Deploying a Virtual Nexus Dashboard (vND) in Amazon Web Services (AWS)

About hosting a vND on the AWS public cloud

This feature allows you to run a virtual Nexus Dashboard (vND) on the AWS public cloud. The components to this solution are:

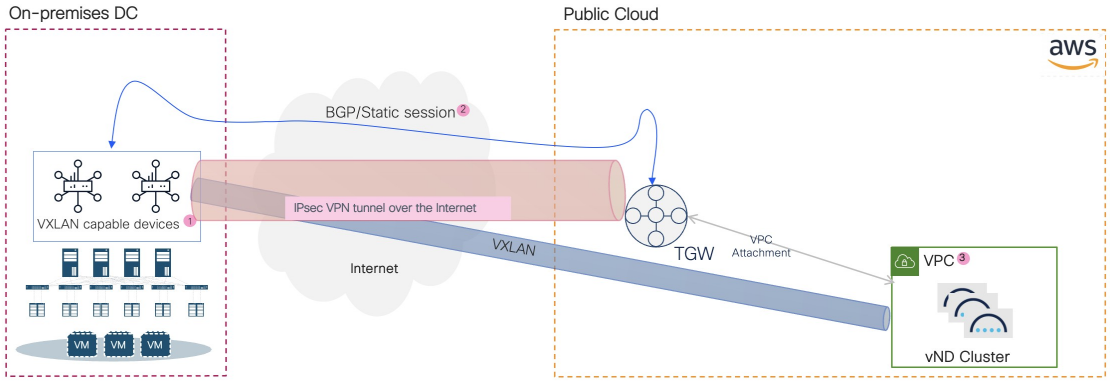
- Virtual Nexus Dashboard
- Nexus 9000 switch
- Two Catalyst 8000 series routers, or another type of device (such as the Nexus 9000 switch) that allows the Nexus Dashboard to terminate the VXLAN tunnel from the vND to the on-premises data center for persistent IP address (PIP) traffic
- AWS public cloud account

Understanding how vNDs are deployed on AWS public cloud

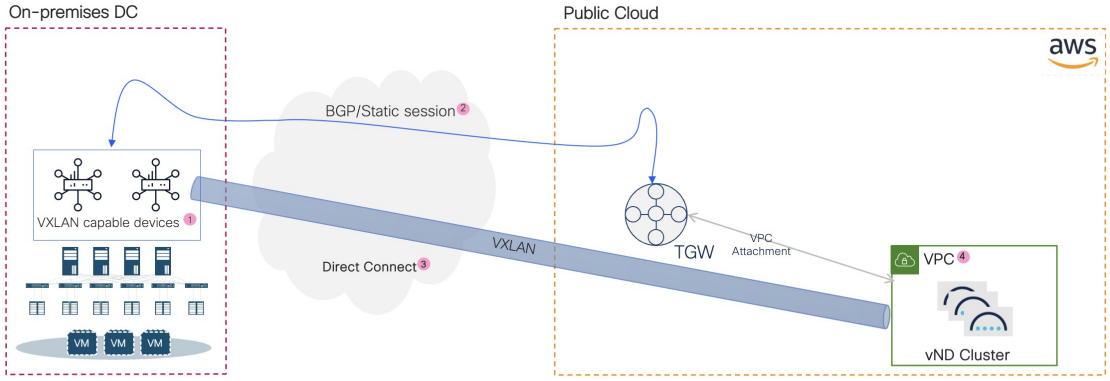
When you deploy the vNDs on the AWS public cloud, you do not have to do any manual bootstrapping; instead, the Nexus Dashboard bootstrapping performs the bootstrapping automatically for you. Once you go through the vND deployment process on AWS public cloud, a highly-available three-node cluster is created automatically for you across three availability zones (AZs) in a Virtual Private Cloud (VPC). In the Nexus Dashboard GUI, navigate to **Admin** > **System Status** > **Overview**, then view the information on the three-node cluster in the **Cluster nodes** area.

Example topology

These figures show example topologies:



1 On-premises device with VXLAN support for example, Catalyst 8000 series router, Nexus 9000
2 BGP / static session for ND data IP reachability
3 VPC in AWS terminology stands for virtual private cloud and is an equivalent of VRF



1 On-premises device with VXLAN support for example, Catalyst 8000 series router, Nexus 9000
2 BGP / static session for ND data IP reachability
3 Direct connect takes the role of a private transport for carrying data
4 VPC in AWS terminology stands for virtual private cloud and is an equivalent of VRF

Where:

- The connectivity between your on-premises data center and the AWS public cloud is achieved using either direct connect (recommended for production deployments) or an IPSec tunnel (for PoC or lab as additional overhead) between the two.
- The two on-premises routers could be one of the following:
  - If you are using direct connect, you can use two physical switches, such as the Nexus 9000 switches.
  - If you are using an IPSec tunnel, you can use a network appliance from the Cisco 8000 family, with VXLAN support because you will be terminating a VXLAN tunnel in this case.
- A transit gateway is used to create transit gateway attachments to connect to the VPC (the app VPC) that hosts the Nexus Dashboard nodes, as well as another transit gateway attachment, a VPN attachment or router, that is terminated on the transit gateway.

Note The Catalyst 8000V (C8000V) was launched as an evolution of the Cisco Cloud Services Router (CSR) 1000V. Throughout this documentation, C8000V will be used as an example of the VXLAN capable edge device. For more information, see *Release Notes for Cisco Catalyst 8000V Edge Software*.

Prerequisites and guidelines for deploying the vNDs in Amazon Web Services

Before you proceed with deploying the virtual Nexus Dashboards (vNDs) in Amazon Web Services (AWS):

Note The vND type that is supported for AWS is vND data only with 32vCPU, 128G RAM, 3TB SSD (GP3) and 10G of network throughput.

- This feature is supported on 3-node virtual clusters (data) on AWS with Nexus Dashboard as a single product (IPv4 only).
- Only NX-OS fabrics are supported with this feature, and only with these enabled features:
  - Controller
  - Telemetry, with these restrictions:
    - Only out-of-band
    - Traffic analytics, but no flow telemetry

  The Orchestration feature is not supported with this feature.
- This feature is supported on LAN fabrics only. It is not supported on IP Fabric for Media (IPFM) or SAN fabrics.

Note An AI fabric is considered a LAN fabric. Deploying this type of fabric in a vND in AWS is not restricted from a solution perspective. The basic AI fabric requirement is to not exceed latency between devices and the vND over 50ms.

- Secondary/worker nodes are not supported with this feature. Only three primary and one standby nodes are supported.
- Scale per cluster: 100 switches on a single three-node vND cluster
- You cannot change the IP address or the VNI assigned to the tunnel endpoints after you have deployed the vNDs in AWS.
- Before you can deploy your Nexus Dashboard vNDs, it is best to have your on-premises site ready, with the Catalyst 8000 series routers or a pair of Nexus 9000 switches already deployed, which allows you to provide the necessary BDI and TEP IP addresses during the Nexus Dashboard vND deployment. If

necessary, you can deploy the on-premises network appliances after you have deployed your Nexus Dashboard vNDs, but then you will have to ensure that you configure the on-premises devices with the same information that you provided during the Nexus Dashboard vND deployment. If you fail to provide the same configuration information in both places, you might have to re-install the Nexus Dashboard vNDs again.

- Ensure that the AWS form factor supports your scale and services requirements.

  Scale and services support and co-hosting vary based on the cluster form factor. You can use the Nexus Dashboard Capacity Planning tool to verify that the cloud form factor satisfies your deployment requirements.

- Review and complete the general prerequisites described in the General prerequisites and guidelines.
- Review and complete any additional prerequisites described in the *Release Notes* for the services you plan to deploy.
- Have appropriate access privileges for your AWS account.

  You must be able to launch multiple instances of Elastic Compute Cloud (`m5.8xlarge`) to host the Nexus Dashboard cluster.

- Ensure that the CPU family used for the Nexus Dashboard VMs supports AVX instruction set.
- Perform the Prepare Amazon Web Services for the Nexus Dashboard cluster, on page 4 procedure.

Prepare Amazon Web Services for the Nexus Dashboard cluster

Before you deploy the Nexus Dashboard vNDs in Amazon Web Services (AWS), follow these prerequisites to prepare AWS for your deployment:

- Familiarize yourself with AWS and how it works.
- (Optional) Establish a connection between AWS and your on-premises data center (ideally, a direct connection).
- Identify the region that you will use for the deployment of the Nexus Dashboard nodes.
- Have an existing VPC, or create a new VPC, that you will use for this deployment.
- Enable external access.

  This is necessary for mapping Elastic IP addresses to the vND management interfaces and for accessing the GUI and SSH externally. You may or may not need to create and attach an Internet Gateway to the VPC to enable external access, depending on the connection method that you choose:

  - **Option 1**: Connecting the management interface using the Ethernet Interface Processor (EIP), in which case you will need the Internet Gateway.
  - **Option 2**: Use a private IP address, in which case you will not need the Internet Gateway.

- Update the security group to allow access from your public IP address or range for required services, such as:
  - HTTPS (TCP port 443): For accessing the Nexus Dashboard GUI
  - SSH (TCP port 22): For secure remote login to the vND nodes

This is necessary so that you can access the GUI and SSH into the Nexus Dashboard nodes.

- Create 6 subnets:
  - One set of subnets for management for each node (3) - minimum /28
  - One set of subnets for data for each node (3) - minimum /28

  Subnets for management and data for a specific node must be in the same availability zone.
- Ensure that you have enough AWS Elastic IP addresses available for the vND deployment.

  This installation requires 3 AWS Elastic IP addresses, 1 for each node, where each AWS Elastic IP address is used to access the management services, such as accessing the vND UI or SSH.
- Because the management subnets IP addresses will be mapped with AWS Elastic IP addresses as part of the deployment, those management subnets will need external access. Data subnets need to have reachability to the on-premises devices and on-premises Catalyst 8000 series routers (or other devices, such as Nexus 9000 switches) used for the termination of the VXLAN tunnel (used by persistent pods) from the vNDs.
- One /28 (such as 100.100.100.0/28) subnet that is not owned by AWS and comes from the on-premises data center (but is not already being used) that will be used by the PIP (persistent IP addresses), where 100.100.100.1 and 100.100.100.2 of that subnet must be the BDI IP addresses on the on-premises data center devices (Catalyst 8000 or Nexus 9000 switches) and the rest of the IP addresses are used by vND persistent pods (trap, telemetry collectors, and so on).
- On-premises devices should be able to reach these persistent IP addresses and Nexus Dashboard data IP addresses, and vice versa, for proper functioning.
- Create a security group with all the necessary IP addresses and ports so that the vND nodes can communicate with each other and form the cluster, and communicate externally and with the on-premises devices.
- Configure one EC2 key pair for deployment.

Note Complete this configuration as part of the prerequisites, even though EC2 key pair is not currently used and user/password is the only supported option at this time.

Deploy a virtual Nexus Dashboard (vND) in Amazon Web Services (AWS)

This section describes how to deploy a virtual Nexus Dashboard (vND) in Amazon Web Services (AWS).

Before you begin

- Ensure that you meet the requirements and guidelines described in Prerequisites and guidelines for deploying the vNDs in Amazon Web Services, on page 3.

Procedure

Step 1 Subscribe to Cisco Nexus Dashboard product in AWS Marketplace.

a) Log into your AWS account and navigate to the AWS Management Console.

The Management Console is available at https://console.aws.amazon.com/.

b) Navigate to **Services** > **AWS Marketplace Subscriptions**.
c) Click **Manage subscriptions**.
d) Click **Discover products**.
e) Search for **Cisco Nexus Dashboard - Cloud** and click the result.
f) Click the **View Purchase** options and scroll down to click **Subscribe**.
g) In the product page, click **View subscription**.
h) In the **Manage subscriptions** page, locate the line for **Cisco Nexus Dashboard - Cloud**, then click **Launch** in that line.

Step 2 Select software options and region.

a) In the **Configure this software** page for **Cisco Nexus Dashboard - Cloud**, make the following choices:

- **Fulfillment option**: Leave the default **Nexus Dashboard - Cloud Deployment** choice as-is.
- **Software version**: Choose the latest 4.1.1 option available from the dropdown list.
- **Region**: Choose the appropriate region where the template will be deployed.

  This must be the same region where you created your VPC.

b) Click **Continue to Launch**.
c) In the **Launch this software** page for **Cisco Nexus Dashboard - Cloud**, locate the **Choose Action** field and choose **Launch CloudFormation** from the dropdown list, then click **Launch**.

The **Create stack** page appears.

Step 3 Complete the stack configuration.

a) Leave the options in the **Create stack** page as-is:

- **Prerequisite - Prepare template**: Leave `Choose an existing template` option as-is.
- **Specify Template**: Leave `Amazon S3 URL` option as-is.
- **Amazon S3 URL**: Leave pre-configured URL entry as-is.

b) Click **Next** to continue.

The **Specify stack details** page appears.

Step 4 Specify the stack details.

a) Provide the **Stack name**.
b) Review the information provided in the **Parameters** area and make changes, if necessary.

For the most part, you can leave the pre-populated fields as-is based on the configurations that are part of this vND CFT.

- In the **Nexus Dashboard Cluster Name** field, enter the cluster name for the Nexus Dashboard cluster.
- In the **Fabric Deployment Mode** field, the default **LAN** option is the only supported option for the Nexus Dashboard 4.1.1 release.
- In the **VPC identifier** field, enter the VPC identifier.

  The application VPC is automatically entered in this field. If you want to change the VPC in this field, choose another VPC under **VPC dashboard** > **Virtual private cloud** > **Your VPCs**.
- In the **Security Group Identifier** field, enter the security group identifier.

  This is a pre-created security group that must allow ingress access for ports 22 and 443.
- In the **Instance Type** field, specify the EC2 instance type for the node instances.
- In the **AMI Identifier** field, specify the AWS AMI for the Nexus Dashboard.
- In the **Password** field, enter the admin password for the Nexus Dashboard node.

  The admin password for the Nexus Dashboard node must contain at least 1 letter, number, and special character (@$!%*#?&) and must be between 8 and 64 characters in length.
- (Optional) In the **Key Pair Name** field, specify the name of an existing SSH key pair to enable SSH access to the Nexus Dashboard.

c) Enter the necessary information in the **DNS Configuration** area.

- In the **Primary DNS Server IP** field, enter the primary DNS server IP address.
- In the **Secondary DNS Server IP** field, enter the secondary DNS server IP address.
- In the **Search Domain Name** field, enter the search domain name.

d) (Optional) Enter the necessary information in the **Proxy Configuration** area.

- In the **Proxy Type** field, specify the proxy type (for example, HTTP or HTTPS).
- In the **Proxy URL** field, specify the full proxy URL, including the protocol and port (for example, `http://proxy.example.com:8080`).
- In the **Proxy Username** field, specify the proxy username, if authentication is required.
- In the **Proxy Password** field, specify the proxy password, if authentication is required.
- In the **Proxy Ignore Hosts IP** field, specify the proxy ignore hosts IP addresses.

  Only one entry is allowed in this field (for example, 192.168.10.101).

e) Enter the necessary information in the **NTP Configuration** area.

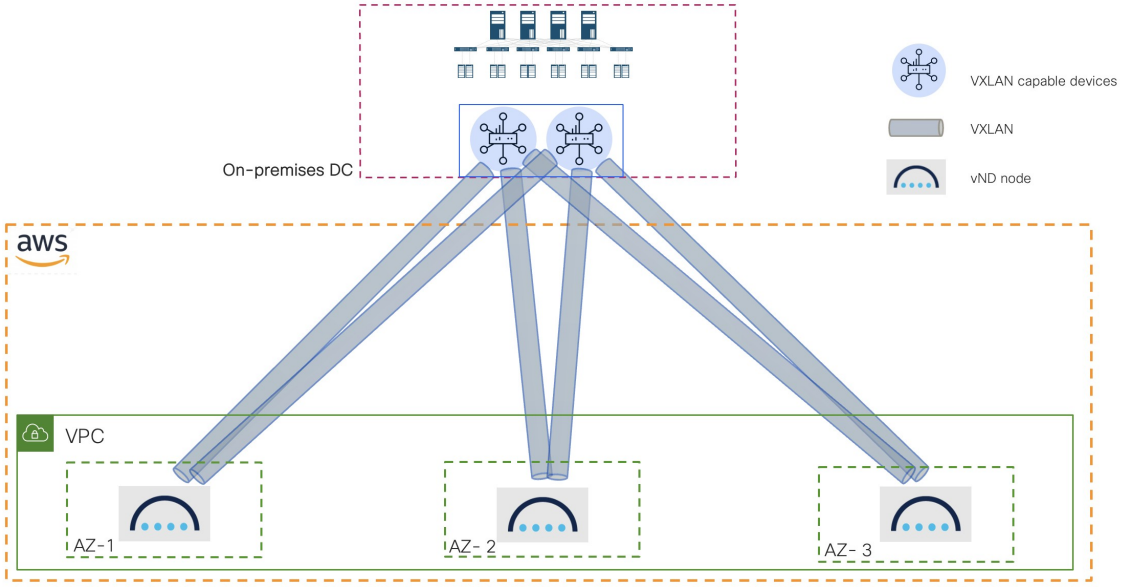
- In the **NTP Server Host** field, specify the NTP server host.
- In the **NTP Server Key Identifier** field, specify the NTP server key identifier.
- In the **NTP Server Preferred** field, choose `true` if the server is preferred.
- In the **NTP Key Identifier** field, specify the identifier for the NTP key.
- In the **NTP Key** field, specify the key for the NTP key.

- In the **NTP Key Authentication Type** field, specify the authentication type for the NTP key (for example, MDS or SHA1).
- In the **NTP Key Trusted** field, specify `true` or `false` for whether the NTP key is trusted.

f) Enter the necessary information in the **Cisco VXLAN Capable Device** area.

- In the **Device VXLAN Identifier (VNI)** field, enter a VNI value to be used for the VXLAN tunnel between the Cisco VXLAN capable device (if you are using an IPSec tunnel) or Nexus 9000 switches (if you are using direct connect) and the Nexus Dashboard nodes.

  A single VNI value will be used for all the VXLAN tunnels between the Cisco VXLAN capable devices and the Nexus Dashboard nodes (the vNDs), as shown in this figure.



- In the **Device 1 Bridge Domain IP** and **Device 2 Bridge Domain IP** fields, enter the bridge domain IP addresses for both of the Cisco VXLAN capable devices.

  The bridge domain IP addresses for the devices should come from the subnet that you provide in the **Private IP Subnet for Nexus Dashboard Pods** field. For example, if you enter `100.100.100.0/28` in the **Private IP Subnet for Nexus Dashboard Pods** field, you might enter `100.100.100.1` and `100.100.100.2` as the bridge domain IP addresses for the devices.

- In the **Device 1 Tunnel Endpoint IP** and **Device 2 Tunnel Endpoint IP** fields, enter the tunnel endpoint IP addresses (the data IP addresses) for both of the Cisco VXLAN capable devices.
- In the **Private IP Subnet for Nexus Dashboard Pods** field, enter the private IP subnet to be used by the Nexus Dashboard pods.

  The IP subnet size must be a /28, such as `100.100.100.0/28`.

  Note
  This procedures in this section do not deploy any Cisco VXLAN capable devices; they only ensure Nexus Dashboard has all the variables required to build connections with the edge devices.

g) In the **Nexus Dashboard Node 1 Configuration**, **Nexus Dashboard Node 2 Configuration**, and **Nexus Dashboard Node 3 Configuration** areas, enter the necessary information for each of the vND nodes in the cluster:

- **ND Node *x* Hostname**: Enter the hostname for each Nexus Dashboard node.
- **ND Node *x* Management Subnet**: Enter the first management subnet each Nexus Dashboard node.
- **ND Node *x* Static Management IP**: Enter a static management IP address from the management subnet that you entered above for each Nexus Dashboard node.

  Verify that the IP address that you enter in this field is not being used already.
- **ND Node *x* Management Subnet Netmask**: Enter the first management subnet netmask for each Nexus Dashboard node in the CIDR format (16-28).
- **ND Node *x* Management Subnet Gateway**: Enter the first management default gateway on the management subnet that you entered above for each Nexus Dashboard node.

  This is typically the first address on the subnet.
- **ND Node *x* Data Subnet**: Enter the first data subnet each Nexus Dashboard node.
- **ND Node *x* Static Data IP**: Enter a static data IP address from the management subnet that you entered above for each Nexus Dashboard node.

  Verify that the IP address that you enter in this field is not being used already.
- **ND Node *x* Data Subnet Netmask**: Enter the first data subnet netmask for each Nexus Dashboard node in the CIDR format (16-28).
- **ND Node *x* Data Subnet Gateway**: Enter the first data default gateway on the management subnet that you entered above for each Nexus Dashboard node.

  This is typically the first address on the subnet.

h) In the **Kubernetes Network Configuration (Optional)** area, enter the configuration information, if necessary:

- In the **Kubernetes Service Network** field, specify the network address for the Kubernetes service network.

  The CIDR range is fixed to /16.
- In the **Kubernetes App Network** field, specify the network address for the Kubernetes app network.

  The CIDR range is fixed to /16.

i) Click **Next** to continue.

Step 5 In the **Configure stack options** page, review and modify the information provided in this page, if necessary.

a) Under **Stack failure options**, we recommend that you change the choice under **Behavior on provisioning failure** to **Preserve successfully provisioned resources**.

b) Click **Next** when you have finished reviewing or modifying the information in the **Configure stack options** page.

Step 6 In the **Review and create** page, verify the template configuration information, then click **Submit**.

Step 7 Wait for the deployment to complete, then start the VMs.

You can view the status of the instance deployment in the **CloudFormation** > **Stacks** page, for example `CREATE_IN_PROGRESS`. You can click the refresh button in the top right corner of the page to update the status.

When the status for your stack changes to `CREATE_COMPLETE`, you can proceed to the next step.

Step 8 In your stack under **CloudFormation** > **Stacks**, click the **Outputs** tab to view the public IP addresses for the three vNDs in the cluster.

Note
The CloudFormation template takes care of the connectivity within the cluster. Nodes should automatically form a cluster, if all the variables are filled in correctly.

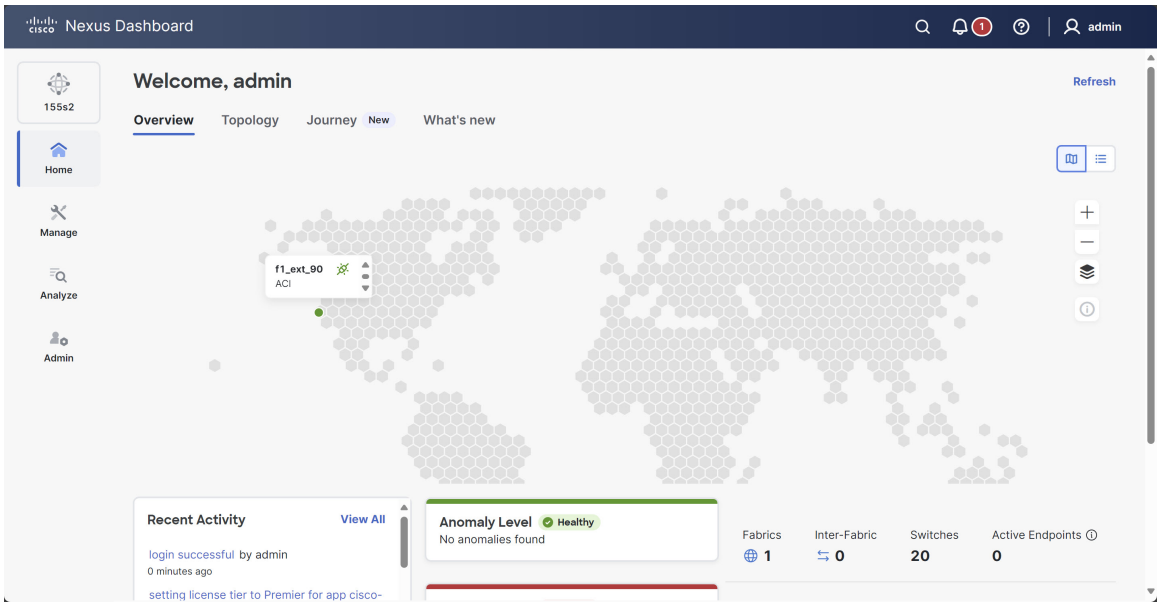
Step 9 Log into the Nexus Dashboard GUI using one of the public IP addresses listed in the previous step.

Note
You might have to wait for around 40 minutes after you have started the VMs before you can log into the Nexus Dashboard GUI using one of the public IP addresses.

Step 10 Verify that the cluster is healthy.

After the cluster becomes available, you can access it by browsing to any one of your nodes' management IP addresses. The default password for the `admin` user is the same as the `rescue-user` password you chose for the first node. During this time, the UI will display a banner at the top stating "Service Installation is in progress, Nexus Dashboard configuration tasks are currently disabled".

After all the cluster is deployed and all services are started, you can look at the **Anomaly Level** on the **Home** > **Overview** page to ensure the cluster is healthy:



Alternatively, you can log in to any one node using SSH as the `rescue-user` using the password you enterd during node deployment and using the `acs health` command to see the status:

- While the cluster is converging, you may see the following output:

```
$ acs health
k8s install is in-progress

$ acs health
k8s services not in desired state - [...]

$ acs health
k8s: Etcd cluster is not ready
```

- When the cluster is up and running, the following output will be displayed:

```
$ acs health
All components are healthy
```

What to do next

The next task is to create the fabrics and fabric groups. See the *Creating Fabrics and Fabric Groups* article for this release on the Cisco Nexus Dashboard collections page.