Progress Corticon
Life Cycle Policy Guide

August 2020

Contents

1   Introduction

Progress Software's Corticon Product Life Cycle consists of a series of milestones and activities that determine the different stages of a product release's life cycle: starting from its first General Availability (GA) to the eventual Retirement. The primary objective of this document is to help customers understand the different stages of Corticon product release life cycle, and to help with planning the upgrade and/or migration strategies of their Corticon applications.

New features and enhancements are introduced in new releases, and from time to time Progress Software will declare some of these new releases as Long Term Supported (LTS) releases. This document explains the differences between LTS and non-LTS releases.

Each Corticon release goes through up to three phases of product life cycle: Active, Sunset, and Retired. The definition of each life cycle phase includes information about certification of new platforms or operating systems, availability of Updates, and more.

2   Forms of Product Delivery

2.1   Releases

Releases contain important new product features and enhancements along with bug fixes.

Each release is available as a complete install to all customers with a current Maintenance agreement and to new customers. It may require modifications to your applications (e.g. recompile new and/or modified code to take advantage of new features) or systems (e.g. changes to supported platforms).

ⓘ **Note:** The distinction between *Major* and *Minor* releases is no longer in place.

2.2   Updates

Updates are used for the resolution of critical product issues, as determined solely by Progress, including *defects* categorized at Severity 1 (and by exception Severity 2) defined in Progress Maintenance and Support Policy and/or *security vulnerabilities* classified at Common Vulnerability Scoring System (CVSS) score level 9 or higher. Delivery timeline and content of every Update is always at the discretion of Progress.

ⓘ **Note:** Updates replace *Service Packs* and *Hot Fixes* as a delivery vehicle for receiving post-release changes. Updates adhere to much stricter standards in which backward compatibility and release stability are the primary objectives for all customers operating the corresponding release in production. For this reason, not all critical product issues will be fixed in Updates.

Product issues or change requests that don't get resolved in Updates will be taken into consideration when planning future releases. In some cases, it may be beneficial to share a product enhancement ideas with other Corticon customers in the form of idea submission at https://Corticon.ideas.aha.io/.

Updates generally do not require a migration effort and are available to all customers with a current Maintenance agreement. If a more involved migration is required by customers, a separate communication is issued explaining the case in more detail.

Updates are cumulative and made available to all customers with a current Maintenance agreement.

3   Product Support Duration

Any Corticon release can be designated as Long Term Supported (LTS) release at Progress's discretion. Unless stated otherwise, new releases should be treated as non-LTS releases.

3.1   Long Term Supported (LTS) Releases

An LTS release is meant to be adopted by customers who primarily look for stability and minimal change for a deployed application over the course of an extended period, typically years.

3.2   Non-LTS Releases

Non-LTS releases are targeted for customers seeking a faster pace of innovation and change. These releases, while delivering new features and ready for production use, become Retired immediately upon the subsequent release (LTS or non-LTS) becoming available. They may get Updates addressing critical issues, but, due to their potentially short lifespan, they don't get planned (or scheduled) Updates.

Progress Software recommends use of continuous integration and continuous delivery to help benefit from the faster release cadence expected with non-LTS releases. Non-LTS releases also give customers an opportunity to use and test features that will appear in upcoming LTS releases.

3.3   Versioning Scheme

The versioning scheme of Corticon is used to capture the unique build number. It is most often used when reaching out to Progress Technical Support to verify the exact binaries used by the customers.

ⓘ **Note:** The versioning scheme does not necessarily identify whether a distribution is an LTS Release, a non-LTS Release, or an Update. Furthermore, different components of the same Corticon release may have different build versions.

4   Product Life Cycle Phases

4.1   Active Phase

A Corticon release enters the Active life cycle Phase when it becomes Generally Available (GA), and exiting it when it enters the Sunset Phase.

Active Phase product releases are fully supported. If problems are found using an Active Phase release, Progress will work with customers towards an appropriate resolution if their licenses are covered under Maintenance.

LTS releases in the Active Phase will be evaluated by Progress for certifications and ports to new third-party products and their versions. Non-LTS releases will only be considered for certifications, but not for ports.

ⓘ**Note:** NO NEW FEATURES will be added or retrofitted in Updates to an LTS release. New features/enhancements will only be introduced in subsequent LTS and non-LTS Releases.

Progress recommends that customers begin all new projects with the latest Active Phase LTS releases and migrate or upgrade their existing applications or environments to the Active Phase LTS releases as soon as possible.

Once an LTS release becomes Generally Available and enters the Active life cycle phase, it will remain in the Active phase for a **three** year countdown to the release Sunset Phase (*Target Sunset Date*).

4.2   Sunset Phase (only for LTS releases)

An LTS release will enter the Sunset Phase once both of the following two conditions are met:
   a)   The Target Sunset Date is reached, and
   b)   A newer LTS release is GA and hence in the Active life cycle phase.

ⓘ **Note:** A non-LTS release does not enter the Sunset Phase. Once a subsequent release becomes Active, the prior non-LTS release immediately moves to the Retired Phase.

LTS releases in the Sunset Phase are fully supported and will be evaluated by Progress for certifications on new operating environments, but not for ports to new hardware systems.

The frequency of planned Updates for Sunset Phase releases may be reduced at Progress's discretion.

If problems are found using product releases in the Sunset Phase, Progress will work with customers towards an appropriate resolution where possible, if their licenses are covered under Maintenance. This includes the possibility of an Update at the discretion of Progress.

Progress recommends that customers plan to upgrade from Sunset Phase product releases using this document as a guideline.

The duration of the Sunset Phase is fixed at **one** year, after which the release becomes Retired.

4.3   Retired Phase

Product releases placed in the Retired Phase are not available for sale except for the purchase of additional licenses by existing customers. Retired Phase product releases will not be evaluated for certifications on new operating environments. Updates may be provided for Retired releases on an exception basis only:

Progress provides commercially-reasonable efforts to resolve customer issues and answer customer questions on Retired Phase product releases covered under Maintenance. However, the knowledge, skills, and development and testing environment required to resolve issues on Retired Phase product releases are NOT guaranteed.

- In case of an LTS release, this includes the possibility of an Update at the discretion of Progress and **for a fee,** based on an assessment of the effort required by Progress, **only for the first year of the Retired Phase**. Starting in year 2 of the Retired Phase, Progress will not consider requests for LTS release Updates.
- For non-LTS releases, given their shorter life cycle, NO Updates will be made once the release enters the Retired life cycle phase.

Progress strongly recommends that customers migrate or upgrade to a fully-supported Corticon releases as soon as possible in order to maintain the highest level of support for their applications and systems.

4.4   Summary of Attributes Available for Each Life Cycle Phase

	Active		Sunset	Retired
	LTS	Non-LTS		
Updates	•	•	•	-
Certify new third-party product version	•	•	•	-
Port to new platform	•	-	-	-
Sales to new Direct Customers	•	•	-	-
Sales to ISVs for new Customers	•	•	•	-
License quantity increases	•	•	•	•
Lifetime Technical Support[1]	•	•	•	•

For further information, please contact your Progress Sales representative or business partner. For information about Progress Support Services please refer to https://www.progress.com/support/corticon.

4.5   What Life Cycle Phase is Each Corticon Release in?

An individual Corticon release moves through the Active, Sunset, and Retired life cycle phases over time based on policies described earlier in this document.

To learn what phase a specific Corticon release currently is in and also to see what the target date is for moving to the Retired phase, please visit the Corticon Release Availability Guide on Progress Communities.

5   Backward Compatibility

Backward compatibility refers to a product release's ability to seamlessly, or at least with minimal disruption, support a prior release deployment. This impacts the operation of applications in use as well as maintenance and development of these applications.

Backward compatibility has always been at the forefront of Progress release planning. While new Releases and Updates are meant to make Corticon better, some changes inevitably may require additional steps towards a smooth transition. This is particularly important for any changes that may affect mission-critical business applications running in production environments.

The following table lists some, but not all, examples of the types of changes and potential implications that you can expect to encounter in new releases and updates

---

[1] Requires an active Maintenance agreement.

	Releases	Updates
Security • Progress is continually monitoring Corticon for security threats and reserves the right to make changes to mitigate potential security vulnerabilities. These changes may impact the Corticon functionality and/or performance and may require specific one-time installation steps or updates to the way Corticon is used.	✓	✓
Platform support • Support for Operating Systems or other platform components or their versions may be discontinued at Progress's discretion. Refer to the Support Platforms in the Corticon Resource Center for more information.	✓	✓
Rule Assets • New capabilities may be introduced or deprecated in new releases. Rule assets (vocabulary, rule sheets, rule flows, and rule tests) may require upgrades in new releases.	✓	✘
Corticon Studio • New features can be introduced; some features may be deprecated. Rule projects may require upgrades in new releases.	✓	✘
Command Line Tools • New features can be introduced; some features may be deprecated. Existing scripts using these tools may require upgrade.	✓	✘
Web Console • New features can be introduced; some features may be deprecated. Existing Web Console configurations will be automatically upgraded.	✓	✘

6 Feature / Functionality Obsolescence Life Cycle

In addition to the overall product life cycle, features and functionality also move through various phases of maturity from commercial introduction to obsolescence. As features become obsolete, they are handled in one of two ways: They can be ***De-Supported*** or ***Deprecated***.

- **Definition of De-Support:** Features/Functionality is identified as obsolete, but not removed from the product.
- **Definition of Deprecation:** Features/Functionality is identified as obsolete and removed from the product.

The backward compatibility of Corticon rule projects and deployments is one of the key factors in determining if obsolete features are *Deprecated* or *De-Supported*.

Typically, Corticon rule asset features are de-supported to ensure the support of existing applications, whereas deprecation is used for functionality where the loss does not force application re-work.

Benefits of the De-Support and Deprecation life cycles phases include:
- Set appropriate customer expectations regarding backwards/forwards compatibility
- Give customers enough time to consider and plan changes in their applications
- Promote rejuvenation and upkeep of applications, advantageous to partners and customers
- Better alignment with non-Corticon technology partners such as Operating Systems vendors
- Encourage customers to use modern replacement features as appropriate

6.1 De-supported Features and Functionalities

De-support provides the ability to identify, communicate and manage obsolescence (and the possible eventual deprecation) of features and functionality, independent of the products and versions in which they may be included and how are they packaged. Progress recommends that de-supported features should no longer be used. Customers should consider substituting de-supported features over time with the newer replacement ones. Please note that:

- De-supported features continue to function
- Best-effort support will be available for de-supported features and functionalities
- De-supported features will not include further enhancements
- Communications will follow the 'Obsolescence Life Cycle Guidelines' as described below

6.2 Deprecated Features and Functionalities

Deprecation is used where changes in technology or standards have made a feature obsolete and it is removed from the Corticon product. Deprecated features sometimes have replacement equivalents and typically have no impact on backwards compatibility. Key details of deprecation include:

- Corticon-dependent features may be removed
- Third party-dependent features, such as platform support, may continue to function
- There will be no support for deprecated features
- Communications will follow the 'Obsolescence Life Cycle Guidelines' as described below

6.3   Feature / Functionality Obsolescence Life Cycle Guidelines

The following are the phases for the De-support or Deprecation life cycle of features as they become obsolete:

- Prior to assigning one of the obsolescence statuses, features that are candidates for de-support or deprecation will be published to partners and customers for comment on the impact that the de-support or deprecation may cause to current applications
- Corticon Product Management will use the information gathered from this process to assess the obsolescence of each feature or functionality
- Details about de-supported and deprecated features will be included in Platform and Product Availability Guide
- Announcements will be made to inform the Progress community of any updates to feature status
- De-supported and deprecated features will be identified as such in the Product Documentation