Oracle Corporation

Server Technology Products

Software Error Correction Support

Version 2.7e

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Status: Published

Applies to:

Collaboration Suite
Database
Enterprise Manager (Base Platform and Plugins)
Fusion Middleware (including products acquired from BEA)
TimesTen In-Memory Database

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1 About This Document

1.1 Scope Of This Document

Oracle provides bug fixes for its Server Technology products as part of Premier and Extended Support (but not Sustaining Support). This document explains the methods used to deliver bug fixes and some of the policies regarding those methods.

Relationship to Lifetime Support Policy: The Lifetime Support Policy describes for all Oracle products the duration of support for *product releases* and what support is delivered in each phase of a product's life. This Error Correction Policy document describes, for the products listed on the title page, details about *how* we deliver error corrections within the life of those releases. This includes policies on how long we will create new fixes for older forms of patch delivery such as patch sets and bundle patches.

1.2 Summary

Oracle Technology products are released and maintained using this model:

- **Major releases** (e.g. Database 11.2, EM 12.1, or FMW 11.1) are released periodically and listed separately in the Lifetime Support Policy.

- **Patch sets** – An integrated, cumulative, fully tested collection of fixes issued in between major product releases. Patch sets may include minor enhancements. Patch sets have their own version numbers which indicate their relationship to the release they maintain (e.g. DB 11.2.0.3). This is our primary maintenance vehicle.

- **Proactive patches and bundles** (such as Patch Set Updates and Security Patch Updates) are released on a regular basis to maintain the patch sets. They provide a well-tested set of important fixes which should be part of every customer's proactive maintenance strategy.

- **Interim patches** are released as required to correct specific severe bugs for specific software versions. These corrections are then later incorporated into a release, patch set, or proactive patch or bundle.

- **Diagnostic patches** are created for specific versions to diagnose specific issues, and are temporary (removed after diagnosis is complete) and not included in any later release.

In general, proactive and interim patches are created only on the most

current patch set, and for some period of time (the *grace period*) on the previous patch set. Because of this, it is very important for you to plan to stay current on patch sets.

Interim patches are created for severe problems for which no reasonable workaround exists. A request for one must meet certain criteria for customer business and operational impact before being accepted, and the fix must be technically feasible for Oracle to create in a way which will not be likely to cause further bugs. Because they involve some inherent risk compared to patch sets and proactive patches and bundles (where all the fixes are tested together), if a fix is already in one of those you should consider applying the patch set or proactive patch rather than apply a separate interim patch.

1.3 Products and Options This Policy Applies To

This document applies to all products and options in the product bundles listed below. Please check release documentation to determine which products and options are included, as these change periodically.

Product bundles covered:
- Oracle Database
- Oracle Fusion Middleware (including former BEA products)
- Oracle Collaboration Suite
- Oracle Enterprise Manager (Base Platform and Plugins)
- Oracle TimesTen In-Memory Database

At this time Sun software products such as Solaris, iPlanet, and Java are not covered under this policy.

Refer to Appendix A for product-specific details.

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2 Terminology Used In This Document

Bundle patch	An iterative, cumulative patch issued between patch sets. Bundle patches usually include only fixes, but some products may include minor enhancements. Examples are the Database Windows Bundles and SOA Bundle Patches.
Conflicting patch	Conflicting patches are two or more patches which have some files in common, but contain independent fixes.
Critical Patch Update (CPU)	Oracle's program for quarterly release of security fixes. Patches released as part of this program may be Patch Set Updates, Security Patch Updates, and Bundle Patches. Regardless of the patch type, the patches are cumulative.
Cumulative patch	A patch in a series of patches which includes both new fixes plus all fixes from previous patches in the series.
Diagnostic patch	An interim patch created specifically to diagnose a problem.
e-fix	Obsolete term - see *Diagnostic patch*.
Exception release	Obsolete term - see *Interim patch.*
Fix Verification Binary (FVB)	Obsolete term - see *Diagnostic patch*.
Grace period	The period of time following the release of a patch set where we create new fixes for both the new and previous patch set, allowing customers time to plan for and install the new patch set. Grace periods vary by product – please see [Appendix A](#) for details by product.
Hotfix	Obsolete term - see *Interim patch.*
Interim patch	A patch containing one or more fixes made available to customers who cannot wait until the next patch set or new product release to get a fix.
Major release	A software release which contains significant new feature content. The Lifetime Support Policy typically applies specifically to major releases. The easiest way to identify which releases are major releases: if it is listed separately in the Lifetime Support Policy brochures, it is a major release – anything else is a subset of a major release.
Maintenance pack	Obsolete term - see *Bundle patch*

Merged patch	The combination of multiple conflicting bug fixes into a single interim patch.
MLR	Obsolete term - see *Merged patch*.
One-off patch	Obsolete term - see *Interim patch*.
Patch set	An integrated, cumulative, fully tested collection of fixes issued in between major product releases. Patch sets may include minor enhancements.
Patch Set Exception (PSE)	Obsolete term - see *Interim patch*.
Patch Set Update (PSU)	A quarterly patch which contains the most critical fixes for the applicable product, allowing customers to apply one patch to avoid many problems.
Regression	A new bug introduced or revealed as part of a release or patch.
Security Patch Update (SPU)	An iterative, cumulative patch consisting of security fixes. Formerly known as *Critical Patch Update*.
Service pack	Obsolete term - see *Bundle patch*.
Text patch	Obsolete term - see *Diagnostic patch*.
Update release	Obsolete term - see *Bundle patch*.
x-fix	Obsolete term - see *Interim patch.*

3   Patch Sets

3.1   *Definition*

Periodically during the Premier Support phase of a product release's life, Oracle combines bug fixes made since the product release, tests them thoroughly together, and releases them in one single package known as a *patch set*.

Patch sets are the safest and most reliable way for you to get bug fixes for a supported release, and are the cornerstone of preventive maintenance strategy. In the hierarchy of patching, patch sets are the foundation upon which more frequent proactive and interim patches are built.

By proactively applying patch sets as they are released, you can avoid encountering many bugs which might otherwise affect the smooth operation of your systems, and avoid having to install a patch set at an inconvenient time if you do encounter a bug.

Patch sets are typically identified by a change in the 4th digit of the version number. Because they are cumulative, it is possible to skip a patch set and still get all the fixes once the customer installs the latest.

3.2   *Policies*

3.2.1   Which Patch Sets Will Oracle Create New Fixes On?

All Patch Sets are supported as long as the product release is supported. Oracle will investigate bugs and will provide assistance for all supported product releases.

However, error correction is only available for the:

- Current patch set, and
- Previous patch set, for the duration of the *Grace Period*.

Error Correction includes new bug fixes through Interim Patches, Bundle Patches, Patch Set Updates, and Security Patch Updates.

The grace period is intended to provide customers adequate time to plan the installation of a new patch set. During this time Oracle will continue to create new fixes for the previous patch set.

Figure 1 below is an illustration of the grace period for a Database patch set, showing the release dates and overlap of

maintenance for the previous patch set.

The end date for error correction is set for the previous patch set when the new patch set is released. Future patch set releases will not have any effect on this end date once set. Example: patch set N is released and the end of error correction for patch set N-1 is set for a year from the release date of N. Nine months later, patch set N+1 is released. The end date for error correction for N is set to a year from the release date of N+1. But even though it means that three patch sets will be supported simultaneously, the original date for end of error correction for N-1 remains the same; error correction is not shortened due to the quick release of N+1.

Minimum grace period: Oracle releases a new patch set on different platforms over time. Because of this, not all platforms will be supported for error correction for the full grace period. Because of this, we will always support the previous patch set for error correction for *at least 3 months*. For example, if

- the initial release of patch set A.x.y.z (on Linux x86-64) is on June 1, 2010, and
- the same patch set is released on Univac on May 5, 2011

Even though the grace period normally ends on June 1, 2011, Oracle will continue to provide new patches for the previous release (A.x.y.z-*1*) on Univac until August 5, 2011 (3 months). Outside of the specific exceptions listed below, PSUs and SPUs will NOT be provided beyond the end of the initial grace period.

See Appendix A for details about the grace period for each specific product. Also, see section Criteria For Considering Interim Patch Requests for other information about requesting an interim patch.
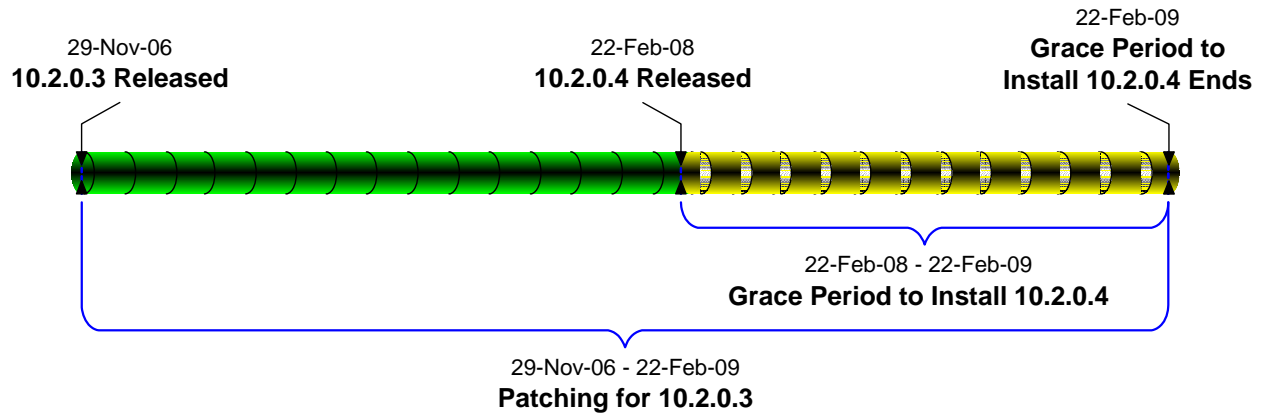
Figure 1 - Example of Database grace period

3.2.2 Patch Sets Only For Supported Releases

Patch sets are only created for releases in the Premier Support period. Patch sets are not created for releases which have entered Extended Support.

3.2.3 Regressions Due To Patch Sets

Oracle's goal is to produce patch sets of the highest quality, because we know customers need them to be trouble-free if they are to be a successful part of a preventive maintenance program. Because of this, if a patch set does introduce a new bug, Oracle will give extra priority to any P1 or P2 regression until fixed – but you must identify the issue as a regression and request the higher priority. If necessary, Oracle may create an interim patch to correct the problem.

3.2.4 Not All Patch Sets Ported to Every Platform

Oracle may not port every patch set to every platform. Oracle will always port the last patch set for a release to all platforms the release was originally ported to.

4 Proactive Patching: Quarterly Updates and Bundle Patches

4.1 Definitions

Oracle is streamlining patching by providing customers with tested bundles of fixes released on a fixed predictable schedule. This allows you to plan for and install the fewest number of patches with the highest expectation of success. At this time we have two principal quarterly patches: the Security Patch Update (SPU) and the Patch Set Update (PSU).

> **NOTE:** we have changed the name of the Critical Patch Update patch to be *Security Patch Update*. The name of the Oracle program for security patch releases remains the Critical Patch Updates program – only the name of the patch release itself has changed.

Security Patch Updates

A Security Patch Update (SPU) is a collection of security fixes issued quarterly on the Tuesday closest to the 17th of the month. SPUs are built for specific patch sets for all versions of applicable Oracle products under error correction. For example, for a given platform a SPU might be issued for Database 10.2.0.5 (in the Extended Support period), 11.1.0.7, 11.2.0.3 etc. The number of bug fixes is very small compared to patch sets.

Testing

SPUs are tested extensively including install and functional regression tests, and in some cases are tested as part of an Oracle application stack. Oracle recommends as a best practice customers install each SPU on a test system which mirrors their production system's environment before installing in a production system.

Scope

SPUs contain new security fixes, plus all fixes from previous SPUs issued on any given patch set. Thus each new SPU on a particular patch set is cumulative. For example, the second SPU issued against DB 11.1.0.2 will contain all the fixes from the first SPU for 11.1.0.2 plus the new fixes.

Even though Oracle intends to include mainly security fixes in SPUs, we may decide to include high-priority non-security fixes. We will always identify them in the SPU documentation.

Patch Set Updates

Patch Set Updates are proactive cumulative patches comprised of critical bug fixes released quarterly. Patch Set Updates establish a new baseline version number. Where both are released in a quarter, all the fixes in the Security Patch Update are included in the Patch Set Update.

Patch Set Updates apply to specific patch sets. Unlike patch sets, interim patches can be requested for any Patch Set Update, as long as the patch set it applies to is still supported for error correction.

Every Patch Set Update is a new version of the software, changing the 5th place of the version number (e.g. 11.2.0.3.**1**). It also represents a new baseline of the code, so an interim patch may need to be built specifically for the PSU you have installed in order to be applied. For more information on Patch Set Updates see Patch Set Updates for Oracle Products (Doc ID 854428.1) including information about patch conflicts and how to resolve them.

Testing
Patch Set Updates are subjected to extensive tests prior to release: regression, system and performance testing are done to ensure customers have the most successful experience using them.

Scope
PSUs contain strictly limited number of fixes – usually 25 to 100 fixes. Content is selected to provide maximum benefit to you while ensuring the PSUs are safe to apply. Included are:

- Fixes for critical technical issues such as wrong results, corruptions, and hangs.
- Fixes encountered by a large number of customers.
- Fixes already proven in the field.
- All fixes from the Critical Patch Update program.

Excluded from any PSU are:

- Fixes which would require recertification or changes functional behavior.
- Fixes which would require any configuration changes.
- Database: Fixes which would require a RAC cluster outage to install (i.e. guaranteed RAC rolling-installable).

If a Critical Patch Update security fix breaks one of the above rules, we include it and document the exception.

Recommended Patches

Some products may designate some patches as "Recommended" or "Critical". Recommended patches are ones all customers should apply due to the likelihood the customer may experience the problem fixed by the patch or the potential severity of the problem.

***4.2 Policies –
Critical Patch
Update Program***

4.2.1 Which Patch Set Versions are covered by the CPU program?

Patches released as part of the CPU program (e.g. PSUs, SPUs, bundle patches) follow the same rules for a patching support as other patches do: they are created for the current patch set and the previous patch set (if any) for the duration of the grace period (see section 3.2.1 above). For example, if 11.2.0.3 were the current Database patch set, a SPU would be created on 11.2.0.3 and on 11.2.0.2 as long as it is within the grace period to install 11.2.0.3.

Only customers who have contracted for Extended Support are entitled to download and use SPUs created for a product in Extended Support.

4.2.2 Patch Conflict Resolution For SPUs

It is possible you may encounter a conflict between the new SPU and a patch you had installed prior to the SPU. Conflict resolution process is different for different products – see Patch Conflict Resolution (Doc ID 1299688.1) for more information.

***4.3 Policies –
Patch Set
Updates***

4.3.1 Which Patch Set Versions Will A PSU Be Created For?

Patch Set Updates are created for products and patch set versions which in Oracle's judgment are adopted widely enough to benefit from this approach to delivering an integrated set of fixes, and only for patch sets currently under error correction. See Appendix A for product- specific information on which patch sets are eligible for error correction.

4.3.2 Which Patch Set Updates Will New Interim Patches Be Created For?

Interim patches can be created for any PSU as long as the patch set it is based on is supported for patching. In other words, there is no requirement to install the latest PSU in order to get a new patch built.

4.3.3 Resolving conflicts between Patch Set Updates and previously installed interim patches

It is very important to check for conflicts as part of the planning process when applying a PSU so you know what installed patches will conflict and can ensure conflicts are resolved before you install the PSU. You must get a replacement fix which is specific to the PSU you are planning on applying.   If the patch you need to resolve the conflict does not already exist on My Oracle Support you must request it. Unlike a typical request for a new interim patch, no special approval is required to get a replacement patch built. Note: even if you resolve a conflict with the current PSU, the new fix might still conflict with later PSUs. We do proactively create overlay patches to resolve conflicts as

part of the quarterly program, so the fix you need may already exist.

4.3.4 Requested Patches Not Included In Future PSUs

In order to keep them small and focused, new fixes delivered to customers on top of a PSU are NOT typically rolled into the next PSU built on the same patch set – fixes are selected for inclusion based on the criteria outlined in the Scope section above. For example, a new fix for 11.2.0.3.1 will not be included in 11.2.0.3.2 – it would generally be included in the next patch set instead. This means if you had an interim patch built on a particular PSU you may have to request a new patch for the same fix when installing a later PSU *if the interim patch conflicts*.

5   Interim Patches

5.1 Definition

An *Interim Patch* is a patch containing one or more fixes made available to customers who cannot wait until the next patch set or new product release to get a fix. Interim patches will not be used to backport features to older releases or implement new features. Interim patches are specific to a particular product version (base release or patch set). For example, an interim patch created for 11.2.0.3 should NOT be installed on 11.2.0.1 or 11.2.0.2. All interim patches are included in a future (usually next) patch set as well as the next product release.

Interim patches are not released for all products or on all platforms. In some cases products may release fixes on some or all platforms as cumulative binaries, and may not release any interim patches, or interim patching is limited. One example of this is Oracle Database on Windows.

<u>Testing</u>
Interim patches are not always tested with fixes from other patches when first created, so a user installing multiple interim patches compounds the risk to system stability with each additional interim patch installed. For long-term reliability customers should install the next Bundle Patch, Patch Set Update, or patch set which includes the desired fix(es).

5.2 Policies

5.2.1 <u>Supported Releases</u>

New interim patches are only created for <u>eligible patch sets</u> of releases which are in

- Premier Support

- Extended Support

- Limited Extended Support

NOTE: during Limited Extended Support, interim patches are only created for Severity 1 issues reported via Service Request. This includes security issues which are of critical impact to your business when there is good reason to believe the issue affects the version you are running and your configuration.

See <u>Lifetime Support Policy – Oracle Technology Products</u> for the dates of Premier and Extended Support, and <u>Oracle Software Technical Support Policies</u> for exceptions such as any Limited Extended Support offerings on specific releases or platforms.

5.2.2 <u>Criteria For Considering Interim Patch Requests</u>

Any request for a new interim patch should be accompanied by a case showing the customer business and operational impact is severe to be

considered. Also, Oracle must believe it is technically feasible to create a patch which does not jeopardize the stability of your system.

Below are some of the criteria which should be discussed in the impact case which must accompany a request:

Customer business impact
- Inability to do normal business
- Significant risk to development or deployment schedule
- Patch required to replace a patch rolled back by a PSU

Operational/technical impact
- Permanent data corruption (physical or logical)
- System hangs or crashes repeatedly
- Failure of critical functionality
- Severe performance regression
- Bug fix is not implemented in a later patch set for the release you are running, or applying the patch set not feasible due to a strong business or technical reason
- No workaround available or inability to use workaround because of a strong business / technical reason
- Technical Feasibility: if a fix requires too many lines of code to be changed, Oracle may determine the bug fix cannot be safely implemented as an interim patch

If the impact case for the request is strong, Oracle Support will log a request for an Interim Patch on your behalf, which will result in the patch being created and put on My Oracle Support for you to download. If the impact of a bug is high but does *not* meet the above criteria, Oracle Support will log a request to include the fix in the next patch set release.

5.2.3 Which Patch Sets Are Eligible For Interim Patches?

Oracle will create new interim patches against the currently available patch set, and for the previous patch set for the duration of the *grace period* **(see section 3.2.1 above)**. Oracle considers it a "best practice" leading to greater system stability to create new fixes on the latest patch set. Because of this, even if a previous patch set is still being patched, Oracle Support will always suggest you install the latest patch set. However, we would only require it if a fix is not technically feasible to implement in the earlier patch set.

NOTE: You ARE NOT REQUIRED to install any patch set as a prerequisite for Oracle to investigate a potential bug. Only after diagnosis has determined a new bug fix must be created, or the bug is fixed in an existing patch set and it is not feasible to fix it on the patch set you are now running, would you be required to install the current patch set. Any new fix will only be created for a maintained patch set

(see 3.2.1 above).

5.2.4   Regressions Due To Interim Patch

If an interim patch introduces a new bug when installed on a customer system, Oracle will work the problem at the level of priority assigned to the original bug. If necessary, Oracle may create a new interim patch to correct the problem.

5.2.5   Interim Fixes Included In Future Patch Sets And Releases

Interim patches are automatically included in the next patch set and the next release of the product. In cases where the interim patch is created too late in the development cycle of the current patch set, it will be rolled into the following patch set. ***Be sure to review the list of bug fixes included in a new patch set to make certain all the fixes from patches you currently have installed are included.*** If you find a patch you need is missing from the new patch set, contact Support prior to installing so a new patch can be created for you on the new patch set.

5.2.6   Customer Considerations

- An interim patch is unit tested but not tested with other interim patches, nor is the product regression tested as a whole with the interim patch included. If possible you should install and perform basic testing on a test system before installing an interim patch in a production system.
- Please install the requested patch promptly. If you do not plan to install it promptly, please ask for the fix to be included in the next patch set or bundle instead of requesting a patch.
- Please report back to Oracle Support on the success of the patch, so Support can update the bug.
- As a best practice, install a patch set with this fix as soon as it is available on your platform.

5.2.7   Interim Patches Available Via Self Service

Once an interim patch has been provided to you, at Oracle's discretion it is made available to other customers for download via My Oracle Support. IF YOU PLAN TO INSTALL MORE THAN ONE INTERIM PATCH to an Oracle Home directory, it is very important to contact Oracle Support before installing the patch. Oracle Support will determine, based on the patches already installed, whether a Merged Patch must be requested. **Failure to do so may result in reoccurrence of problems fixed by an earlier-installed interim patch.**

6   Diagnostic Patches

6.1   Definition   Diagnostic patches are patches created for the purpose of attempting to diagnose a product or performance fault.

6.2   Policies   ### 6.2.1   Install Only On Problem System

Diagnostic patches should not be installed on any other customer system than the one they were specifically produced for unless so directed by Oracle Support personnel.

6.2.2   Diagnostic Patches Created On All Versions

Diagnostic Patches may (at Oracle's discretion) be created for any supported version. See sections 3.2.1 above.

6.2.3   Remove Diagnostic Patches After Problem Resolution

Diagnostic patches should be removed from a production system once the situation it was produced for has been resolved, unless otherwise directed by Oracle Support personnel.

Appendix A   Product Specific Details

A.1 Database

For a full definition of the grace period for patch sets, see <u>section 3.2.1</u>.

Grace Period: up to 1 year for first patch set (minimum 3 months), and up to 2 years for second and subsequent patch sets.

- **First Patch Set:** Customers on all platforms have up to one year from the release of the first patch set on the first platform of a major release to install it.
- **Second and Subsequent Patch Sets:** For the second and any subsequent patch set release, customers on all platforms have up to two years from the release of a new patch set to install it.

As an example, for release X.Y (base release version X.Y.0.1):

- First patch set for (X.Y.0.2) comes out on Linux x86-64 in September 2010. Customers on all platforms have until September 2011 to install it.
- Second patch set (X.Y.0.3) comes out in September 2011. Customers would have two years – until September 2013 – to install X.Y.0.3.
- Third patch set (X.Y.0.4) comes out in July 2013, customers have until July 2015 to install it.
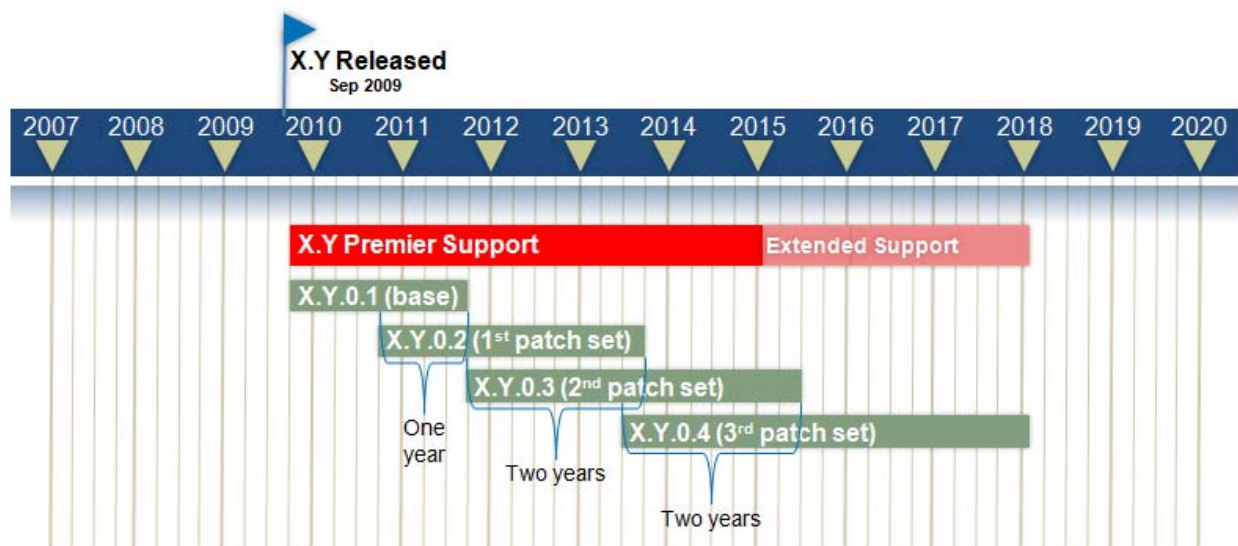

Figure 2 Sample release roadmap showing overlap of Database patch set support

During the grace period we will create new bug fixes for the previous patch set and the current patch set.

Patching end dates for current and most recent patch sets can be found on My Oracle Support in Release Schedule of Current Database Releases (Doc ID 742060.1).

Exceptions:

All Oracle Database patching period exceptions are published on My Oracle Support in Release Schedule of Current Database Releases (Doc ID 742060.1).

- **3 Month minimum grace period:** Oracle releases a new patch set on different platforms over time. Because of this, not all platforms will be supported for error correction for the full grace period. Because of this, we will always support the previous patch set for error correction for *at least 3 months*.
- **Bundle patches for Windows:** Oracle releases patches for Windows via periodic bundle patches instead of interim patches. Bundle patches are released periodically (at least quarterly), and include the Critical Patch Update security fixes.
- **Ad-hoc exceptions:** In some case Oracle may identify situations where the majority of customers will need additional patching support for a particular patch set and will extend the grace period.

A.2 Fusion Middleware

For a full definition of the grace period for patch sets, see section 3.2.1.

Grace Period: up to 1 year, minimum 3 months.

Oracle will continue to make new patches available for the preceding patch set (n-1) for up to one year from the initial release of a new patch set. After then you must install the new patch set in order to get new fixes. This patch set grace period became effective with the release of FMW 10g patch sets 10.1.2.3 and 10.1.3.4 (e.g.10.1.2.2 is supported for one year from the initial release of 10.1.2.3, etc.). This continues through the 11g patch sets (e.g. 11.1.1.3 is supported for one year from the initial release of 11.1.1.4, etc.). For details (including links to documents containing error correction dates for specific products and patch sets), see Error Correction Support Dates for Oracle Fusion Middleware (10g/11g/WLS) (Doc ID 944866.1).

Exceptions:

- **Minimum grace period and Extended Support** – same as Database in A.1 above

- **Bundle patches**: In Fusion Middleware, new fixes might be delivered as cumulative bundle patches, similar to the "Windows bundle patches" on the Database. Customers are highly recommended (and in many cases required) to always move to the latest available bundle patch. Some current Fusion Middleware products which utilize bundle patch distribution are OAM (Oracle Access Manager), OIM (Oracle Identity Manager), Discoverer, and Integration related products.

- **Bundle Patches:** Some Fusion Middleware products are maintained by bundle patches (formerly referred to as rolling patches). Interim patches are not available for these products. Fusion Middleware products which issue bundle patches include Coherence, Tuxedo, and JRockit.

- **Oracle Products Relying On Specific Weblogic Server Versions:** Some Oracle products have been coupled to WebLogic Server, i.e. they require specific releases of WebLogic Server. If maintenance is required on these versions of WebLogic Server see: Error Correction Support Dates for Oracle WebLogic Server (Doc ID 950131.1).

A.3 Oracle Enterprise Manager: Base Platform and Plug-ins

For a full definition of the grace period for patch sets, see section 3.2.1.

Grace Period: up to 1 year

When Oracle releases a new EM Base Platform patch set or Plug-in version, you have up to one year to plan for and install the new version. During that year (known as the grace period), Oracle will continue to create bug fixes for the previous EM Base Platform patch set or EM Plug-in. A grace period is effective beginning with the release of the next patch set or plug-in.

> **EM Base Platform (Cloud Control) Example:**
> EM Base Platform 12.1.0.2 released September 13, 2012. Oracle will continue to create new patches for EM Base Platform 12.1.0.1 until September 13, 2013. After then, new patches for EM Base Platform 12.1.0.1 will cease to be made available.
>
> **EM Plug-in Example:**
> Oracle Fusion Middleware Plug-in 12.1.0.3 released September 13, 2012. Oracle will continue to create new patches for Oracle Fusion Middleware Plug-in 12.1.0.2 until September 13, 2013. After that date, new patches for Oracle Fusion Middleware Plug-in 12.1.0.2 will cease.

Exceptions:

> **Critical Patch Update Program and EM Plug-ins:** Patches will be provided for EM Plug-ins under error correction guidelines with the following exception: If there is a later release of an EM Plug-in which includes the security vulnerability fixes, then the recommendation will be to upgrade to the new EM Plug-in release and patches will be available only "on-request".

Criteria for Considering Enterprise Manager Interim Patch Requests

The criteria includes but not limited to:

- OMS or Agent hangs, unable to start, hangs or crashes repeatedly
- Failure of key functionality, (e.g. Blackout, Notifications, Jobs, SLA, etc)
- Loss of functionality in the console user interface
- Unable to run an automated mass-deployment action (e.g. Deployment Procedure, Agent Patching)
- Severe performance problems: (e.g. Console, OMS, Agent)

- Permanent data corruption to the repository
- Bug fix is not implemented in a later patch set for the release you are running
- No workaround available or inability to use workaround because of a business / technical reason
- *Technical Feasibility: if a fix requires too many lines of code to be changed, Oracle may determine the bug fix cannot be safely implemented as an interim patch*

A.4 TimesTen In-Memory Database

Grace Period: 1 year for interim patches and SPUs from the release of each patch set or bundle on each different platform. Interim patches for TimesTen In-Memory Database are always cumulative, and will include all fixes made available in previous interim patches for the applicable patch set release.

A.5 All other products

Grace Period: 6 weeks for patches from the release of each patch set or bundle on each different platform. SPUs will be released on the previous patch set for one year.

The Grace Period to install new patch sets (and receive bug fixes on the previous patch set) is different for interim patches and SPUs. Interim patches will be created for the previous patch set for 6 weeks. SPUs will be created for the previous patch set for 12 months. The Grace Period for each platform starts with the release of the new patch set on that platform.

Exceptions: none

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Appendix B   Document Control

Date, Author	Version	Comments
23-Aug-02 Roger Knopf	1.0	Initial publication.
28-Feb-03 Roger Knopf	1.1	NT patch sets – no grace period. Added table showing patch characteristics by product and platform. Additional clarifications on Tools issues. Added a glossary. Reformatted some sections for clarity.
6-Mar-03 Roger Knopf	1.2	Clarified no back ports of security patches to non-supported releases or patch sets.
1-May-03 Roger Knopf	1.3	Reflect changes in overall product lifecycle policy. Added security patch policy changes incl. Support of previous patch set. Rewrote some parts for clarification.
19-Jan-05 Roger Knopf	1.4	Add definition of and separate section for Critical Patch Updates. Remove all references to Oracle E-Business Suite (developing their own policy document). Clarify language around patch set support for security patches. Clarified policy for security patches for EMS releases. Change all references of iAS to AS. General editing.
19-Oct-07 Roger Knopf	2.0	Major revision. Incorporate new Grace Period policy, changed all references about EMS to ES, clarified Windows patching, general editing.
28-Nov-07 Roger Knopf	2.0c	Removed Win patch bundles from grace period. Incorporated all review comments. Will publish as 2.0.
28-Dec-07	2.0d	Changed DB grace period to one year, moved product specific information to Appendix A.
14-Mar-08 Roger Knopf	2.1	Adding 1 year grace period for FMW.
18-Jul-08 Roger Knopf	2.1b	Removed Windows exception to the DB grace period because they are now producing bundles on current+previous patch sets.
27-Aug-08 Roger Knopf	2.2	Adding Grid Control
30-Oct-08 Roger Knopf	2.3	Added clarifications in sections 3.2.1, 5.2.1 and 5.2.2 regarding business case for requesting an interim patch.
12-Jan-09 Roger Knopf	2.3a	Added link to Metalink note containing specific DB Grace Period dates.
5-Feb-09 Roger Knopf	2.3b	Added illustration and text to clarify the concept of Grace Period
27-Apr-09 Roger Knopf	2.3c	Added description of how this document relates to the Lifetime Support Policy. Rewrote Appendix A description of *grace period* to add clarity (ie policy did not change)
2-Jun-2009	2.4	Changed DB grace period policy so Extended Support no longer terminates a grace period; added distinction of "supported for error correction" patch set.
22-Jul-2009	2.5	Add Patch Set Updates to policy
27-Oct-2009	2.6	Add BEA products, also added a table of contents

11-Jun-2012	2.7	Added new unified patch nomenclature, rewrote many definitions for clarity, removed procedural sections not relevant to policy.
28-Sep-2012	2.7a	Revised wording in Appendix A for EM patching
14-Jan-2013	2.7b	Implemented new policy change for DB patch set grace periods
31-Jan-2013	2.7c	Minor rewrite of DB grace period language to make it more clear
4-Feb-2013	2.7d	Correct erroneous explanation of the new DB grace periods and add a picture to help clarify.
9-Apr-2014	2.7e	Added TimesTen to Appendix A. Minor changes to definitions. Corrected example of minimum grace period for patch sets.