

RED HAT OPENSTACK PLATFORM LIFE CYCLE

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

INTRODUCTION

Customers of Red Hat® OpenStack® Platform have different needs when it comes to use and upgrading to new versions. Some wish to always upgrade to the latest version, while others look to standardize on a release for several years. To accommodate these different needs, we vary the length of support we provide for Red Hat OpenStack Platform based on its version. This FAQ document addresses questions you may have about this support.

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QUESTION: How is the Red Hat OpenStack Platform life cycle changing with the release of version 10?

ANSWER: Every 18 months, a release will be designated as being long life. The first such release will be Red Hat OpenStack Platform 10, based on the OpenStack community's Newton release.

Long-life releases will have a support life cycle of three years. Customers will then have the option to purchase the Extended Life Cycle Support Add-Ons, granting an additional fourth and fifth year of support.

Standard (not long-life) releases will have a support life cycle of one year. The first such release will be Red Hat OpenStack Platform 11, based on the OpenStack community's Ocata release.

New releases of Red Hat OpenStack Platform will continue to be made available on an approximately six-month cadence.

QUESTION: Why are these changes being made?

ANSWER: In talking with customers as well as potential customers we notice two distinct ways in which they wanted to use Red Hat OpenStack Platform.

For some customers, it's not always easy to change what's already in production. Frequent upgrades are a disruption. These customers may not always need the latest features of OpenStack, and they might be constrained by complex regulations. For these customers, a long-life version of OpenStack, one upon which they could standardize for up to five years, was necessary.

For other customers, they desire the latest features and are often working on fast applications themselves. They already employ continuous delivery concepts, their validation procedures are automated, and they can continuously scale their infrastructure with newer hardware. For them, they want a model that allows them to always stay on the latest features.

QUESTION: How are these changes being communicated?

ANSWER: The details of these new options can be found on the Red Hat customer portal at <https://access.redhat.com/support/policy/updates/openstack/platform>.

QUESTION: What is the Red Hat OpenStack Platform Extended Life Cycle Support Add-On?

ANSWER: The Red Hat OpenStack Platform Extended Life Cycle Support Add-On is an offering that allows customers to continue receiving critical-impact security fixes and selected urgent-priority bug fixes for Red Hat OpenStack Platform beyond retirement. The benefit to customers is that they can confidently stay on retired versions of Red Hat OpenStack Platform for an additional two years and still receive updates. During that time, they can continue to use their legacy hardware and software, allowing them more time to upgrade their infrastructure to a newer version.

QUESTION: For which versions is the Extended Life Cycle Support Add-On available?

ANSWER: The Extended Life Cycle Support Add-On can only be purchased for specific releases of Red Hat OpenStack Platform described as long life, starting with Red Hat OpenStack Platform 10 and every third version after that. The version of Red Hat Enterprise Linux® supported for these versions will be the same version as the one supported at the end of the regular life cycle.

QUESTION: Are in-place (rolling) upgrades between sequential releases (N→N+1) still supported?

ANSWER: Yes. Customers who upgrade through releases sequentially (e.g., 7→8→9→10-E→11→12) will continue to be able to do so in a rolling fashion with minimal to no disruption of the workloads running on the cloud and automated by the Red Hat OpenStack Platform director as long as the upgrade is performed while the releases involved are still supported.

QUESTION: Will Red Hat support in-place (rolling) upgrades between long-life releases (N→N+3)?

ANSWER: No. Facilitating a rolling upgrade requires that at some point during the process the control plane be running the new release while compute nodes continue to run the old release. It isn't currently possible to have an OpenStack environment running such a combination of control and compute plane elements when the versions involved are more than one release (N→N+1) apart. A rolling upgrade between long-life releases would require such support.

Currently, OpenStack, and its supporting continuous integration, only tests interaction of N+1 elements with N elements (e.g., Red Hat OpenStack Platform 10 with Red Hat OpenStack Platform 9). Remote procedure call (RPC) and application program interface (API) compatibility for 2 or more releases apart is not developed, tested, nor expected to work due to:

- Complexity involved in testing such combinations (test matrix + CI hardware).
- Additional technical debt, instability, and performance ramifications inherent in such compatibility translations.

Customers who wish to take advantage of the long-life option to skip deploying certain releases will instead need to perform a parallel cloud migration (e.g., Red Hat OpenStack Platform 10→13) with minimal additional hardware (currently estimated as one undercloud node, three controller nodes, and two compute nodes).

Red Hat will provide additional tooling to support such migrations. Note that some outage will be required for the cloud workloads being migrated.

QUESTION: When will the long-life to long-life release migration process be available to test?

ANSWER: Tooling will be available before the Red Hat OpenStack Platform 13 release (the next long-life release after version 10). Use of the tooling prior to this time will be unsupported and will be at your own risk.

QUESTION: What if I need more than five years of support for a Red Hat OpenStack Platform release?

ANSWER: Red Hat does not currently have a plan to extend support for any single Red Hat OpenStack Platform release, long-life or otherwise, beyond five years (where the year four and five Extended Life Cycle Support offerings have been purchased). Customers and partners with requirements for longer life cycles should contact their Red Hat account representative to ensure these requirements are considered in any future reevaluation.

QUESTION: Is the Extended Life Cycle Support Add-On SKU version-specific?

ANSWER: Customer purchasing the Extended Life Cycle Support Add-On SKU will have access to all extended versions that are available at a given point in time.

For instance, once Red Hat OpenStack Platform 10 Extended Life Cycle Support Add-On expires in the fifth year, customers can take the subscriptions they used to cover Red Hat OpenStack Platform 10 and use them to cover Red Hat OpenStack Platform 13, which will be available for extended life-cycle support for 18 more months (between year four and five).

QUESTION: How is the Extended Life Cycle Support Add-On packaged and sold?

ANSWER: The add-on SKU needs to be purchased for the last two years of the life cycle of a given release to continue having access to updates through the Red Hat Network (RHN) and Content Delivery Network (CDN) channels.

QUESTION: What other subscription terms apply to the Extended Life Cycle Support Add-On?

ANSWER: A standard or premium subscription is required. The Extended Life Cycle Support Add-On subscription requires a standard or premium Red Hat OpenStack Platform or Red Hat Cloud Infrastructure subscription. The level of support will depend on whether the customer has a standard or premium subscription.

Customers who purchase the underlying subscription from a Red Hat partner offering L1, L2, or even L3 support must purchase the Extended Life Cycle Support Add-On subscription from that same partner.

Also, it's not possible to buy multiple years of extended life-cycle support up front. Subscriptions must be purchased one year at a time in advance of the one-year coverage period. Customers can purchase renewals up until the date on which the current subscription ends.

QUESTION: Is the Extended Life Cycle Support Add-On available worldwide?

ANSWER: Yes.

QUESTION: Is the Extended Life Cycle Support Add-On available through all channels?

ANSWER: Yes.

QUESTION: What support do I get with the Extended Life Cycle Support Add-On?

ANSWER: You will receive updates to all packages listed in the package manifest for the given Red Hat OpenStack Platform release for critical and urgent issues, including security patches, for year four and five of the extended life-cycle support versions.

QUESTION: In general, what types of components or packages are excluded from defect fixes and security fixes?

ANSWER: Any packages that are not part of our full support policy are excluded from this offering. This generally applies to features and packages marked as technology preview for a feature.

QUESTION: Is this offering unique to Red Hat?

ANSWER: At this time, we do not know of any other vendors offering a longer support life cycle for OpenStack, and among those who have similar duration, none offer it as frequently (approximately every 18 months) as we do.

QUESTION: How does a customer with an Extended Life Cycle Support Add-On subscription access updates?

ANSWER: For regular Red Hat OpenStack Platform access, updates are done through Red Hat Network (RHN) and Content Delivery Network (CDN). When the regular channel is discontinued at the end of year three, a different channel will be maintained for the extended life-cycle support.

QUESTION: Where can I get more details about Red Hat life-cycle policies and how they relate to this offering?

ANSWER: Visit the Red Hat customer portal at <https://access.redhat.com/support/policy/updates/openstack/platform>.

QUESTION: Will Red Hat OpenStack Platform systems continue to need entitlements if a customer did not buy the Extended Life Cycle Support Add-On?

ANSWER: Customers who want to directly subscribe a legacy Red Hat OpenStack Platform system to any of the retired channels containing the previously released product content will continue to use one of their subscription entitlements.

QUESTION: Will there be production phase one and production phase two for long-life releases?

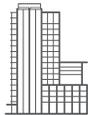
ANSWER: Yes, starting with version 10 long-life releases will have an 18-month production phase one and an 18-month production phase two.

QUESTION: Will there be production phase one and production phase two for standard (not long-life) releases?

ANSWER: No. Starting with Red Hat OpenStack Platform 11, standard releases will start in production phase two for their life cycle.

QUESTION: Will this new life cycle affect previous OpenStack release life cycles (Red Hat OpenStack Platform 9 and earlier)?

ANSWER: No, there will be no change to these versions.



ABOUT RED HAT

Red Hat is the world's leading provider of open source software solutions, using a community-powered approach to provide reliable and high-performing cloud, Linux, middleware, storage, and virtualization technologies. Red Hat also offers award-winning support, training, and consulting services. As a connective hub in a global network of enterprises, partners, and open source communities, Red Hat helps create relevant, innovative technologies that liberate resources for growth and prepare customers for the future of IT.



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