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Legacy platform decommissioning evidence checklist

The evidence a controlled platform retirement should leave behind. If the pack below exists, the switch-off is defensible; if it does not, the platform is not ready to go.

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A decommission is one of the few projects whose deliverable is an absence. This checklist describes the evidence that proves the absence was created responsibly.

Work through it before the switch-off date is set, and keep it with the evidence pack afterwards. The final section is the test: if the pack is complete, an auditor, a regulator or a successor can reconstruct what happened and why.

INVENTORY

04 checks

Gathered read-only from the platform itself, not from memory or old documents.

- [ ] **Sessions, applications, connections, service accounts and data paths are inventoried.**
- [ ] **File shares and DFS paths that resolve through the platform are listed.**
- [ ] **Scheduled tasks and scripts running on or against the platform are captured.**
- [ ] **Service accounts created for the platform are traced to everywhere they are reused.**
  Accounts outlive platforms. Reuse is where retirements break other systems.

USAGE EVIDENCE

03 checks

- [ ] Real usage is observed over a window that covers month-end and quarter-end processing.
  A quiet fortnight proves nothing. Seasonal and batch work hides.
- [ ] Every login and connection in the window is attributed to a person, a team or a system.
- [ ] Apparent idleness is tested: batch, failover and break-glass roles are checked explicitly.

DEPENDENCY DECISIONS

04 checks

- [ ] Every dependency has a named owner.
- [ ] Every dependency has a written decision: migrate, replace, retire, or accept the loss.
- [ ] Accepted losses are signed by someone entitled to accept them.
  Acceptance by silence is not acceptance.
- [ ] Stubborn dependencies have a senior owner and a written residual risk, not a whispered one.

STAGED REDUCTION

04 checks

- [ ] Reduction stages are defined: observe, restrict, pause, switch off.
- [ ] Each stage has a checkpoint and a fast way back.
  Anything missed should announce itself while the platform can still be restored.
- [ ] Restore has been exercised at least once before the pause stage.
- [ ] The stage schedule respects month-end, quarter-end and known busy periods.

SWITCH-OFF RECORD

03 checks

- [ ] The switch-off approval records who approved it, when, and what was checked.
- [ ] Monitoring confirms nothing is still calling the platform before removal.
- [ ] Licences, hardware and support contracts are released only after the agreed retention period.

THE EVIDENCE PACK

04 checks

The deliverable. Everything above, retained together.

- [ ] Inventory, usage record, dependency map and decision log are stored as one pack.
- [ ] Every sign-off and accepted loss is in the pack.
- [ ] The pack has an owner and lives where audit can find it.
- [ ] A successor could reconstruct what was retired, what replaced it and who agreed.
  That sentence is the test of the whole exercise.

READING THE RESULT

06 gates

Do not count the ticks. Read where the gaps sit: each section is a gate, and each gate failing means something different.

Inventory

Gaps here mean the platform boundary is unclear: nobody can say precisely what the switch-off would switch off.

Usage evidence

Gaps here mean the observation window has not proved enough. Quiet is not the same as unused.

Dependency decisions

Gaps here mean the switch-off is still speculative, however confident the date in the plan.

Staged reduction

Gaps here mean anything missed cannot surface safely, because there is no staged way back to offer it.

Switch-off record

Gaps here mean the action is not attributable: nobody can show who approved what, or when.

The evidence pack

Gaps here mean the retirement is not yet complete as a governed change, whatever the power state of the hardware.

> A powered-off platform without its evidence pack is an outage waiting to be misunderstood, not a completed retirement.