

IBM audit letter: the first 72 hours

A checklist for IT teams and license owners: ten steps in order, before you reply to the auditor.

WHY THE FIRST 72 HOURS MATTER

Without credible ILMT data, IBM can count licenses at full capacity, usually a multiple of what you pay under sub-capacity.

Example: one VM with 4 vCPU on a 32-core host

Sub-capacity with ILMT data **4 cores**

Full capacity without ILMT data **32 cores**

8x the same software, counted two ways



Day 0-1

before you reply to anyone

- 1 Confirm nothing and send no data.** A notification letter requires a response, not obedience. The dates in it are usually the auditor's proposals; what actually binds you is your agreement. ☐
- 2 Appoint a single point of contact.** Nobody else talks to the auditor and nothing leaves the company without this person's sign-off. Inform legal, IT and procurement. ☐
- 3 Secure the letter and its dates.** Check who formally audits (usually a Big4 firm acting for IBM) and which agreement it refers to. ☐
- 4 Pull the documents.** Passport Advantage agreement, Proofs of Entitlement, purchase records. Find the audit clause: what scope it allows and with what notice. ☐

Day 1-2

learn your own position first

- 5 Snapshot the state of ILMT.** Is the server running, how many agents report, which ones have gone silent and since when, the date of the last audit snapshot, whether the required 2 years of snapshots exist. If ILMT is broken or missing, that is finding number one: full-capacity risk is growing. ☐
- 6 Do not "clean up" anything.** Uninstalling software after the letter arrives is visible in the data and weakens your negotiating position. ☐
- 7 Write down what you know.** A list of IBM products in use and licenses owned, even incomplete. The gaps against ILMT are your risk map. ☐

Day 2-3

a reply that gives nothing away

- 8 Acknowledge receipt of the letter.** Propose a kickoff meeting in 2-3 weeks and agree an NDA with the auditor before any data changes hands. Do not yet agree to any scope, entity list or auditor tooling. ☐
- 9 Plan the internal review.** Who knows the AIX and VMware estates, who has access to vCenter and the Power servers, who owns BigFix. ☐
- 10 Decide on outside help before the scope is agreed.** The most ground is gained between the letter and the kickoff. Once the scope is signed, your room for manoeuvre shrinks. ☐

What not to do for the entire audit

- ✗ Do not send raw data exports without verifying them first.
- ✗ Do not accept results from the auditor's tools without comparing them against a correctly configured ILMT.
- ✗ Do not sign a draft report "to keep the peace". A draft is a position to verify, not a verdict.
- ✗ Nothing goes to IBM without your written authorization.

Active IBM audit?

Independent verification of the auditor's numbers before you confirm anything.

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I reply within one business day.