



CASE STUDY

Sohar International Bank

SafeWatch Screening Application False Positives Optimization

SITUATION

Sohar International Bank faced significant challenges with high false-positive rates in their Safe-Watch Screening (SWS) Anti-Money Laundering (AML) system. These false positives led to inefficiencies in operations, delays, and increased manual reviews. The bank also needed to ensure compatibility with ISO-20022 messaging standards to meet SWIFT's November 2025 deadline, adding urgency to the issue.

TASK

The primary task was to reduce the false positives generated by the SWS system while maintaining compliance with regulatory requirements. The objective was to streamline the detection process and improve operational efficiency, allowing the bank's compliance team to focus on genuine suspicious activities.

ACTION

- 1. Datafile Optimization:** The World Check Premium Datafile was updated using the Dynamic Downloader. Low-quality aliases and alternative spellings were excluded, and the latest version, which included 1,500 new entities, was uploaded.
- 2. Increased Scanning Rank:** The scanning rank was raised from 80% to 85%, improving precision in detecting violations.
- 3. Good Guys Implementation:** A whitelist was created for the top 10 hits identified in the initial analysis. These entries were marked as "Good Guys" to avoid unnecessary detections.
- 4. Technical Support:** Provided database optimization recommendations, including index defragmentation and log size reduction for both the SCDB and SafeWatchDB databases.
- 5. Analysis Reports:** Conducted a comprehensive analysis of 120,738 SWIFT RJE messages and generated two detailed reports—before and after the modifications—to validate the impact of the changes.

RESULT

The implemented modifications resulted in a 67.25% reduction in false positives, significantly improving the efficiency of the AML system. Key achievements include:

- A reduction in alerts from 312,693 to 102,414.
- Streamlined compliance processes, saving time and resources.
- Enhanced detection accuracy, enabling the compliance team to focus on critical cases. This initiative has set a benchmark for future efforts in reducing false positives and improving AML system performance.



Our Compliance team was struggling with a huge volume of false positives in the SafeWatch Screening (SWS) system. The workload was overwhelming, slowing down our operations and making it harder to focus on real threats. On top of that, the looming SWIFT ISO-20022 deadline added even more pressure. When we partnered with the Eastnets team to tackle this, the results were nothing short of transformative. They didn't just tweak the system—they completely redefined how it worked for us. By optimizing the data files, fine-tuning the scanning parameters, and introducing a simple but effective whitelist for recurring false hits, we saw a dramatic 67% drop in false positives. The number of alerts went from over 312,000 to just about 102,000. This wasn't just a number—it was about making our lives easier. The compliance team can now focus on real risks instead of wasting time on unnecessary alerts. The technical improvements also made the system faster and smoother to work with. What stood out most was the team's attention to detail and their commitment to ensuring every change was backed by data. Their analysis and reports gave us confidence in the results, and the entire process was seamless. Thanks to their efforts (specially for Mr. Mohammed Khair and his team), we're in a much better place—not just for today but for the future. we're grateful to have worked with such a talented and dedicated team.

About

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