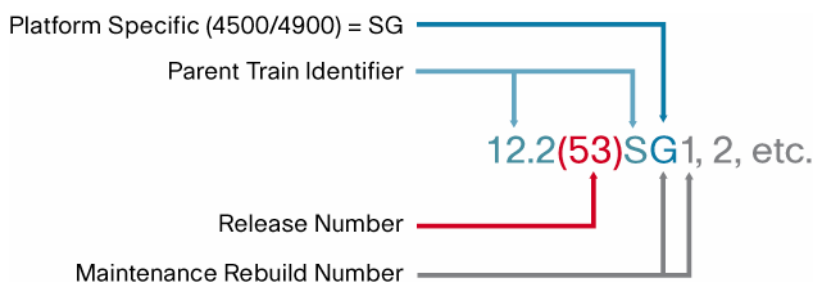


Cisco IOS Software Release 12.2S on Cisco Catalyst 4500 and 4900 Series Switches

PB468800

Cisco® announces new software release designations effective April 1, 2008 (this document updated on March 23, 2010) for new technology releases off the Cisco IOS® Software Major Release 12.2S for the Cisco Catalyst® 4500 and 4900 Series. This announcement provides clarity on software maintenance plans and does not change any Cisco standard end-of-life policies, located at http://www.cisco.com/en/US/products/products_end-of-life_policy.html. The Cisco standard end-of-life policy defines maintenance and support requirements for a major release, which for the Cisco Catalyst 4500 and 4900 Series is 12.2S. The end-of-life policy does not specify how long bug-fix maintenance rebuilds can be expected on a new technology release such as 12.2(53)SG on Major Release 12.2S. Figure 1 shows the release numbering convention for Major Release 12.2S.

Figure 1. Release Numbering



Under current policy, after a new technology release becomes available on the same major release, bug fixes will generally not be applied to previous new technology releases. In order to get comprehensive bug fixes, customers must move to the latest new technology release.

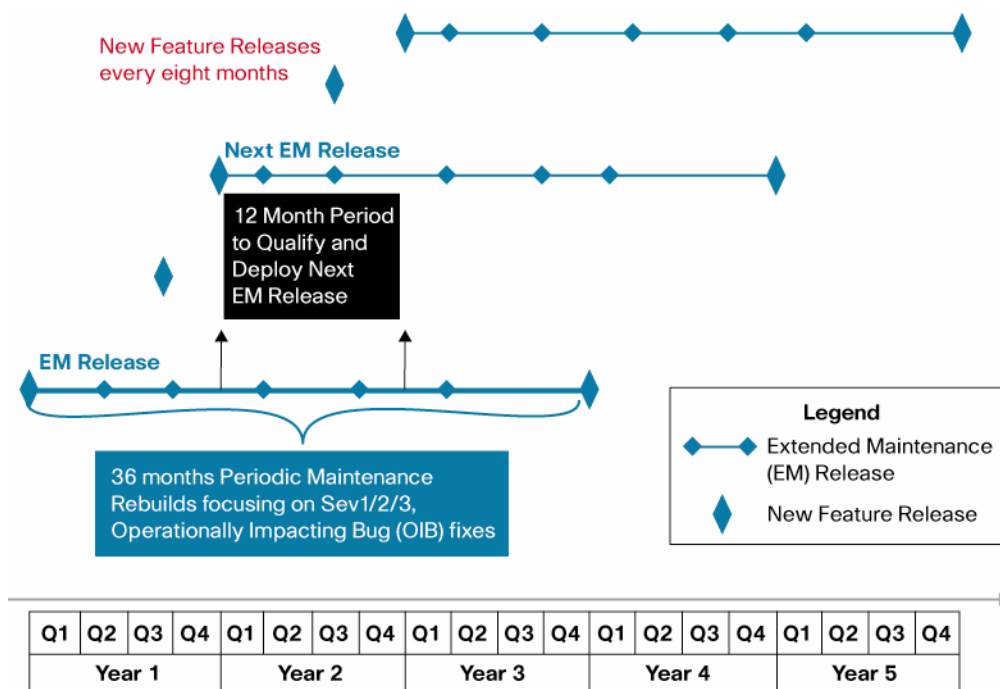
As long as maintenance is offered under the Cisco end-of-life policies for a major release, bug fixes will continue to be applied to that release, but can only be expected to appear in the most recent new technology release of that major release. For example, for Cisco IOS Software Major Release 12.2S, a move from Release 12.2(50)SG to Release 12.2(53)SG will be required when Release 12.2(50)SG goes to end of software maintenance status in order to get bug fixes through rebuilds.

To allow customers to qualify, deploy, and remain on a new technology release with active bug-fix maintenance plans, Cisco will now designate new technology releases on Major Release 12.2S as either a new feature release or extended maintenance release. A new feature release will be a “time-based release,” which will continue to offer new software and hardware functionality. The extended maintenance release will be offered with at least a 12-month overlap between each extended maintenance release with bug-fix maintenance rebuilds.

Under the new policy, bug fixes can be expected in any new technology release that is in an active maintenance state as defined by the extended maintenance release designator.

Figure 2 shows sample standard maintenance and extended maintenance releases and explains the new policy.

Figure 2. Planned Release Maintenance Process Timelines



New Feature Release

- Time-based release available periodically between 6 and 8 months
- Ideal for latest feature and hardware support until the next extended maintenance release is available.
- Same internal shipping quality criteria as extended maintenance release.
- Critical fix support for network-affecting bugs such as Product Security Incident Report Team (PSIRT) issues. (Standard Cisco PSIRT policy will take precedence and be fixed in the next time-based release. For example, if a PSIRT is encountered in the spring release, it will be fixed in the subsequent release.)

Table 1 highlights "New feature release" goals and dates for the Cisco Catalyst 4500 and 4900 Series.

Table 1. New Feature Release Goals and Dates for Cisco Catalyst 4500 and 4900 Series

Goal	Definition	Date
Posting to Software Download Center	The date the software release is first available at http://www.cisco.com/kobayashi/sw-center/sw-ios.shtml .	Day 0
End of new feature release maintenance	All critical fixes including PSIRT fixes will be made available for this software release in the next time-based release. A software upgrade to the next available maintenance release might be required for continued bug fix on supported supervisor engines.	+6–8months (depending on next software release)

Extended Maintenance Release

- Ideal for long-term maintenance support and also incorporating all the features and hardware support of previous new feature software release and extended maintenance release.
- 12.2(53)SG is the latest extended maintenance release integrating the Supervisor 6L-E
- Regular maintenance rebuilds (approximately one every 3 to 4 months).
- Six additional months of PSIRT support.
- At least 12 months of overlap with next extended maintenance release to allow for smooth transitions. At any one point, there will be always two extended maintenance software releases available for customers to choose from depending on requirements.

Table 2 shows extended maintenance release goals and dates for the Cisco Catalyst 4500 and 4900 Series.

Table 2. Extended Maintenance Release Goals and Dates for Cisco Catalyst 4500 and 4900 Series

Goal	Definition	Date
Posting to Software Download Center	The date the software release is first available at http://www.cisco.com/kobayashi/sw-center/sw-ios.shtml .	Day 0
End of extended maintenance	The last date on which regular bug-fix maintenance rebuilds will be made available for this software release. After this date, a software upgrade to the next available release for supported products might be required for continued bug-fix maintenance.	+12 months of overlap with next extended maintenance release
End of critical maintenance	The last date on which a critical fix rebuild (limited to network-affecting issues such as PSIRT advisories; see http://www.cisco.com/en/US/products/products_security_advisories_listing.html) will be made available for this software release. After this date, a software upgrade to the next available release for supported products might be required for continued bug-fix maintenance or critical fixes. Standard Cisco PSIRT policy will take precedence; see http://www.cisco.com/go/psirt .	+6 months from end of extended maintenance date

Current Maintenance Release Strategy

The current maintenance release trains are 12.2(31)SGA, 12.2(50)SG and 12.2(53)SG. In the current convention these releases will only incorporate critical bug fixes to help ensure software image stability. The 12.2(53)SG train is the latest extended maintenance release. Please note that 'end of life' announcements have been posted for 12.2(31)SGA and 12.2(50)SGA, see more detailed notes below. Maintenance releases from an extended maintenance branch will typically occur every 3 to 4 months, alternating between the branches. This results in at least four maintenance releases in a single year.

12.2(31)SGA Software Release

Cisco IOS Software Release 12.2(31)SGA for the Cisco Catalyst 4500 Series was the first to receive new designations as an extended maintenance release. Table 4 provides the goals and dates for Extended Maintenance Release 12.2SGA. Please note that an EoS/EoL announcement has been issued for 12.2(31)SGA. Please visit this link for more information.

http://www.cisco.com/en/US/prod/collateral/switches/ps5718/ps4324/end_of_life_notice_c51-551230.html

Table 3. Cisco IOS Software Release 12.2(31)SGA Goals and Dates as First Extended Maintenance Release

Goal	Date
Posting to Software Download Center	September 8, 2006
End of extended maintenance	July 10, 2010
End of critical maintenance	After July 10 2010, PSIRTS and or bug fixes will be applied to 12.2(53)SG

12.2(50)SG Software Release

Cisco IOS Software Release 12.2(50)SG for the Cisco Catalyst 4500 Series was also an extended maintenance release. An EoL announcement has been posted for this 12.2 (50)SG. Please visit this link for all EoL announcements

http://www.cisco.com/en/US/products/hw/switches/ps4324/prod_eol_notices_list.html

Table 4. Cisco IOS Software Release 12.2(50)SG Goals and Dates

Goal	Date
Posting to Software Download Center	January 5, 2009
End of extended maintenance	August 30, 2011
End of critical maintenance	After August 30, 2011 PSIRTS and or bug fixes for 12.2(50)SG will be applied to 12.2(53)SG

12.2(53)SG Software Release

Cisco IOS Software Release 12.2(53)SG for the Cisco Catalyst 4500 Series is an extended maintenance release. The primary motivation for this maintenance release was the introduction of the Supervisor 6L-E and ensuring this new supervisor had extended maintenance support shortly after release. Please visit this link for more details of the 12.2(53)SG release.

http://www.cisco.com/en/US/prod/collateral/switches/ps5718/ps4324/product_bulletin_c25-553133.html

Table 5. Cisco IOS Software Release 12.2(53)SG Goals and Dates

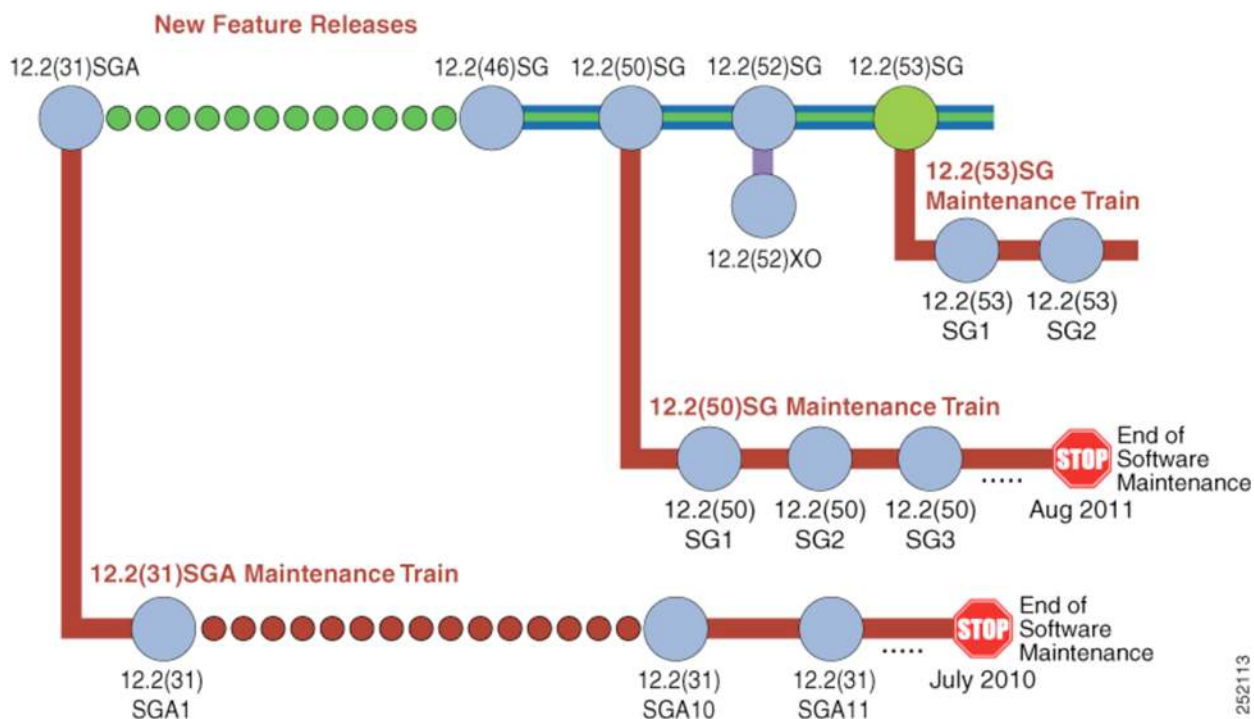
Goal	Date
Posting to Software Download Center	July 6, 2009
End of extended maintenance	September, 2013
End of critical maintenance	March, 2014

New Feature and Extended Maintenance Release Identification

At the time of initial posting to the Software Download Center, the product bulletin and release notes for a new release will be updated to indicate whether it is designated as a new feature release or an extended maintenance release. Note that the "posting to Software Download Center" date is effective on the initial new technology release posting for all subsequent rebuilds on that release. For example, the "posting to Software Download Center" date for Release 12.2(53)SG1 will be the date Release 12.2(53)SG is first posted to the Cisco Software Download Center Website. Therefore, the standard maintenance and extended maintenance designations and dates only apply to the first build of a new technology release, such as 12.2(53)SG, and all subsequent rebuilds will be subject to the same policy and dates.

Cisco IOS Software Migration Guide for Cisco Catalyst 4500 and 4900 Series Switches

Figure 3 displays the Cisco IOS Software release plan relative to the 12.2S release train and identifies the recommended migration path. Currently, the Cisco Catalyst 4500 platform has three active maintenance trains: 12.2(31)SGA, 12.2(50)SG and 12.2(53)SG.

Figure 3. Cisco IOS Software Release Plan for Cisco Catalyst 4500 Series

Summary of Migration Plan

- Customers requiring the latest Cisco Catalyst 4500 Series hardware and software features should migrate to Cisco IOS Software Release 12.2(53)SG
- Customers using the Supervisor 6L-E must migrate to 12.2(53)SG for extended maintenance release support.
- Please refer to the EoL announcements page for details of the Cisco IOS Software Release 12.2(31)SGA and 12.2(50)SG Maintenance Trains.
- http://www.cisco.com/en/US/products/hw/switches/ps4324/prod_eol_notices_list.html

Support

- Support for Cisco IOS Software Release 12.2SG follows the standard Cisco support policy, available at http://www.cisco.com/en/US/products/products_end-of-life_policy.html.

For more information about the Cisco Catalyst 4500 Series, visit

<http://www.cisco.com/univercd/cc/td/doc/product/lan/cat4000/index.htm>.

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