

MELISSA WITTE-SPENCER

Senior Compliance Technical Program Manager | ISO/IEC 27001:2022 Lead Auditor,
ISO/IEC 42001:2023 Lead Auditor, ISO 37001 Lead Implementer

Kirkland, Washington | (425) 894-3566 | melissaspencer2@msn.com |
<https://mewitt74.github.io/ProfessionalProfile/> | <https://www.linkedin.com/in/mewitt>

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

ISO/IEC 27001:2022 Lead Auditor, ISO/IEC 42001:2023 Lead Auditor, ISO 37001 Lead Implementer and Senior Compliance Technical Program Manager with 18+ years of proven expertise driving transformational compliance and GRC modernization at Microsoft. Specialized in AI-driven automation, enterprise risk management, and controls monitoring across 21+ international regions impacting millions of assets. Demonstrated ability to deliver exceptional results: 96.5% compliance accuracy, 46% year-over-year growth in program volumes, and 40% reduction in manual workload through intelligent automation. Strategic leader who transforms complex compliance challenges into scalable, efficient operations through technical innovation, process excellence, and cross-functional collaboration. Positioned to drive organizational resilience and competitive advantage through advanced GRC capabilities, data-driven decision-making, and responsible AI governance.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

MICROSOFT CORPORATION | Redmond, Washington (Remote) – 18+ Years Excellence

Senior Compliance Technical Program Manager | May 2024 - Present

Dual Global Program Leadership & AI-Driven Modernization

- Orchestrated end-to-end ownership of Controls Monitoring Framework (CMF) and Policy Exception Request (PXR) programs across 21+ international regions, ensuring regulatory adherence for millions of assets and achieving 96.5% compliance pass rate across 310+ control procedures with 100% successful quarterly test launch rate
- Delivered unprecedented program volume: Processed 122 PXRs in FY25 (projected 155 by year-end) representing 46% year-over-year growth while reducing cycle time by 21% (14.7 to 11.62 days), optimizing resource allocation and accelerating business approvals
- Enabled AI infrastructure expansion by facilitating policy exceptions for 500% growth in AI Dedicated site usage and 31% increase in GPU-as-a-Service, directly supporting Microsoft's AI race initiatives and revenue growth strategies

- Designed AI-driven process agents reducing manual administrative workload by 40%, enabling scalable program management and empowering team productivity under exponential demand growth without headcount increase
- Published updated PXR Standard Operating Procedure (first comprehensive update since 2022), aligning documentation with current tooling workflows, addressing long-standing process gaps, and ensuring adaptability across evolving compliance landscape
- Pioneered Assurance Testing process for high-risk PXRs through collaboration with Operations Assurance Team, deploying risk mitigation validation and enhanced compliance practices aligned with FY25 organizational key objectives
- Led Enablon GRC migration planning and governance structure design, establishing integration matrix, requirements mapping, and third-party consulting framework to replace RSA Archer platform and drive long-term scalability
- Enhanced workflow efficiency by 20% in PXR case processing through redesigned workflows, automated administrative tasks, and increased approval transparency, achieving 30% improvement in reporting accuracy for executive visibility
- Delivered inaugural PXR Data Insights review for executive QBR, incorporating trend analysis, risk intelligence, and predictive metrics through advanced Power BI dashboards utilizing DAX and Co-Pilot integration
- Leveraged Microsoft Co-Pilot for complex DAX coding and metrics development, enabling sophisticated Power BI visualizations that significantly enhanced data interpretation, strategic decision-making, and executive insight capabilities
- Enforced enhanced communication channels for PXR status inquiries, dramatically improving stakeholder satisfaction and operational transparency across leadership, external COI engineering groups, and compliance subject matter experts
- Redeveloped CMF Control Procedure administration and testing processes, achieving 100% successful quarterly test launch rate and empowering business teams to self-manage program needs independently
- Navigated major organizational restructuring with professionalism and transparency, ensuring seamless program transition, legacy continuity, and sustained high performance during ambiguous change management period

Senior Compliance Manager | May 2018 - May 2024

Controls Monitoring Framework Excellence & Policy Exception Program Transformation

- Achieved compliance performance: 92.16% pass rate across 487 control tests in FY24 with perfect completion rate, demonstrating outstanding regulatory compliance leadership and operational excellence
- Deployed strategic process control changes resulting in 20% decrease in process-related errors and 15% improvement in project delivery efficiency through RACI management enhancements and stakeholder alignment

- Partnered to onboard 15+ new compliance controls and integrate emerging programs into Controls Monitoring Framework, driving standardization across organization while maintaining 100% quarterly campaign launch success rate
- Reduced campaign management time by 80% (from 80 hours to under 10 hours) through scalable testing methodology, returning 695 labor-hours annually to organization for higher-value compliance initiatives
- Processed 88 Policy Exception Requests in FY2024, approving 74 with 84% approval rate, showcasing effective risk assessment, decision-making excellence, and collaborative stakeholder engagement
- Optimized PXR workflow efficiency: Reduced processing time by 30% and increased positive user feedback by 40% through access issue resolution, intelligent request routing, and user experience enhancements
- Streamlined access management reducing redundant access requests by 60%, demonstrating systems optimization, user-centric design thinking, and operational efficiency improvements
- Maintained technical oversight of eGRC, Power BI analytics, PowerApps, and SharePoint Online platforms, ensuring alignment with compliance objectives and strategic organizational priorities
- Authored multiple PXR engineering features improving user experience including resolution of critical ticketing logic issues, reorganization of policy pick lists, and deployment of workflow extension and change management enhancements
- Built comprehensive prioritization tracker for compliance requests ensuring cross-stakeholder alignment and strategic priority management across multiple organizational groups and initiatives
- Pioneered PXR Data Insights capability delivering first comprehensive review incorporating feedback and trend analysis for executive QBR presentations, enabling data-driven strategic decision-making
- Designed advanced Power BI dashboards with complex DAX coding and Co-Pilot integration, creating role-based actionable views enabling decision-making from operational teams to senior leadership
- Enhanced risk communication by simplifying PXR data reporting for executive presentations and improving self-service analytics capabilities by 40%, democratizing data access across organization
- Introduced Control Effectiveness Score as quantitative indicator of control health, deployed to production with stakeholder training and historical tracking capabilities for continuous monitoring
- Collaborated with compliance engineering and stakeholder teams to submit prioritized requests for tooling optimization including automated control review, Azure DevOps integration, standardized dashboards, and enhanced data elements

- Partnered with Operations Assurance Team to develop and implement Assurance Testing process, evidence validation, and documentation for high-risk policy exceptions ensuring robust risk mitigation

Engineering Program Manager (MCIO) | January 2018 - May 2018

Strategic Engineering Leadership & Global Data Center Operations

- Led MCIO's Global Data Center engineering strategy for managing workflows and chain of custody over memory components classified as data bearing devices across worldwide operations
- Drove cross-functional collaboration with Risk, Compliance, Security, and Inventory Operations teams to collect business requirements and define tooling enhancements for global enterprise implementation
- Orchestrated end-to-end implementation including scheduling, engineering, pilot, training, and rollout of operational features across global data center operations ensuring seamless adoption
- Secured organizational alignment by presenting strategic vision to business and engineering stakeholders, obtaining leadership sign-off for transformational engineering initiatives

Senior Program Manager | August 2011 - December 2017

Data Quality Leadership, Asset Management Transformation & Process Excellence

- Introduced and implemented Global Asset Data Quality Program as preventive control for audit failure, establishing foundation for enterprise-wide data governance excellence across all operations
- Achieved transformational data accuracy improvement: Drove Data Center Inventory and Asset data accuracy from 65% to 99.6% for 3.4M devices across 1000s of SKUs, 100s of locations, and 1000s of customers worldwide—a landmark operational improvement
- Implemented strategic validation systems by placing validation rules directly into source data systems to detect, prevent, and correct invalid information proactively before downstream propagation
- Conducted comprehensive analysis of core data systems and operational processes, implementing and continuously expanding error identification, reporting, and remediation capabilities to reduce data quality risks
- Self-taught SQL expertise enabling efficient data mining and analysis, establishing standard practices within Data Quality Initiative for analyzing core data from source systems to downstream destinations
- Built comprehensive reporting solutions for GFS Asset Management Data Integrity team to compare asset data across systems, enabling systematic resolution of cross-system data discrepancies

- Discovered critical process gaps: Identified that MIUPRD and UPush processes were overwriting accurate receiving data, leading to cross-team remediation efforts and workflow redesign preventing future data corruption
- Led global operations including international travel for process and physical asset audits, presenting weekly and quarterly data quality KPIs to key stakeholders and driving continuous improvement initiatives
- Managed vendor relationships effectively while maintaining rigorous standards for data quality, process compliance, and operational excellence ensuring partner accountability
- Managed comprehensive Bill of Materials (BOM) restructuring project for 65% of GFS datacenter fixed assets, utilizing vendor team expertise to restructure SKUs and realign all impacted fixed assets
- Developed End-of-Life (EOL) process with HP and Cisco preventing procurement escalations due to component unavailability, significantly reducing business plan disruption risk and improving supply chain resilience
- Created step-by-step BOM creation documentation and delivered comprehensive tool training to Inventory Management module users, establishing sustainable go-forward processes and reducing training burden

Program Manager - Capacity Planning | August 2007 - July 2011

Strategic Financial Planning, Forecasting & Executive Leadership

- Collaborated with 300+ business planners, engineers, and management across 500+ business groups including Supply Chain, Data Center Operations, Sourcing, and Finance to drive strategic alignment
- Created multi-million USD capital plans for annual and quarterly planning and budgeting for all online and cloud services, demonstrating exceptional financial acumen and strategic foresight
- Delivered comprehensive forecasting by gathering, analyzing, and developing infrastructure server unit/type, cost, and power planning forecasts enabling optimal resource allocation and financial planning
- Provided strategic insights through data analysis for trends, anomalies, complex reconciliation, and generation of ad-hoc and planned executive reports influencing organizational strategy
- Developed key performance indicators and presented findings to senior leadership, directly impacting strategic decision-making across the organization and driving business outcomes
- Led global training initiatives: Administered and presented quarterly training sessions to business planners and managers worldwide with 50-100 attendees per session ensuring knowledge transfer and consistency
- Managed SharePoint infrastructure as administrator, maintaining and improving organizational content and functionality while defining requirements for future tooling development and capability expansion

- Achieved 86% Tier A property compliance for 12-month planning (exceeding 80% organizational goal) and 90% property group participation (exceeding 75% goal) demonstrating effective stakeholder engagement
 - Developed regular planning schedule creating consistency and predictability, enabling planners to understand timelines and deadlines with confidence and improving organizational planning rhythm
 - Implemented process improvements reducing planning churn and increasing planning accuracy through strategic tooling changes, taxonomy governance refinement, and refined approval processes
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JOHNSON CONTROLS, INC. | Bellevue, Washington

Financial Operations Analyst | May 2006 - July 2007

- Analyzed financial operations data to identify trends and support strategic decision-making for senior management
 - Developed financial reports and presentations for executive stakeholder communication and reporting
 - Collaborated with cross-functional teams to optimize financial processes, controls, and operational efficiency
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VARIOUS LAW OFFICES

Office Operations & Case Support | Jan 1996 – May 2006

- Directed day-to-day law office operations, including scheduling, firm calendar management, file organization, and coordination of attorney court appearances and deadlines.
- Managed client intake end to end: initial screening, conflict checks, opening new matters, and setting expectations on fees, timelines, and required documentation.
- Maintained physical and electronic case files, ensuring documents, correspondence, discovery, and court orders were organized, searchable, and litigation-ready.

Litigation & Paralegal Support

- Processed evidence and discovery, including organizing productions, indexing exhibits, summarizing records, and tracking what had been produced or received from opposing counsel.
- Drafted, formatted, and filed pleadings, motions, and supporting declarations with the court (both in person and via e-filing), ensuring compliance with local rules and deadlines.
- Attended court with attorneys to support hearings and trials, managing exhibits, taking notes on rulings, and coordinating follow-up tasks from the courtroom back to the office.

Client-Facing Responsibilities

- Served as primary client contact for routine questions, status updates, and document collection, helping attorneys stay focused on strategy and court work.
 - Prepared clients for meetings, depositions, and hearings by coordinating logistics, gathering background documents, and confirming timelines and expectations.
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TECHNICAL SKILLS

GR&C & Compliance Tools

Enablon GRC | RSA Archer | Power BI | Microsoft Power Platform (PowerApps, Power Automate) | SharePoint Online | Azure DevOps (ADO) | SQL | Microsoft Co-Pilot | DAX (Data Analysis Expressions)

Frameworks & Standards

ISO 27001 (Lead Auditor) | ISO 37001 | NIST Cybersecurity Framework | SOC 2 Compliance | COBIT | ITIL | FedRAMP | GDPR Compliance | CISA (Certified Information Systems Auditor) | CISM (Certified Information Security Manager) | CRISC (Certified in Risk and Information Systems Control)

Core Competencies

Risk Assessment & Management | Controls Monitoring | Control Testing | Audit Management | Compliance Program Management | Enterprise GRC | AI & Automation Integration | Process Improvement & Optimization | Governance Framework Development | Third-Party Risk Management | Vendor Management | Stakeholder Engagement & Communication | Change Management | Data Analytics | Executive Reporting | Project Leadership | Cross-Functional Collaboration | Issue Remediation Management

Professional Skills

Strategic Planning | Process Innovation | Technical Documentation | Knowledge Management | Leadership Development | Mentoring | Problem-Solving & Root Cause Analysis | Data-Driven Decision Making | User Experience Design | Executive Communication | Project Management | Organizational Change Management

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS & IMPACT

Compliance & Program Management Excellence

- Transformed PXR program from 14.7-day to 11.62-day average cycle time while increasing volume 46% year-over-year, demonstrating operational scaling excellence
- Established 96.5% compliance pass rate across 310+ control procedures impacting millions of assets globally
- Pioneered AI-driven automation reducing manual workload by 40% while enabling 500% growth in AI infrastructure utilization

Data Quality & Governance

- Achieved industry-leading 99.6% data accuracy for 3.4M assets across global operations (up from 65%), establishing benchmark for enterprise data governance

- Implemented proactive validation systems preventing downstream data quality issues and reducing audit risk by 95%
- Delivered 695 labor-hours of organizational savings annually through methodology optimization

Technical Innovation & Analytics

- Designed sophisticated Power BI and DAX dashboards enabling real-time executive insights and data-driven decision-making
- Leveraged Microsoft Co-Pilot and advanced analytics to create predictive compliance metrics and risk intelligence capabilities
- Developed automated process agents and workflow optimizations improving team productivity and stakeholder satisfaction by 40%

Strategic Leadership & Organizational Impact

- Recognized by multiple Microsoft senior leaders for exceptional compliance expertise, strategic vision, and cross-functional collaboration
 - Led successful organizational transitions while maintaining program excellence during periods of significant change and restructuring
 - Mentored compliance teams and fostered "One Microsoft" culture through knowledge sharing, professional development, and collaborative partnership
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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & CONTINUOUS LEARNING

During this current period I am actively pursuing advanced certifications and training in emerging areas including AI governance, responsible AI practices, modern GRC platforms, and cybersecurity management. Recent completions include ISO/IEC 27001:2022 Lead Auditor certification, AI and automation specialization, and CISA/CISM/CRISC certification preparation through ISACA, demonstrating commitment to staying at the forefront of compliance and risk management innovation.
