

CP Assessment Report

CP1436 'EAC/AA and NHHDA Applications – Windows Server upgrade'



Committee

Supplier Volume Allocation Group

Recommendation

Approve

Implementation Date

5 November 2015
(November 2015 Release)



Contact

Oliver Xing

020 7380 4276

oliver.xing@elexon.co.uk



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About This Document

This document is the Change Proposal (CP) Assessment Report for CP1436 which ELEXON will present to the Supplier Volume Allocation Group (SVG) at its meeting on 28 April 2015. The SVG will consider the proposed solution and the responses received to the CP Consultation before making a decision on whether to approve CP1436.

There are two parts to this document:

- This is the main document. It provides details of the solution, impacts, costs, and proposed implementation approach. It also summarises the views of respondents to the CP Consultation.
- Attachment A contains the full responses received to the CP Consultation.

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1 Why Change?

NHHDA and EAC/AA software

ELEXON, via its Application Management and Development (AMD) service provider, provides Non Half Hourly Data Aggregators (NHHDA) with NHHDA and Estimated Annual Consumption (EAC)/Annualised Advance (AA) software on which to run the corresponding applications. These are designed to run on either a 'Solaris-only' or 'Solaris/Windows Server' platform. NHHDA's have the choice to run their applications on either of these platforms. Currently 11 of the 13 NHHDA's run their applications on the 'Solaris-only' platform with the remaining two running their applications on the 'Solaris/Windows Server' platform.

The current version of the Solaris platform used for this software, Solaris 5.10, will be supported by Oracle until January 2021. However, the current version of the Windows platform, Windows Server 2003, will only be supported by Microsoft until July 2015.

What is the issue?

The endpoint support to Windows Server 2003 will cease in July 2015. Although the applications can still be run without this support, it means that they will be unprotected against cyber-attacks, viruses and malware. This could leave Settlement data unprotected or exposed, and create risks to Settlement.

The issue will only affect the two NHHDA's that currently operate on the 'Solaris/Windows Server' platform. The other 11 NHHDA's who operate on the 'Solaris-only' platform will not be affected.

Both NHHDA's who are running Windows Server 2003, have advised ELEXON that they have a preference to upgrade to Windows Server 2012, for which Microsoft will provide extended support until 2023.

Proposed solution

ELEXON raised [CP1436 'EAC/AA and NHHDA Applications – Windows Server upgrade'](#). It proposes that ELEXON's AMD service provider will first upgrade its systems to Windows Server 2012. It will then provide new and fully tested versions of the NHHDA and EAC/AA applications to the two NHHDA who are currently running Windows Server 2003.

The CP will remove any risks that may occur from operating on unsupported software, and ensure compatibility between the systems run by ELEXON and the relevant NHHDA.

Proposer's rationale

We believe that CP1436 will allow the NHHDA and EAC/AA applications that run on the 'Solaris/Windows Server' platform to be compatible with the latest and fully supported software, which Microsoft will support until 2023. This will have the following benefits for both the developer and users of this software:

- maintains availability of full vendor support service for users of the applications;
- minimises risk of being unable to take advantage of defect fixes and other enhancements made available by the vendor;
- minimises reliance on reduced vendor support service for both developer and users; and
- minimises cost of vendor support for both developer and users.

Proposed redlining

The proposed CP solution will require changes to the NHHDA System Management Guide and NHHDA Installation Guide documents, which are BSC Category 2 Configurable Items. The AMD service provider will draft redlined changes to these documents, which we will consult on as part of CP1436's implementation if the SVG approves the CP.

3 Impacts and Costs

Central impacts and costs

Central impacts

CP1436 will require the AMD service provider to develop, test and deploy new versions of the NHHDA and EAC/AA software applications, and will require corresponding updates to the NHHDA System Management Guide and NHHDA Installation Guide documents.

Central Impacts	
Document Impacts	System Impacts
- NHHDA System Management Guide - NHHDA Installation Guide	NHHDA systems

Central costs

There will be a total central cost of approximately £40,000 to deliver the technical solution to the CP and to implement the relevant document changes.

BSC Party & Party Agent impacts and costs

CP1436 will only impact the two NHHDA that operate on the existing Windows Server 2003 systems. Costs will arise from upgrading their systems to the new Windows Server 2012 platform. No other BSC Parties or Party Agents will be impacted by CP1436.

Two respondents believe that the CP will impact them as they will need to carry out system and process changes. One of these is one of the impacted NHHDA, while the other response was from a Supplier. We do not believe that CP1436 will impact the Supplier. It does not require them to upgrade their systems and there will be no changes to the functionality of the applications. We have queried this response with the Supplier and will update the SVG verbally at the meeting.

One further respondent suggests that it will be impacted if the CP introduces functional changes to the NHHDA and EAC/AA systems. This CP seeks to introduce a version upgrade to Windows Server and will not require any functional changes to the applications, and so will not impact this participant.

BSC Party & Party Agent Impacts	
BSC Party/Party Agent	Impact
NHHDA that currently operate on Windows Server 2003	Costs will arise from upgrading systems to the new Windows Server 2012 platform, and from installing and testing the new versions of the EAC/AA and NHHDA software delivered by ELEXON.

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4 Implementation Approach

Recommended Implementation Date

We propose CP1436 for implementation on **5 November 2015** as part of the November 2015 BSC Systems Release.

The two impacted NHHDA's wish to complete their system upgrades as soon as possible, which can be done as soon as new versions of the applications are delivered by ELEXON. The upgrade to ELEXON's systems will require approximately 13 weeks' lead time from the SVG decision date. This means that, if approved, the new versions of the applications will be delivered to the affected two NHHDA's on 1 July 2015. Based on this, we would expect the full upgrade to be completed by the end of July 2015 at the latest.

The updates to the NHHDA System Management Guide and NHHDA Installation Guide documents will be made as part of this process, although for administrative and governance purposes this will formally happen as part of the November 2015 Release.

None of the seven respondents to the CP Consultation disagree with this proposed implementation approach.

5 Initial Committee Views

SVG's initial views

CP1436 was not presented to the SVG for initial views.

Due to the need to progress the upgrade as quickly as possible, we did not formally present CP1436 to the SVG for its initial views. We did discuss the draft CP with the Software Technical Advisory Group (STAG) and the affected NHHDA's, and we updated the SVG verbally at SVG meeting 168.

6 Industry Views

This section summarises the responses received to the CP Consultation. You can find the full responses in Attachment A.

Summary of CP1436 CP Consultation Responses			
Question	Yes	No	Neutral
Do you agree with the CP1436 proposed solution?	6	0	1
Will CP1436 impact your organisation?	3	4	0
Will your organisation incur any costs in implementing CP1436?	3	4	0
Do you agree with the proposed implementation approach for CP1436?	6	0	1
Do you have any further comments on CP1436?	1	6	0

Comments on the CP

Six of the seven respondents support the CP. One Party remains neutral as it will not be affected by this CP, due to it operating solely on the Solaris system.

One Party sought ELEXON's view on whether it was aware of any instances where software applications were running unprotected due to expired support. We can confirm that there are no such instances.

As the NHHDA and EAC/AA applications are distributed to organisations to use, ELEXON relies on the Software Technical Advisory Group (STAG) as the main industry forum for discussing future functional changes and providing technical support. We use this forum to identify third party software components that are nearing the end of their support period to ensure continuous operation of these industry applications.

7 Recommendations

We invite you to:

- **APPROVE** CP1436 for implementation on 5 November 2015 as part of the November 2015 Release; and
- **NOTE** that the redlined changes to the NHHDA System Management Guide and NHHDA Installation Guide documents to implement CP1436 will be produced and consulted on as part of the CP's implementation.

Appendix 1: Glossary & References

Acronyms

Acronyms used in this document are listed in the table below.

Acronyms	
Acronym	Definition
AA	Annualised Advance
AMD	Application Management and Development (<i>service provider</i>)
CP	Change Proposal
EAC	Estimated Annual Consumption
NHHDA	Non Half Hourly Data Aggregator (<i>Party Agent</i>)
STAG	Software Technical Advisory Group
SVG	Supplier Volume Allocation Group (<i>Panel Committee</i>)

External links

A summary of all hyperlinks used in this document are listed in the table below.

All external documents and URL links listed are correct as of the date of this document.

External Links		
Page(s)	Description	URL
3	CP1436 page on the ELEXON website	https://www.elexon.co.uk/change-proposal/cp1436/