

VMware HCX Software Versioning, Skew and Legacy Support

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VMware HCX 4.5

You can find the most up-to-date technical documentation on the VMware website at:

<https://docs.vmware.com/>

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About this Document

This document describes HCX software versioning, interoperability between HCX components, and upgradability and supportability for software version skew scenarios.

Intended Audience

This information is intended for anyone who wants to install, upgrade, or use HCX. The information is written for experienced Windows or Linux system administrators who are familiar with virtual machine technology and datacenter operations.

VMware Technical Publications Glossary

VMware Technical Publications provides a glossary of terms that might be unfamiliar to you. For definitions of terms used in the VMware technical documentation, go to <http://www.vmware.com/support/pubs>.

Software Versioning, Skew and Legacy Support Policies

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Starting with the HCX 4.0.0 release, HCX releases transition from a cadence of R-named releases to a series of releases based on Semantic Versioning.

This section describes the new version scheme and the software life cycle policy, software skew scenarios between components at the local site, software skew scenarios between paired sites, and HCX policy for vacating legacy vSphere environments.

The following terminology applies throughout this section:

Software Version Skew

Any version drift between HCX components.

Partial Local Upgrade

HCX Manager is upgraded but local Service Mesh appliances are not upgraded.

Complete Local Upgrade

HCX Manager and its local Service Mesh appliances are upgraded.

Site to Site Version Skew

Paired HCX installations are not running the same software version.

Site to Site Compatibility

Compatible sites have the ability to site pair, deploy appliances, and operate HCX Services.

Complete HCX Upgrade

All site paired HCX installations are upgraded (HCX Managers and appliances).

Semantic Versioning

Starting with the HCX 4.0.0 release, software versioning adheres to an x.y.z [Semantic Versioning](#) scheme, where X is the major version, Y is the minor version, and Z is the maintenance version.

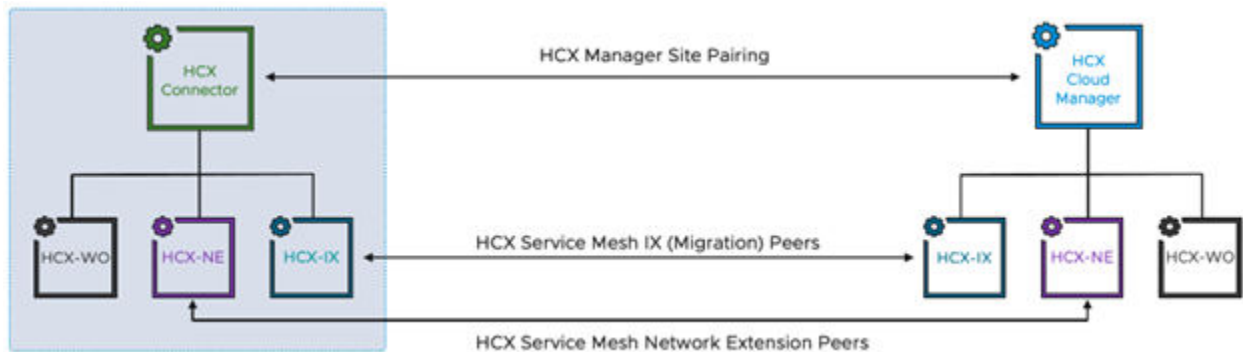
HCX releases with semantic versioning observe the VMware N-2 Lifecycle Policy. To find the End of Support date for a product release, refer to the [VMware Product Lifecycle Matrix](#).

HCX releases prior to 4.0.0 were based on HCX version 3.5.x and were identified as "R" releases, such as R146 and R147. Each R release was associated with a specific build and released on a monthly cadence.

With R releases, HCX supported the four most recent releases, meaning an N-3 policy that aligned with the monthly cadence.

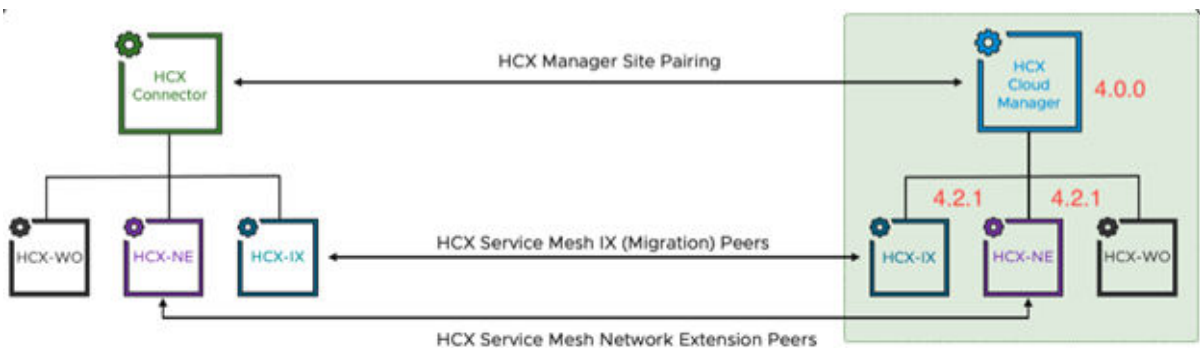
Local Version Skew Policy

The local version skew policy applies to all components that are local to either the source or the destination HCX.



Local version skew can happen when upgrading the HCX Manager and Service Mesh component appliances. Local version skew also can happen if the HCX Manager reverted, leaving the Service Mesh appliances at a higher version.

- Reverting HCX Managers (using vSphere snapshots, external backup systems or HCX based backups) after upgrading the HCX Service Mesh results in version skew, where the Service Mesh version is higher. This is an unsupported skew state. The Service Mesh components must be redeployed to return to a supported state.



Local Version Skew During HCX Upgrades

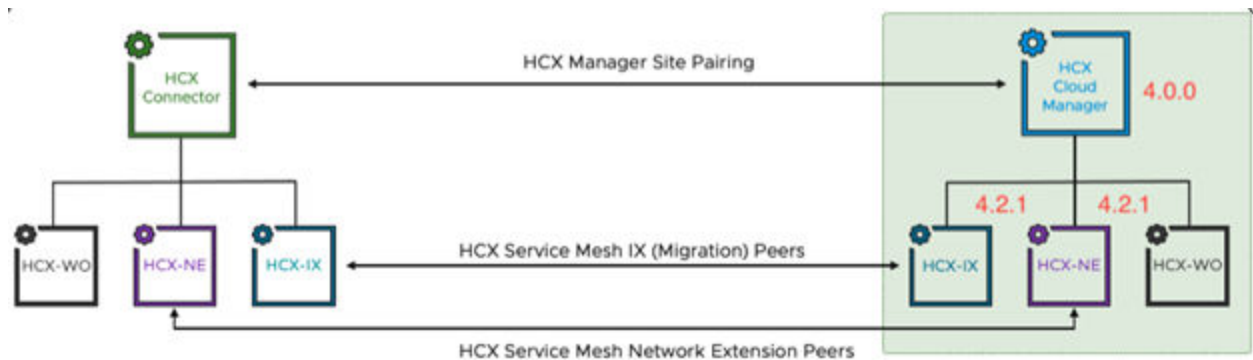
Transient, or temporary, version skew is an expected state during the system or the appliance upgrades. HCX Manager and Service Mesh appliance versions are interoperable within the following policy:

- In all cases, it is the best practice to execute a complete local upgrade. New features are not supported until a complete upgrade.
- While it is possible to perform the HCX Manager upgrade separately from the Service Mesh upgrade to align with the next available maintenance window, it is the best practice to execute a complete local upgrade. When local version skew exists, only the lowest common functionality between the two versions is supported.
- VMware Support might require a complete local upgrade to provide known fixes.
- Local major version skew is not supported, except during upgrade event.

For version compatibility during upgrades, see [HCX Upgrade Path in the VMware Interoperability Matrix](#).

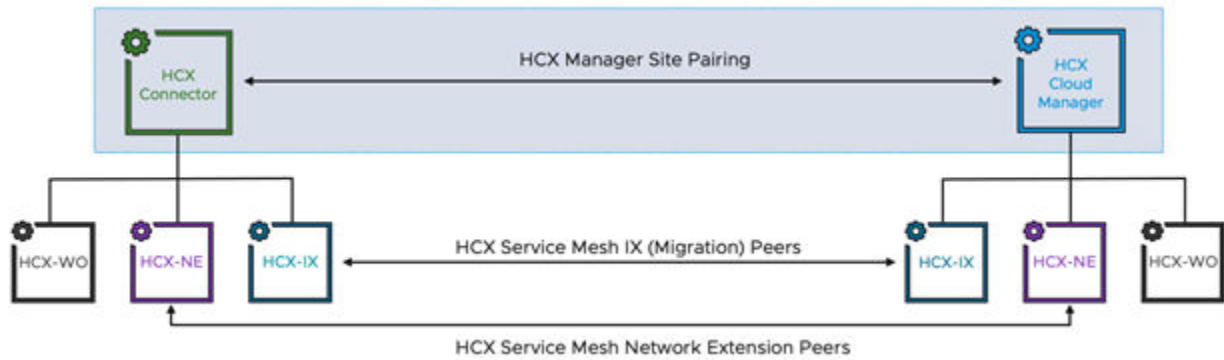
Local Version Skew Due to Reverted HCX Manager

Reverting HCX Managers (using vSphere snapshots, external backup systems or HCX based backups) after upgrading the HCX Service Mesh results in version skew, where the Service Mesh version is higher. This is an unsupported skew state. The Service Mesh components must be redeployed to return to a supported state.



Site to Site Version Skew Policy

Site to site version skew refers to paired HCX installations that are not running the same HCX software versions.



You can achieve the highest compatibility by running all site-paired HCX Managers at the same version of HCX. Operating site paired systems without the version skew is recommended.

In some situations, it is difficult to avoid skew. Large scale multi-site HCX deployments with many site pairings and multi-cloud deployments, where the providers manage the initially deployed HCX Cloud version, can result in mismatches.

Version skew can result in limited compatibility of the paired sites. HCX systems are compatible within the following policy:

- Paired systems of the same major HCX version

An HCX site has limited compatibility with other HCX sites running different, but supported, minor HCX versions within the same major version (for example, HCX 4.3 pairing with HCX 4.4):

- During upgrade, skew is supported between versions listed as compatible in the VMware Product Interoperability Matrix - Upgrade Path portal.
- Service compatibility is provided for features at the lower version for two paired HCX installations.
- Features from the higher minor version are not supported.
- VMware does not test compatibility with partial local upgrades.

- Paired systems of different major HCX versions

An HCX site has limited compatibility with other HCX sites running different major HCX versions (only the first minor release of the next major version), during upgrade events.

- During upgrade, skew is supported between versions listed as compatible in the VMware Product Interoperability Matrix - Upgrade Path portal.
- Service compatibility is provided for features at the lower version for two paired HCX installations.
- Features from the higher major version are not supported.
- A complete HCX upgrade of all site-paired HCX Managers and Service Mesh Appliances is strongly recommended.

HCX Support Policy for Legacy vSphere Environments

VMware HCX enables users to evacuate vSphere environments that have entered the End of General Support and provides limited support for vSphere versions at End of Technical Guidance, avoiding complex upgrades and accelerating adoption of the VMware Software Defined Data Center and VMware-based Clouds. For more information, see VMware [KB 82702](#).