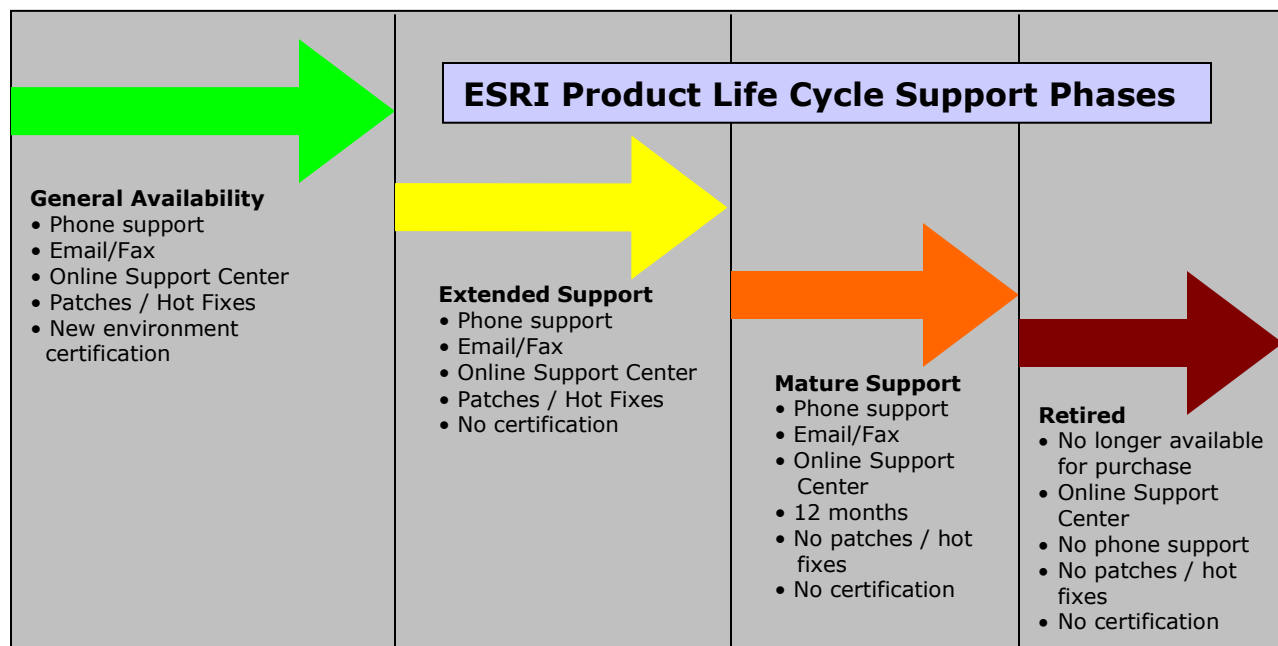**ESRI Product Life Cycle Support Policy**
The Product Life Cycle Support Policy is designed to help communicate to ESRI users the technical support resources available during a product's life span and to provide advanced notification of planned changes to available support options. This document outlines the 4 different Support phases of ESRI's Product Life Cycle. This information is intended to help you develop your product plans including migration and transition strategies with the knowledge and understanding of our Product Life Cycle Support plans. It replaces the previous support policy of "2 releases back" (n+2).

Note: The Product Life Cycle Support Policy does not impact a user's right or ability to use any of the software products, it only applies to support availability.

Product Life Cycle Support Phases and Definitions
 ESRI Product Life Cycle Support Policy has 4 phases:
1. General Availability
2. Extended Support
3. Mature Support
4. Retired

ESRI Product Life Cycle Support Phases

General Availability
- Phone support
- Email/Fax
- Online Support Center
- Patches / Hot Fixes
- New environment certification

Extended Support
- Phone support
- Email/Fax
- Online Support Center
- Patches / Hot Fixes
- No certification

Mature Support
- Phone support
- Email/Fax
- Online Support Center
- 12 months
- No patches / hot fixes
- No certification

Retired
- No longer available for purchase
- Online Support Center
- No phone support
- No patches / hot fixes
- No certification

1. General Availability Phase:
A product is in General Availability phase as soon as it is released to ship. General Availability products are the currently shipping products. General Availability products are fully supported. Support includes all the support options and programs currently available (e.g., Primary and Secondary Support, Premium Support, Developer Support, etc.).

Support includes:
- Phone support between 5:00AM and 5:00PM (PST) Monday through Friday - US only. (International users need to contact their local distributors)
- 24x7 fax and email request
- Online Support Center access – knowledge base, supported environment, downloads and discussion forums
- Software patches and hot fixes when warranted
- New environment certification – when a major new release of an operating system, database, or web server is released during the General Availability phase of an ESRI product, ESRI will test this new environment with the General Availability release and provide test result information on its Online Support Center.

We encourage users to begin all new projects with General Availability products and to migrate existing application to these products as soon as possible.

2. Extended Support Phase:
The Extended Support phase usually starts for a product previously in the General Availability phase 3 months after a new major release of the product becomes generally available. For example, ArcGIS 9.2 transitioned to the Extended Support Phase 3 months after ArcGIS 9.3 started shipping. The 3 months overlap takes into account the shipping time for a new release. It takes about 3 months for the majority of our users worldwide to receive a new release.

Once a product enters Extended Support, a user can expect the following support:
- Phone support between 5:00AM and 5:00PM (PST) Monday through Friday - US only. (International users need to contact their local distributors)
- 24x7 fax and email request
- Online support center access – knowledge base, supported environment, downloads, and discussion forums
- Software patches and hot fixes when warranted

ESRI will not certify new environments for products in this Extended Support phase. If an existing customer is contemplating migrating their environment then they should also consider an ESRI product migration as appropriate. Customers with products in the Extended Support phase are encouraged to start planning their migration to a General Availability product.

3. Mature Support phase:
The Mature Support phase starts when the Extended Support Phase ends. As a rule, an Extended Support phase product moves to the Mature Support phase when a new major release of the product becomes available. For example, now that ArcGIS 9.3 is shipping and in General Availability, ArcGIS 9.2 is now in Extended Support and the ArcGIS 9.1 releases are now in the Mature Support phase. This general rule does not apply to all products. In particular, products that do not have frequent updates (e.g., PC ArcInfo) may enter the Mature Support phase even when no new version has been released.

Once a product enters Mature Support, a user can expect the following support:
- Phone support between 5:00AM and 5:00PM (PST) Monday through Friday - US only. (International users need to contact their local distributors)
- 24x7 fax and email request

- Online Support Center access – knowledge base, supported environment, downloads, and discussion forums

ESRI will not provide any further Patches and hot fixes for products that have reached the Mature Support phase. New environments will not be certified for Mature Support phase.

The Mature Support phase will last 12 months from date of announcement unless otherwise statement at announcement time to provide users with enough time to migrate their environment. Customers with Mature Support products should be actively migrating their applications to General Availability products.

4. Retired phase:
After 12 months in the Mature Support phase or at the time previously announced, a product will be retired and enter the Retired phase.

Once a product enters the Retired phase, the product will no longer be available for purchase and users will only have access to very limited support in the form of the Online Support Center:

- Online support center access – knowledge base, supported environment, downloads and discussion forums

Although the online information will remain available to users, this information will not be updated or kept up to date. Users will be able to browse existing documents. Email requests posted through the Online Support Center will not be answered.

Users will no longer have access to technical support through direct phone, fax, or email request. No new patches or hot fixes will be available and ESRI will not certify any new environment. Typically, older products in the Retired phase will not work correctly under new environments. ESRI will not attempt to determine whether a Retired product will work in a new environment or to actually make it work in a new environment.

Announcing Transition
ESRI will announce Product Life Cycle Support transitions on its Online Support Center. At each new release of a product, ESRI will re-evaluate the Life Cycle phase of the product's previous versions and will announce the status of the previous versions in the "Product Life Cycle" section of the Online Support Center web site. ESRI may also announce transitions outside of a specific release event.

Getting the Life Cycle Support status for each ESRI products
The Life Cycle Support status for each of the ESRI software products can be found at
http://support.esri.com/index.cfm?fa=knowledgebase.productLifeCycles.gateway