

# Enterprise Centralized Logging and Observability Architecture on AWS

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Specialization: Cloud Security & Observability

Platform: Amazon Web Services (AWS)

## 1. Problem Statement

An organization operating multiple AWS accounts lacked centralized visibility into logs and security findings. Logs were dispersed across accounts, limiting detection capabilities. A unified logging and SIEM integration architecture was required.

I implemented this solution to ensure that critical logs from distributed workloads are consistently collected, securely stored, retained according to compliance requirements, and analyzed through a centralized SIEM platform.

## 2. Objectives

The primary objectives of this implementation were to:

- Centralize AWS service and application logs
- Improve security monitoring and incident investigation
- Support regulatory and compliance requirements
- Enable real-time detection and alerting
- Ensure secure and durable log storage
- Reduce operational blind spots

## 3. Logging Architecture Overview

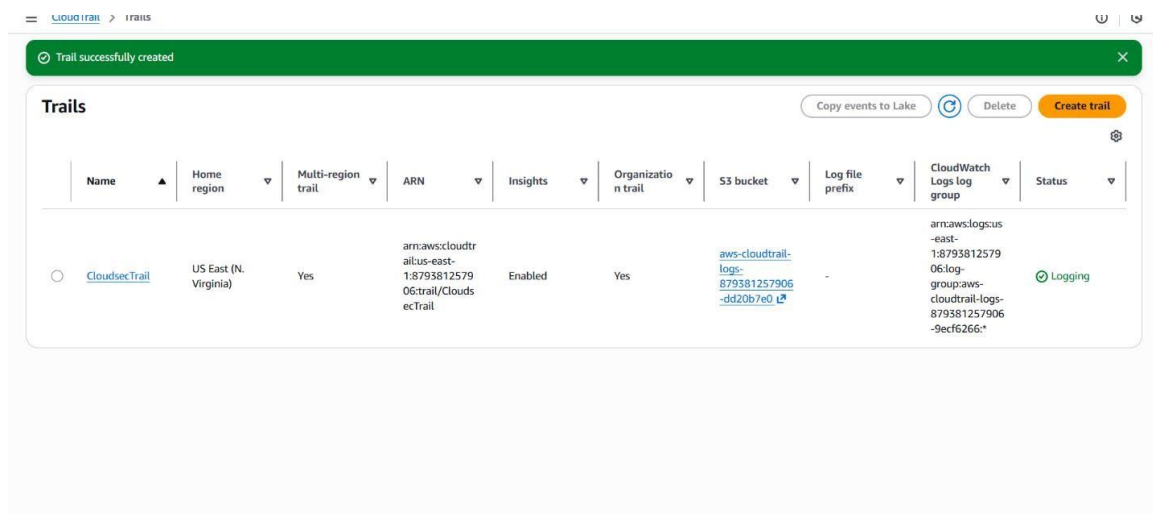
The centralized logging platform was built using:

- AWS CloudTrail
- Amazon CloudWatch Logs
- Amazon Kinesis Data Firehose
- AWS Lambda
- Amazon OpenSearch
- Amazon S3

All service and application logs are routed through CloudWatch and streamed into a secure analytics platform.

4. CloudTrail Configuration

CloudTrail was configured as a multi-region, organization-level trail.



The configuration includes:

- Management event logging
- CloudTrail Insights for anomaly detection
- Centralized S3 storage
- Streaming to CloudWatch Logs

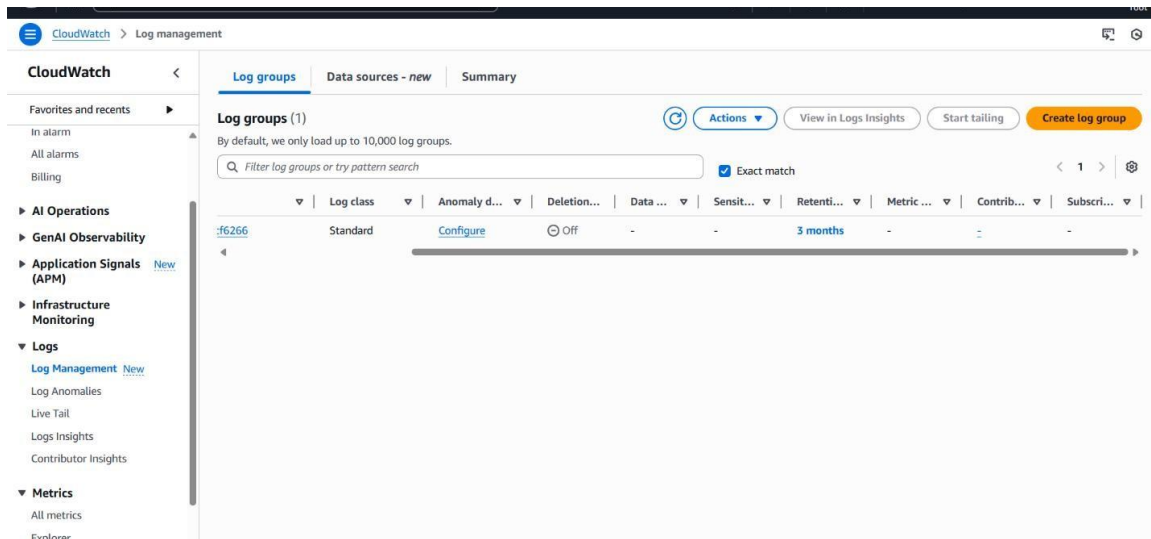
This ensured full visibility into account activity across regions.

5. Log Retention and Lifecycle Management

CloudWatch Log Groups were configured with defined retention periods to prevent indefinite storage.

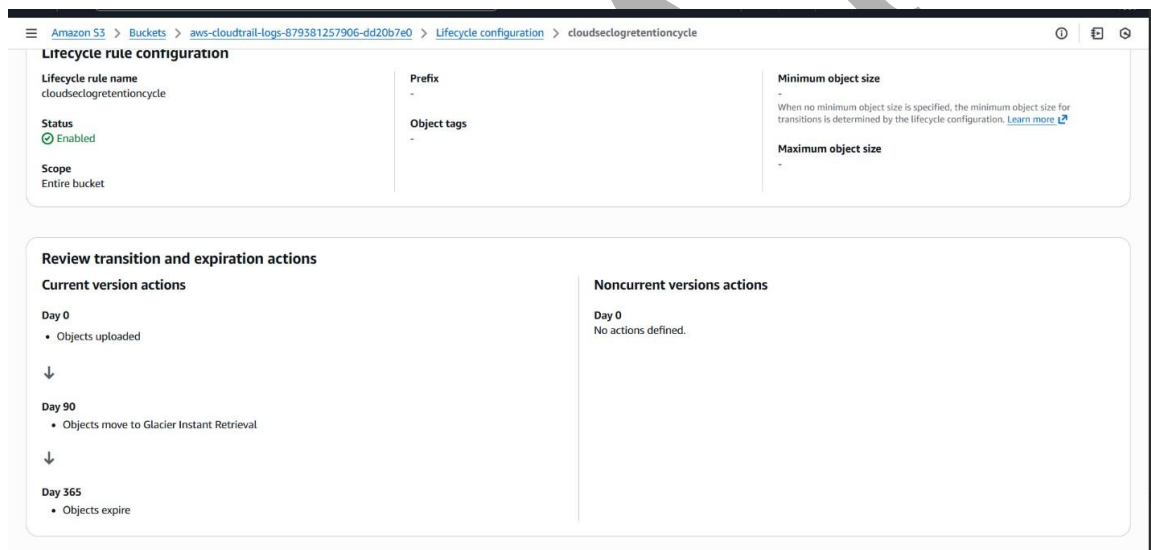
CloudTrail logs stored in S3 are managed using lifecycle policies that:

- Retain logs in S3 Standard for 90 days



- Archive older logs to S3 Glacier

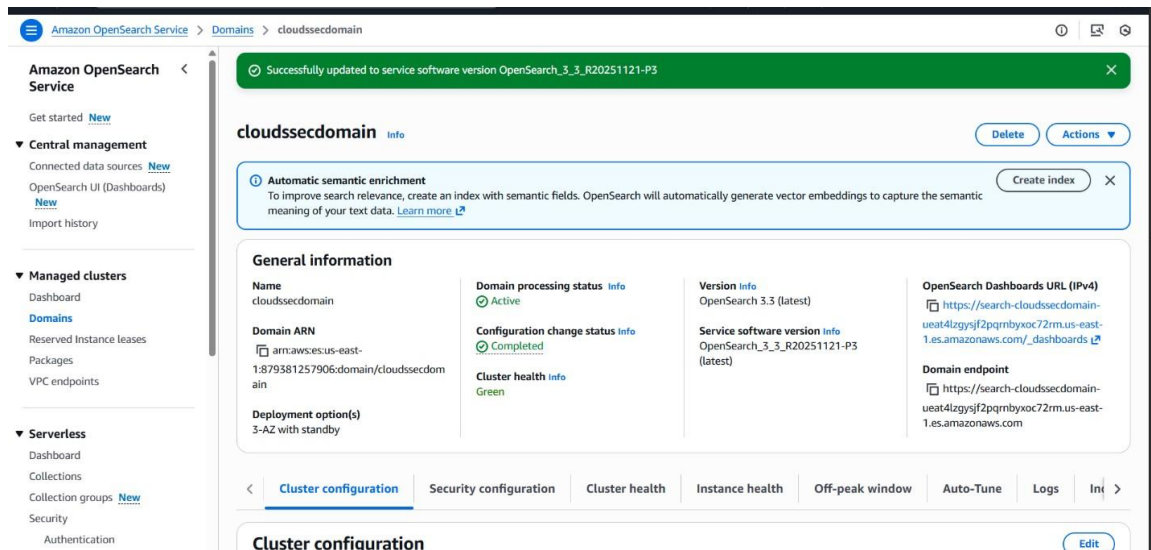
- Delete logs after one year



This approach aligns with common compliance standards such as PCI-DSS while controlling storage costs.

## 6. Centralized SIEM Platform (Amazon OpenSearch)

Amazon OpenSearch was deployed as the centralized log analytics and SIEM platform.



The domain was configured with:

- No public internet exposure
- VPC-based deployment
- Fine-grained access control
- IAM-based authentication
- Encrypted storage
- Node-to-node encryption

Access was restricted using security groups to authorized ingestion services.

## 7. Secure Log Ingestion Pipeline

### 7.1 CloudWatch Subscription Filters

Subscription filters were created to forward all CloudTrail events to Kinesis Data Firehose.

No filtering was applied to ensure complete audit coverage.

### 7.2 Kinesis Data Firehose Configuration

Firehose was configured with:

- OpenSearch as primary destination

- S3 backup destination
- VPC delivery enabled

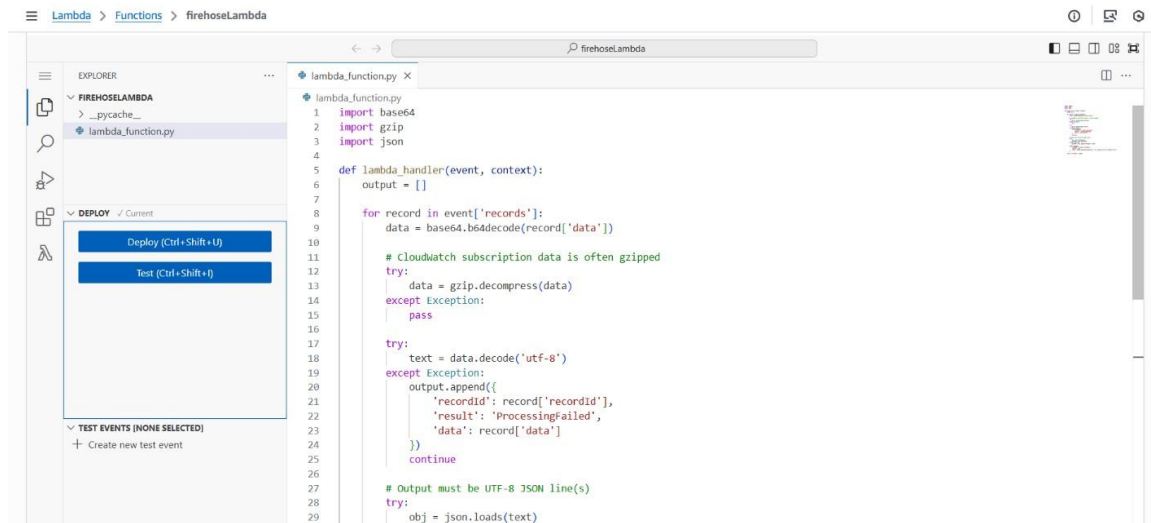
The screenshot displays the Amazon Data Firehose console interface. At the top, a blue banner indicates that demo data sending has been stopped for the stream PUT-OPS-KKey6. The main content area is titled 'PUT-OPS-KKey6' and includes a 'Firehose stream details' section. This section shows the stream is 'Active', its source is 'Direct PUT', its destination is 'Amazon OpenSearch Service', and data transformation is 'Enabled'. The ARN is listed as 'arn:aws:firehose:us-east-1:879381257906:deliverystream/PUT-OPS-KKey6'. Below this, there is a 'Test with demo data' button and a note about standard charges. The 'Monitoring' tab is selected, showing 'Firehose stream metrics' for 'Incoming bytes', 'Incoming put requests', and 'Incoming records'. A large 'ADDED' watermark is visible across the bottom half of the image.

An IAM role was created with permissions for:

- Writing to OpenSearch
- Delivering data to S3
- Managing network interfaces

### 7.3 Lambda Log Transformation

A Lambda function was integrated into Firehose to perform log transformation.



Functions included:

- Normalizing log formats
- Adding metadata
- Ensuring indexing compatibility

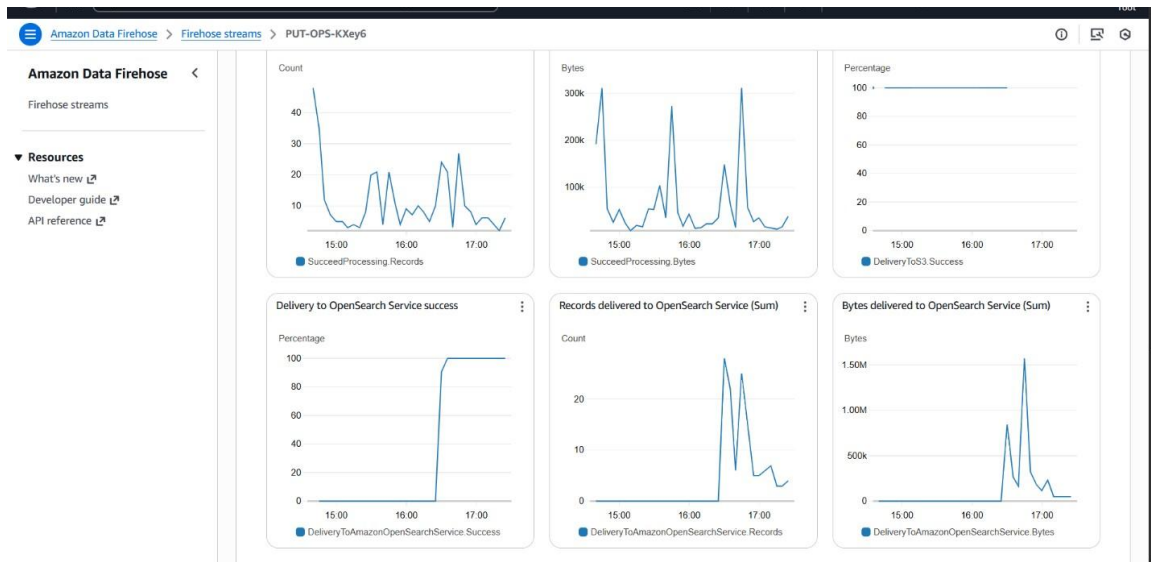
This improved searchability and consistency.

## 8. Pipeline Validation and Testing

The logging pipeline was validated end-to-end.

After resolving VPC network restrictions, log ingestion was confirmed in OpenSearch.

Indexed records were verified to be searchable and complete.



The screenshot shows the AWS console's 'Discover' page for CloudTrail logs. The left sidebar lists 'Selected fields' and 'Available fields'. The main area displays 'Results (58/58)' with a 'Download as CSV' button. The logs are filtered by 'aws-logs-2026-01-15'.

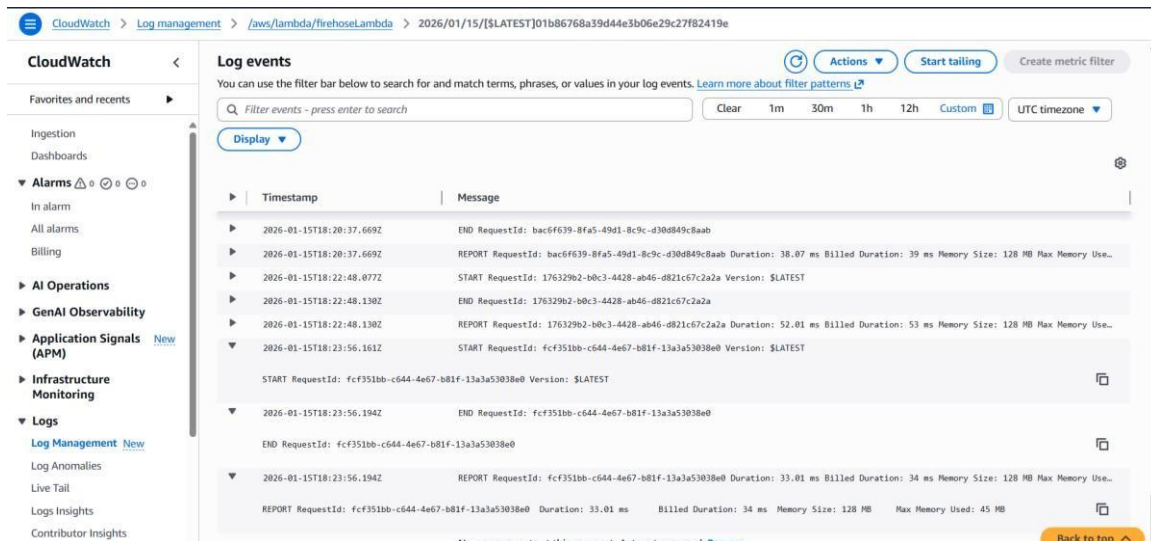
Log Group	Log Stream	Log Entry
aws-cloudtrail-logs-879381257906-9ecf6266	o-pn8spcswbk_879381257906_CloudTrail_us-east-1	<pre>{   "eventVersion": "1.11",   "userIdentity": {     "type": "Root",     "principalId": "879381257906",     "arn": "arn:aws:iam:879381257906:root",     "accountId": "879381257906",     "accessKeyId": "ASIA4ZP2V02ZAU00NBIV",     "sessionContext": {       "attributes": {         "creationDate": "2026-01-15T10:47:14Z",         "mfaAuthenticated": true       }     },     "eventTime": "2026-01-15T16:27:23Z",     "eventSource": "iam.amazonaws.com",     "eventName": "ListInstanceProfilesForRole",     "awsRegion": "us-east-1",     "sourceIPAddress": "172.31.1.1",     "userAgent": "awscli/2.15.1",     "requestParameters": {}   },   "message": "ListInstanceProfilesForRole: iam.amazonaws.com: ListInstanceProfilesForRole" }</pre>
aws-cloudtrail-logs-879381257906-9ecf6266	o-pn8spcswbk_879381257906_CloudTrail_us-east-1	<pre>{   "eventVersion": "1.11",   "userIdentity": {     "type": "Root",     "principalId": "879381257906",     "arn": "arn:aws:iam:879381257906:root",     "accountId": "879381257906",     "accessKeyId": "ASIA4ZP2V02ZAU00NBIV",     "sessionContext": {       "attributes": {         "creationDate": "2026-01-15T10:47:14Z",         "mfaAuthenticated": true       }     },     "eventTime": "2026-01-15T16:25:38Z",     "eventSource": "logs.amazonaws.com",     "eventName": "DescribeMetricFilters",     "awsRegion": "us-east-1",     "sourceIPAddress": "172.31.1.1",     "userAgent": "awscli/2.15.1",     "requestParameters": {}   },   "message": "DescribeMetricFilters: logs.amazonaws.com: DescribeMetricFilters" }</pre>
aws-cloudtrail-logs-879381257906-9ecf6266	o-pn8spcswbk_879381257906_CloudTrail_us-east-1	<pre>{   "eventVersion": "1.11",   "userIdentity": {     "type": "Root",     "principalId": "879381257906",     "arn": "arn:aws:iam:879381257906:root",     "accountId": "879381257906",     "accessKeyId": "ASIA4ZP2V02ZAU00NBIV",     "sessionContext": {       "attributes": {         "creationDate": "2026-01-15T10:47:14Z",         "mfaAuthenticated": true       }     },     "eventTime": "2026-01-15T16:25:38Z",     "eventSource": "logs.amazonaws.com",     "eventName": "DescribeMetricFilters",     "awsRegion": "us-east-1",     "sourceIPAddress": "172.31.1.1",     "userAgent": "awscli/2.15.1",     "requestParameters": {}   },   "message": "DescribeMetricFilters: logs.amazonaws.com: DescribeMetricFilters" }</pre>

## 9. Workload Log Integration

### 9.1 AWS Lambda Logging

Lambda workloads were verified to emit logs to CloudWatch.

Test invocations confirmed correct log group and stream creation.

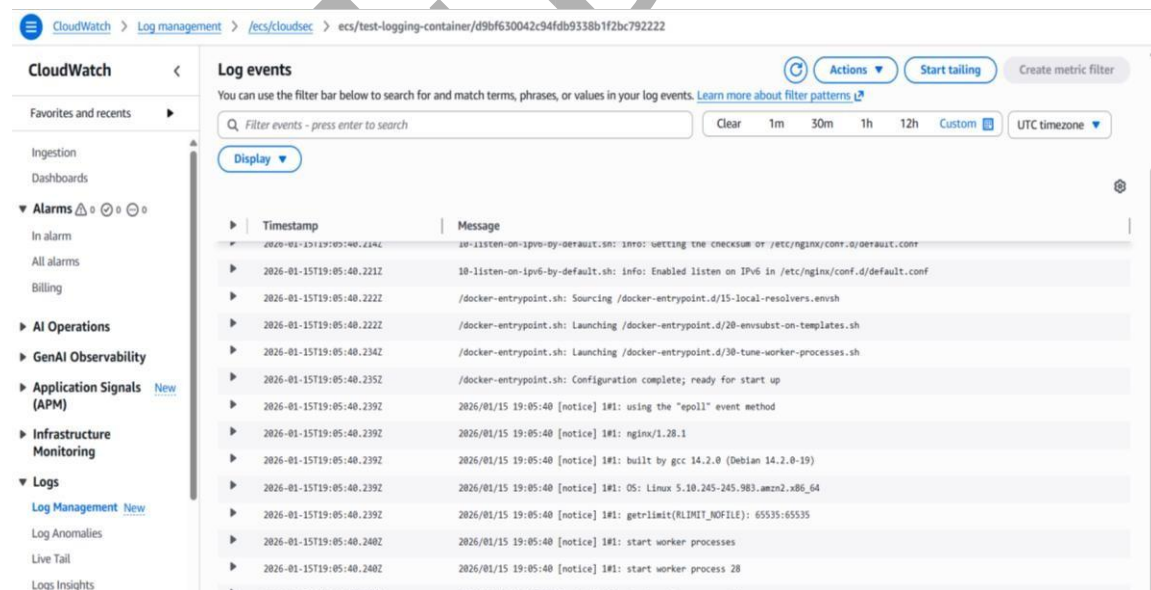


## 9.2 ECS Container Logging

ECS Fargate workloads were configured using the awslogs driver.

Application logs were verified in dedicated CloudWatch log groups.

This ensured container workloads were centrally monitored.



## 10. Durability and Backup Strategy

All logs delivered through Firehose are backed up to S3.



Lifecycle policies archive data to Glacier for long-term retention.

This provides durability, disaster recovery, and compliance support.

## 11. Governance and Documentation

All logging configurations, access policies, and retention standards were documented.

This supported:

- Audit reviews
- Compliance reporting
- Incident investigations
- Operational continuity

## 12. Outcomes and Impact

This implementation delivered:

- Centralized security visibility
- Improved incident response capability
- Compliance-aligned log retention
- Secure SIEM deployment
- Reliable log delivery
- Reduced operational blind spots

## 13. Conclusion

I designed and implemented a secure, scalable, and compliant centralized logging and observability platform on AWS.

Through automated log collection, secure analytics, and structured retention policies, this solution supports enterprise security monitoring, investigations, and regulatory requirements.