Tests finished, but where is the report? Treat coverage as a delivery contract

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On November 23, 2026, GitHub announced that the Code Quality upload-code-coverage action checks for Cobertura XML and fails uploads in unsupported formats. The change highlights a useful distinction: successful tests do not establish successful report delivery.

Separate three completion conditions

This is an approach proposed by 8plus, not a measured case study. Ask whether tests finished, whether this run produced the expected report, and whether the remote result belongs to the correct commit and pull request. Each question needs its own evidence.

A test command can finish while writing its report to a different directory. An upload could then find an older file and present apparently plausible data. Tie the artifact to the current run instead of checking only that a path exists.

A format is more than an extension

Renaming JSON to coverage.xml does not turn it into Cobertura. Check the reporter configuration and the actual output. If conversion is required, make it an observable step that can fail.

In a test workflow, supply an invalid report and confirm that execution stops at the intended check. Then use a valid sample to exercise the normal path. A negative case demonstrates the boundary more clearly than another all-green run.

Do not turn missing data into zero

A missing report may indicate a generation, path, upload, or presentation problem. It does not establish zero coverage or the absence of testable code. Distinguish missing data from a low measured value.

In a monorepo, also check which application the report represents, how paths map to source files, and which working directory is treated as the root. Numbers with different scopes are not a reliable before-and-after comparison.

Ask an AI assistant for inspectable evidence

When an assistant changes CI, ask for the test command, report location, associated commit, and remote check result. A statement that tests passed is insufficient. Do not hide a required failure merely to remove a red indicator.

If remote processing is pending, say so. If access prevents inspection, mark it unverified. Preserve useful diagnostics without posting credentials, private paths, or personal information from test fixtures.

Accept the result a reviewer can actually see

After the fix, confirm that the pull request displays a report from this run. Keeping execution, transport, and interpretation separate prevents one green indicator from standing in for the entire delivery chain. Coverage informs a conversation about test scope; it does not prove the absence of bugs.

Sources

Official announcement

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