Red Hat OpenStack Platform

Lifecycle FAQ

Introduction

As networks scale to meet ever-increasing customer demands, the need for uptime becomes an even higher priority. In Red Hat® OpenStack® Platform 16, the platform's life-cycle has been aligned with that of the underlying Red Hat Enterprise Linux operating system and is the first long life release to be powered by the latest Red Hat® Enterprise Linux® - version 8. With these in sync, the entire private cloud platform will require fewer updates and therefore reducing risk and reducing costs associated with testing and certifying multiple deployments. With Red Hat OpenStack Platform 16, IT can put more resources towards delivering innovation back to the business and thanks to the long lifecycle of Red Hat Enterprise Linux itself, customers can run the same version for up to 5 years. This FAQ document addresses questions that you have about this support.

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General

Question: How is the Red Hat OpenStack Platform life cycle changing with the release of version 16?

Answer: Starting with Red Hat OpenStack Platform 16, every release would be a long-life release going forward, with a cadence of approximately one year.

QUESTION: Why are these changes being made?

ANSWER: The traditional release cadence to align to upstream OpenStack release every 6 months did not meet customer requirements for a longer support on a given release. Long-life releases allow customers to better meet their security compliance processes timeframe, allowing more time for workloads validation and managing their maintenance windows, as well as keep up with Ecosystem certifications.

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 1 year 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..

Upgrades

QUESTION: Are in-place ("rolling") upgrades between sequential releases still supported?

ANSWER: Sequential upgrades require a support exception. Traditionally, Red Hat has supported customers who upgrade through releases sequentially to do so 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. Given the new lifecycle, as of January 2020, only Long Life releases remain supported (10, 13).
When one or both of the releases involved in the upgrade are out of support, the upgrade will require a Support Exception.
The upgrade from Red Hat OpenStack Platform 15 to 16 will be the last supported sequential in-place upgrade.

QUESTION: Will Red Hat support in-place ("rolling") upgrades between long-life releases)?

ANSWER: The Fast Forward upgrade between Red Hat OpenStack Platform 10 to 13 is a supported in-place procedure. For other long-life release upgrades in-place, Red Hat will

provide a framework for performing the upgrade that will follow a different approach to the Fast Forward upgrade previously released because it includes a major operating system upgrade (RHEL 7 to RHEL 8).

Customers who wish to take advantage of the long-life option, will have both in-place upgrade as well as parallel migration options.

For in-place Red Hat OpenStack Platform 10 to 13 upgrades, Red Hat released the support of a Fast Forward upgrade. For in-place upgrades between 13 and 16 releases Red Hat will release a framework for performing the upgrade before the Red Hat OpenStack Platform 16.1 release.

For a parallel migration with minimal additional hardware (currently estimated as 1 undercloud node, 3 controller nodes, and 2 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: Why are in-place upgrades between multiple releases of OpenStack so complicated?

ANSWER: 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. 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.

Red Hat develops procedures for upgrades between targeted Long-Life releases given the extensive knowledge of those. However, given the changes between releases, these are very specific approaches that will change depending on the releases involved.

Extended Life

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 16.1 release. 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 5 years of support for a Red Hat OpenStack Platform release?

ANSWER: Red Hat does not currently plan to extend support beyond the Extended Life Cycle Support phase. 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 re-evaluation.

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, customers can take the subscriptions they used to cover Red Hat OpenStack Platform 16, which will be available as well for extended life-cycle support.

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

ANSWER: The add-on SKU can be purchased on a yearly basis up to 5 years of the life cycle of a given release to continue having access to updates through the 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: How does a customer with an Extended Life Cycle Support Add-On subscription access updates?

ANSWER: For Regular OpenStack Platform access, updates are done through Red Hat's Content Delivery Network (CDN). When the regular channel is discontinued at the end of the maintenance support phase , a different channel that 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 this new life cycle affect previous OpenStack release life cycles (Red Hat OpenStack Platform 15 and earlier)?

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

Question: What is the criteria for potential feature backports into the Red Hat OpenStack Platform long life releases?

Answer: Customers and Partners may request to backport a feature to a long life release in the new lifecycle, these requests can only be considered during the full support phase of the release. Features backports are not allowed during the release maintenance support and extended support phases. Each feature backport will require review from Red Hat Product Management and Engineering prior to commitment.

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