

Software Lifecycle Support Statement - ACI

Contents

What You Will Learn	3
Types of Cisco ACI Software Releases	3
Lifecycle of a Cisco ACI Software Release	4
Upgrade and Migration	5
Summary	6
For More Information	7

What You Will Learn

A comprehensive Cisco ACI Software release methodology has been developed to both preserve the integrity and stability of mission-critical networks and has the flexibility to respond to market needs for timely delivery of advanced networking features with multilayer intelligence.

This software lifecycle support statement is a guide to understanding the Cisco ACI Software release lifecycle. It describes the types of releases, their functions, and their timelines. It also describes the Cisco ACI Software release and image naming conventions.

Types of Cisco ACI Software Releases

Table 1 lists the Cisco ACI Software release variants: Major+, Major releases or trains, Feature releases and Maintenance releases.

Table 1. Cisco ACI Software Release Types

Cisco ACI Software Release Type	Description
Major+ Release	<p>A Major+ release is considered a superset train, which carries all attributes of a major release but can have further additional key changes (for example, 64-bit kernel) or other significance that requires increasing the release numbering. A major+ release consists of multiple major releases.</p> <p>Example: Release 6.x(x)</p>
Major Release	<p>A major release or software train introduces significant new features, functions, and/or hardware platforms. Each major release consists of multiple feature releases and maintenance releases and is its own train.</p> <p>Examples: Release 6.0(x)etc.</p>
Feature Release	<p>Each major release will receive new features, functions, and hardware platforms, in the first few releases (typically 3 releases) of the major train. These are designated features release.</p> <p>Examples: Release 6.0(2)F, 6.0(3)F</p>
Maintenance Release	<p>Once a major train has reached maturity via the first few feature releases, it will then transition to the maintenance phase where it will receive bug fixes and security enhancements only. No new features will be developed on a maintenance release, to ensure the integrity and stability of the overall major release train.</p> <p>Examples: Releases 6.0(4)M, 6.0(5)M, 6.0(6)M</p>

Each Cisco ACI Software release is uniquely numbered as A.B(C)x, where A is the Major+ release or train, B is a Major train that enhances a Major+ release, C is the numerical identifier of the sequence within the Major train and x represents if this release is a Feature release or a Maintenance release.

Figure 1 is an example showing graphical representation of the Cisco ACI Software releases

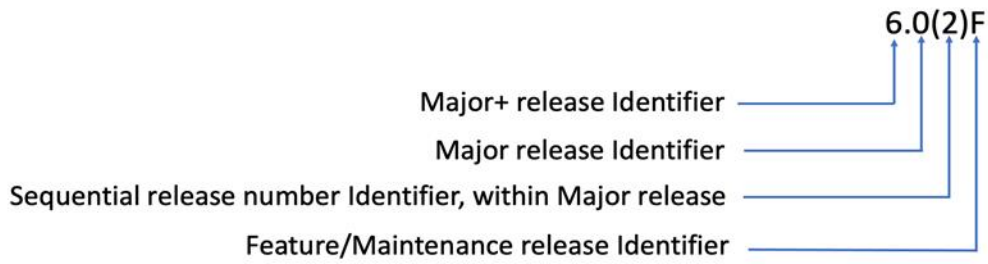


Figure 1.
Cisco ACI Software releases

Lifecycle of a Cisco ACI Software Release

Previously, ACI releases were designated as either a long-lived or a short-lived release. From ACI 6.0 release onwards, all Major releases are treated equally, and all major release trains will be designated as the recommended release at various points within their lifecycle. Figure 2 represents the lifecycle of the ACI 6.0 release.

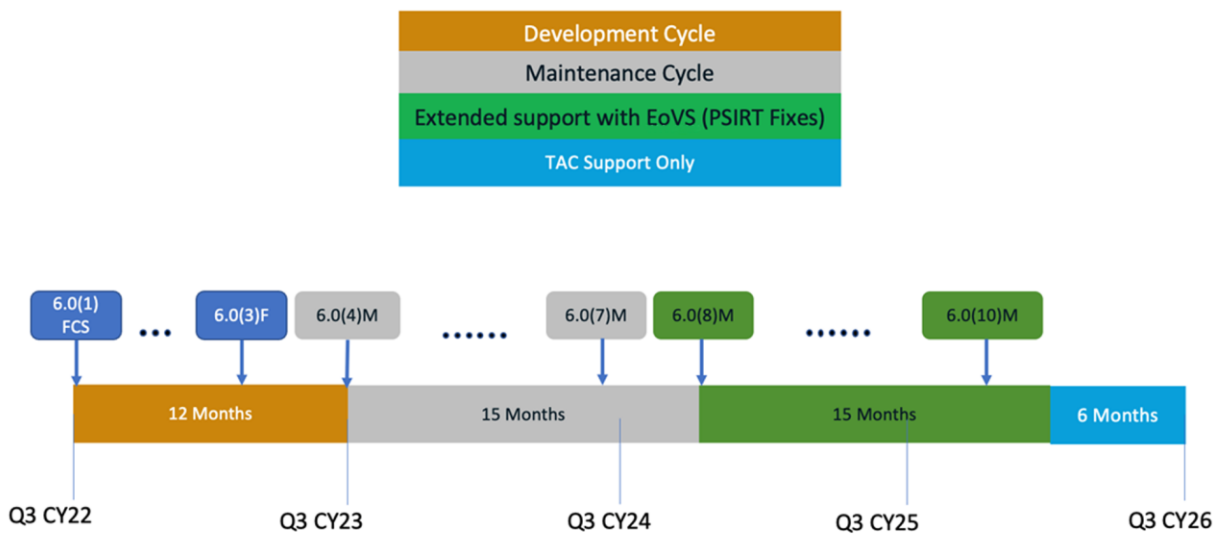


Figure 2.
Example of Lifecycle of ACI software release

The lifecycle of an ACI release goes through 4 phases. These phases also align with various stages in the End-of-Life process.

1. The lifecycle of a Major release starts with Feature Development Phase. This phase starts with First Customer Shipment (FCS) or the first release, on the Major train. It represents the date of the first shipment of a software release to customers. There are 2 additional releases over the subsequent 12 months on this major train, where new features and enhancements are introduced. The EOS announcement, as part of the EOL process is designed to coincide with FCS, to provide customers visibility into the EOL milestones and support timelines for the major release.
2. At 12 months post FCS, the major release then enters the Maintenance Phase. This maintenance phase extends over 15 months, with regular software releases, where any potential defects or Security Vulnerabilities (PSIRTs) are addressed. No new features or enhancements are introduced during this phase, to ensure software stability.
3. At 27 months post FCS, it enters the Extended Support Phase, under which it receives only PSIRT fixes. This date aligns with the End of Software Maintenance milestone in the EOL process.
4. At 42 months post FCS, it enters the TAC Support phase, where customers can continue to get software support from Cisco TAC, and an upgrade to a subsequent Major release will be required for defect fixes. This date aligns with the End of Vulnerability and Security Support (EoVS) milestone in the EOL process. At 48 months post FCS, no support will be provided for this Major release.

Note: For HW products running ACI software, customers will receive Critical vulnerability(PSIRT's) support through HW LDOS on the final extended maintenance ACI release

Upgrade and Migration

ACI will continue to innovate across Major releases, all the while, providing a reliable and stable version of ACI to our customers.

A new Major release, is planned every year, enabling customers to take advantage of new features and hardware in this new major release, while allowing other customers to remain on the previous Major and recommended release, for those who want the reassurance of regular releases, focused solely on defect fixes.

An example of major release timelines and milestones are outlined below in Fig 3.

Be mindful that the below illustration is just an example, and the release numbering is based on criteria mentioned in Table 1.

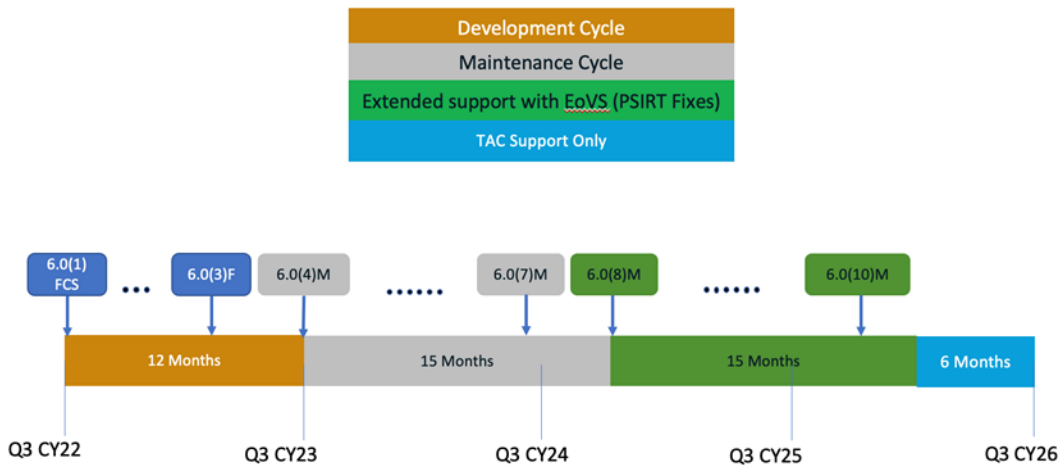


Figure 3.
Example of Major Release Timelines and Milestones

Summary

The Cisco ACI cadence-based software release methodology preserves the integrity, stability, and quality of customers' mission-critical networks. It has the flexibility to respond to market needs for timely delivery of innovative features. Primary attributes of release methodology include the following:

- Major releases introduce significant new features, functions, and platforms
- Feature releases enhance the features and functions of ACI.
- Maintenance releases address product defects

For More Information

- Cisco ACI release notes: <https://www.cisco.com/c/en/us/support/cloud-systems-management/application-policy-infrastructure-controller-apic/tsd-products-support-series-home.html>
- Cisco APIC and Nexus 9000 Series Switches minimum recommended Cisco ACI releases: https://www.cisco.com/c/en/us/td/docs/switches/datacenter/aci/apic/sw/recommended-release/b_Recommended_Cisco_ACI_Releases.html
- Cisco APIC End of Life, End of sales announcements: <https://www.cisco.com/c/en/us/products/cloud-systems-management/application-policy-infrastructure-controller-apic/eos-eol-notice-listing.html>
- Cisco Nexus 9000 End of Life, End of Sales Notices: <https://www.cisco.com/c/en/us/products/switches/nexus-9000-series-switches/eos-eol-notice-listing.html>

Americas Headquarters
Cisco Systems, Inc.
San Jose, CA

Asia Pacific Headquarters
Cisco Systems (USA) Pte. Ltd.
Singapore

Europe Headquarters
Cisco Systems International BV Amsterdam,
The Netherlands

Cisco has more than 200 offices worldwide. Addresses, phone numbers, and fax numbers are listed on the Cisco Website at <https://www.cisco.com/go/offices>.

Cisco and the Cisco logo are trademarks or registered trademarks of Cisco and/or its affiliates in the U.S. and other countries. To view a list of Cisco trademarks, go to this URL: <https://www.cisco.com/go/trademarks>. Third-party trademarks mentioned are the property of their respective owners. The use of the word partner does not imply a partnership relationship between Cisco and any other company. (1110R)