

EICAR introduces seal of approval for anti-malware products

The European Expert Group for IT Security wants to create a minimum standard for the trustworthiness of anti-malware products.

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(Image: dpa, Nicolas Armer)

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The European Expert Group for IT Security ([EICAR](#)) wants to publish a seal of approval for anti-malware products. The organization is not concerned with detection rates, but with trustworthiness, according to a press release. The seal of approval will be given to products that respect privacy and do not allow any backdoors - for example, by secret services.

No back doors

According to EICAR Chairman Rainer Fahs, the idea arose in connection with the federal Trojan. G-Data has always emphasized that it does not provide any backdoors for investigation purposes. This led EICAR to ask how a manufacturer wanted to ensure and, above all, publicly prove this.

The "eicar trutesd IT-security" seal will initially be awarded for anti-malware packages. Later, other IT security products such as firewalls and intrusion detection systems will also be tested.

EICAR plans to introduce the standard in four stages. The first stage will start immediately on the basis of voluntary self-regulation. In the second stage, a minimum standard for AV test laboratories and other testers will be developed. The third stage will develop procedures to verify the minimum standard. Finally, the fourth stage provides for testing by certified testers.

Special handling of malicious code

The rules are already clearly defined at the first level. Among other things, manufacturers must assure that their software does not contain any backdoors. Also, no personal data may be transmitted without the express consent of the user. If malicious code is found on a computer and uploaded to the manufacturer, the manufacturer must ensure that only a narrow circle of authorized persons can access it and the personal data potentially contained therein. The software must not deliberately overlook any malicious code and thus protect state Trojans, for example.

Initially, the four companies G-Data, F-Secure, Kaspersky and Trend Micro want to acquire the EICAR seal for their anti-malware products. The fact that none of them has its headquarters in the USA is no coincidence: according to Rainer Fahs, American manufacturers must grant third party access to government authorities. The seal explicitly excludes this procedure.

The name EICAR is known to insiders through the test virus of the same name. The harmless file "eicar.com" merely issues a message on the console; nevertheless, all antivirus programs sound an alarm when they find the file. This is a safe way to test that it is working correctly. You can have such a harmless Eicar test virus sent to you via the [heise Security e-mail check](https://heise.de/-2749819) (anw).

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