

# Australian Local Councils Implement In-place Record-keeping to Simplify PROV Compliance and Reduce End-user Burden with AvePoint



## Customer Location

Victoria, Australia

## Industry

Public Sector

## Platform

Microsoft 365

## Critical Needs

- Migrate data from file system (including HP TRIM and RecFind) to the cloud
- Mitigate end-user burden of maintaining record-keeping processes
- Compliance with Public Records Office of Victoria (PROV)
- Cloud-based, user-friendly solution

## Solution

- AvePoint Fly Server
- AvePoint Opus

## ★ Success Highlights

- Successfully achieved and maintained PROV compliance while keeping the user experience simple and easy to navigate
- Automated the discovery and classification of new SharePoint sites, ensuring necessary regulations are followed without IT intervention
- Consolidated ~70 terms into less than 10, simplifying BCS and disposal rules and minimizing the risk of non-compliance
- Improved the transparency and tracking of record disposal and workflows, providing better visibility and accountability to ensure regulatory compliance.

## 🔍 Customer Profile

Southern Grampians Shire Council is a local government organization located in the south-western part of Victoria, Australia. As a small council, Southern Grampians frequently collaborates with other local councils in the area to maximize resources and skills. This collaborative approach has led to more efficient and effective service delivery, resulting in better services for the community.

## ⚙️ The Challenge

The Southern Grampians Shire Council, in partnership with three other local councils, faced significant challenges with their outdated record-keeping systems. They wanted to move away from a lift and shift record-keeping approach to a more user-friendly, cloud-based solution with better compliance features.

According to Matthew Tulloch, Manager Business Systems and Transformation, Southern Grampians Shire Council, who previously worked at one of the partner councils, “Records management is not the first thing on people’s minds. A select group knows the importance and uses systems well, but most just want to get their jobs done and not worry about compliance.”

The councils determined centralizing record-keeping in user-friendly SharePoint environment using Microsoft Teams as their staffs’ primary user interface would reduce the burden on users and improve accessibility, usability, and compliance, but they needed a solution to help with information management in Microsoft 365.

## 💡 The AvePoint Solution

The councils received 10 proposals from managed service providers, seven of which offered AvePoint Opus as the records management solution. Ultimately, the councils decided to partner with a provider who offered AvePoint Fly Server to migrate content to the cloud and AvePoint Opus to manage the data.

The project began by migrating content from HP Trim and RecFind to SharePoint using Fly Server's three-step approach. The councils participated in AvePoint's pre-migration workshops to get expert guidance and ensure a smooth migration. For instance, they streamlined their information management architecture in the new system by reducing over 50 metadata points.

Damien Ferguson, Coordinator Digital Transformation, Southern Grampians, praised AvePoint for their ease of communication and their helpfulness during the migration process. "AvePoint was really easy to work with, and I'm pleased with how easy it was to go through the migration with them," he said.

After migrating their content to SharePoint, the councils collaborated with AvePoint to build a new information architecture that dictated how AvePoint Opus managed the entire content lifecycle. Workshops were held to understand the councils' requirements and build a framework that met all four councils' needs while being clear and easy to understand.

The new information architecture had an organized structure, with easily identifiable locations to store records, and five Microsoft Teams defined structures for users to work in. AvePoint Opus applied necessary policies to content in each category, allowing for efficient information management with minimal effort on the part of the councils' IT teams. Matt says, "Now, it's really easy for people to know where they should be working and where they should save things, providing a clear and easy way to meet compliance."

As part of the new architecture, the councils consolidated dozens of classifications into simplified categories based on the necessary retention length of content. This helped streamline their business classification scheme (BCS) and reduced the number of terms to less than 10, while still meeting PROV requirements.

Since implementing AvePoint Opus, the councils have experienced several significant improvements. With auto-discovery, new SharePoint/MS Teams sites are automatically classified, ensuring necessary regulations are followed without IT intervention. Thanks to its integration with the Microsoft stack, content no longer needs to be moved between systems, and onboarding new users is as simple as adding them to the appropriate Azure AD groups for their role in Council. The biggest win, though, is AvePoint Opus's automated disposal capability, which has made the councils more compliant simply by implementing disposal of content based on pre-configured retention schedules.

## The Bottom Line

By modernizing their infrastructure and using advanced records and information management capabilities, the councils have been able to efficiently manage their content and achieve compliance more easily. Their new information management strategy, with automatic application of business rules and content lifecycles thanks to AvePoint Opus, has reduced the workload of councils' staff while providing a seamless experience for users.

The councils' move to centralize record-keeping in SharePoint/MS Teams is part of their overall strategy to move to cloud-based systems to better scale resources. Damien explains, "We have to work smarter, not harder. That's where AvePoint Opus really ticks all the boxes. Users don't even know records management is happening in the background of Microsoft 365. People work where they need to work and the majority of record-keeping is done for them. It's an easy user interface and an easy way for them to work."

Given their positive experience, the councils would recommend AvePoint to others. As Damien said, "I already have! It's a really good experience, and AvePoint has been very helpful in streamlining our records management processes."

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- DAMIEN FERGUSON,  
COORDINATOR DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION, SOUTHERN GRAMPAINS SHIRE COUNCIL

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