Contents

What You Will Learn

A comprehensive Cisco DCNM Software release methodology is developed that both preserves 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 DCNM Software release methodology. It describes the types of releases, their functions, and their lifecycles with various scenarios. It also describes the Cisco DCNM Software release and image naming conventions.

Types of Cisco DCNM Software Releases

Table 1 lists the Cisco DCNM Software release variants: major releases, feature releases, and minor or maintenance releases.

Table 1:   Cisco DCNM Software release types

Cisco DCNM Software release type	Description
Major release	A Major release is considered a superset train, which consists of all the Feature releases. Other significance may require bumping up of the Major release numbering. Example: Release 11.
Feature release	A Feature release introduces significant new features, functions, and/or support for hardware platforms. Each Major release consists of multiple feature releases. Examples: Releases 11.4(*), Release 11.5(*), and so on
Minor or Maintenance release	A Minor/ Maintenance release will primarily resolve product defects which preserve the integrity and stability of the feature release. These

| | are provided on an as-needed basis. |
| | Examples: Releases 11.2(1) and 11.2(2). |

Each Cisco DCNM Software release is uniquely numbered as X.Y(z), where X is the major release or train, Y is a major train feature release version that enhances major release X, and z is a minor/maintenance release that addresses product defects in feature release Y.

Figure 1 is a graphical representation of the Cisco DCNM Software releases.

Figure 1:   Cisco DCNM Software releases example 11.5(1)

11.5(1)

Major Release/Train Identifier

Feature Release Version identifier

Minor/maintenance release Identifier
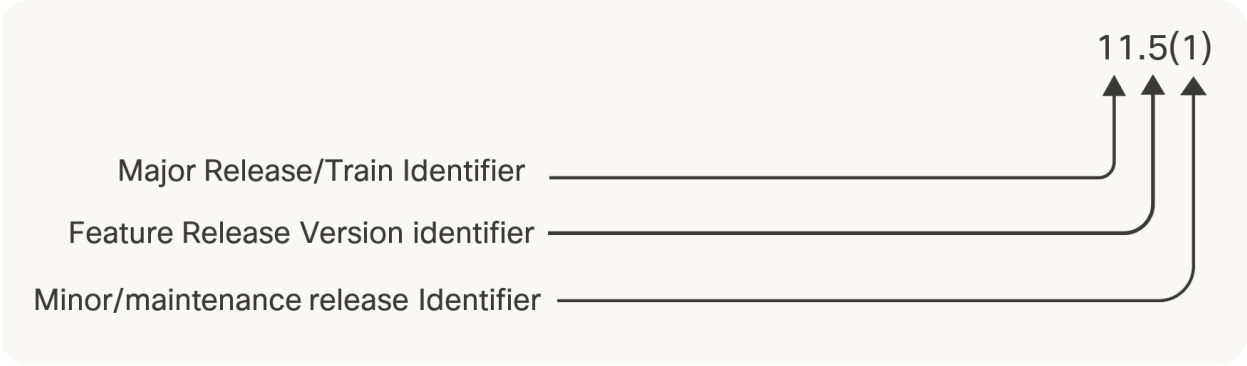
Long-Lived Releases

Each Cisco DCNM major release or train has one long-lived release

Long-lived releases are software features releases that are candidates to be hardened, mature and will help ensure that quality and stability will be selected to be the long-lived release. Each major release has one long-lived release, which is maintained for a longer time span than other releases. After a long-lived release is established, there will be no other feature releases added to the Major release train. Long-lived releases are recommended for long standing deployments and for networks that will not be upgraded frequently.

Lifecycle of a Cisco DCNM Software Release

The lifecycle of a major release spans several feature releases.

Figure 2 illustrates the lifecycle of a Major release based on the example of DCNM version 11.x.

Figure 2.   Lifecycle of a DCNM Major software release/ Train for DCNM 11.x

The lifecycle of a major release starts with the First Customer Shipment (FCS) of the first feature release. It represents the date of the first shipment of a software release to customers for revenue.

The major release then enters the next phase, in which several other feature releases are FCS to bring other features, feature enhancements as well to address product defects.

As the features that are introduced in the major release train achieve broad adoption and stability, a feature release in that major release train is selected to be a long-lived release. At this stage, the major release is proven with extensive market exposure in diverse deployment scenarios and has passed rigorous metrics analyzing quality, stability, and problem trends. After the long-lived release is FCS, the major release will no longer have any additional feature releases. In this phase, the release receives maintenance releases on an as-needed basis. Security fixes and Patches are provided on a case-by-case basis. Problems found internally are also evaluated and addressed based on the issue. The long-lived release remains in this phase of maintenance-only release for two years, after which the long-lived release goes end-of-life. When announcing the end-of-life milestone for a long-lived release, an alternate long-lived release will be identified for customers to migrate to.

After a long-lived release is announced for a major release train, the lifecycle for the next major release train starts for the next release.

The other non-long-lived feature releases in the major release train is in end-of-life approximately one year after the long-lived release is announced. Official end-of-life announcements generally lag, and this document should be used for software-release-cycle planning for getting up-to-date end of lifecycle management timelines.

Cisco will generally provide a six-month notice of a product's end-of-sale date or the last day when the affected product can be ordered. The software release will still be available through www.cisco.com and remain fully supported by Cisco until the end-of-sale date.

After the end-of-sale milestone (typically after one year), a release achieves end-of-software maintenance status, which represents the last potential date for maintenance software to be released. Engineering will no longer actively apply any defect repairs to the release. Software defects are addressed by upgrading to a subsequent release. The End of vulnerability/security support occurs concurrently with the End of SW maintenance release date. This is the last date

that Cisco Engineering may release bug fixes or PSIRT fixes for Vulnerability or Security issues. After this date, bug fixes or PSIRT fixes for Vulnerability or Security issues that are identified may be provided through later supported software releases.

Finally, the release reaches end-of-life status, in which the software image is no longer supported by Cisco and is removed from Cisco.com.

Summary

Cisco DCNM 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 through feature releases
- Feature releases add and enhance the features and functions of an existing major release
- Minor/maintenance releases address product defects in a feature release on a need basis

For More Information

For more information about the Cisco DCNM product line visit the following page: https://www.cisco.com/c/en/us/products/cloud-systems-management/network-services-orchestrator/index.html or contact your local Cisco account manager.

For information about Cisco service and support programs and benefits, visit the following page: https://www.cisco.com/c/m/en_us/customer-experience/support/software-support-service-swss.html.