

Renier Kotze

Senior DevOps / Cloud Platform Engineer — AWS · Amazon EKS · Terraform & Terragrunt

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PROFILE

Twenty years in technology, including six years inside Amazon Web Services as an enterprise escalation engineer and support operations manager, and four and a half years building and owning cloud platforms for regulated South African financial services. Currently responsible for the Terraform/Terragrunt and Amazon EKS platform behind the Shoprite Group's Money Market division across eight AWS accounts, and for the DevOps environment underpinning Old Mutual's Will product.

Strongest where infrastructure automation meets production reliability: modular infrastructure as code, EKS cluster lifecycle and workload identity, pipeline-gated delivery in audited environments, and diagnosing the failures other engineers escalate. Afrikaans and English; comfortable operating in CET-aligned distributed teams.

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Cloud: AWS — EKS, EC2, ECS, IAM, VPC networking, API Gateway, NLB/ALB, RDS, S3, Secrets Manager, CloudWatch, CloudFormation, Lambda, Elastic Beanstalk

Containers & Orchestration: Amazon EKS, Kubernetes, Docker, Helm, Docker Swarm

Infrastructure as Code: Terraform, Terragrunt (modular multi-account/multi-environment codebases), CloudFormation, Ansible

CI/CD & Automation: Azure DevOps Pipelines, GitLab CI, Jenkins, Git, Bitbucket

Observability: Datadog, Prometheus, EFK/Elasticsearch stack, CloudWatch; alerting via OpsGenie, Mattermost, Microsoft Teams

Security & Identity: AWS IAM, IRSA, EKS Pod Identity, EKS Access Entries, Secrets Manager, API key and usage-plan controls, least-privilege design

Languages & Platforms: Python, Bash, PowerShell, Linux (CentOS, Ubuntu, SuSE), YAML/HCL

Currently developing: Argo CD (GitOps proof of concept in progress); self-hosted LLM tooling — Dify, Ollama, Qdrant

EXPERIENCE

Senior DevOps Engineer | CyberPro Consulting — client: Shoprite Group (Money Market Division)

Cape Town, South Africa · Apr 2022 – Present

- Own the Terraform and Terragrunt codebase that provisions infrastructure across eight AWS accounts spanning the full SDLC, built as reusable modules within a dependency DAG so environments stay consistent and new services onboard without bespoke code.
- Operate the Amazon EKS platform hosting production microservices: cluster access control, IAM role and namespace lifecycle, workload identity, add-on management and platform upgrades.
- Leading an in-progress migration from the deprecated aws-auth ConfigMap to EKS Access Entries and from IRSA to EKS Pod Identity, run as a phased coexistence cutover (API_AND_CONFIG_MAP) to unblock cluster version upgrades without interrupting running services.
- Built and maintain Azure DevOps pipelines as the only sanctioned path to AWS — no local Terraform execution is permitted — giving a fully auditable, credential-free deployment trail suited to a regulated financial-services environment.
- Wrote a Python EKS health-check tool against the Kubernetes API, wired into pipelines with exit-code gating and DR-region awareness so cluster degradation blocks a release rather than surfacing after it.
- Extended the Terragrunt DAG with an API Gateway module fronting private EKS services — REST API with proxy integration, API-key authentication, usage plans and a VPC Link to an internal NLB — and resolved a production VPC Link failure traced to incorrect NLB selection in Terraform data sources.
- Run production observability on Datadog with Prometheus and an EFK stack across non-production, and alerting through OpsGenie, Mattermost and Microsoft Teams.
- Built DR-aware deployment automation with primary/secondary region switching, validated through extensive testing and a regional failover rehearsal.
- Deployed a self-hosted LLM platform for documentation review and deployment-process improvement: Dify interface on EKS, Ollama and Qdrant on EC2, PostgreSQL on RDS.
- Act as day-to-day technical guidance and troubleshooting escalation for engineers on the engagement.

DevOps Engineer | CyberPro Consulting — client: Old Mutual (Will Division)

Cape Town, South Africa · Feb 2022 – Present (concurrent engagement)

- Designed and built the complete DevOps environment and CI/CD pipeline for the Old Mutual Will product from a standing start, delivering a turnkey deployment capability rather than a set of scripts.
- Built the original platform on Docker Swarm, Jenkins and EC2-based load balancing, then migrated it to GitLab CI and Amazon ECS as the product matured, keeping EC2 services in place throughout.
- Provide continuing DevOps ownership and support for the environment alongside the Shoprite engagement.

DevOps Engineer | Rank Interactive

Cape Town, South Africa · Sep 2021 – Apr 2022

- Implemented and administered the team's automation toolchain — Terraform, Ansible, Jenkins, Bitbucket and Git — and drove adoption of DevOps practice across delivery teams.
- Planned and tracked infrastructure work through the Atlassian suite, and authored the technical documentation and guides the team worked from.

Operations Manager, Premium Support | Amazon Web Services

Cape Town, South Africa · May 2019 – Jun 2021

- Managed day-to-day Premium Support operations for the Graduate and Security Cloud Support Engineer teams, including performance management, technical coaching and training.
- Established quality management systems — SOPs, lean programmes and operational procedures — and set quality metrics and KPIs jointly with department heads and global teams.

Cloud Support Engineer II | Amazon Web Services

Cape Town, South Africa · Aug 2015 – Apr 2019

- Second-line escalation engineer for enterprise AWS customers across EC2, VPC, Linux, CloudFormation, Elastic Beanstalk, Docker, Amazon ECS, CodePipeline, Lambda and Python — resolving the production failures that had already defeated first-line support.
- Managed customer escalations during major service events and critical incidents.
- Advised enterprise customers on streamlining deployment and automation, built internal tooling to improve Premium Support processes, and recruited and coached junior support engineers.

EARLIER EXPERIENCE

Linux Systems Administrator, One Digital Media (Oct 2013 – Jul 2015) — Linux server estate, PXE-boot provisioning server for rapid builds, backup and recovery, Bash and PowerShell automation.

Support Engineer, Technology Systems Integration (Apr 2011 – Sep 2013) — CentOS edge servers acting as firewalls, routers and mail gateways for SME networks, plus Linux and Cisco networking support.

ComputAssist Group (Oct 2003 – Apr 2011) — progressed from Field Support Engineer to Call Centre Operations Manager to Director of Technical Support: pharmacy and point-of-sale systems, SuSE Linux servers, and leadership of support and service-desk teams.

EDUCATION & CERTIFICATIONS

A+ Certification, Information Technology — Audem (2000)

Matric — Hoërskool Jeugland (2000)

LANGUAGES

Afrikaans (native) · English (full professional)