Enable automatic failover using AlwaysOn Availability Groups

The AlwaysOn Availability Groups feature uses the availability of a set of databases within your enterprise to improve your failover options and general availability. This feature makes the database highly available using the Windows Failover Cluster Service for Windows Server 2008 and above. As a result, this feature requires Windows Failover Cluster as well as SQL Server on all cluster nodes.

When an availability group is configured using multiple SQL Servers, one of the servers is designated as the PRIMARY node and others are considered SECONDARY nodes. If the primary node SQL Server stops or shuts down, the failover automatically switches to the synchronized secondary node with no data loss. You also can manually perform a failover on the SQL Server.

SQL Compliance Manager provides auditing of the AlwaysOn-configured database and audits the events on the AlwaysOn database along with the failovers.

The AlwaysOn Availability Groups feature is available for SQL Server 2012 and above only.

How AlwaysOn integrates with SQL Compliance Manager

There are two scenarios of how SQL Compliance Manager can work with AlwaysOn availability group databases:

- Listener. Use this scenario when you want to audit a listener (virtual SQL server instance) that works only with a node in the PRIMARY role.
- Nodes. Use this scenario when you want to audit every node that can be in PRIMARY or SECONDARY roles. Note that the secondary role is read-only.

You can use only one scenario at a time, it is not possible to use both of them at the same time on a cluster.

Each node of the SQL Server instance used in the AlwaysOn Availability Group must have a license.

Review the following links to configure AlwaysOn Availability Groups:

Configuring Listener scenario:

1. Install cluster agent services on all Listener nodes using the SQL Compliance Manager Cluster Configuration Console
2. Install cluster agent services on all Listener nodes using the Failover Cluster Manager
3. Add the Listener to SQL Compliance Manager

Configuring Nodes scenario:

- Manually deploy the SQL Compliance Manager Agent

Ensure to review additional information to start working with AlwaysOn Availability Groups:

- Removing a Listener from SQL Compliance Manager
- Exporting/importing audit settings for all AlwaysOn nodes
- Removing an AlwaysOn node from SQL Compliance Manager