Stream Analytics - Fraud Detection From Phone Call Data with Azure Event Hubs, Azure Stream Analytics and Power BI

Things to note!!!

- Project Focus: To discuss in detail the key components involved in real time streaming process in Azure using Azure Event Hubs and Azure Stream Analytics while solving the problem of fraud detection.
 - Scenario: The phone call data, generated by a client application, contains fraudulent calls, which are detected by the Stream Analytics job.
 - **Solution**: Process a continuous flow of telemetry data seamlessly in real time utilizing a serverless architecture.

Requirements for this project

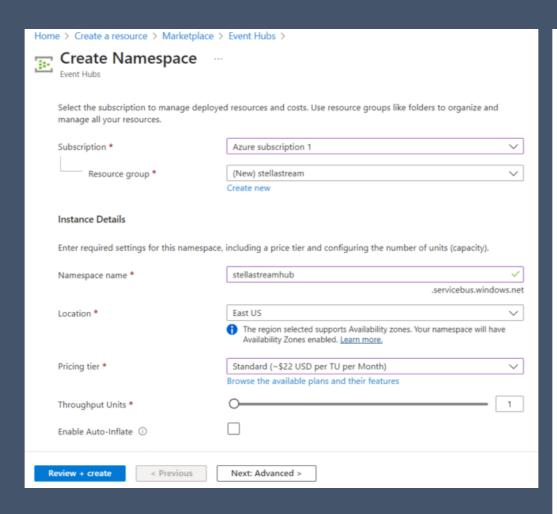
- Azure subscription
- TelcoGenerator Call event generator app from Microsoft
- Visual Studio interphase to edit the code
- Power BI Account Premium or Pro Subscription

Key Components of the Project:

- Azure Event Hubs
- Azure Stream Analytics
- Power BI
- Shared Access Signatures
- Azure Event Bus
- Azure Service Grid
- Zone Redundancy
- User Token
- Managed Identity
- Partition Count
- Retention Time
- Window Functions

STEP 1: Creation of Event Hubs Namespace & Resource Group

- Sign into your Azure portal & create an Event Hubs Namespace
- Create a new resource group (if you don't want to use an existing one) to house the Event Hub Namespace
- Event Hubs Namespace: is a management container for event hubs. The namespace allows for effective management of event hubs with related artifacts within the Azure environment.



The event hubs namespace for this project is "stellastreamhub".

Œ	Create Namespace	
•	Validation succeeded.	
	Event Hubs Namespace by Microsoft	
	Basics	
	Namespace name	stellastreamhub
	Subscription	Azure subscription 1
	Resource group	stellastream
	Location	East US
	Pricing tier	Standard
	Throughput Units	1
	Availability Zones (Zone Redundancy)	Enabled
	Auto-Inflate Maximum Throughput Units	Disabled
	Networking	
	Connectivity method	Public access
	Security	
	Minimum TLS version	1.2
	Local Authentication	Enabled

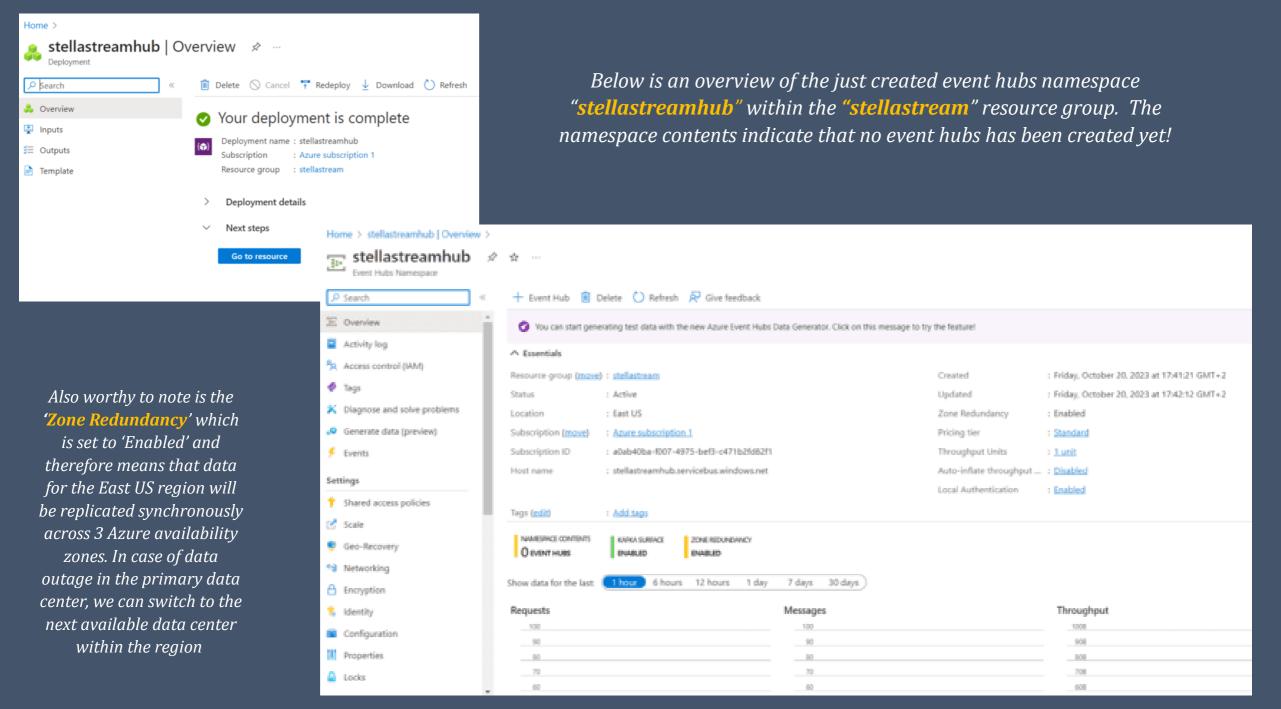
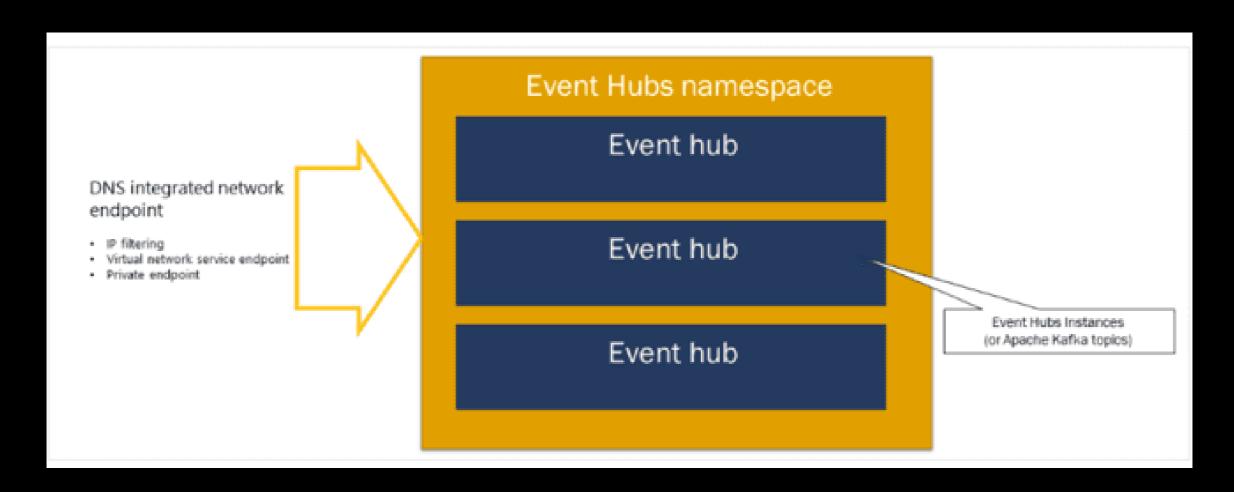


Diagram showing an Event Hubs Namespace housing a few event hubs



Step 2: Creation of the Event Hub 'stellastreamhub'

Home > stellastreamhub Overview > stellastreamhub >				
Create Event Hub Event Hubs				
Basics Capture Review + create				
Event Hub Details				
Enter required settings for this event hub, including partition count and message retention.				
Name * ①	StellaEventHub	~		
Partition count ①	○	2		
Retention				
Configure retention settings for this Event Hub. Learn more				
Cleanup policy ①	Delete	~		
Retention time (hrs) * ①	1			
	min. 1 hour, max. 168 hou	rs (7days)		

Partition Count 'PC'

Partition counts are ordered logs of events used to facilitate the parallel processing of data and events in event hubs. As event hubs are subject to high influx of streaming data, the partition counts offer horizontal scalability by distributing data across multiple partitions for efficient data ingestion and processing.

Partition Counts also allow for independent and parallel processing of real time event streams making it easier for multiple consumers to read the data simultaneously. They also help to prevent bottlenecks by ensuring that the system can handle high data traffic by employing effective load balancing techniques without compromising on performance.

Step 2 contd

Partition Counts:

- A few points to consider when determining the number of partition counts to allocate for a streaming event are
- i. The volume of the incoming data and the rate at which it needs to be ingested and processed
- ii. Scalability Requirements: Ensure the selected partition count can support future scalability and evenly distribute the processing load in the event of growing workloads and sudden spikes in events.
- iii. Consumers: The number of consumers that would be reading data from the partitions simultaneously
- iv. Cost: Although partitioning enhances the performance of the event hubs, it also impacts the cost. Cost therefore should be put into consideration whilst also evaluating the trade-offs with scalability and performance

For this project, the **partition count was set to '2'** meaning there were 2 partitions running simultaneously to ingest data and enhance the performance of the whole process. This is a sample project, and the cost of the partition count was the most important factor considered...lol!

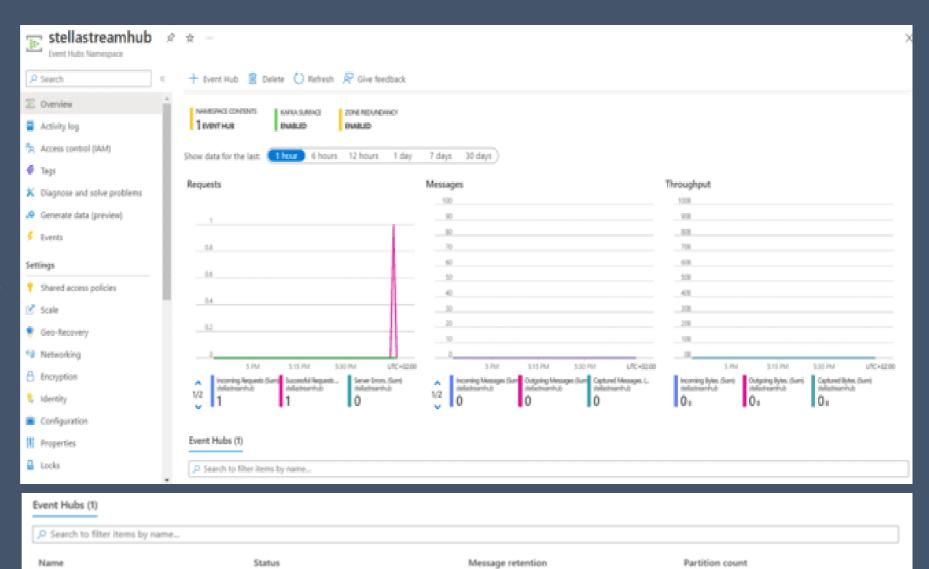
Step 2 contd

Retention Period

This is the specified period within which data is retained and made available for consumption, replay and troubleshooting purposes amongst other things. After the specified retention time, the data is permanently deleted.

The retention period for this project was set to one hour.

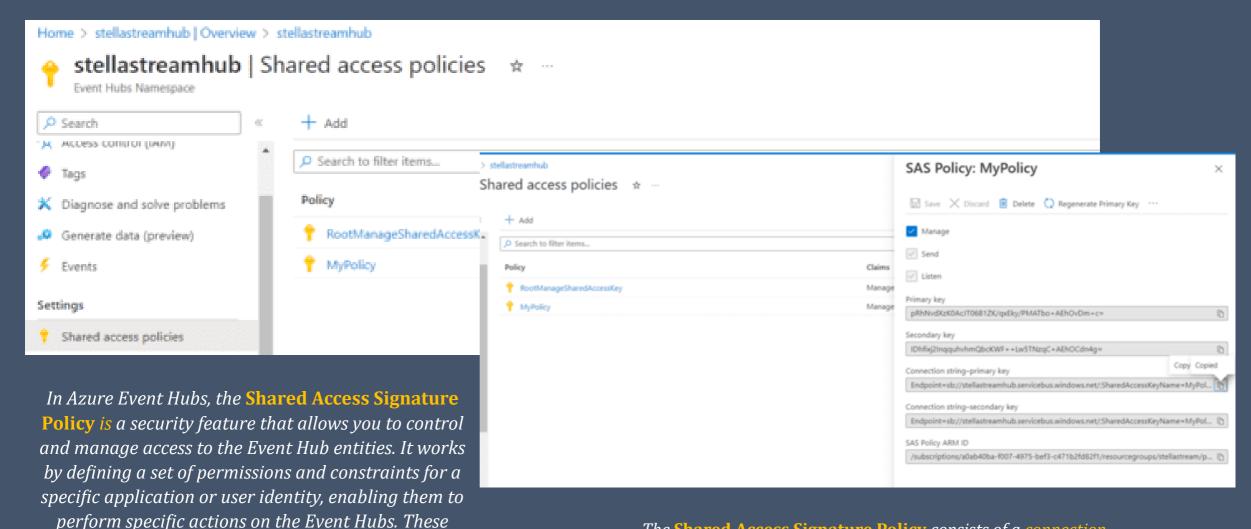
stellaeventhub



Step 3: Shared Access Signature Policies

policies are associated with an Azure Active Directory

identity or a shared access key.



The **Shared Access Signature Policy** consists of a connection string-primary key that facilitates the connection between the event hub and event generator.

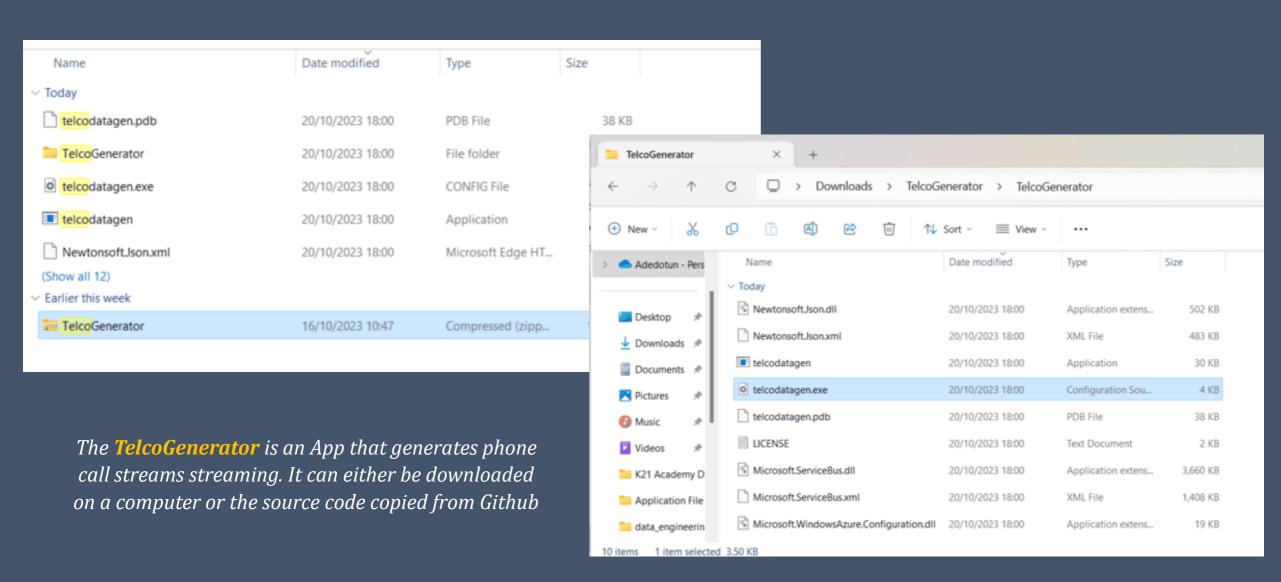
Step 3 contd - How Shared Access Signature Policies Work

- Creation of Policies: You can create multiple shared access policies for an Event Hub namespace or a specific Event Hub. Each policy can have its own set of permissions/ authorisation rules, such as sending, receiving, managing, or listening to events.
- Permission Management: Once created, the shared access policies can be assigned specific permissions (send, receive or manage or all) that define what actions the application or user can perform. This also aids the regulation of access levels.
- Access Key Management: Shared access policies are associated with a primary and secondary access key, which are used to authenticate and authorize the application or user to interact securely with the Event Hub.
- Expiration and Revocation: Shared access policies can be configured with an expiration date, providing an added layer of security by ensuring that the access rights are automatically revoked after a specified period which helps to prevent unauthorized access over an extended period.

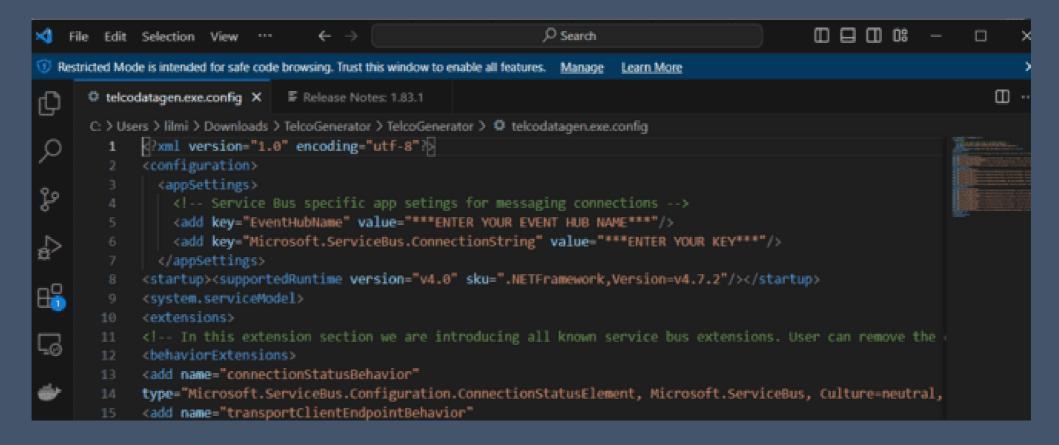
Shared Access Policy Permissions

- ➤ With the "Send" permission, authorized users can send messages to a queue within the Service Bus for further processing or distribution to other connected services.
- The "Receive" permission enables users to receive and process messages from a queue or a subscription for processing and handling based on specific business logic.
- ➤ The "Manage" permission provides users with the ability to manage the Service Bus entities, including creating or deleting queues, topics, subscriptions, and other related resources. Users with this permission can perform administrative tasks such as configuring settings, setting up filters, or adjusting access control rules for the Service Bus entities.

Step 4: Generating Data - TelcoGenerator & Visual Studio



Step 4 contd: Visual Studio & Microsoft Service Bus



The **Visual studio** provides an interphase by which we can input the connection string values. This information enables the **Service Bus** to transport information from the TelcoGenerator to the Event hub.

Step 4: Event Bus

In Azure, an event bus refers to a communication channel or messaging infrastructure that facilitates the transfer of event data between different applications or services within the Azure ecosystem. It enables various components of a system to communicate and interact in a decoupled manner. Examples of event buses provided by Azure are Azure Service Bus and Azure Event Grid.

Azure Service Bus is a fully managed enterprise integration message broker that enables communication between applications and services. It supports both cloud and on-premises solutions and provides a reliable platform for independent transfer of data between different components of a distributed system.

On the other hand, Azure Event Grid is a fully managed event routing service that enables the seamless integration of various Azure services and third-party applications, allowing them to react to events and take necessary actions in real time.

For this project, Azure
deployed "Azure Service Bus"
and this is because
TelcoGenerator is a Microsoft
product. If it were to be a
third-party product, then
Azure event grid would have
been deployed as the means of
transport.

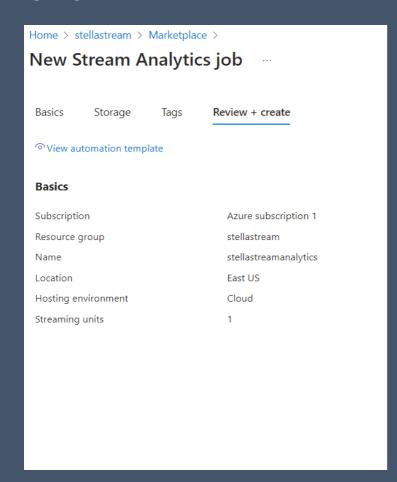
Sample of PhoneStreams generated by TelcoGenerator

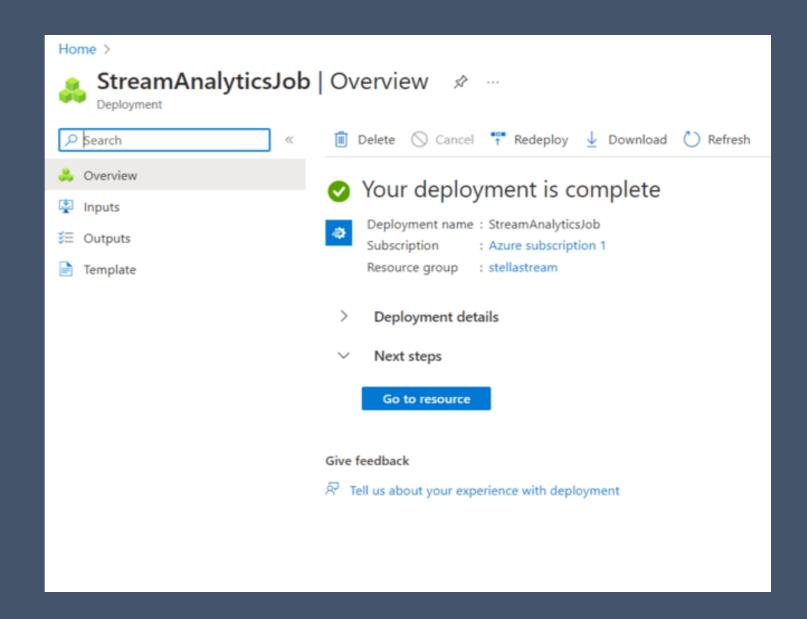
```
Command Prompt
                           Windows PowerShell
Windows PowerShell
Copyright (C) Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.
Install the latest PowerShell for new features and improvements! https://aka.ms/PSWindows
PS C:\Users\lilmi> cd "C:\Users\lilmi\Downloads\TelcoGenerator\TelcoGenerator"
PS C:\Users\lilmi\Downloads\TelcoGenerator\TelcoGenerator>
       > .\telcodatagen.exe 1000 0.2 2
#Sets: 1,#FilesDump: 1,#CDRPerFile: 1000,%CallBack: 0.2, #DurationHours: 2
Time Increment Per Set: 2
20231020 183412
MO.d0.0.Australia,456722620,466921200135361,789066693,466923200779222,20231020,183412,0.0.,.b.1.,4.,425,141298312187
7,,,20231020 183412
MO, d0, 2, Germany, 234566001, 466923000886460, 567858330, 466921302209862, 20231020, 183424, 1, 0, , , V, 1, , 0, , 421, 886932428306, ,
.20231020 183424
MO, d0, 4, UK, 456776271, 466923000464324, 234520325, 466922702346260, 20231020, 183426, 2, 0, . . a, 1, . 0, . 425, 886932429155, . . 2023
1020 183426
MO.d0.6.Australia.234552476.466923101048691.345613685.466923000464324.20231020.183427.3.299...b.1..4..623.1416955584
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0231020 190112
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20231020 183430
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20231020 183430
```

The phonestreams will be fed into event hubs which will in turn be fed into azure streams analytics

Step 5: Time to Involve Azure Stream Analytics

Create a new stream analytics job "stellastreamanalytics" in the resource group.





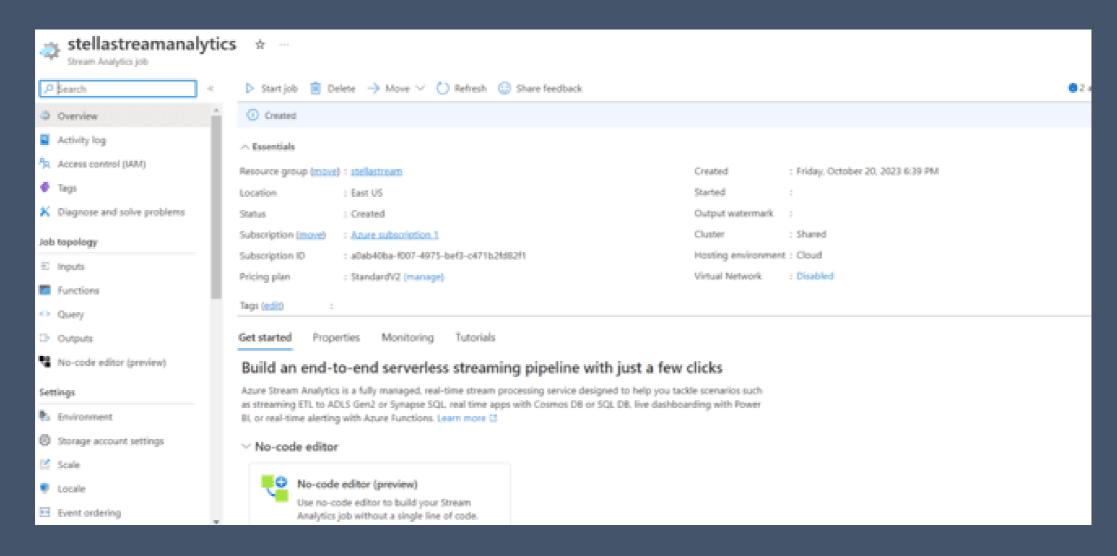
Step 5 contd



Azure Stream Analytics will be used to process the streaming data and perform aggregate functions before it is been set to the process output function like Power BI.

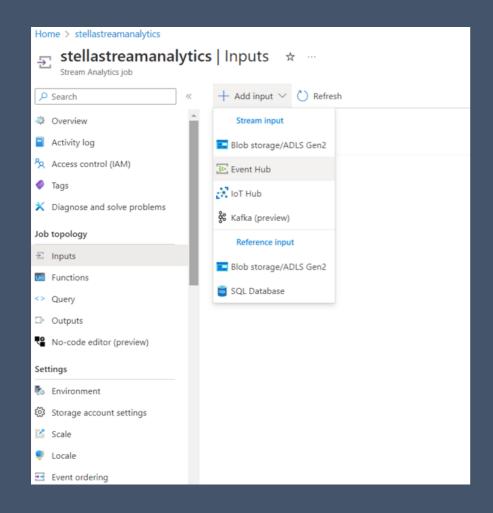
Input stream (Event Hubs) -→ Process stream (Azure Stream Analytics) -→ Output stream (Power BI)

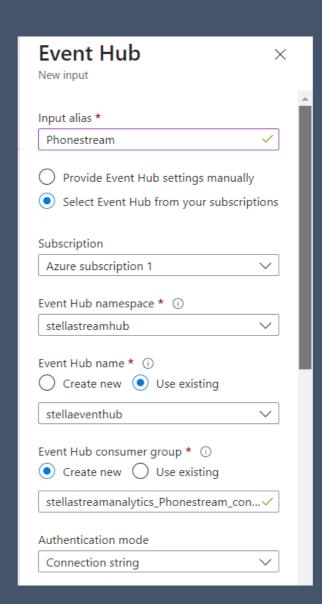
Step 5 contd: Overview of Stream Analytics Dashboard

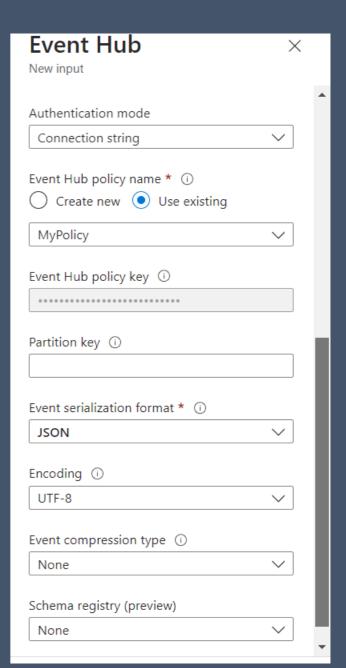


Step 5 contd: Configuring ASA

- Specifying the job input channel as Event Hub

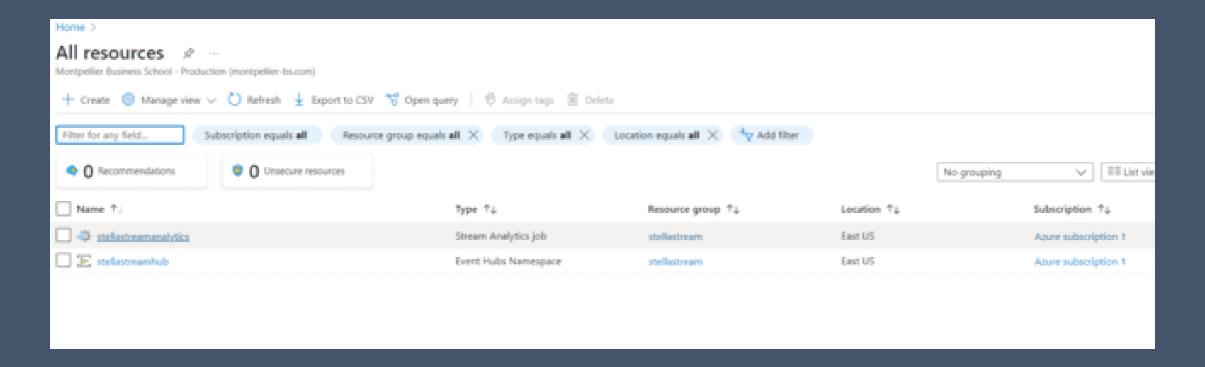






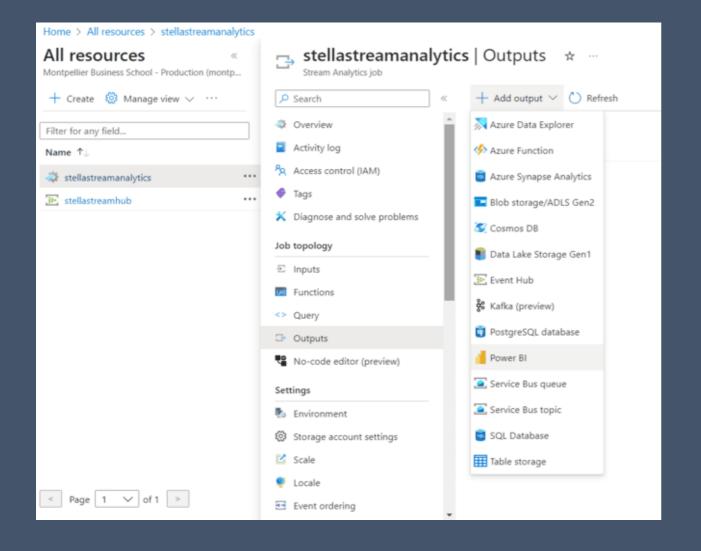
Step 5 contd: Configuring ASA

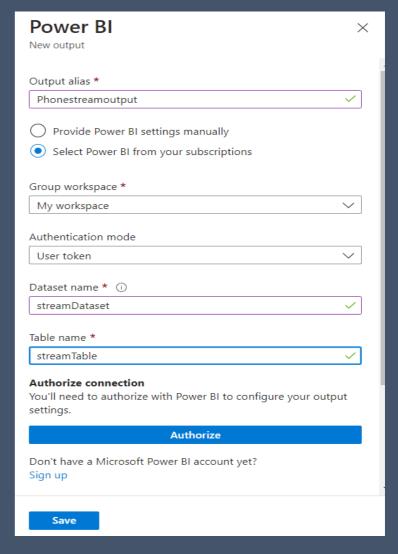
- Job Processing Channel: Azure Stream Analytics



Step 5 contd: Configuring ASA

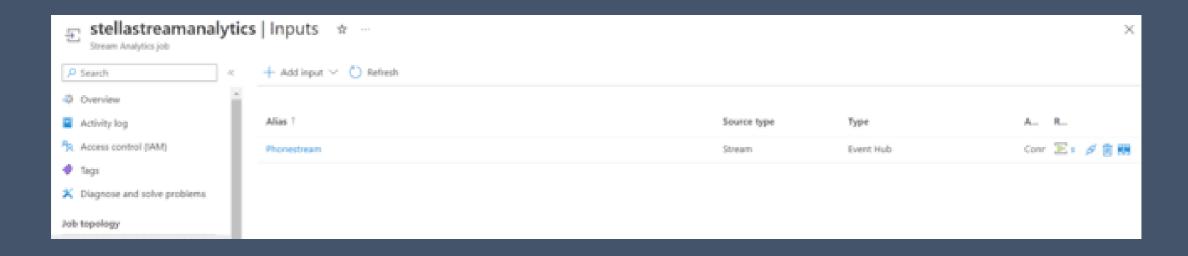
- Specifying the job output channel as Power BI

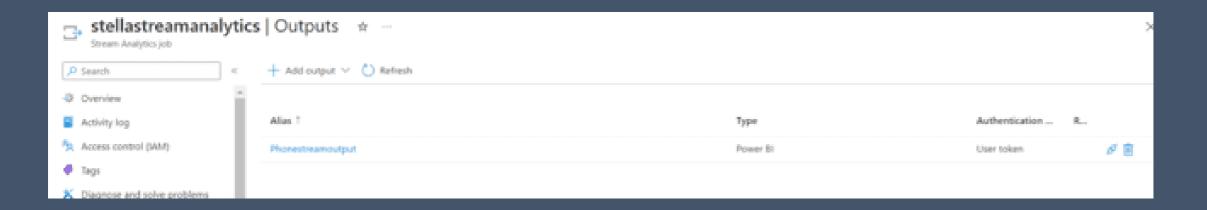




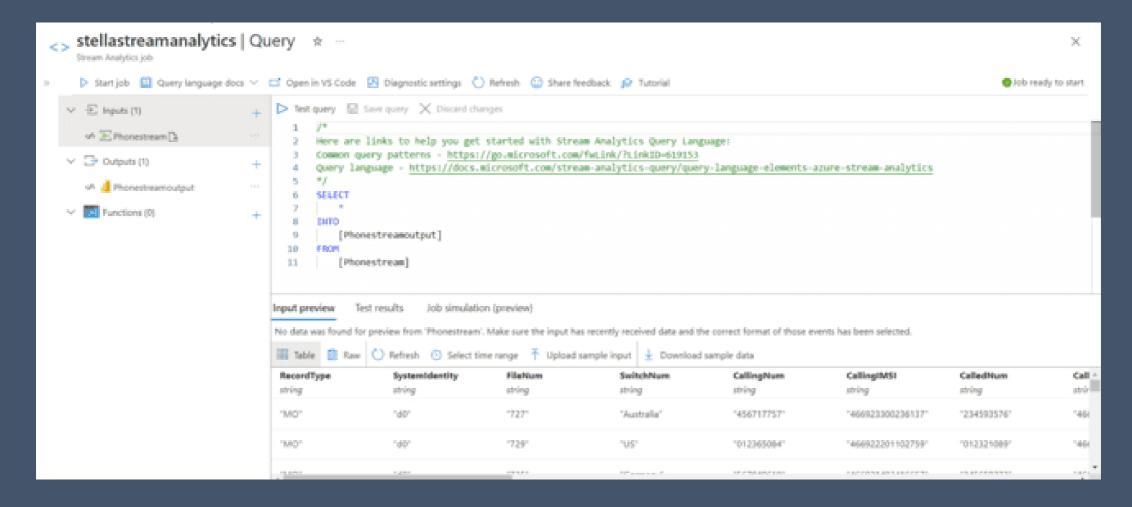
The authentication mode selected is "User Token" which is system generated and will expire after a while. Another option which is safer is the "Managed Identity" but will only work with a Power BI Pro License.

Overview of Input and Output



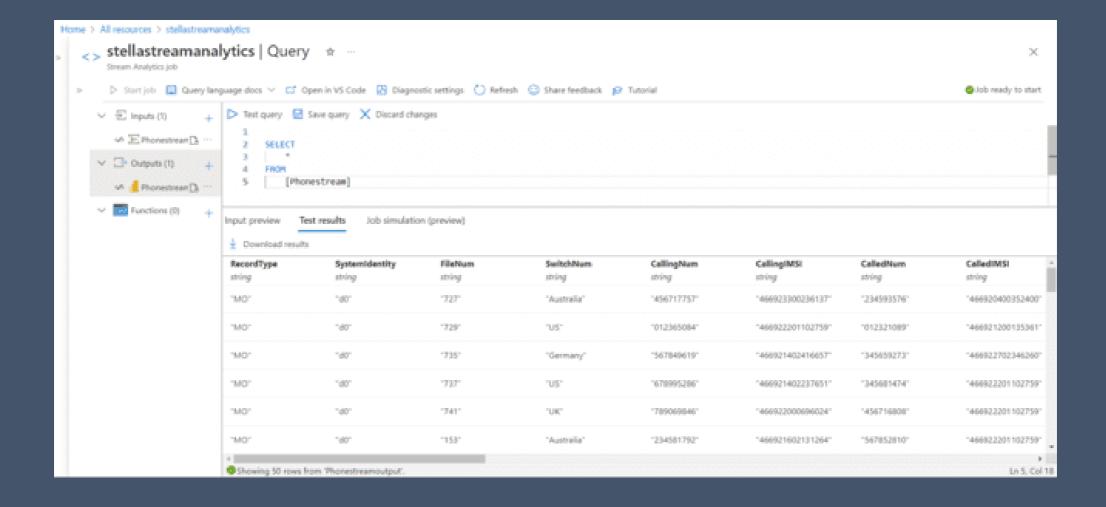


Step 6: Test the Query to confirm that the connection is active

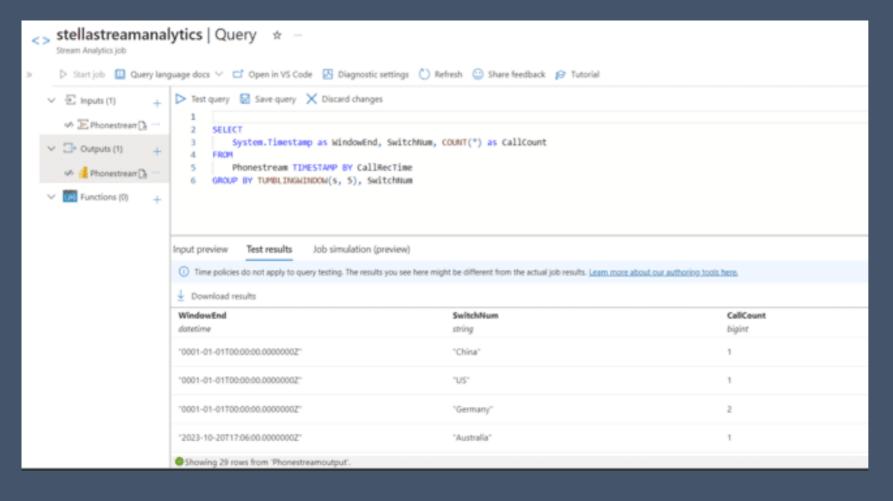


Literal meaning of the query:
Select all the results from input/Event Hub "Phonestream" and send to output/Power BI "Phonestreamoutput"

Step 6 contd: Result of the Query



Step 7: Analysis of 2nd Query



System.Timestamp: Every event at every stage of the query in Azure Stream Analytics has a timestamp associated with it.

System.Timestamp() is a system property that can be used to retrieve the event's timestamp.

System.Timestamp format =

'yyyy-MM-dd'T'HH:mm:ss.SSSSSS' where 'SSSSS' is milliseconds

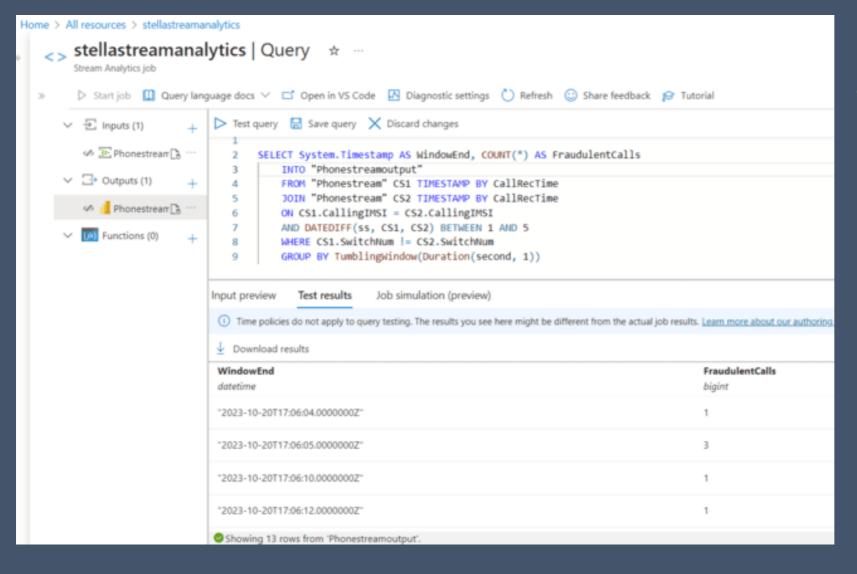
Timestamp By: On the other hand, Timestamp By allows us to specify custom timestamp values. We can select a particular timestamp field in the input stream that'll be used to define the tumbling window. If no timestamp field is selected, it automatically records the time the event was received by the Event Hub or IOT hub.

Step 7: Analysis of 2nd Query Contd

- Tumbling Window: is one of the window functions in azure stream that enables us to perform aggregations such as count or group by on streaming data. Other window functions are session, hopping, sliding and snapshot and all these window functions use the "group by" aggregation.
- According to Microsoft documentation, Tumbling window functions are used to segment a data stream into distinct time segments and perform a function against them. The key differentiators of a Tumbling window are that they repeat, do not overlap, and an event cannot belong to more than one tumbling window.
- Syntax for tumbling window = Tumbling window (Duration(timeunit, windowsize)). Where time unit can be days 'd', hours 'h', seconds 'ss', milliseconds 'ms' & microseconds 'mcs' with 7days being the absolute maximum.
- T/N: By default, tumbling windows are inclusive in the end of the window and exclusive in the beginning for example 12:00 PM 1:00 PM window will include events that happened exactly at 1:00 PM but will not include events that happened at 12:00PM (these events will be part of 11:00 AM 12:00 PM window).

For this project, the system.timestamp is stored in the variable "WindowEnd" which is basically a timestamp for the end of each 5 seconds window of the 'CallRecTime'. The aggregation factor are the countries in the "SwitchNum" column and the tumbling window is an interval of "5 seconds" – this essentially means the calls will be grouped by country/region and counted every 5 seconds interval without repetition.

Step 8: 3rd Query to detect SIM Fraud



Remember to save the query before running it. It is also important to save the query in other to be able to 'start the job' in stream analytics so it can stream the results of the query to Power BI

The result of the query is displayed in "Fraudulent calls"

Step 8: Analysis of 3rd Query Contd

```
Test query Save query Discard changes

SELECT System.Timestamp AS WindowEnd, COUNT(*) AS FraudulentCalls

INTO "Phonestreamoutput"

FROM "Phonestream" CS1 TIMESTAMP BY CallRecTime

JOIN "Phonestream" CS2 TIMESTAMP BY CallRecTime

ON CS1.CallingIMSI = CS2.CallingIMSI

AND DATEDIFF(ss, CS1, CS2) BETWEEN 1 AND 5

WHERE CS1.SwitchNum != CS2.SwitchNum

GROUP BY TumblingWindow(Duration(second, 1))
```

In essence, the code will detect if a user is using the same phone number to dial 2 or more countries at the same time which is illegal. You've made it this far, you may want to go back and read the words in yellow as a whole sentence!

SELECT System.Timestamp AS WindowEnd, COUNT(*) AS FraudulentCalls (Output of the entire query is found in this column)

INTO "Phonestreamoutput"

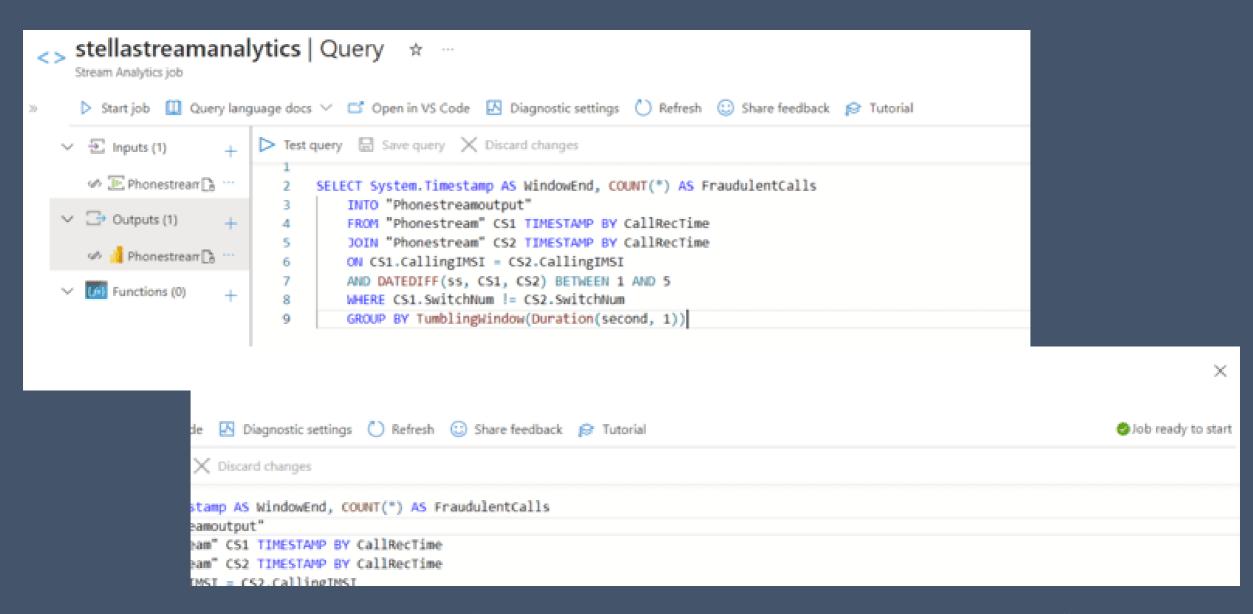
FROM "PhoneStream" CS1 TIMESTAMP BY CallRecTime

JOIN "PhoneStream" CS2 TIMESTAMP BY CallRecTime (It's a selfjoin and we're basically comparing values in the stream against themselves)

ON CS1.CallingIMSI = CS2.CallingIMSI (to check if a phone number appeared more than once at the same time)

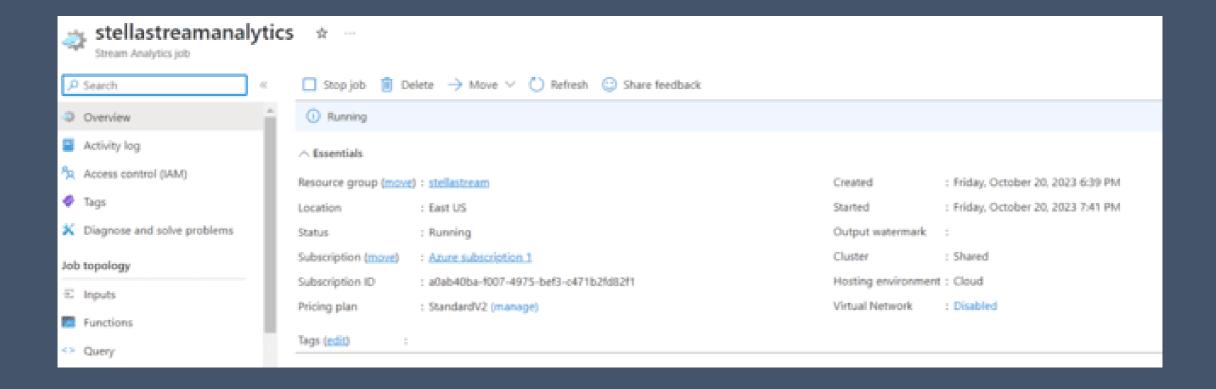
AND DATEDIFF(ss, CS1, CS2) BETWEEN 1 AND 5 (within a space of 5 seconds)

WHERE CS1.SwitchNum != CS2.SwitchNum (especially if the countries from which the phone number originated are not the same)



Now that the query has been saved, the "Start job" button comes on. Once the button is tapped, the "job ready to start" is seen.

The job has already started, and we can now see the "Stop job" button has come on. Once the button is tapped, the job will be stopped, and the data streams will stop being transmitted.

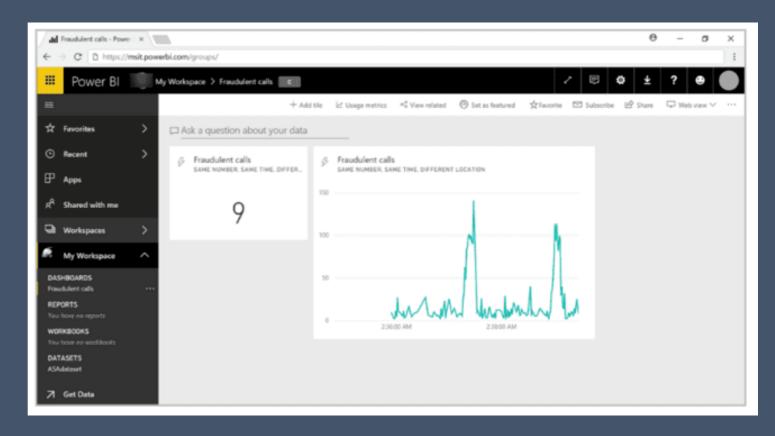


Step 9: Visualising the results in Power BI

PROCESS

Now that the job has started running in Azure Streams Analytics, you can navigate to Power BI and sign in. If the Stream Analytics job query is outputting results, the ASAdataset dataset that was created will be found under the Datasets tab.

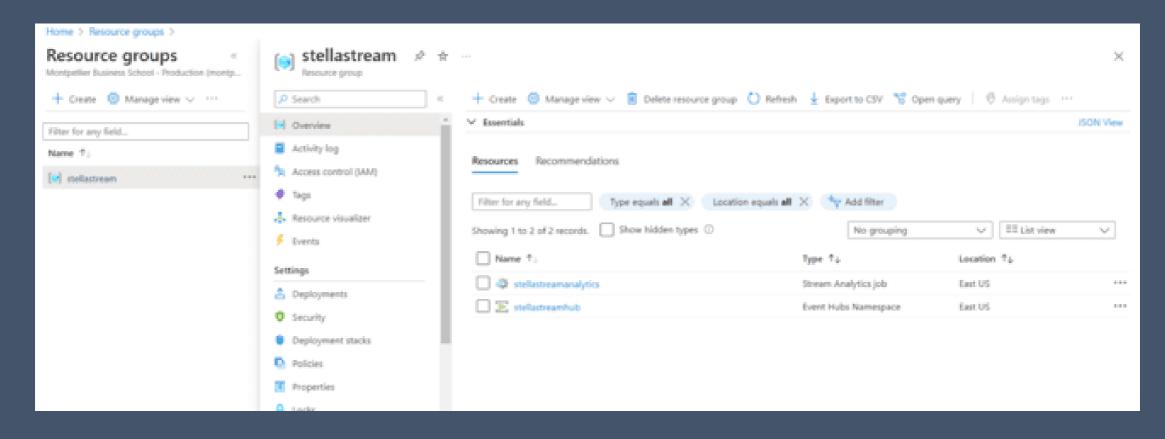
- From your Power BI workspace, select + Create to create a new dashboard named Fraudulent Calls.
- At the top of the window, select Edit and Add tile.
- Then select Custom Streaming Data and Next.
- Choose the ASAdataset (yours should be the name you gave it when you configures Power BI in Azure Stream Analytics) under Your Datasets.
- Select Card from the Visualization type dropdown and add fraudulent calls to Fields.
- Select Next to enter a name for the tile, and then select Apply to create the tile.



Follow the step 5 again with the following options:

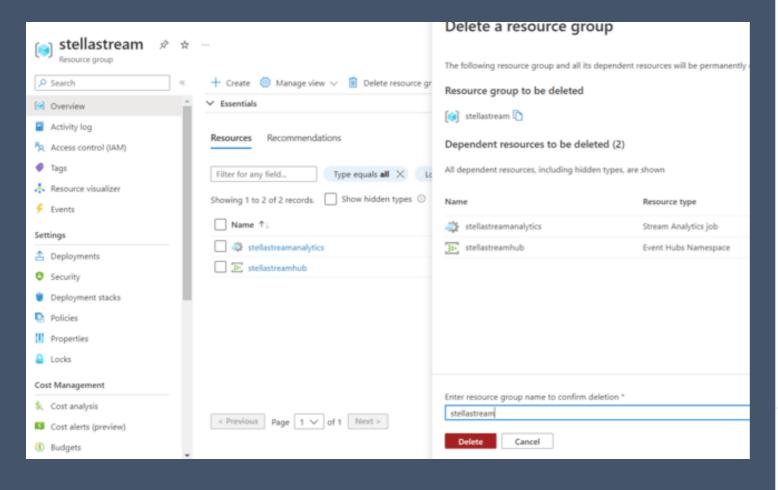
- When you get to Visualization Type, select Line chart.
- Add an axis and select windowend.
- Add a value and select fraudulent calls.
- For Time window to display, select the last 10 minutes

Step 9: Delete Resource group "stellastream"



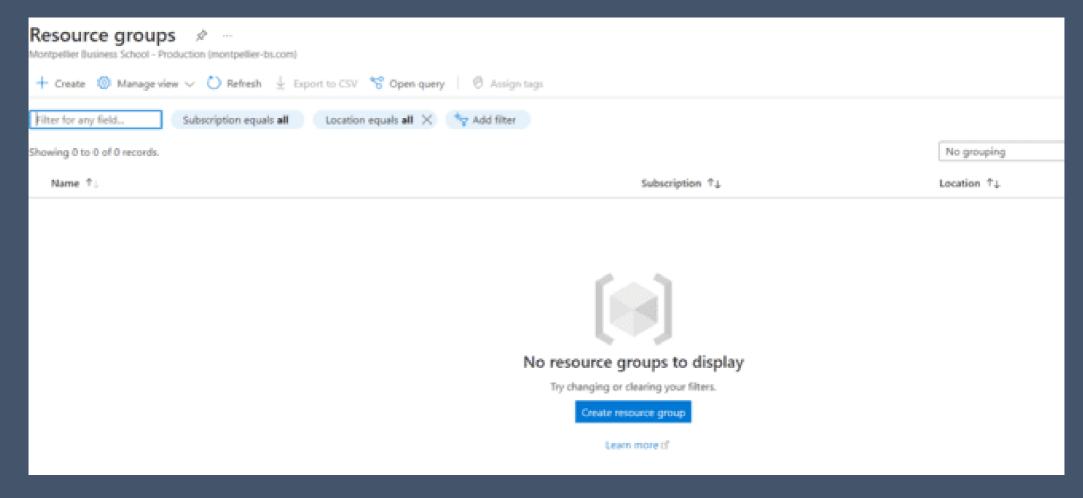
Home >>> Resource groups >>> Select the resources displayed >>> Select "Delete resource group" >>> Confirm the deletion of the resource group

Step 9 contd



Delete a resource group The following resource group and all its dependent resources will be permanently deleted. Resource group to be deleted stellastream 🗅 Dependent resources to be deleted (2) All dependent resources, including hidden types, are shown Resource type Name stellastreamanalytics Stream Analytics job stellastreamhub Event Hubs Namespace Enter resource group name to confirm deletion * stellastream Delete Cancel

Step 9 contd: Confirm that the resources have been deleted



If you do not delete the resource group, it will run up a lot of cost!