How the SQL Compliance Manager Agent works

The SQL Compliance Manager Agent runs under the SQL Compliance Manager Agent Service account on each registered SQL Server computer that hosts the audited instances and databases. To audit events, the SQL Compliance Manager Agent starts SQL Server traces that run on the target SQL Server. Once a trace starts, SQL Compliance Manager copies events from the SQL trace to trace files, providing a raw audit record.

Trace files are stored in the AgentTraceFiles folder under the install directory (`C:\Program Files\Idera\SQLcompliance`) on the computer that hosts the SQL Server instance. This folder is secured using ACL settings. You can specify a different location for the trace directory.

The SQL Compliance Manager Agent compresses the trace files and sends them to the Collection Server. After a trace file is successfully sent, the SQL Compliance Manager Agent deletes the file.

You can configure how the SQL Compliance Manager Agent manages these trace files. For example, you can set the maximum trace directory size to limit how much storage space is consumed by unprocessed audit data. When the directory size is reached, the SQL Compliance Manager Agent stops the SQL trace until the existing trace files can be sent to the Collection Server.

By default, the SQL Compliance Manager Agent communicates with the Collection Server every 5 minutes. This communication is a heartbeat. During a heartbeat, the SQL Compliance Manager Agent confirms its health and receives audit setting updates. You can manually apply audit setting updates as needed using the Management Console.

Note

During the heartbeat, the Collection Service requests a list of the Database Names and ID´s in order to update the table stored in the event database.

If the SQL Compliance Manager Agent continues to run without a heartbeat, IDERA SQL Compliance Manager considers the agent to be unattended. By setting the unattended time limit, you can control how long traces are allowed to run until SQL Server stops the trace. Use this setting to automatically stop auditing when the SQL Compliance Manager Agent is not responding or is deleted.

When you deploy the SQL Compliance Manager Agent, SQLcompliance installs the SQL Compliance Manager Agent service on the computer hosting the target SQL Server instance. You can install the agent manually through the setup program or dynamically through the Management Console.