

RIC Protects 150K Documents, Quickly Meets Government Compliance Standards with AvePoint Cloud Backup



Customer Location

Orange, Australia

Industry

Public Sector

Platform

Microsoft 365

Critical Needs

- Secure and easy collaboration for staff
- Data protection and backup in M365
- Compliance with government regulations
- Quick, comprehensive data recovery

Solution

AvePoint Cloud Backup

★ Success Highlights

- Data backup for 150,000+ documents in M365
- Easy deployment and continued maintenance
- Effective, granular-level restore of data
- Scalable for growing user base

🔍 Customer Profile

Regional Investment Corporation (RIC) is an Australian Government-backed specialist finance provider for farmers and farm-related small businesses. Established in 2018, RIC administers concessional loan programs that encourage the long-term strength, resilience, and profitability of Australian farm businesses in financial need after severe business disruption caused by drought, natural disaster such as bushfire, flooding or cyclone and biosecurity risks. In addition, RIC low-cost loans spark innovation, support succession planning and new entrants to help the Australian agricultural sector to recover, prosper and grow.

⚙️ The Challenge

The mission of RIC is simple but important: Provide long-term financial support through concessional loans to farmers and farm-related businesses so Australian agriculture can thrive. By helping applicants obtain loans for drought assistance, recovery after natural disaster, restocking, improved cash flow and other farm-related business needs, the program is essential for a prosperous regional Australia. As an Australian Government regional investment provider, RIC is focused on understanding the long-term needs of farmers and supporting the Federal government with data insights to better support public policy outcomes.

Doing this work demands quick, comprehensive access to key information.

“It’s a general best practice that our core business data is available all of the time,” said Andrew Chambers, executive manager of information and technology for RIC, who added that the organization’s core infrastructure sits within Microsoft 365 — with most content housed in SharePoint Online and Microsoft Teams.

“While we enjoy high availability that the platform provides, it’s prudent to have an additional layer of backup to protect against things like ransomware,” Chambers said. “There’s a fairly strong misconception that you don’t need backup in the cloud, but there are limitations and instances where existing protections might not be sufficient.”

Backup and restore capabilities outside the scope of M365 retention limits were particularly critical for RIC — which, like other agencies, must adhere to data-protection standards enforced by the Australian government.

The RIC was established during one of the most severe, long-term droughts faced by Australian agriculture so there was significant demand for concessional loans from the onset. Because RIC was a new organisation, starting up with new people, processes and systems required, there was an added challenge of needing to move quickly. Among the legislation to

address was the Archives Act 1983. It [regulates Commonwealth records retention](#) and prohibits destruction without permission from National Archives of Australia, a government agency.

“We needed to establish an environment that was compliant with government guidelines,” Chambers said. “Beyond having the right controls in place, we wanted the opportunity to go above and beyond.”

Meanwhile, RIC faced a growth in M365 data that required a strong backup solution. “We’d been gradually moving toward Microsoft Teams,” Chambers said. “Our usage started quite low, but it has become the centerpiece of organizational collaboration.”

Most RIC business units, he added, have a Team where they maintain documents via SharePoint, and they typically embed Microsoft Planner within the Team to manage workflows. “That means backing up Microsoft Project and Planner, as well as Teams and Groups,” Chambers said. (Cloud Backup is the only solution on the market today that can back up Planner data.)

The AvePoint Solution

By deploying AvePoint’s Cloud Backup solution, RIC was able to solve its challenges.

AvePoint Cloud Backup is a 100% SaaS solution that provides automated, comprehensive backup and restore services for M365, Salesforce, Google Workspace, Dynamics 365, Azure, and Power Platform. It features built-in storage and encryption and offers flexible pricing plans based on the number of users or the amount of data.

Unlike many competing solutions, Cloud Backup can protect Teams information (conversations, private channels, meeting items, and more) that could be detrimental to business continuity if lost.

RIC chose an unlimited data plan to protect several terabytes of information in M365 — including 150,000 documents. Backups are performed automatically four times daily.

“AvePoint Cloud Backup offers a very simple user interface,” Chambers said. “Now, we’re able to perform granular-level restores and go back to find a particular backup or a version of a document. In some instances, it’s easier to restore data from Cloud Backup than it is from the Recycle Bin.”

Planning was key to a successful partnership. A thorough security assessment from AvePoint ensured RIC’s compliance requirements were addressed before they were brought on to the platform.

After that, it didn’t take long to get up and running. “Configuration of the tool was not difficult; we were operational within half a day,” Chambers said.

Cloud Backup has allowed RIC to satisfy Australian data-protection standards. AvePoint Cloud Backup has helped us comply with the “Mitigation Strategies to Recover Data control from the [ACSC Essential 8](#) and related [ISM](#) (Australian Government Information Security Manual) control,” Chambers said.

Cloud Backup is also GDPR compliant — a requirement since 2018 for Australian businesses that conduct business in the European Union.

As such, Cloud Backup supports “right to be forgotten” requests, data sovereignty (choosing where the information is physically located), and extended retention.

The Bottom Line

With the power of Cloud Backup, RIC teams can focus on serving the needs of its farm and business clients without worrying about data security.

“The best benefit is peace of mind,” Chambers said. “Ultimately, I’m responsible for my organization’s data. No matter what happens in our tenancy, I can remain confident that we can easily access our documents and critical information.”

Unlimited backup capacity is critical as RIC’s staff has grown from an initial group of 12 employees to more than 80. Cloud Backup automatically scales with the organization, so there’s no need to manage or modify underlying infrastructure.

And 24/7 support from AvePoint ensures that assistance is available at any time.

“The support from AvePoint has been exceptional,” Chambers said. “The ability for us to expand as a workforce and not have to worry about individual licensing with AvePoint is a major benefit. We’re not constrained in any way by the product, and we are fully supported by the team.”

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- ANDREW CHAMBERS, EXECUTIVE MANAGER, INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY, REGIONAL INVESTMENT CORPORATION

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