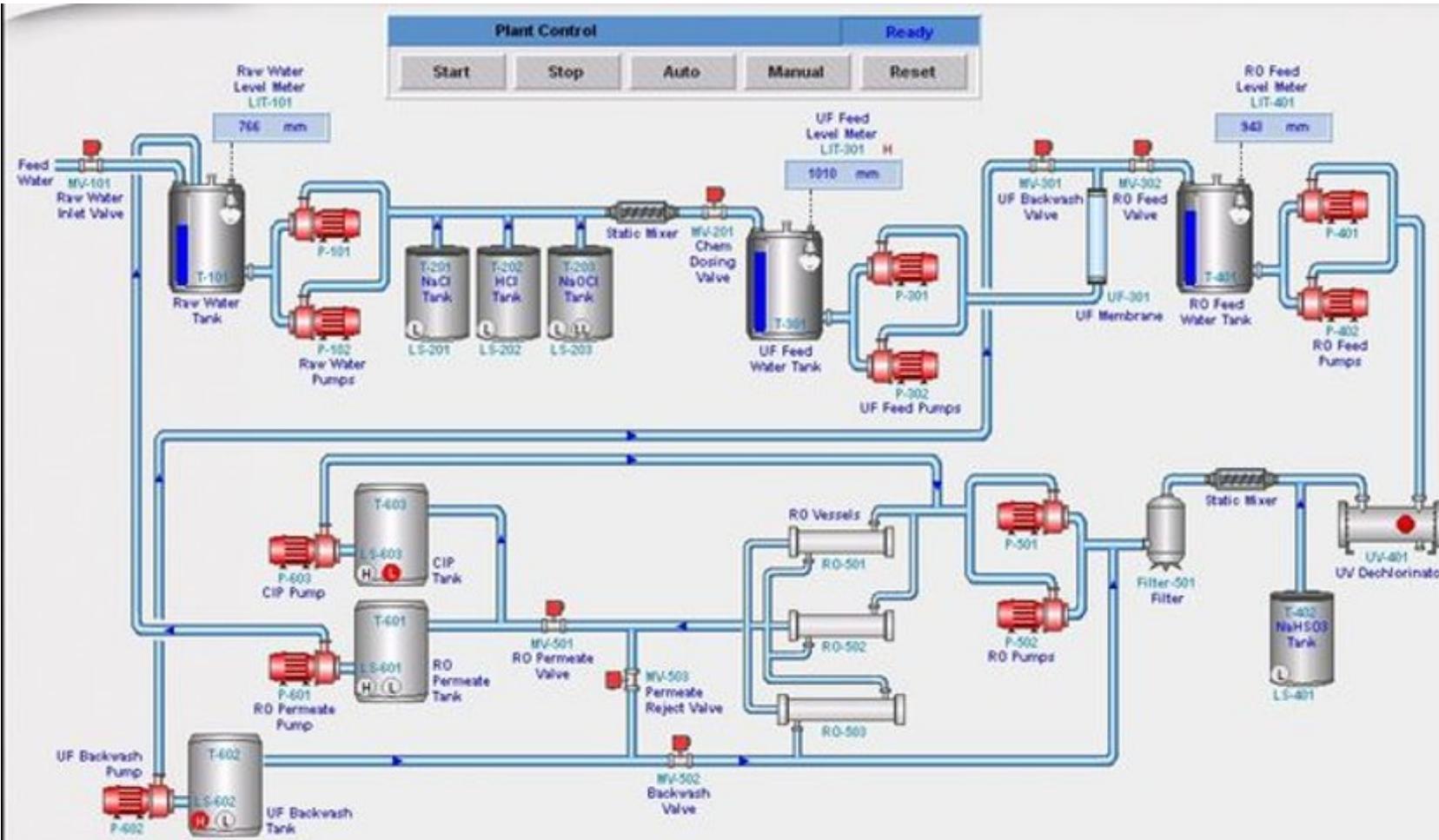
| Timestamp | Values       |
|-----------|--------------|
| 0         | 30.541212341 |
| 1         | 30.481231303 |
| 2         | 30.521231290 |
| 3         | 30.342305190 |
| 4         | 30.560392148 |
| 5         | 30.531091240 |
| 6         | 30.494756191 |

# Talk outline

1. An ICS testbed (SWaT)
2. Cyber/Physical attacks on SWaT
3. How to detect attacks?
4. How to detect attacks using sensor and process noise?
5. Discussion



# Secure Water Treatment Testbed (SWaT)



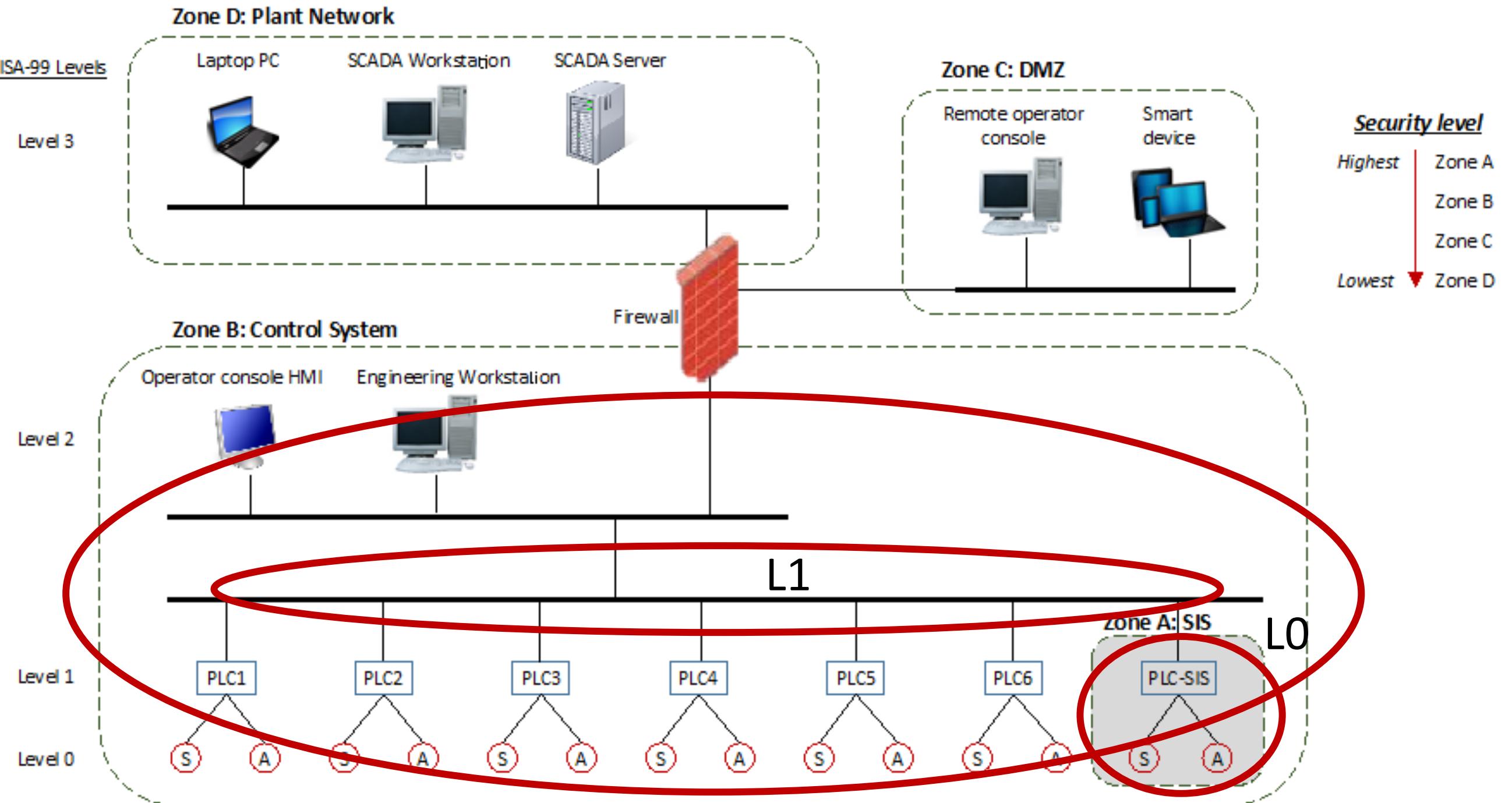
- Water treatment testbed for security research since 2015.
- 6 stages of processing (including UV, chemical treatment)

[https://itrust.sutd.edu.sg/itrust-labs-home/itrust-labs\\_swat/](https://itrust.sutd.edu.sg/itrust-labs-home/itrust-labs_swat/)

# SWaT overview video



# Network overview



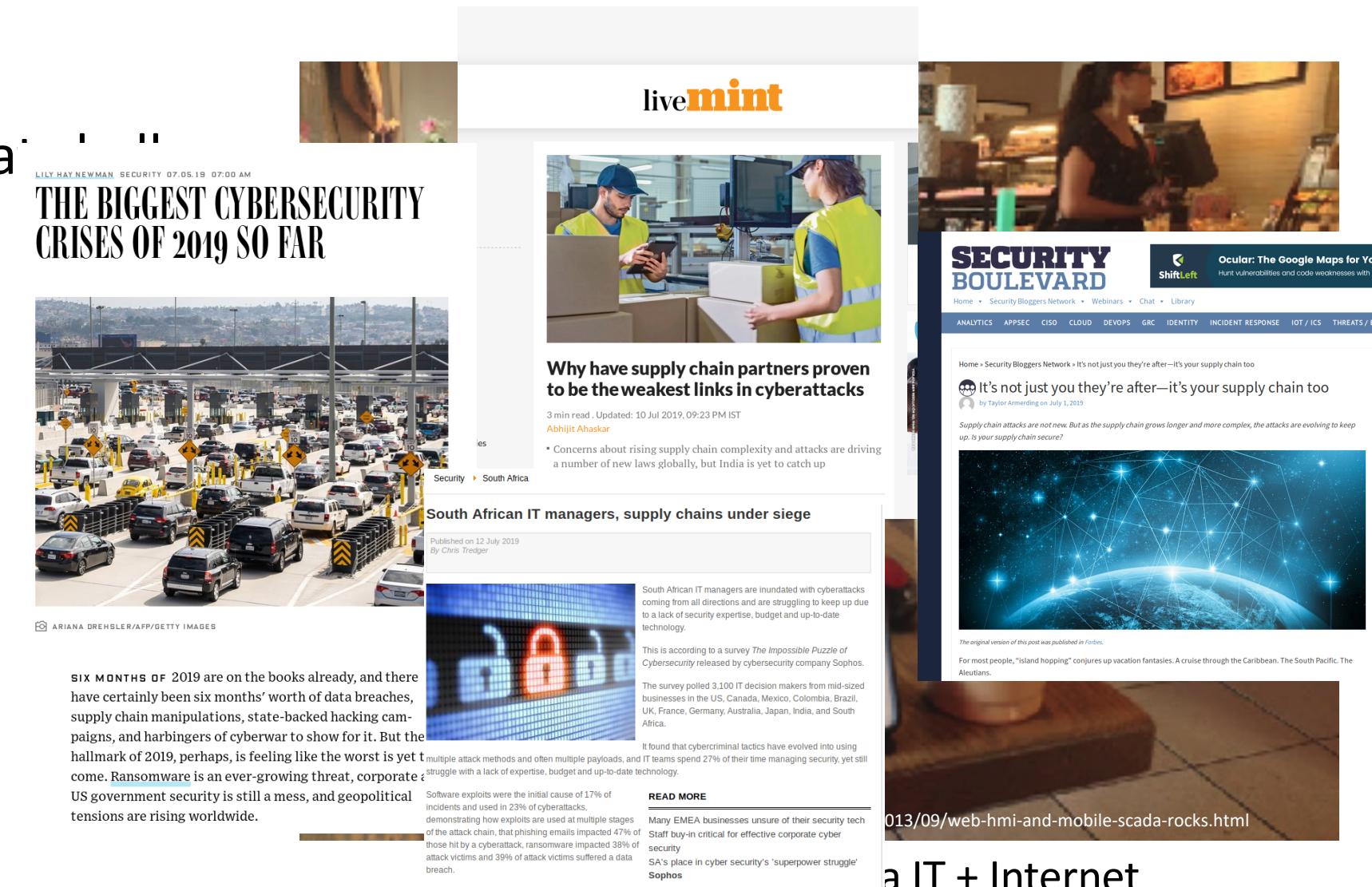




Thanks! Questions?

# Why we need defense in depth in ICS

- Multiple advanced attack vectors that traditional IT security views.
  - Insider threats
  - Insecure Updates
  - Supply chain attacks
- Lack of authentication in L1 and L0! (field network/protocols)



**THE BIGGEST CYBERSECURITY CRISES OF 2019 SO FAR**

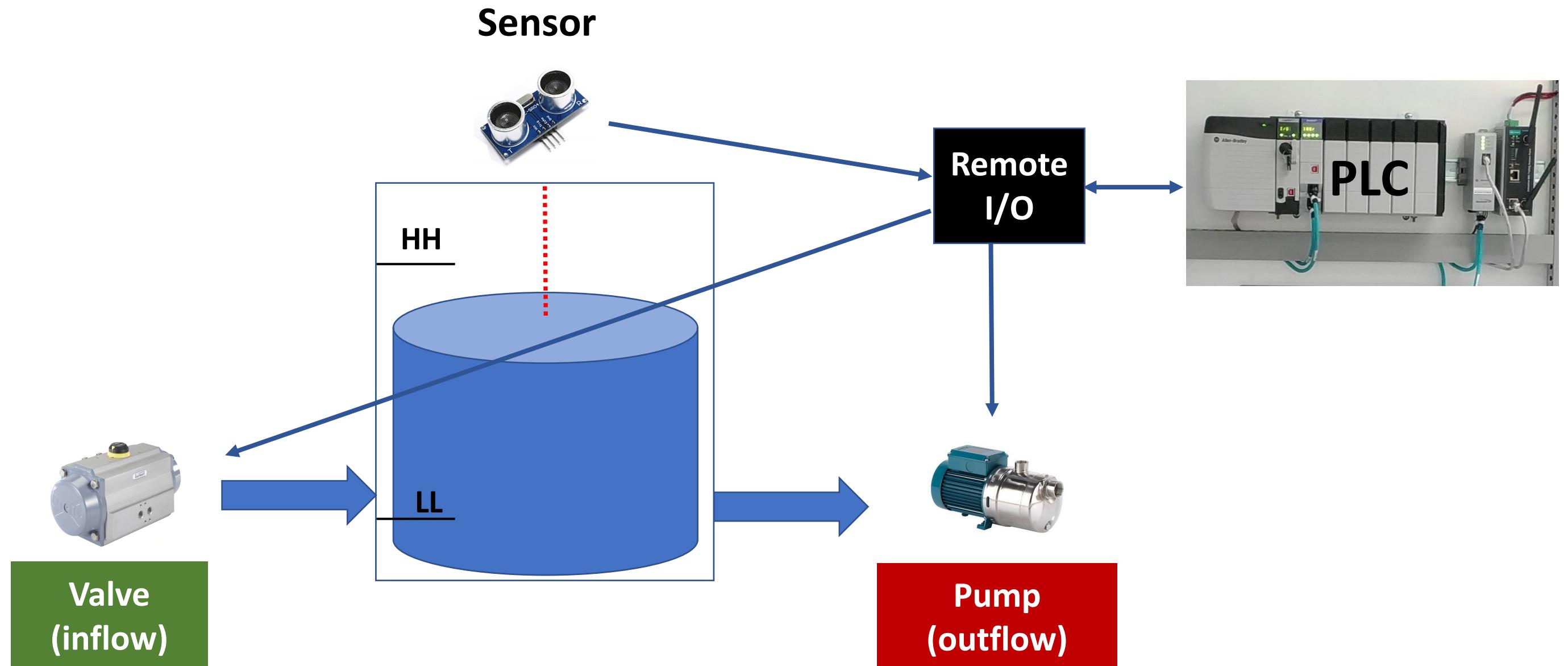
**Why have supply chain partners proven to be the weakest links in cyberattacks**

**South African IT managers, supply chains under siege**

**It's not just you they're after—it's your supply chain too**

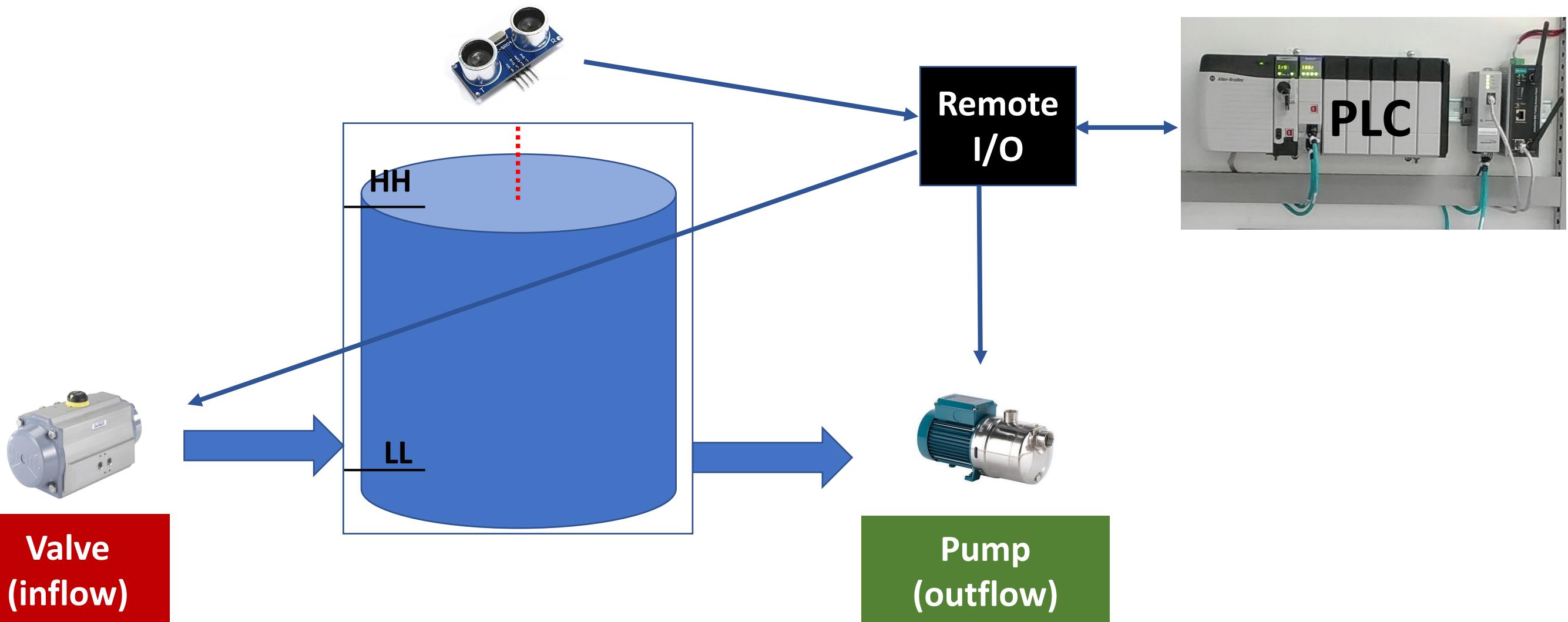
**a IT + Internet**

# How to control a water tank?



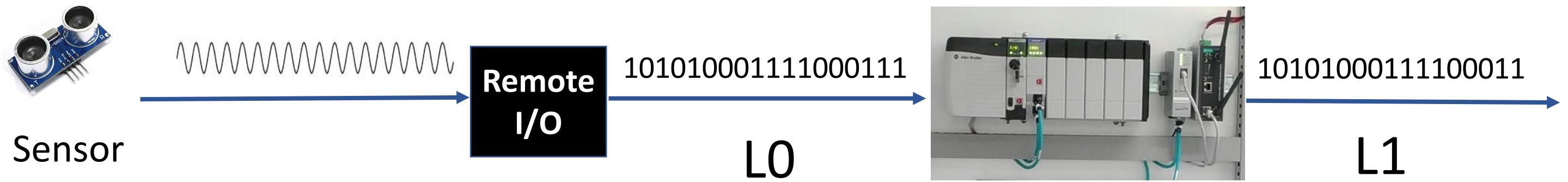
# How to control a water tank?

Sensor

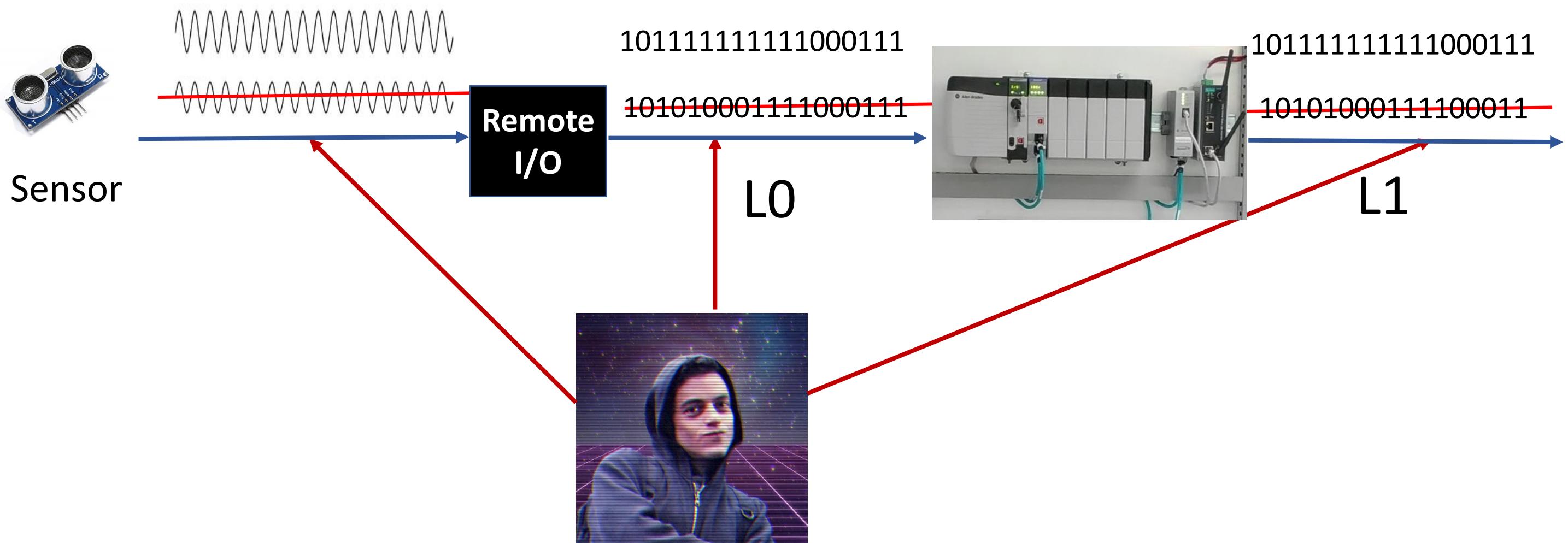


# Attacks?

# Authentication?



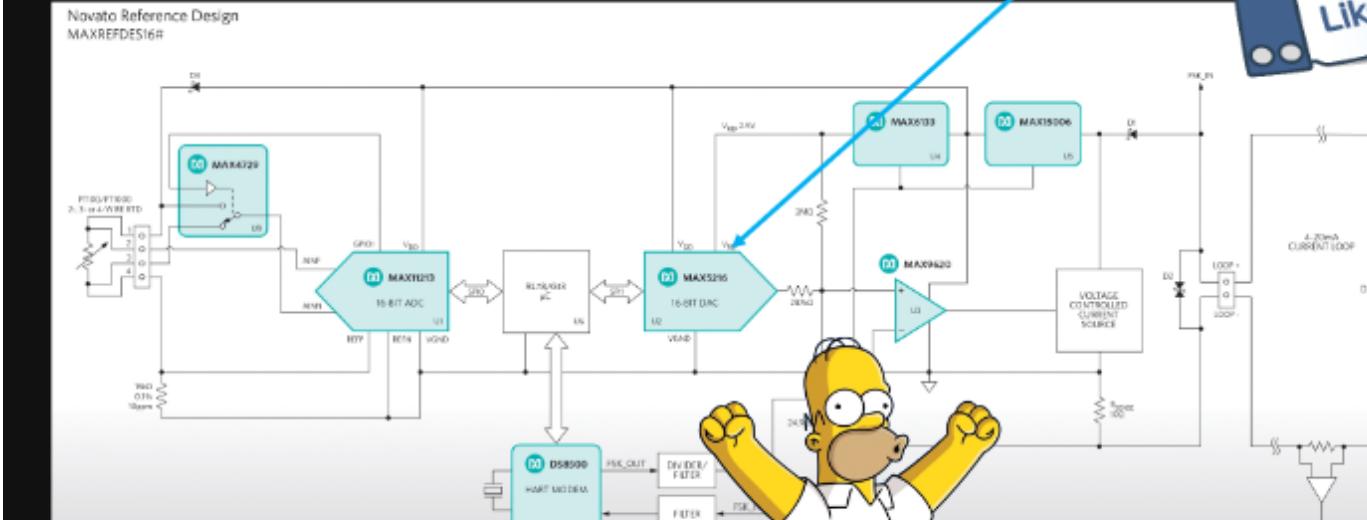
# Authentication?



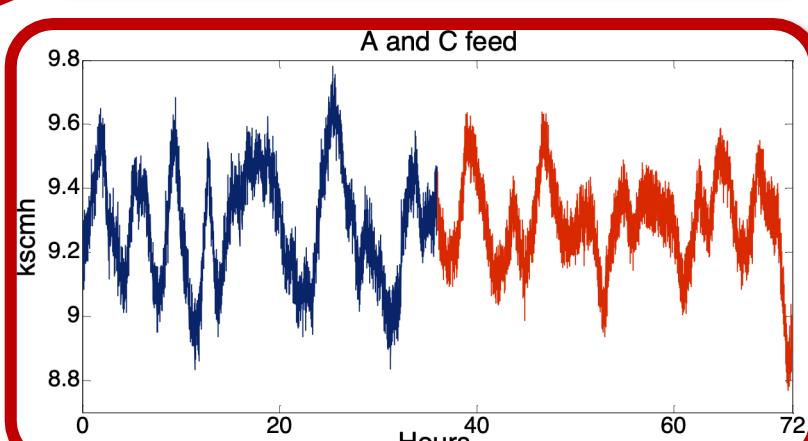
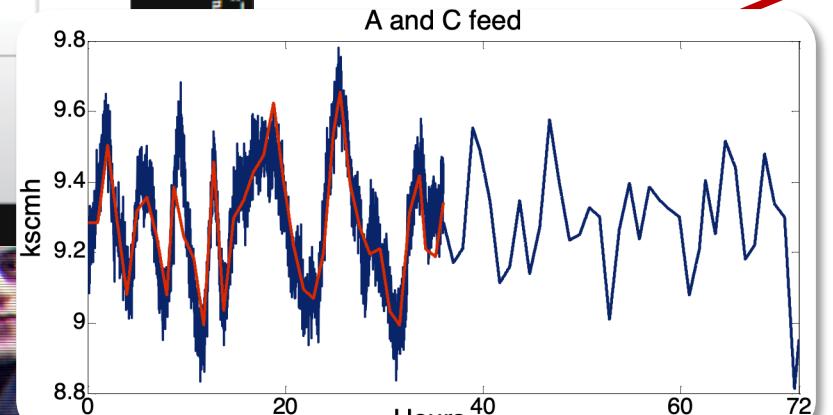
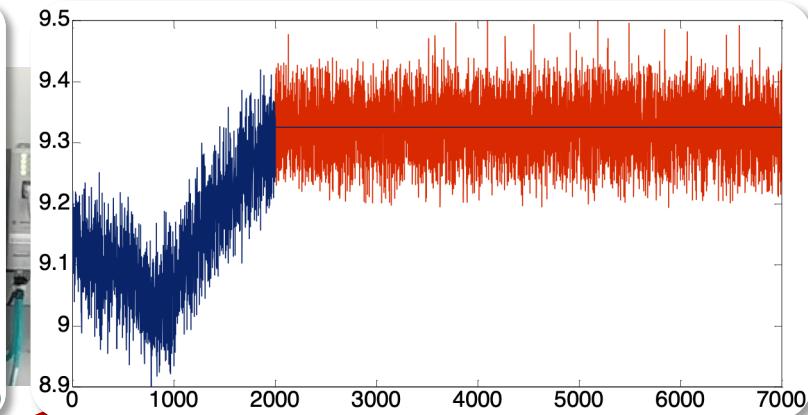
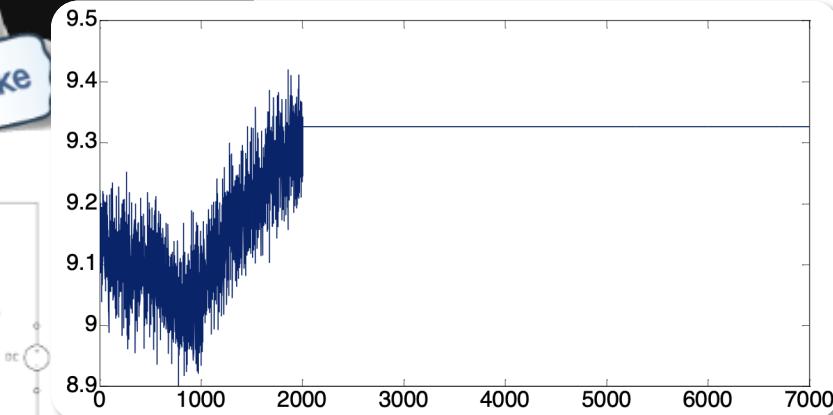
# Attacker model

## ATTACK FROM TRANSMITTER

### HART transmitter reference design ;-)



DAC with s/r up to 100kHz  
(smooth sine wave at ~ 5kHz)

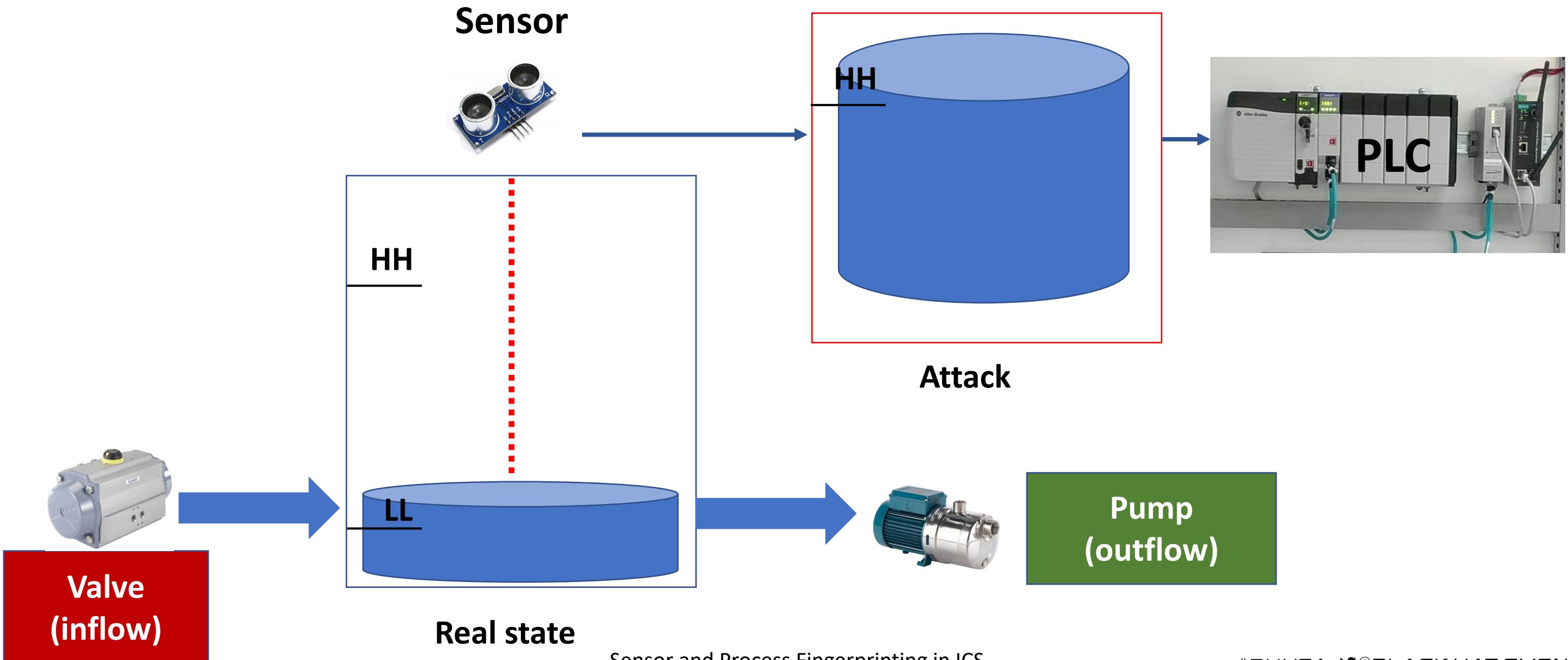


(hardware)

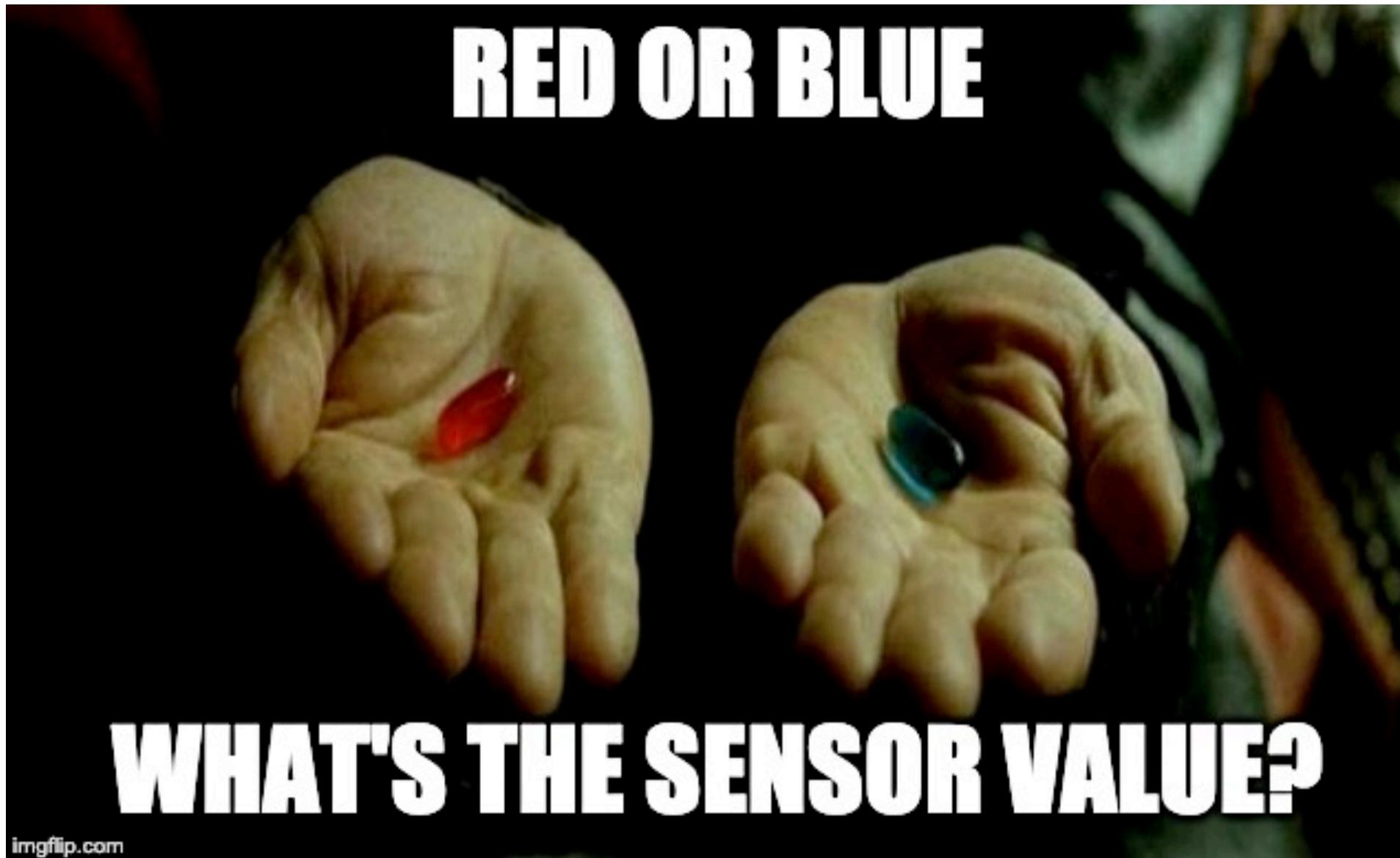
- Can manipulate analog/smart signal

[Bolshev et al. BH Asia 16]

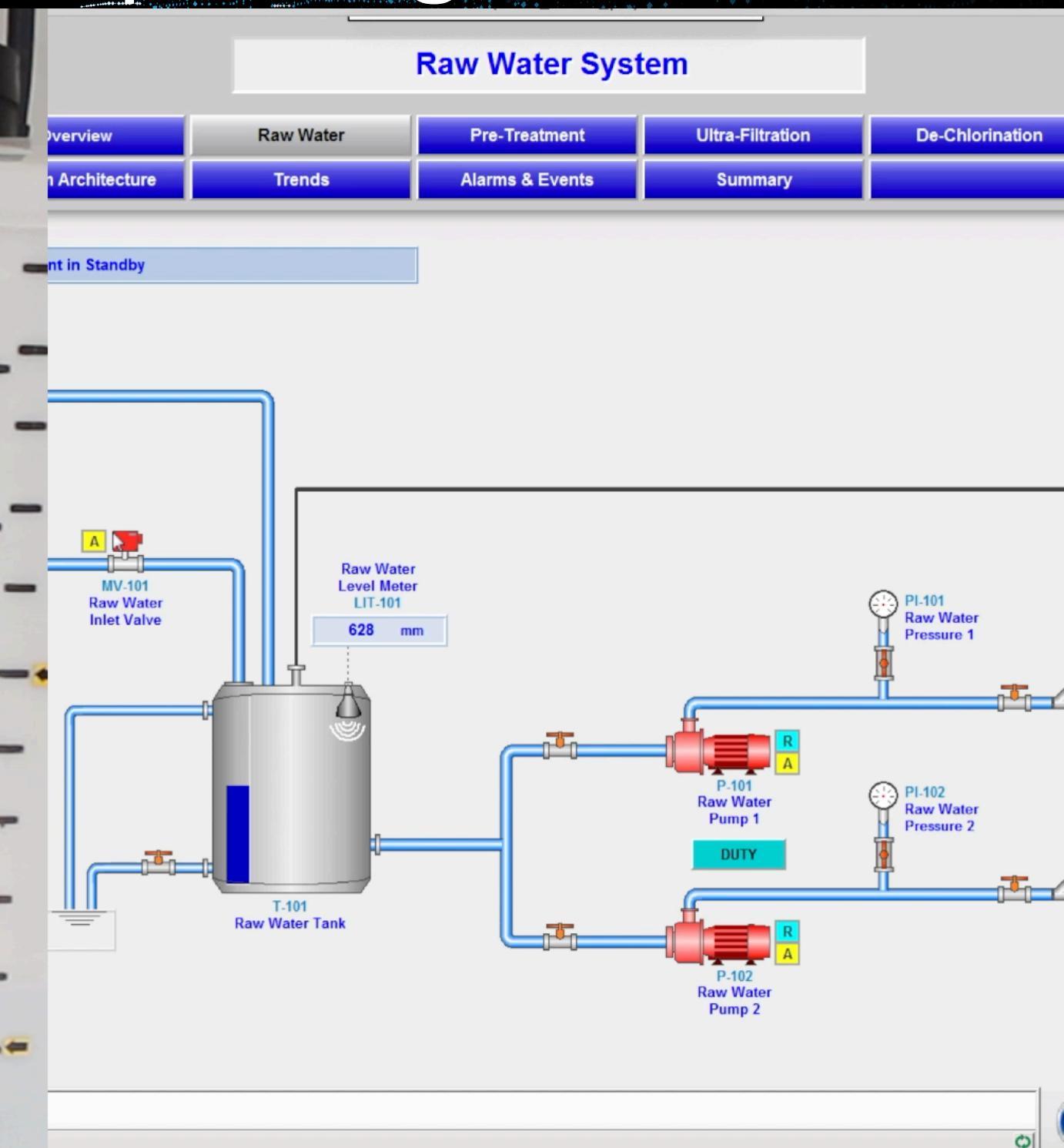
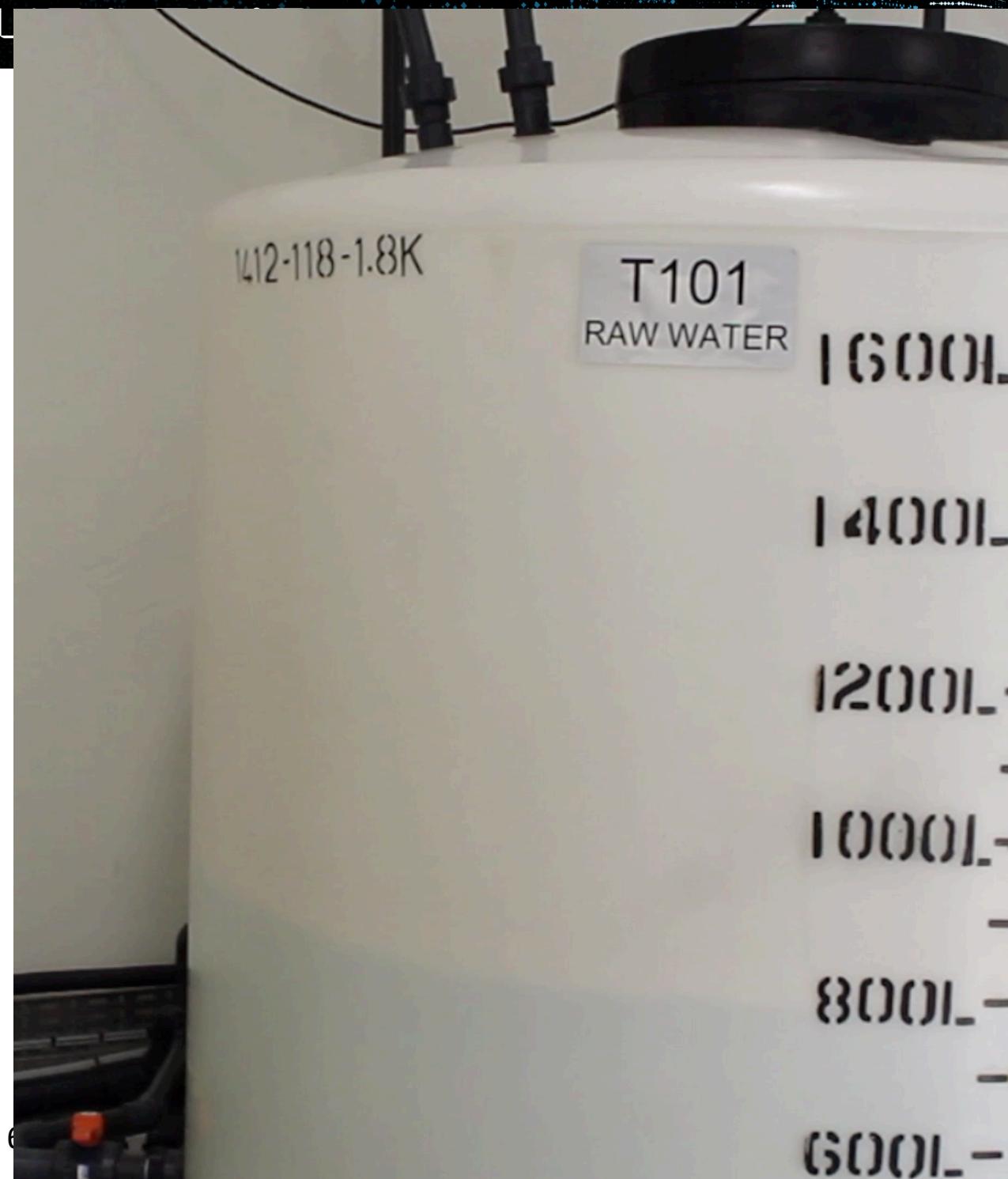
# ("Shameless") attack



# Data spoofing attacks



# Video of data spoofing attack

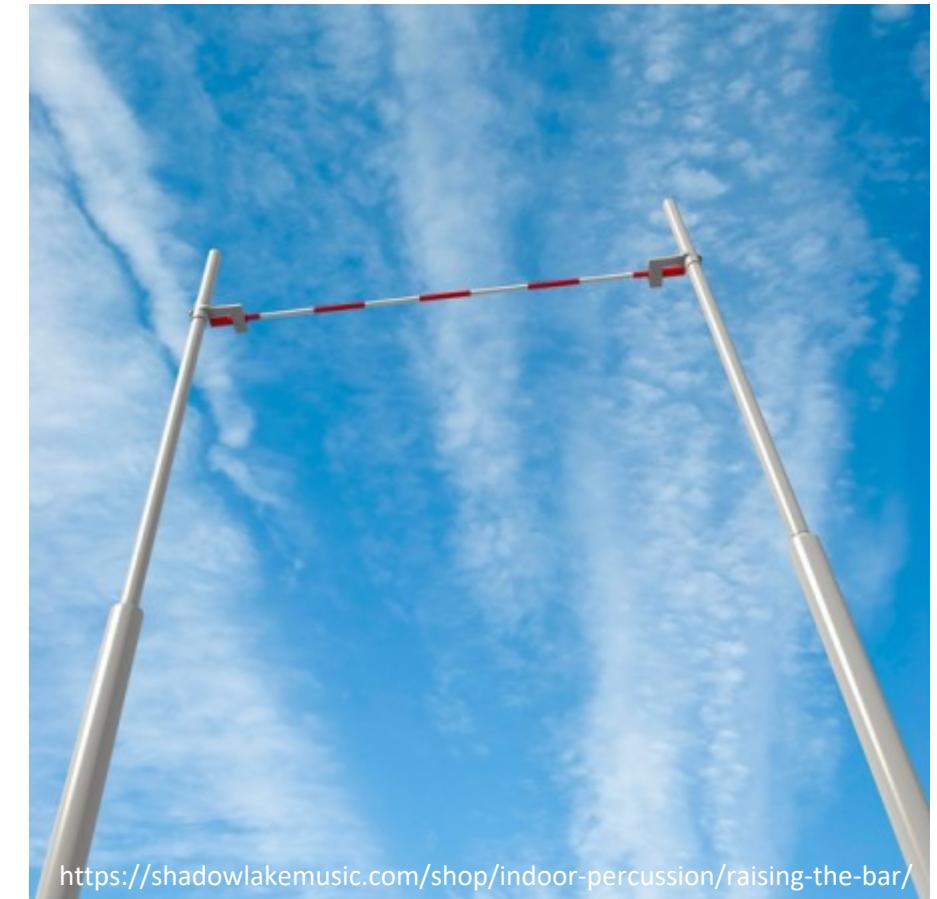




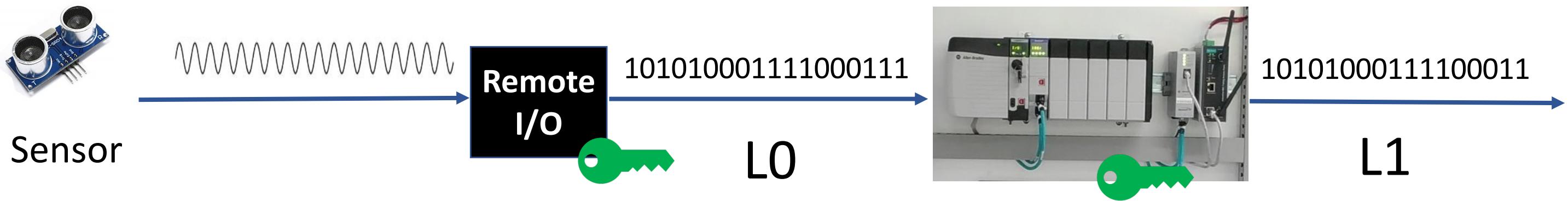
# Defenses?

# How to raise the bar against attacks?

- Use cryptographic primitives to authenticate data?
  - Cumbersome in legacy systems.
    - Computational resources are limited.
    - Not supported by industrial protocols.
  - Doesn't entirely solve the problem.
    - Analog data could already be malicious.
    - Cryptographic keys can be stolen.



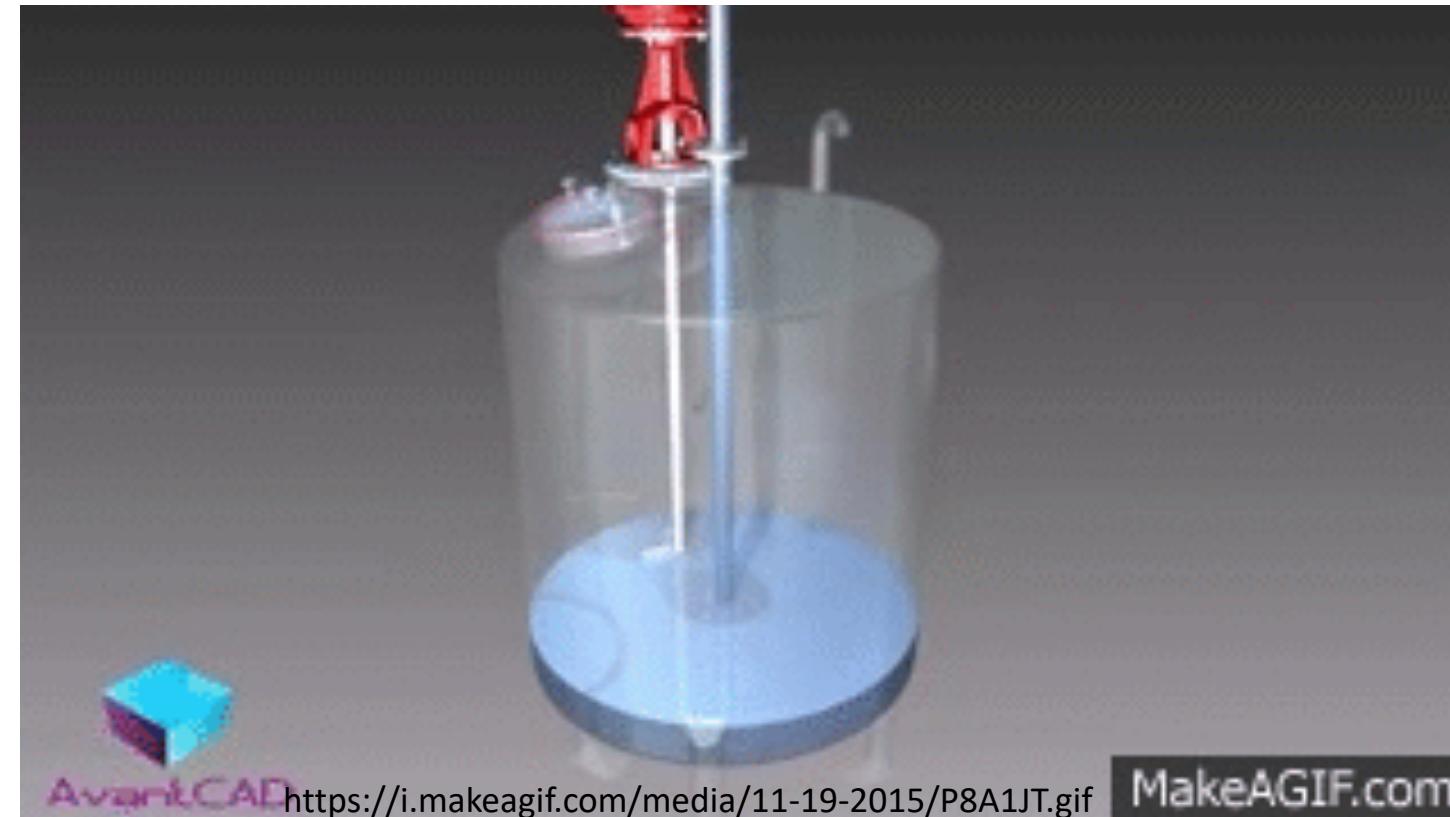
# Authentication?



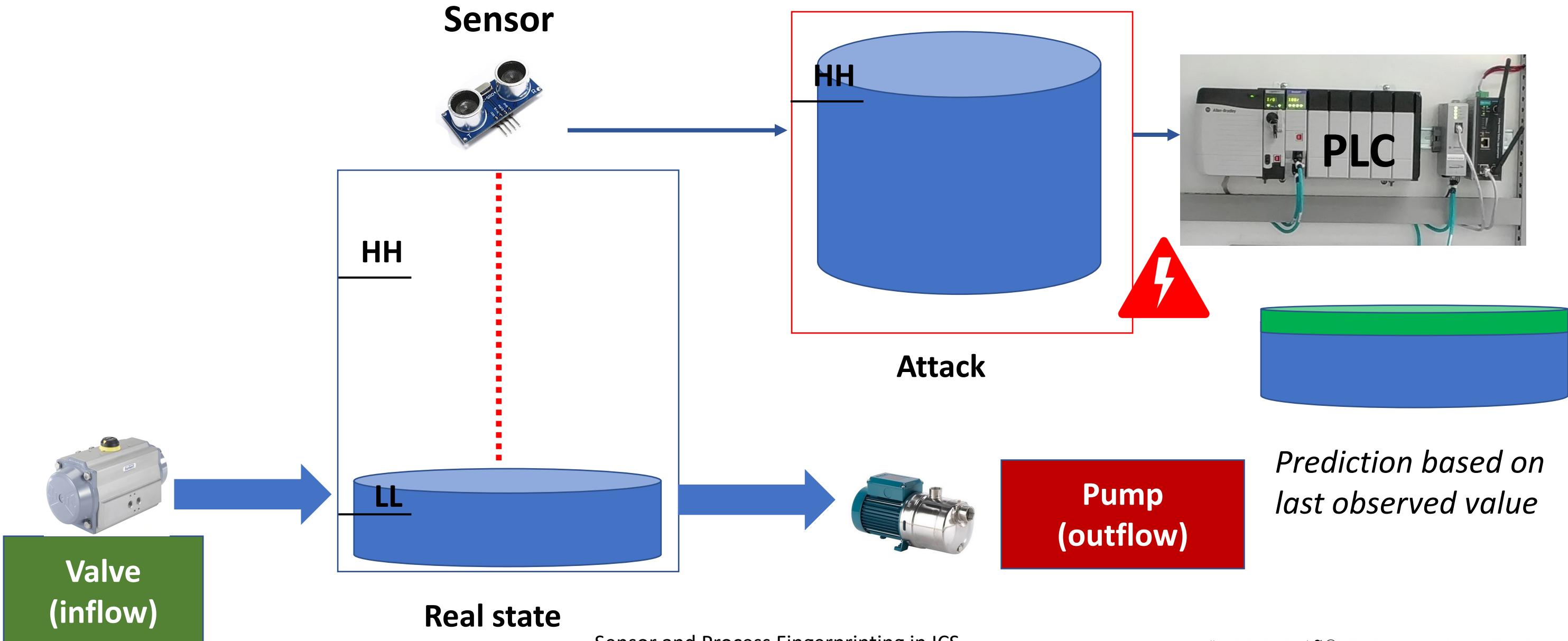
- Sensor data could already be malicious before authenticating.
- Keys can be stolen.

# Model-based countermeasures

- Idea: a mathematical model of the process gives a "prediction" of future plant states.
  - If observation does not match the prediction, raise an alarm.



# "Shameless" attack detection

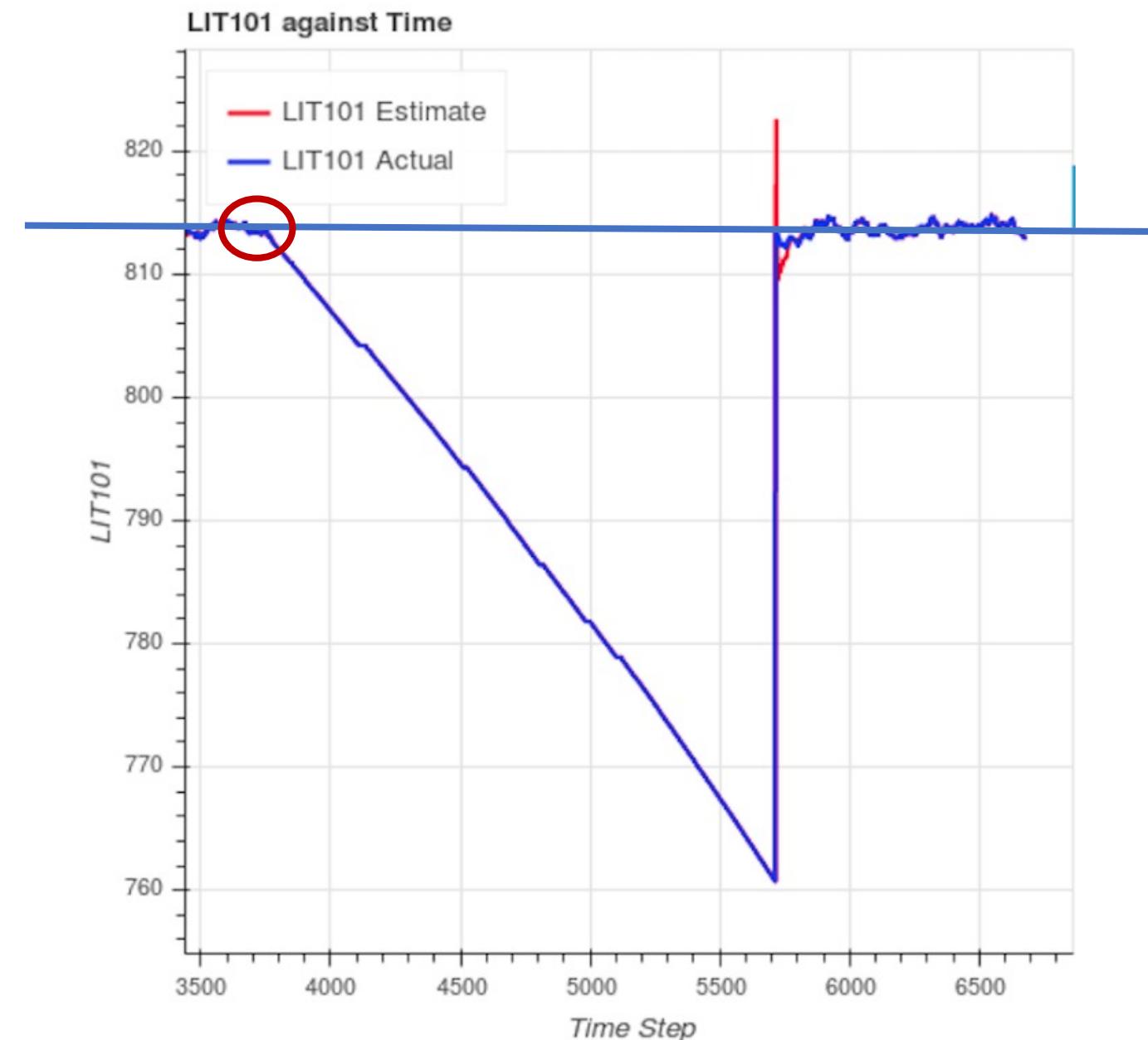


# Stealthy attacks



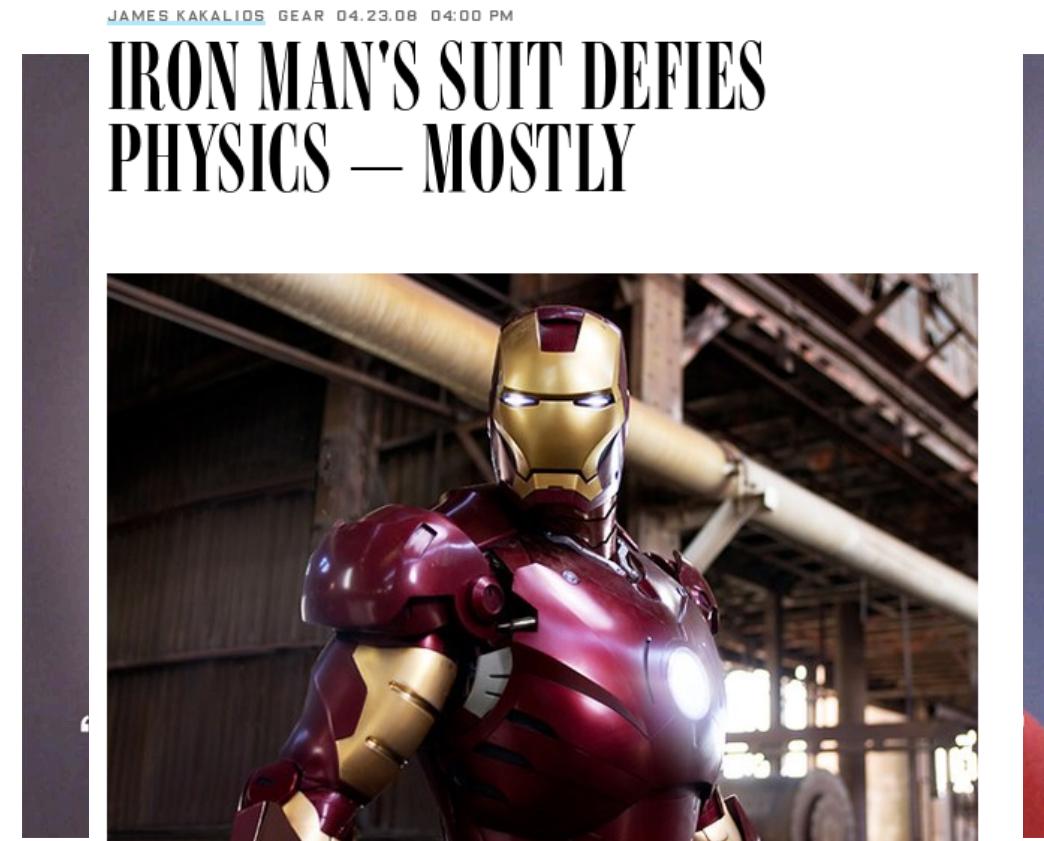
# Stealthy attacks

- Small deviations have a cumulative effect.
- Can bypass model-based countermeasures.



# Physical invariants

- Idea: detect violations of laws of physics, i.e. pressure as a function of a water tank level. [Adepu et al. IFIP SEC 16]
- Shortcomings: hard to produce exhaustive invariant list for a system.

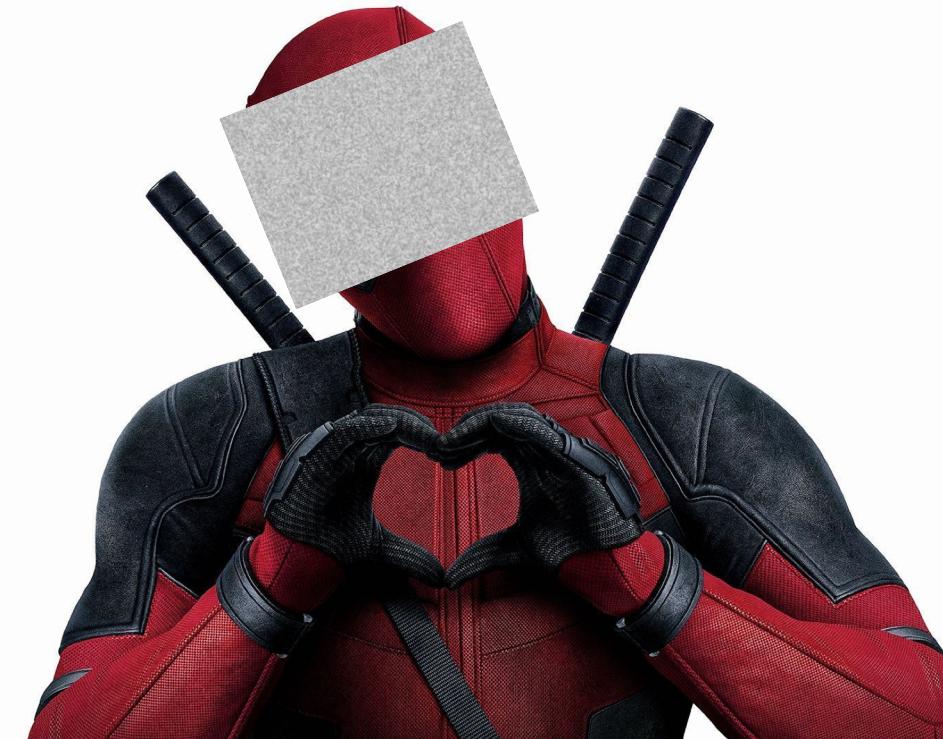


A real-life version of Tony Stark's amazing suit would require more energy than a nuclear power plant can produce. COURTESY PARAMOUNT

# Noise!

# Come on, feel the noise

- Can we use sensor noise to fingerprint sensor values and address shortcomings of previous defenses?
- Can we distinguish sensors of same type and brand?



# Our sensors

iSOLV  
INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS



iSOLV  
INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS

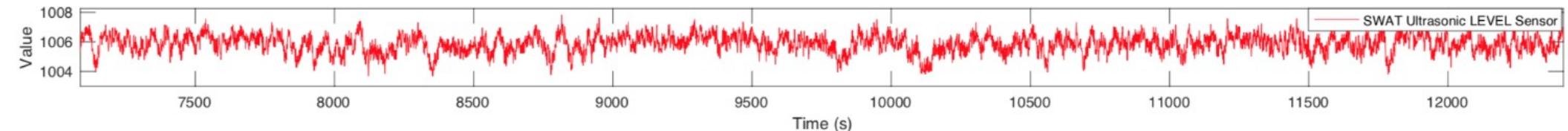


\$1500 - \$3000

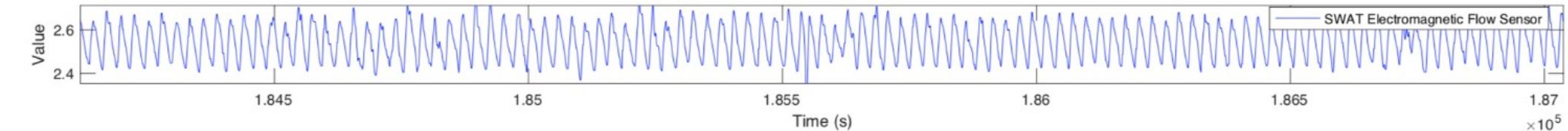


# Noise in different sensors

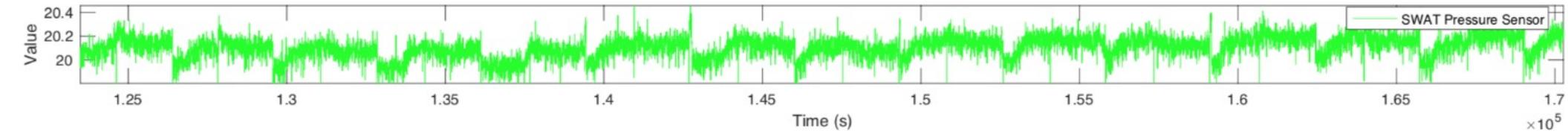
Ultrasonic Level Sensor  
(SWaT)



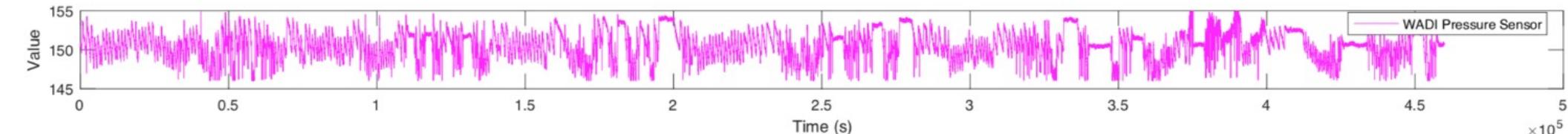
Electromagnetic Flow  
Sensor (SWaT)



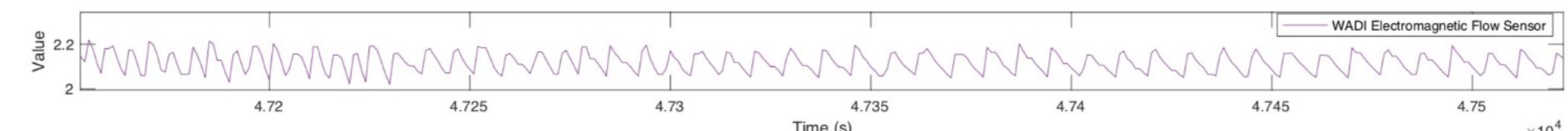
Pressure Sensor (SWaT)



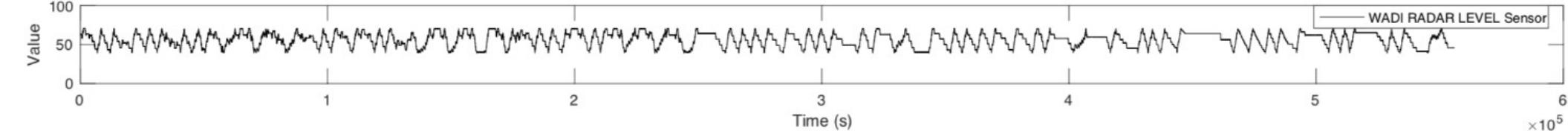
Pressure Sensor (WADI)



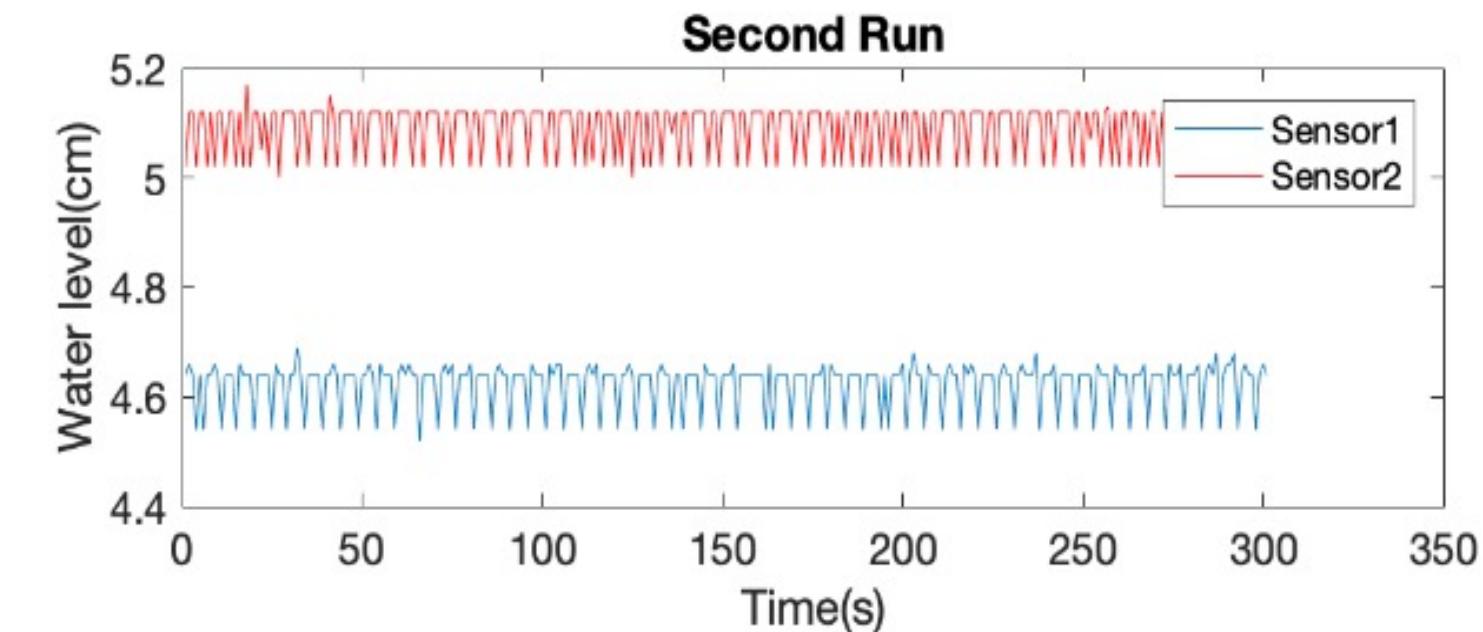
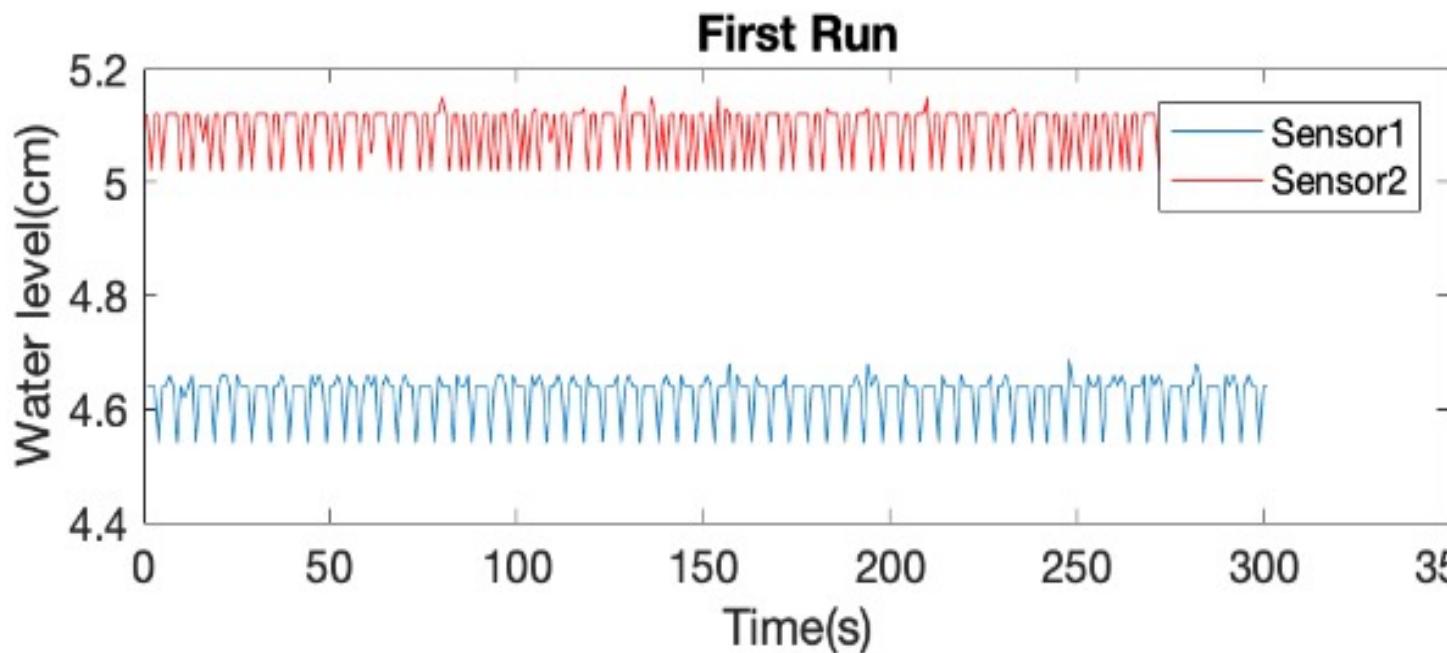
Electromagnetic Flow  
Sensor (WADI)



Radar Level Sensor (WADI)



# Sensors vs Noise



- Water level not changing.
- Stable behavior in two runs.
- Cannot really distinguish Sensor 1 from Sensor 2 visually but...

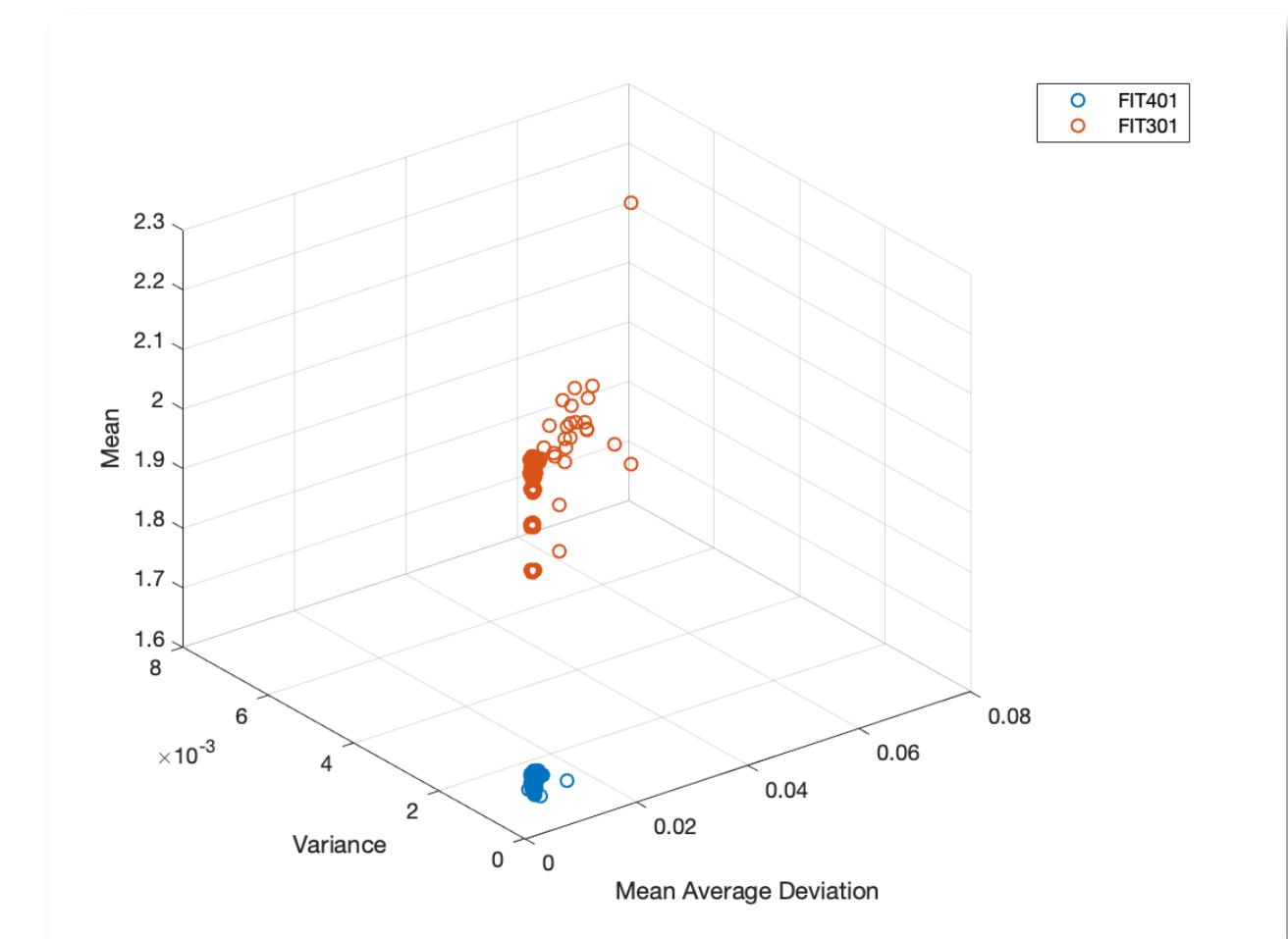
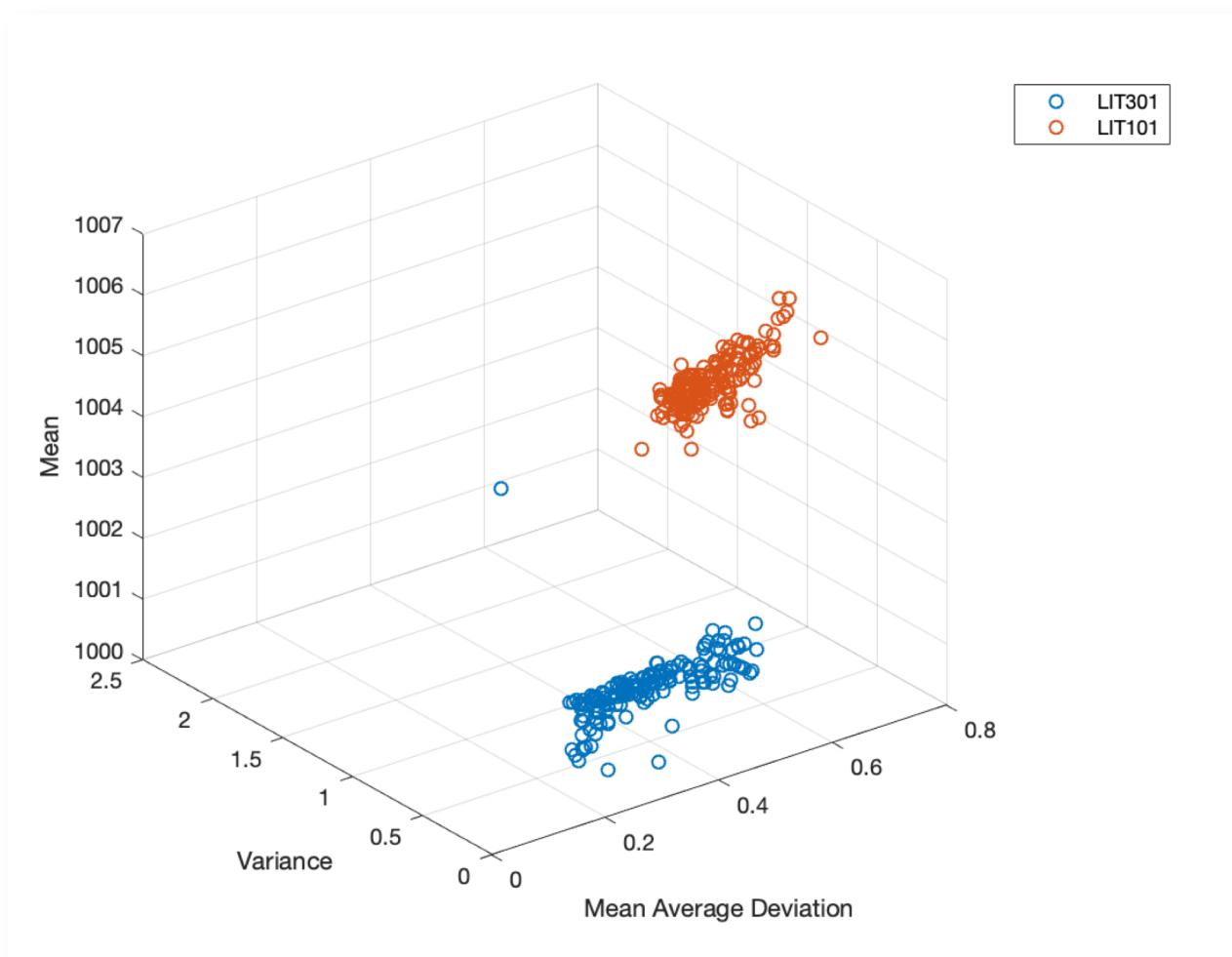
# A bit of magic...



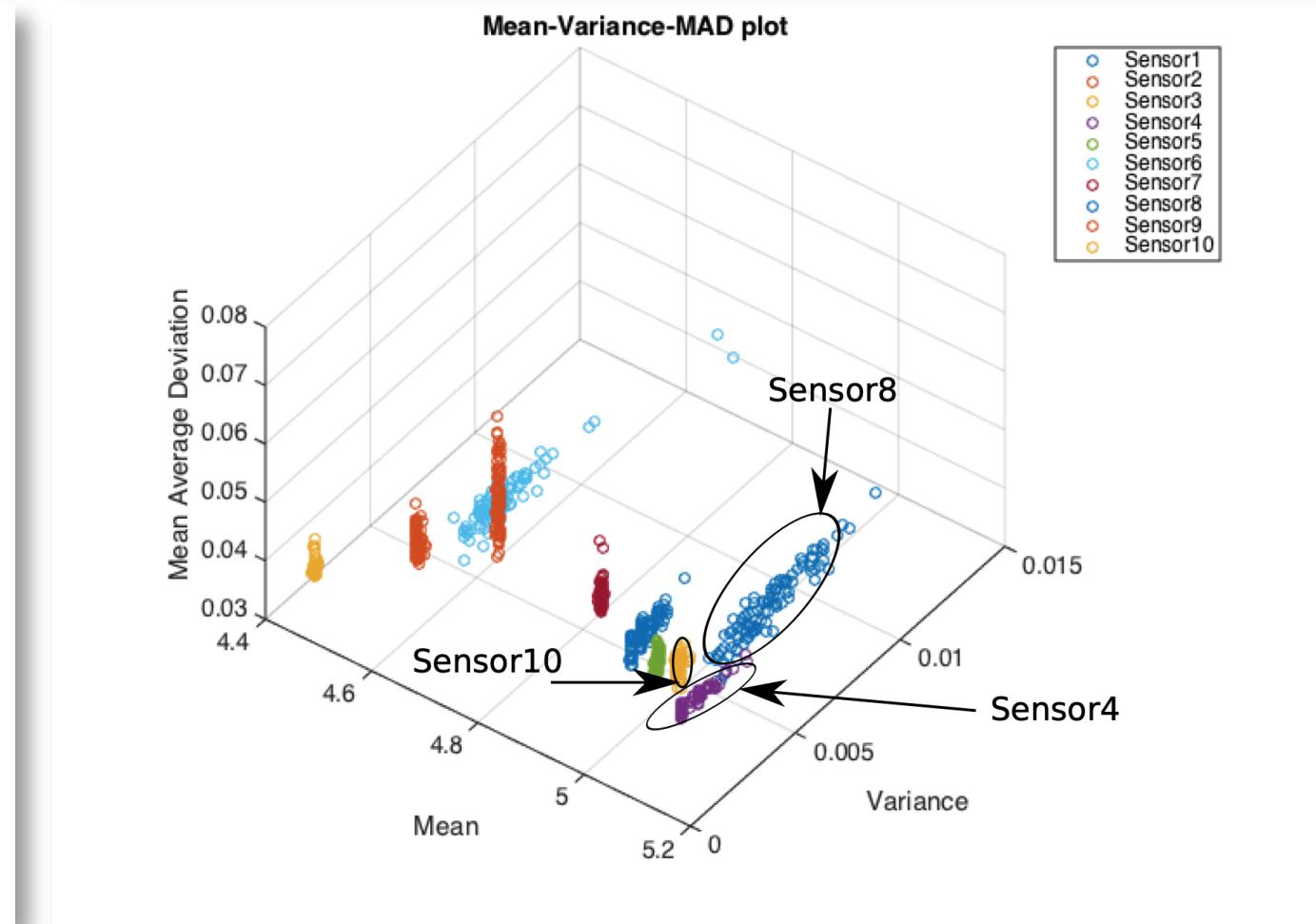
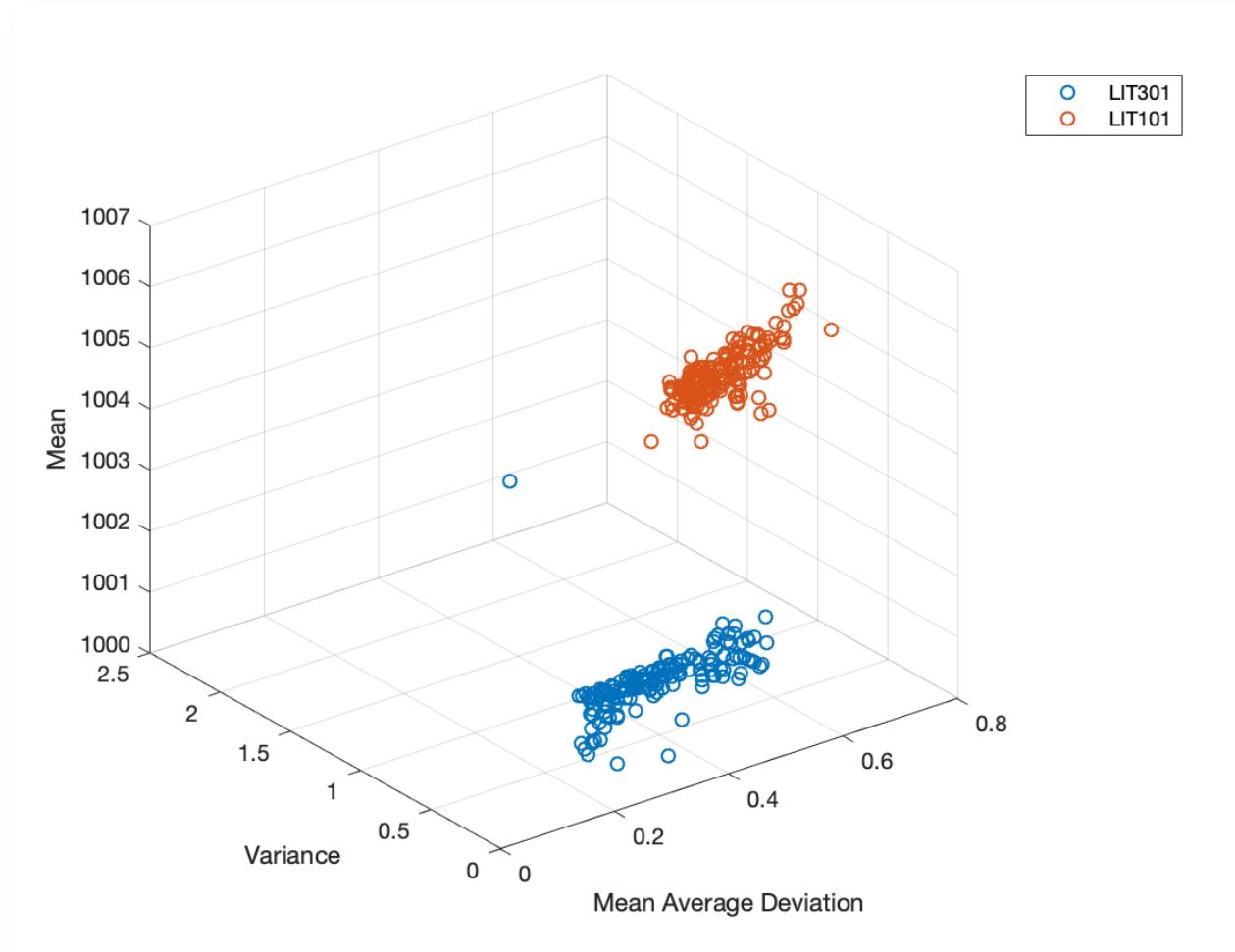
| Feature        | Description  |
|----------------|--|
| Mean           | $\bar{x} = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N x_i$   |
| Std-Dev        | $\sigma = \sqrt{\frac{1}{N-1} \sum_{i=1}^N (x_i - \bar{x})^2}$                     |
| Mean Avg. Dev  | $D_{\bar{x}} = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N  x_i - \bar{x} $                           |
| Skewness       | $\gamma = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N \left(\frac{x_i - \bar{x}}{\sigma}\right)^3$    |
| Kurtosis       | $\beta = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N \left(\frac{x_i - \bar{x}}{\sigma}\right)^4 - 3$ |
| Spec. Std-Dev  | $\sigma_s = \sqrt{\frac{\sum_{i=1}^N (y_f(i)^2) * y_m(i)}{\sum_{i=1}^N y_m(i)}}$   |
| Spec. Centroid | $C_s = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^N (y_f(i)) * y_m(i)}{\sum_{i=1}^N y_m(i)}$                 |
| DC Component   | $y_m(0)$   |

[Ahmed et al. ArXiV 17]

# Sensors vs features



# Sensors vs features



- Supervised Machine Learning can help distinguishing between the noise of different sensors!

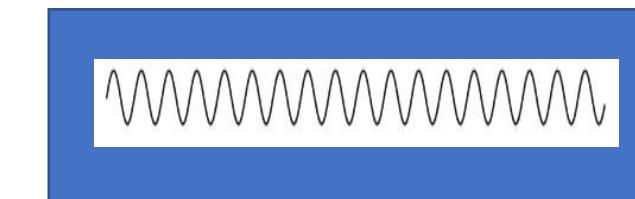
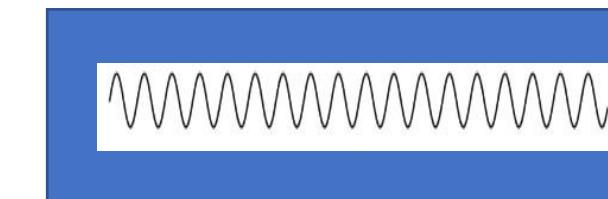
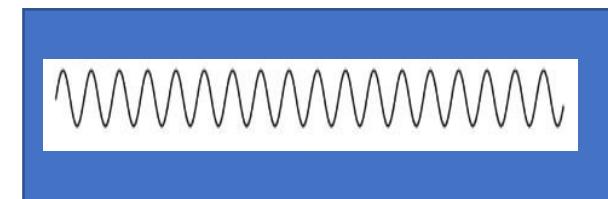
[Ahmed et al. Arxiv 17, AsiaCCS 18]

# Towards authentication

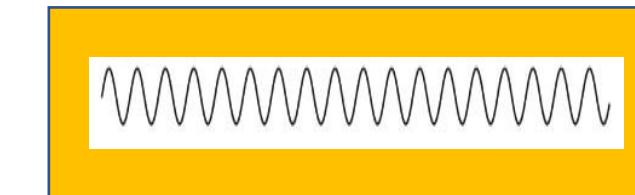
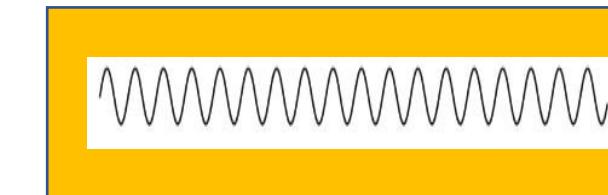
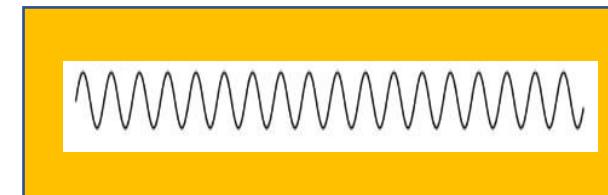
Can we distinguish data belonging to Sensor 1 from other sensors?



**Sensor 1**

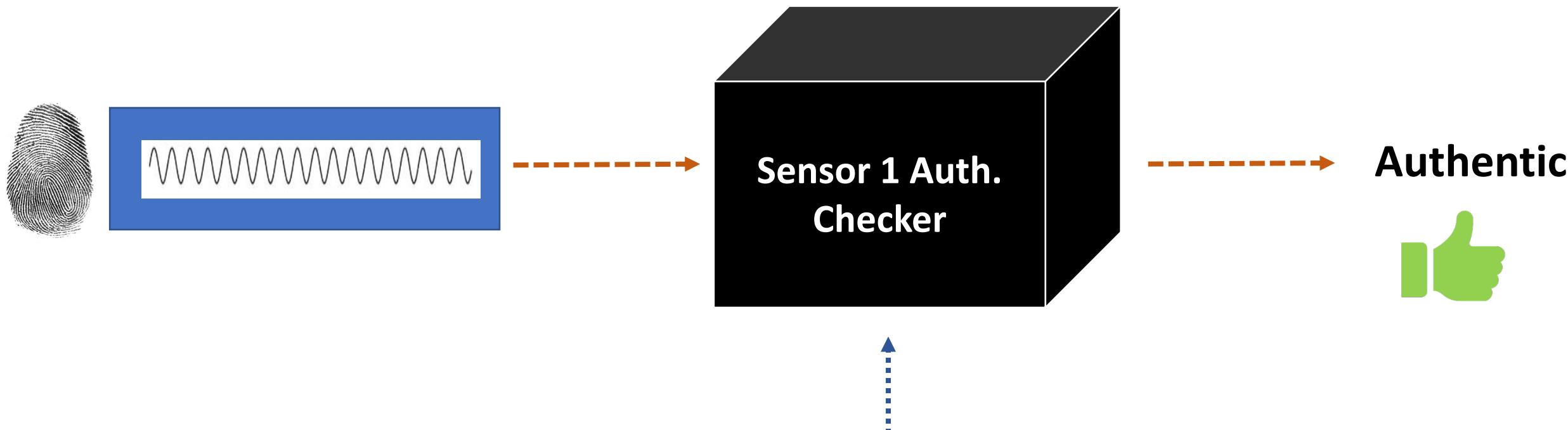


**Sensor 2**



# Towards authentication

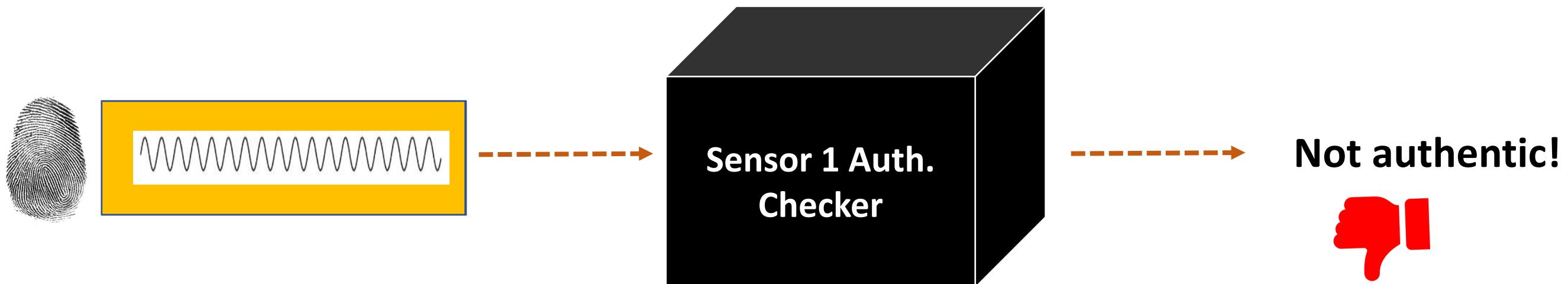
- Want to build a binary classifier (authentic/not authentic) to act as an authenticity verifier.
- Fingerprint check!



Trained with lots of data belonging to Sensor 1 and all other sensors in the plant!

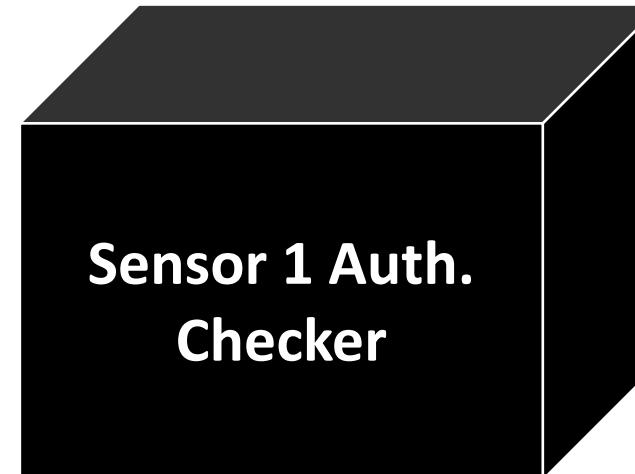
# Towards authentication

- Chunks of observations from other sensors, even for similar values, brand, type etc. should not pass!



# Careless (noise) attack

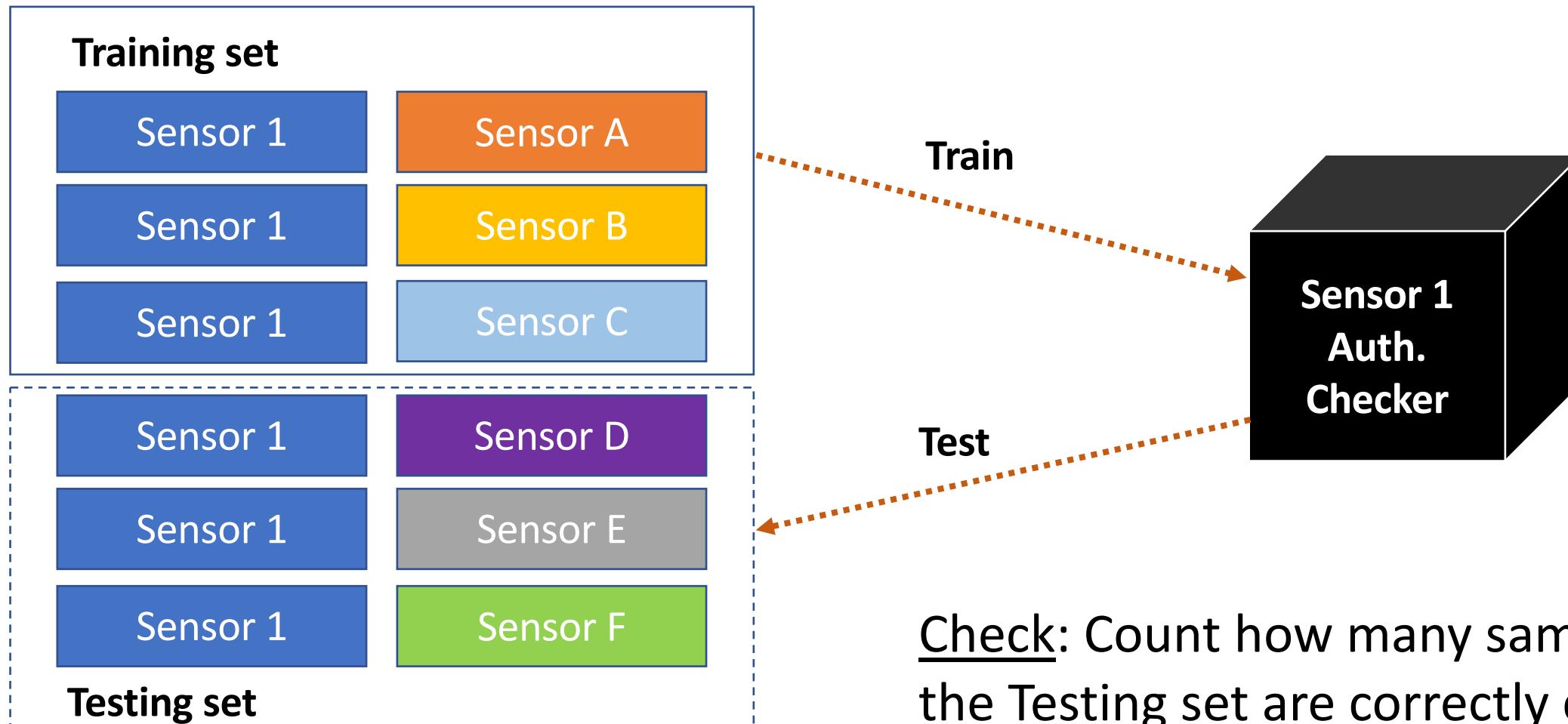
- An attacker using a constant value (no-noise) is easy to detect.



**Not authentic!**

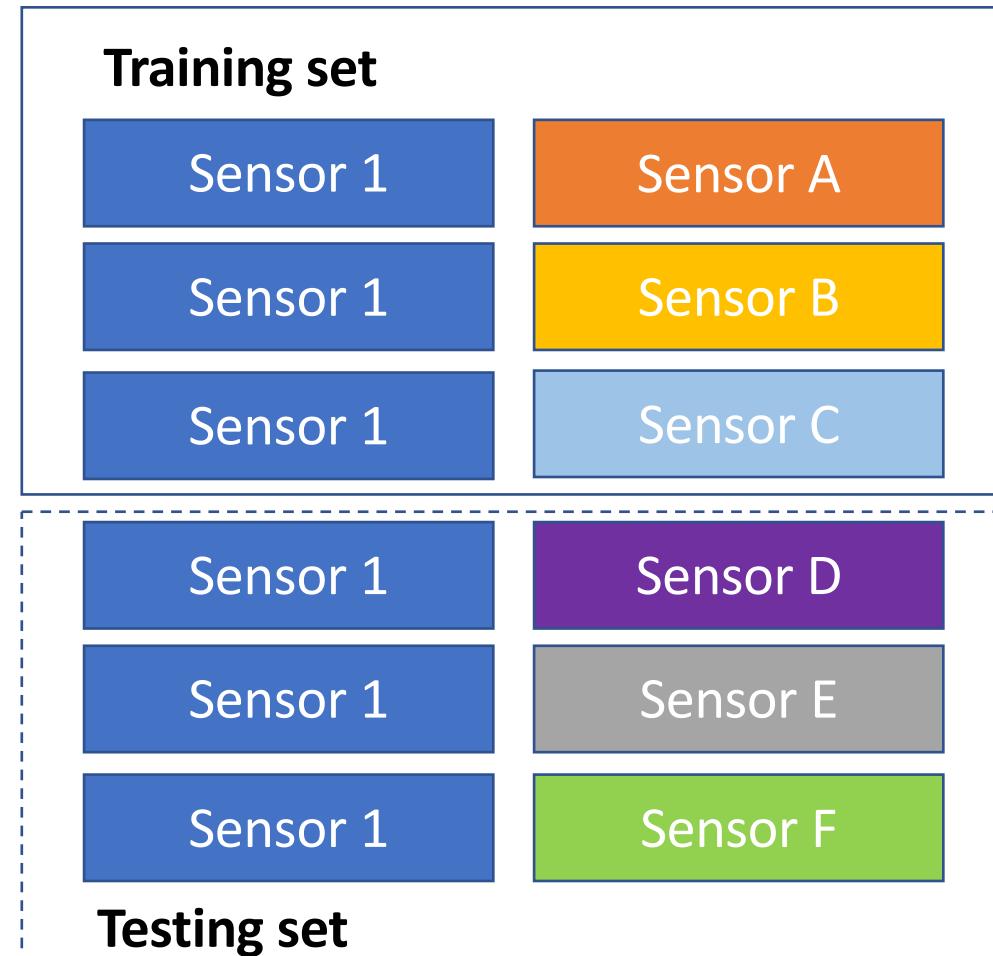


# Does it work?



Check: Count how many samples in the Testing set are correctly classified after training with the Training set.

# Does it work?



- Chunk size of about 2 minutes works best (120 samples).
- Tested on up to 60 sensors of the same class (cheap sensors).
- 99% accuracy in authentication test.  
[Ahmed et al. Arxiv 17, AsiaCCS 18]
- Fingerprints are still valid after 4 years at least.
- Tested in room temperature (20 to 35 °C)

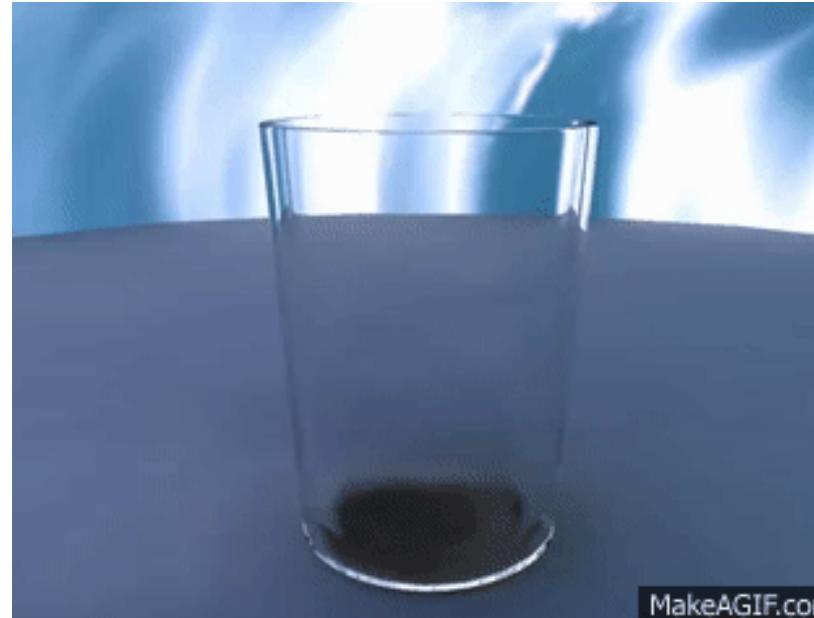
Note that this works when physical quantity is constant!

# Attacks detected?

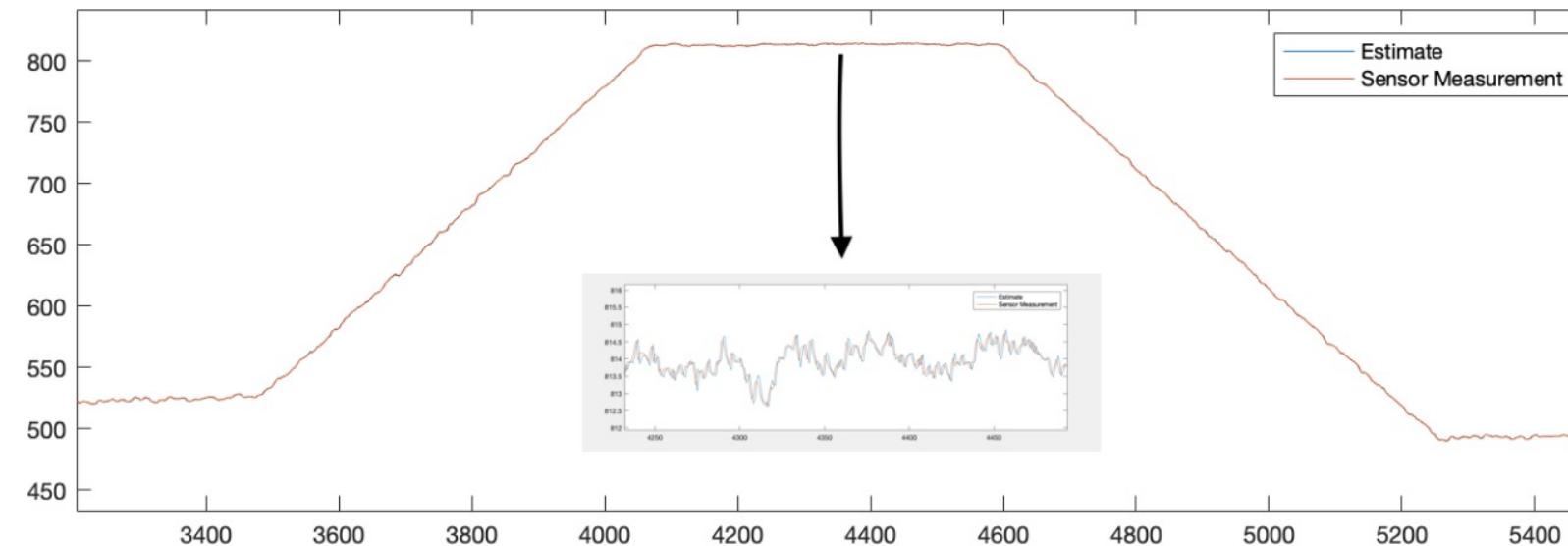
- "Shameless" attacks:
  - Abrupt jumps can be detected by Model-Based countermeasures.
  - "Flat" noise injections can be detected by noise patterns (even stealthy).
- Malicious sensors (hardware) can be detected.
  - Like [Bolshev et al. BH Asia 16]
- What about stealthy attacks that also try to inject coherent noise against a dynamic system?

# Process and Sensor noise

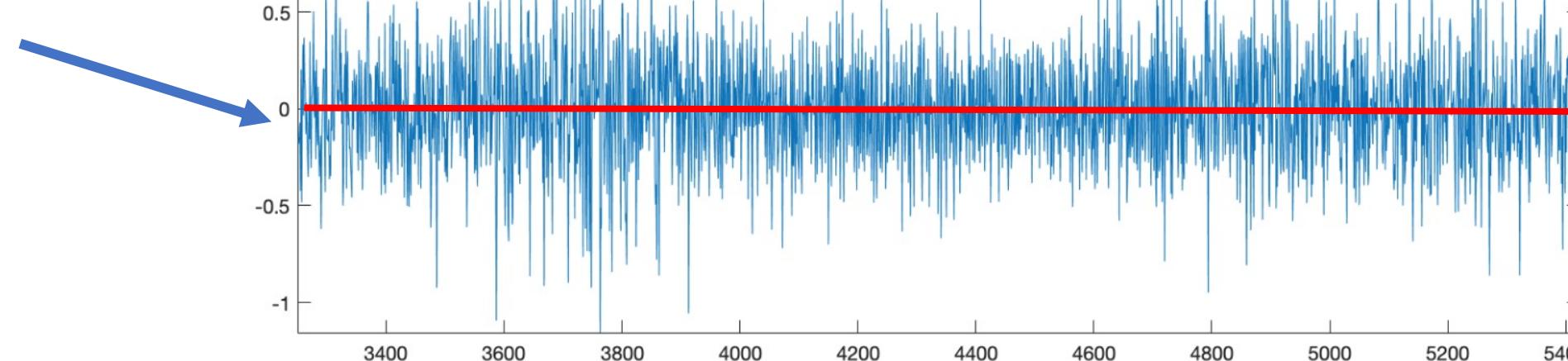
- In practice we have a combination of sensor plus process noise, i.e. water moving generates a certain characteristic "noise".
- I.e. even if sensor is perfect (no noise) measurement is "noisy".



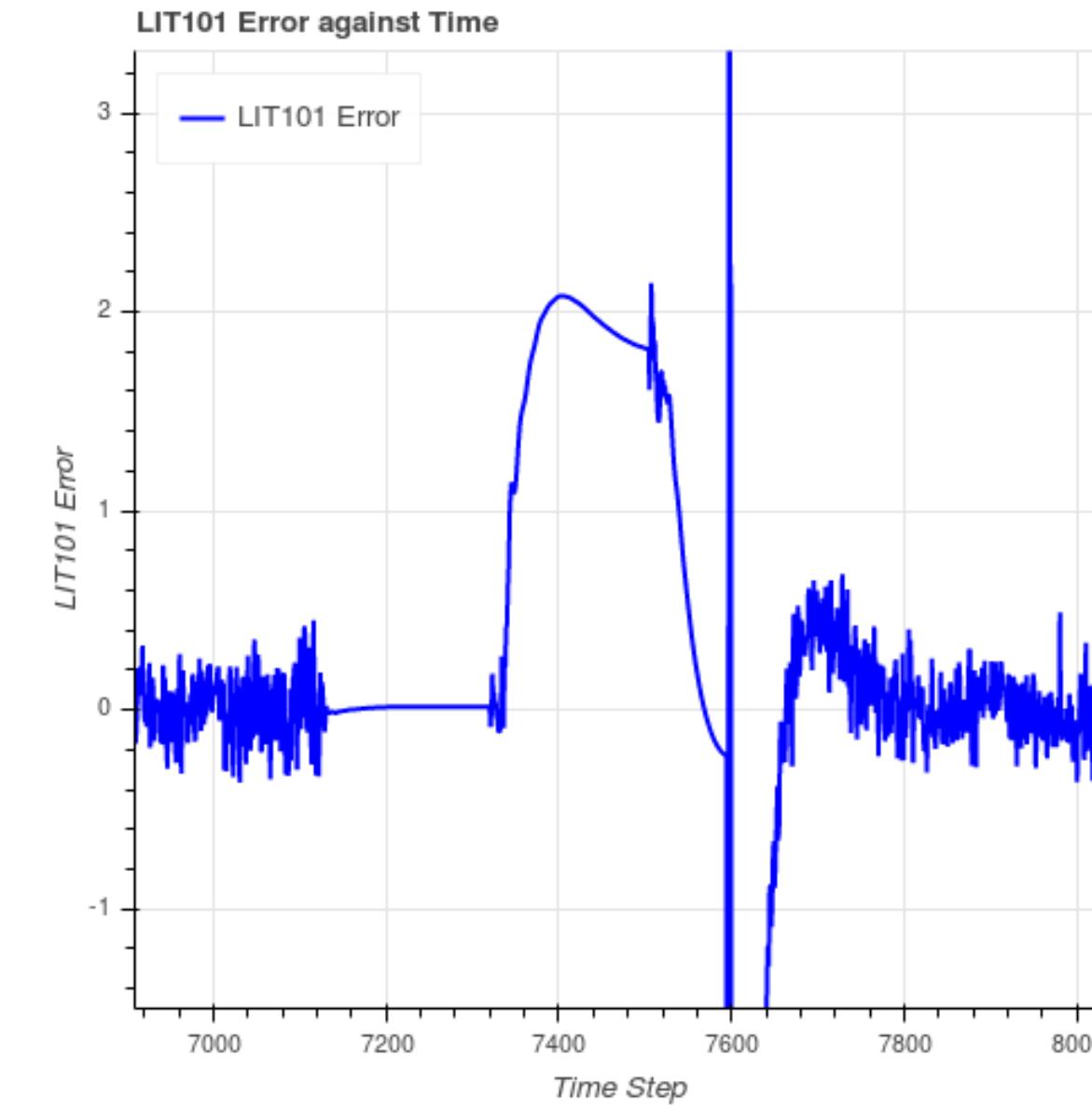
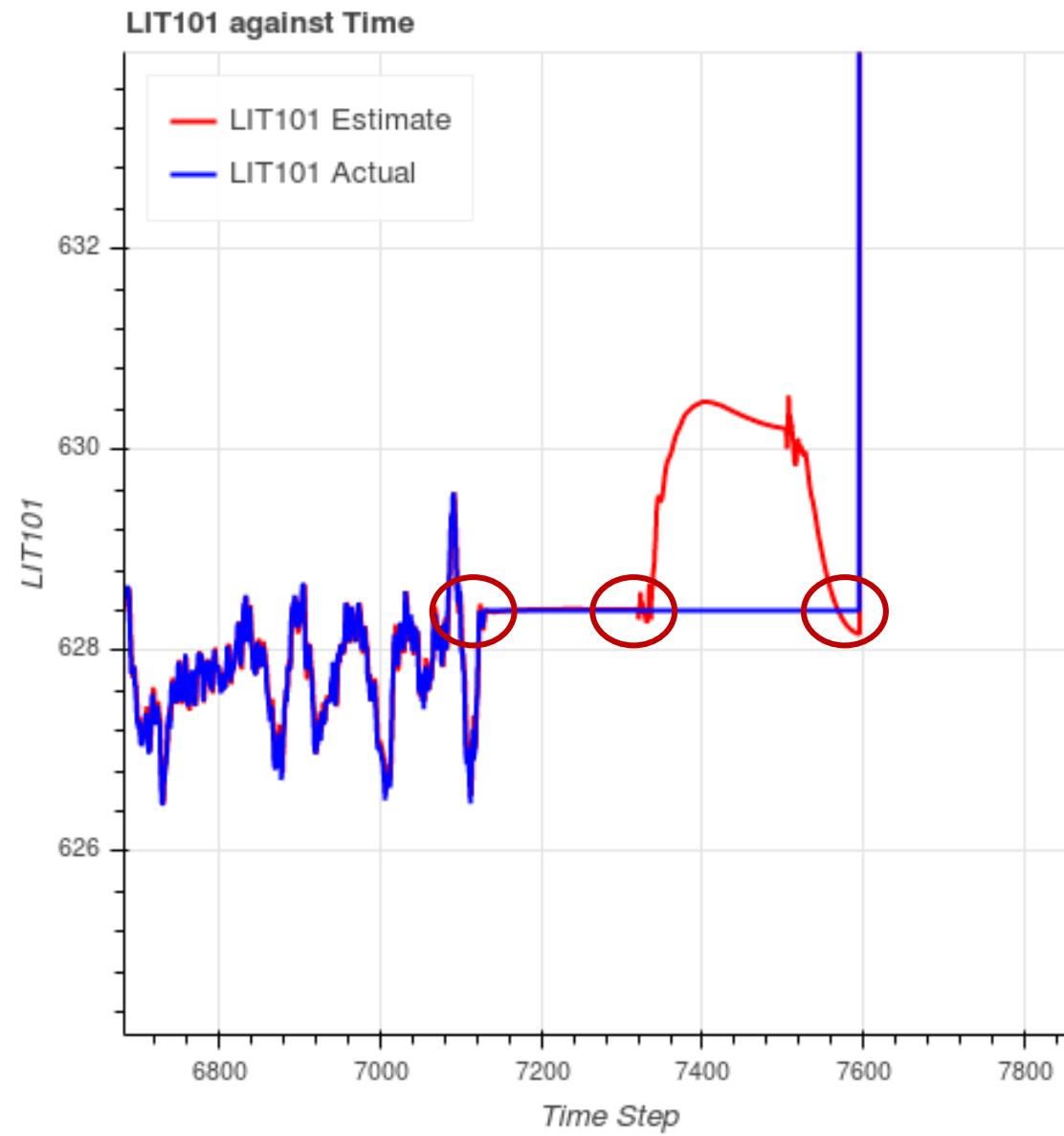
# Process and Sensor noise



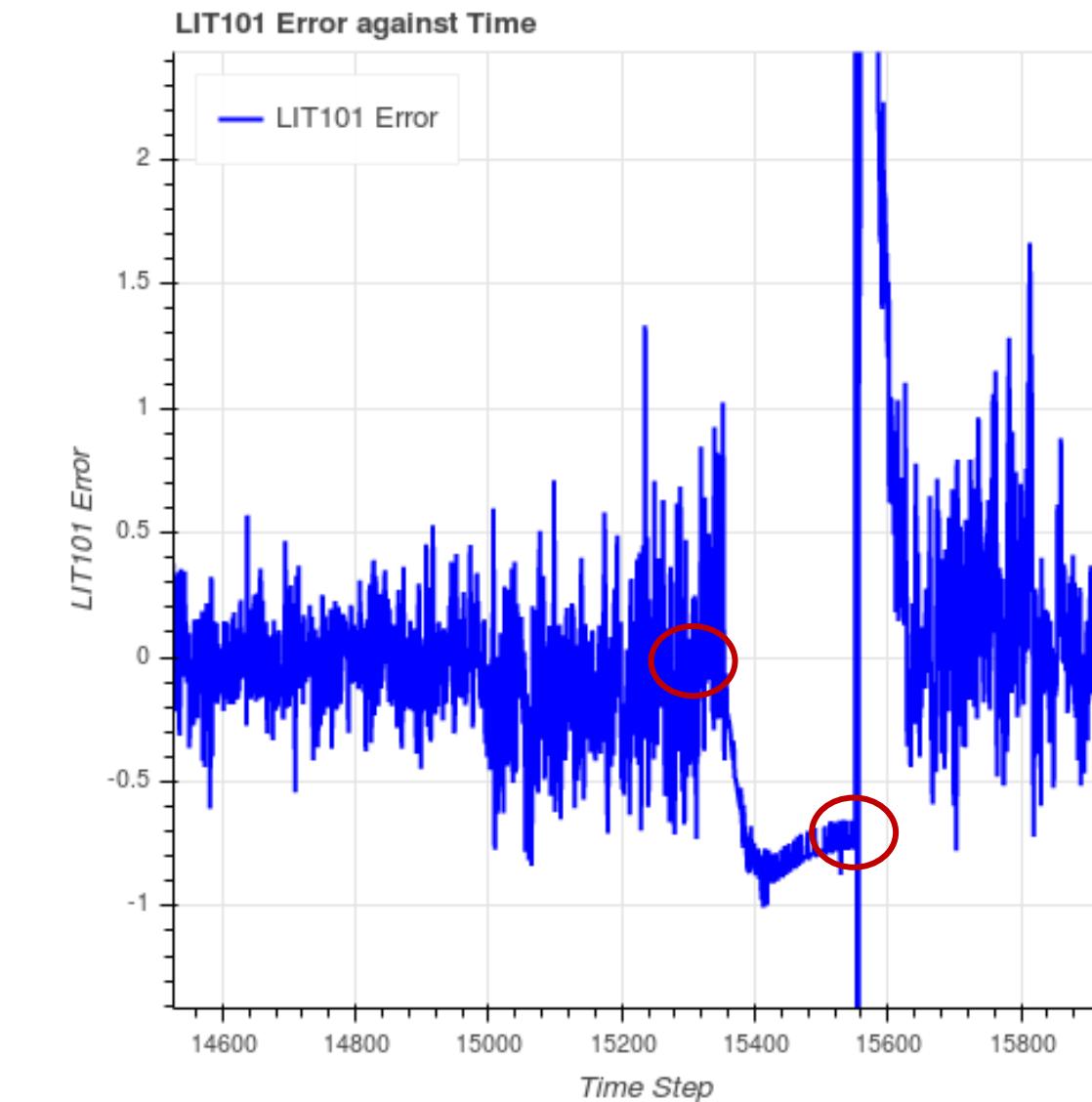
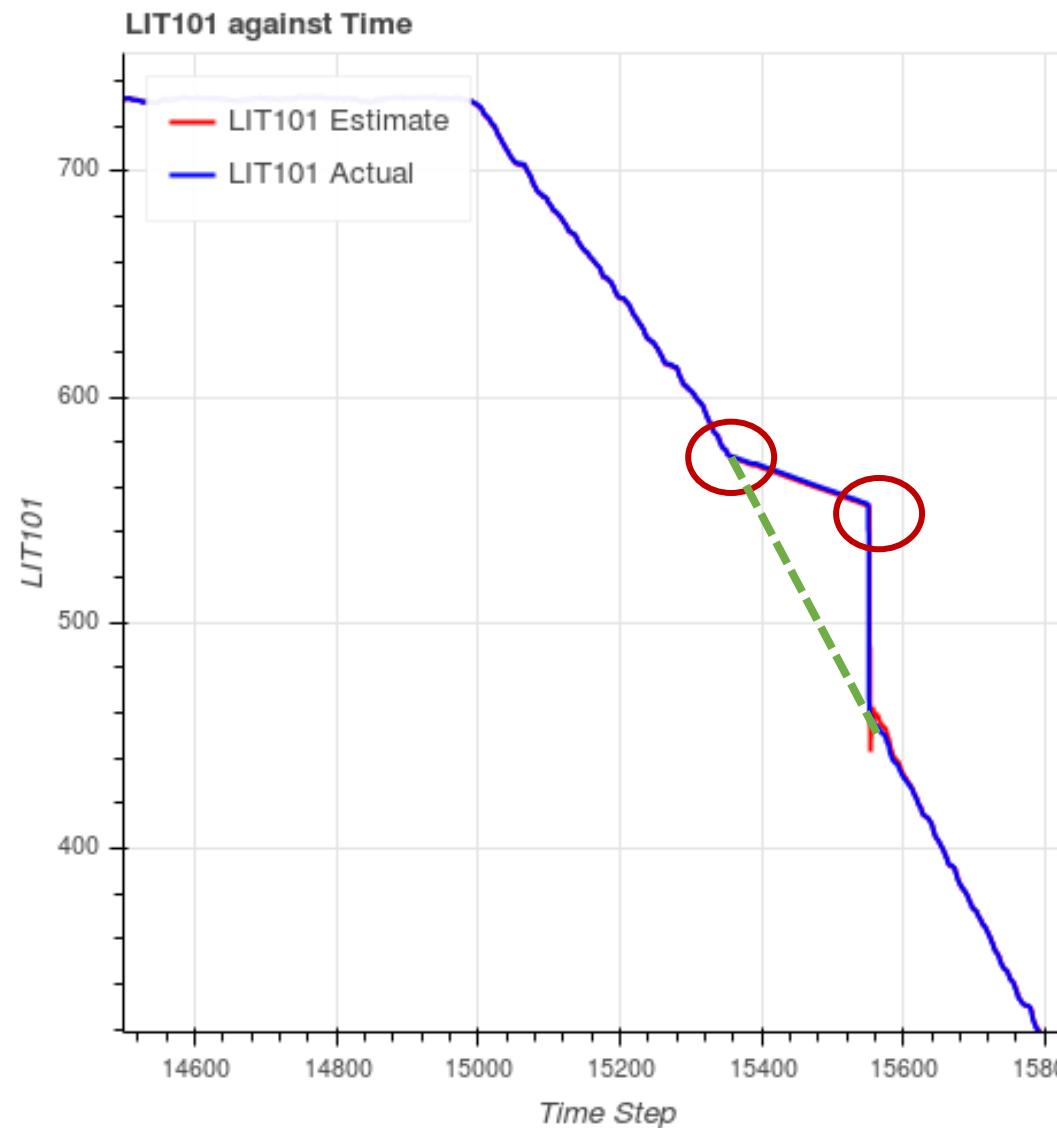
Residual =  
Observation - Prediction



# Detecting flat noise

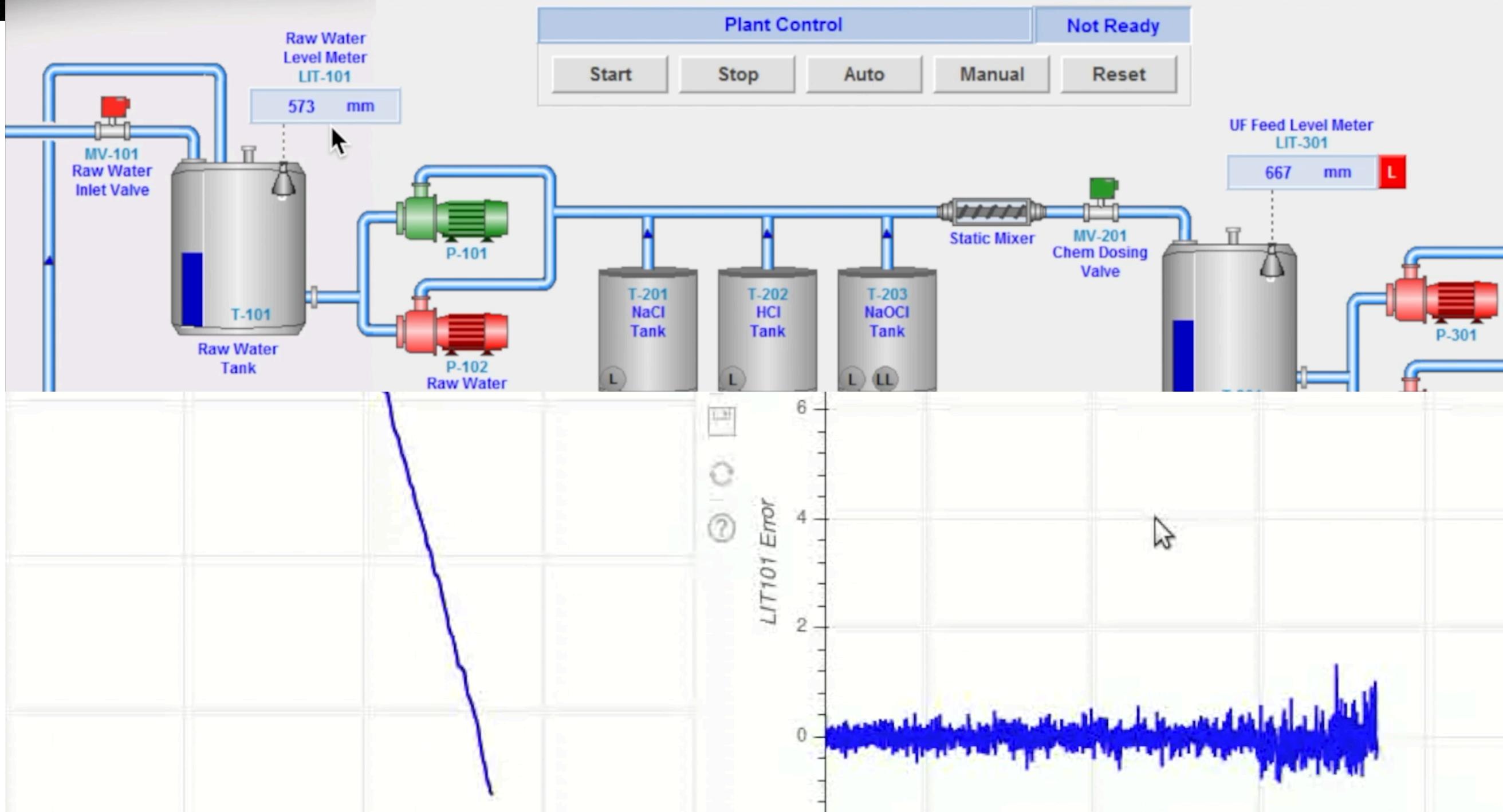


# Noise vs. Stealthy attacks

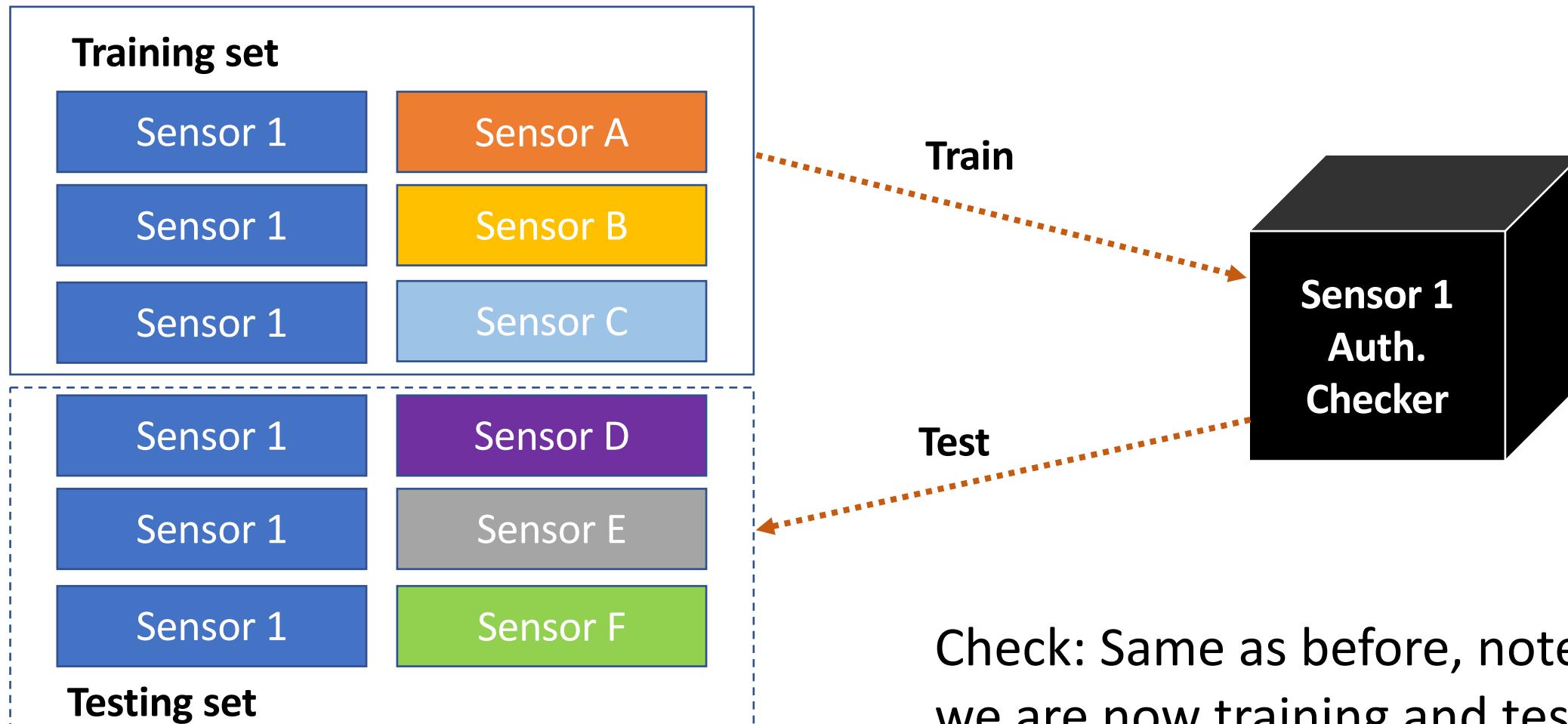


[Ahmed et al. ACSAC 18]

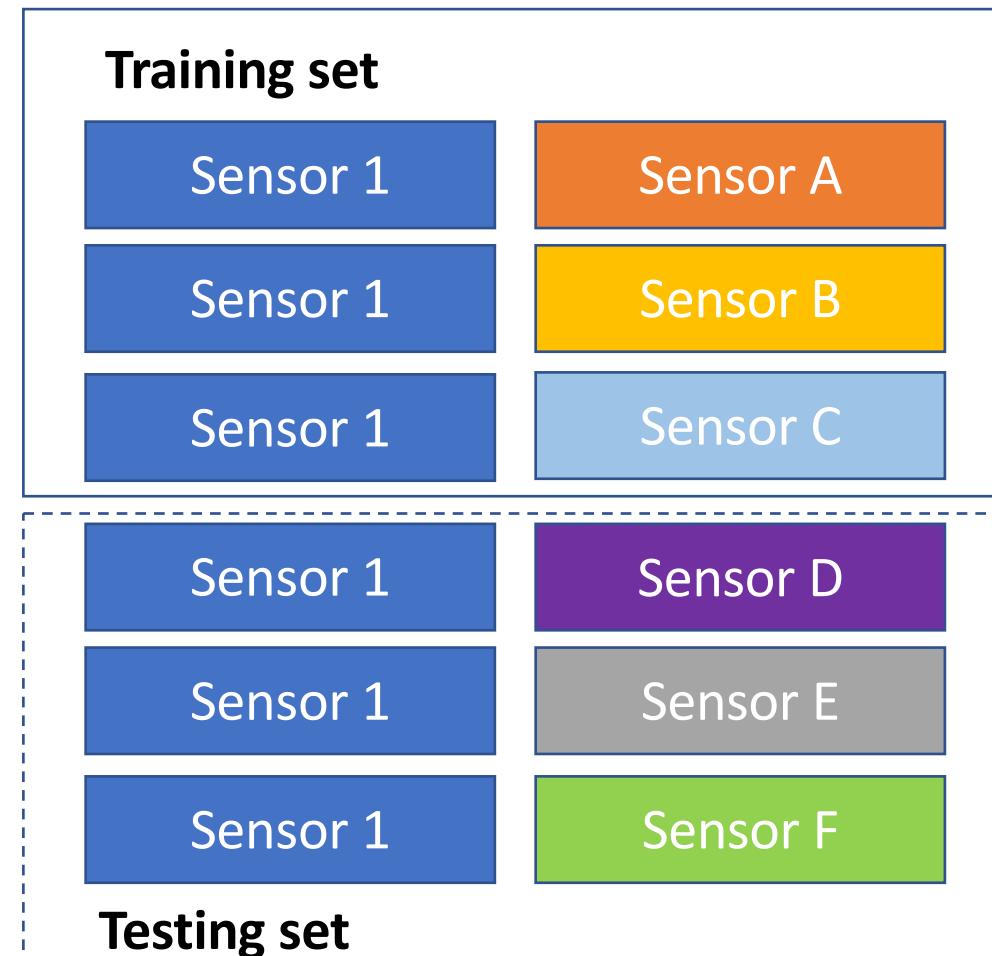
# Video of attack detection



# Does it work?

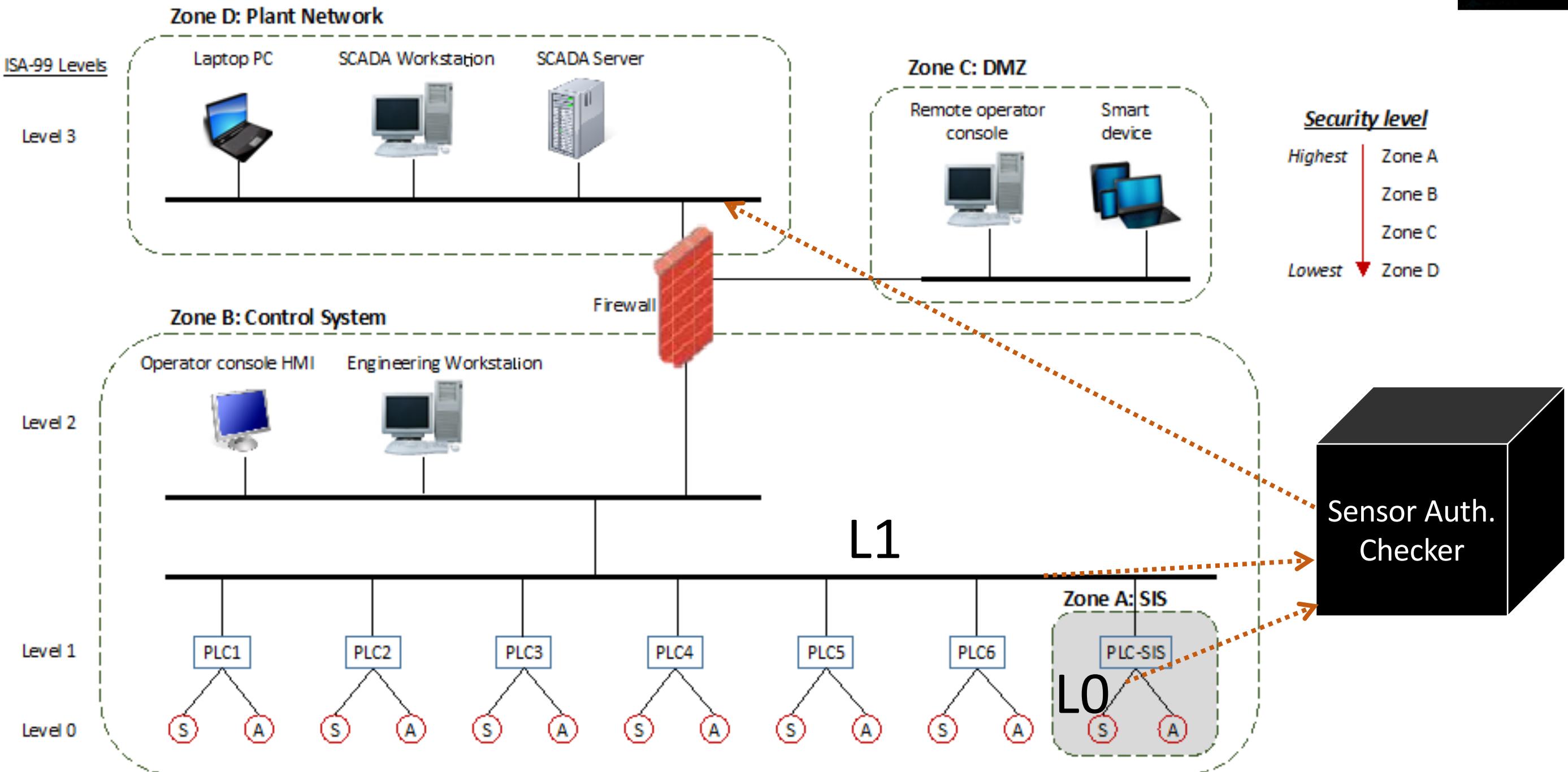


# Does it work?



- Chunk size of about 2 minutes (120 samples) works best (again).
- Tested on up to 18 sensors and respective process on SWaT.
- 96% accuracy in authentication test.  
[Ahmed et al. ACSAC 18]
- Considered several "stealthy" strategies.
  - But CPS are different! [Krotofil et al. HITB 15]

# Architecture



# Summary

- We have shown empirical evidence of existence of sensor fingerprint in real-world ICS.
  - Over 10 sensor types, up to 60 sensors for each type.
- We have shown how this fingerprint, together with a process fingerprint, can help in authenticating sensor readings.
  - High detection/authentication accuracy (96%-99%).



# Next steps?

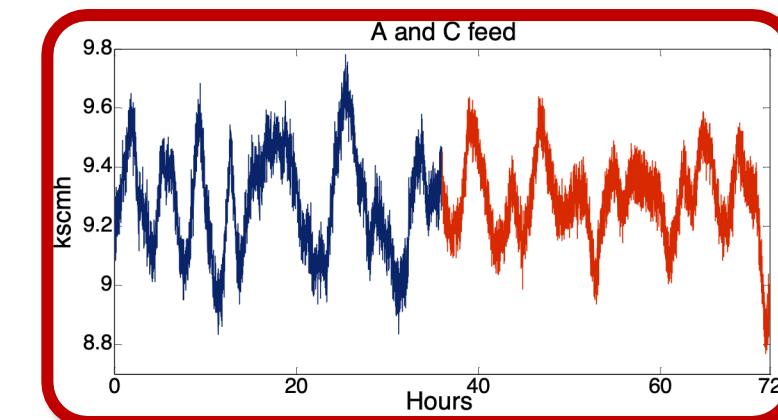
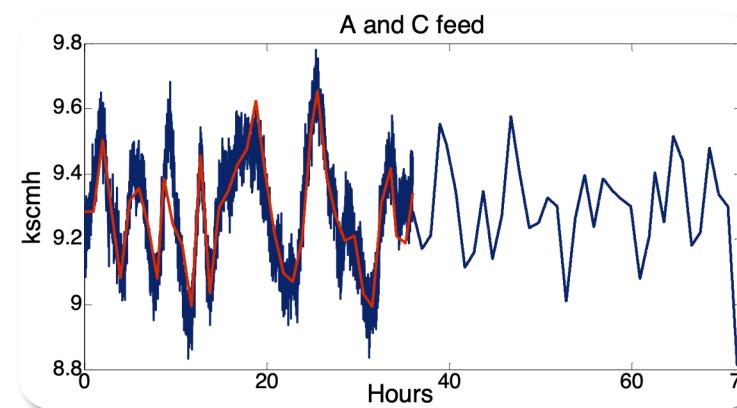
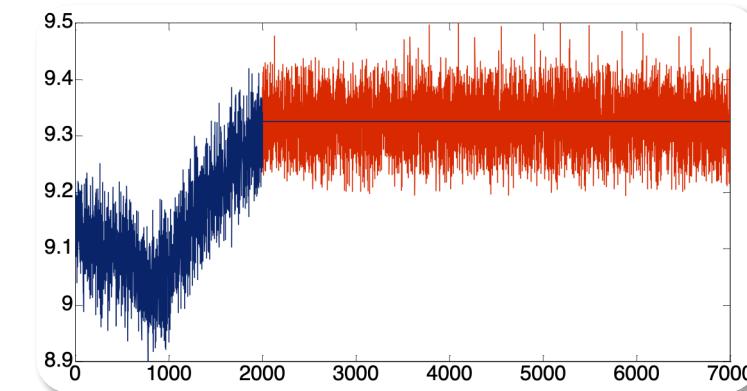
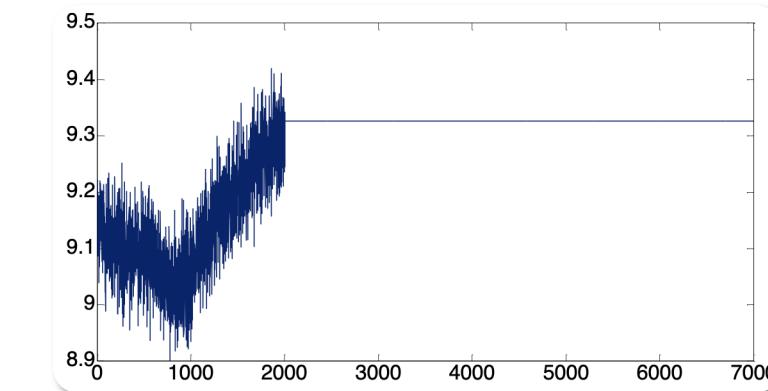
- On the other hand, this is just the beginning!
- What if threat actor has an entire research institute at their disposal?



The screenshot shows a news article from ZDNet. The header includes the ZDNet logo, a search bar, and navigation links for EDITION: US, VIDEOS, 5G, WINDOWS 10, CLOUD, AI, INNOVATION, SECURITY, MORE, and NEWSLETTERS. A banner at the top reads "MUST READ: How to perform a clean install of Windows 10: Here's a step-by-step checklist". The main headline is "FireEye links Russian research lab to Triton ICS malware attacks". Below the headline is a brief summary: "FireEye: Clues link Russia's Central Scientific Research Institute of Chemistry and Mechanics research lab to Triton-related activity." At the bottom, it says "By Catalin Cimpanu for Zero Day | October 23, 2018 -- 17:23 GMT (10:23 PDT) | Topic: Security".

# Next steps?

- A lack of model makes things challenging, under advanced attacks.
  - Case of super powerful attacker (Ironman + PhD)
    - We have ideas on how to deal with this using a challenge-response protocol
- [Ahmed et al, Arxiv 17]



[Krotofil et al. HITB 15]

# Sound Bytes

- In most real-world ICS sensor data is not authenticated at L0 and/or L1 levels.
- Sensor noise can be useful to authenticate sensors without using cryptography.
- Process + Sensor noise results in a more robust fingerprint.

Thanks!

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