



Readiness FOR RELEASE 11i/ EXTENDED SUPPORT

The Readiness for Release 11i/ Extended Support Survey was developed by the Oracle Applications Users Group (OAUG) to uncover areas where OAUG members may benefit from additional information and/or next-step guidelines and approaches for preparing for the expiration of the Premier Support window for Oracle E-Business Suite Applications (EBS) Release 11i. The Readiness for Release 11i/ Extended Support Survey closed on November 30, 2010, with 226 completed surveys.

As Premier Support for Oracle E-Business Suite (EBS) 11.5.10.2 has expired and the Extended Support window begins, a new set of minimum, baseline application code and database object requirements, mandated by Oracle, goes into effect. The effort to apply these mandatory minimum patch baseline requirements may have a significant impact on customers' organizations, depending on how current the technical and functional components of the E-Business Suite of Applications are. The ramifications for both functional and technical team testing as well as ongoing operations and maintenance can be significant.

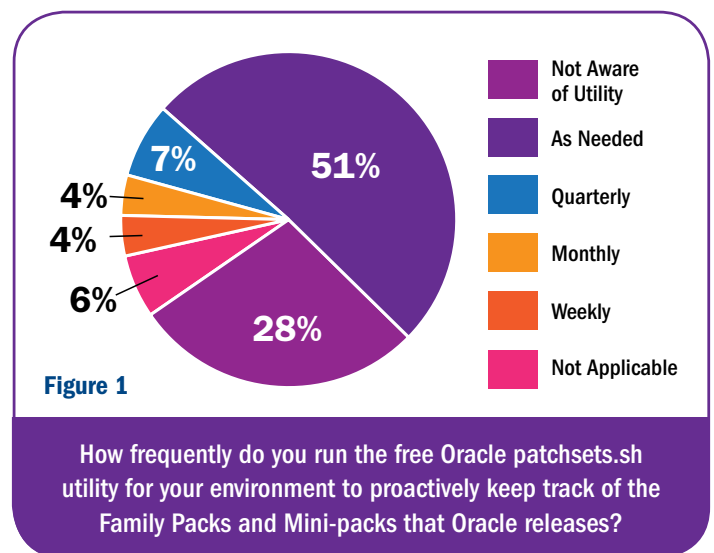
The results of this survey underscore the fact that many Oracle EBS Release 11i customers are unaware of the options and requirements for staying on Release 11i past the end of Premier Support and are thus unprepared for the work effort necessary to reach current, mandatory patch levels, which jeopardizes their organization's continued access to current and accurate Oracle Support bug fixes and patches.

The survey also shows that while many customers wish to achieve the mandatory minimum patch baseline requirements, their ability to reach compliance is hampered by lack of information, time or resources or a combination of all three. Some customers may only be able to focus on high-priority patching efforts, forcing them to either delay or totally opt out of achieving full compliance while waiting to encounter a new issue. While this approach

may be ideal for very mature, stable environments with no plans to implement new features or functionality, the risk to the business can be significant if an issue is encountered and a full "patch current" exercise must be undertaken.

Use of Oracle Patching Tools

Figure 1 shows that just over half (51%) of survey respondents are running the free Oracle utility, patchsets.sh, but only on an as-needed basis to keep track of high-level Family Packs and Mini-packs that Oracle releases. However, 28% of all Oracle EBS Release 11i respondents



Oracle Comment from Oracle Global Customer Support

Oracle acknowledges that planning and deploying an upgrade from a point release such as 11.5.10.2 to Release 12.x is an effort that requires careful planning, time and resources. Oracle continues to promote and highlight resources available to our valued E-Business Suite customers to help to plan the upgrade to R12.1.x for part of their software maintenance strategy.

By receiving customer feedback such as that contained in the survey and through our direct communications with customers, we are actively addressing our customers' concerns by updating and enhancing our upgrade and migration content, as well as enhancing our patching utility tools such as Patch Wizard, which are all available from My Oracle Support. In addition, we are proactively planning timely communications to highlight future release time lines and any associated requirements to assist our EBS customers in future planning.

We encourage all our customers to share within their organizations Oracle communications related to your Oracle systems and to take time to regularly review information to assist with planning for upgrades. Visit www.MyOracleSupport.com to access relevant documentation and tools, including:

- [Doc ID 250.1 – Oracle Support Upgrade Advisors](#)
- [Doc ID 444.1 – E-Business Suite Product Information Center Index](#)
- [Doc ID 806593.1 – Oracle E-Business Suite Release 12.1 Information Center](#)

If you need any help/training for any of the topics above, please go to the Support Training Community (at <https://communities.oracle.com>) and request help by creating a new discussion thread, or contact one of the following Global Customer Advocacy managers directly to set up a session:

Andre Silveira – LAD (andre.silveira@oracle.com)
Joe Sainz – EMEA (jose.sainz@oracle.com)
David Salmo – JAPAC (david.salmo@oracle.com)
Dave Warhoe – NA (david.warhoe@oracle.com)

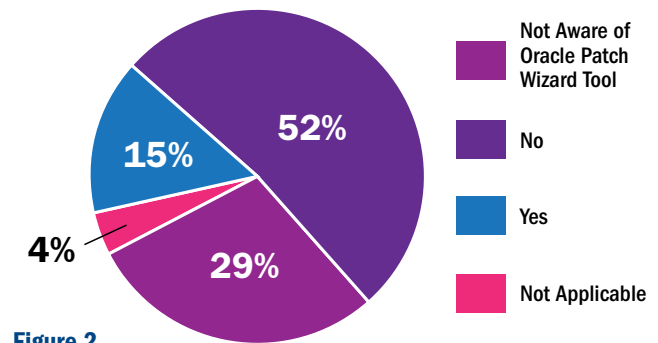


Figure 2

Have you been using the free Oracle Patch Wizard tool in conjunction with the Patch Information Bundle (PIB) which is updated nightly by Oracle?

indicate that they are not aware of the availability of the Oracle patchsets.sh even though the utility has existed since Release 10 of the E-Business Suite of Applications (late 1990s).

Comments for this question provided by survey respondents highlight concerns about the work effort and time associated with patching. Some respondents reported using the Oracle Applications Manager (OAM) Patch Wizard as an alternative to patchsets.sh.

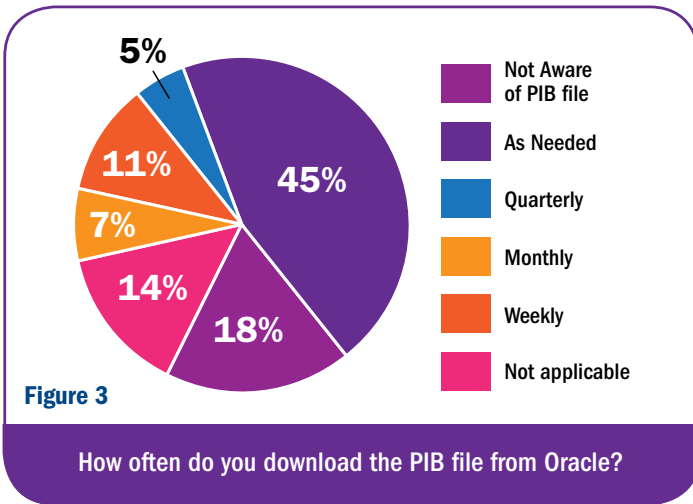
- *“Patching requires integration testing and months of fixing the new bugs introduced so we cannot afford the time and resources.”*
- *“Per Oracle Support: ‘Customers should be using OAM patch wizard/history instead of patchsets.sh.’”*
- *“What is the need for the utility when you can use Patch Wizard?”*
- *“We run it as needed but not necessarily to keep track of where we are. But if we are required to upgrade to next family pack level, then during that process we run this report which shows baseline, current and available patchset level.”*
- *“We are using the patch wizard.”*

Slightly more than half (52%) of respondents report that they are not using the free Oracle Patch Wizard tool in conjunction with the Patch Information Bundle (PIB) file which would result in high-priority and critical patch recommendations for their specific environment configuration, and 29% report that they are not aware of this tool, as shown in **Figure 2**.

One respondent's comment suggested that the OAUG should provide important information like this to help members be aware of relevant tools.

- *“I am not aware of this tool but the DBAs might be. I would like to have such information available through OAUG so the users and IT support are aware of it.”*

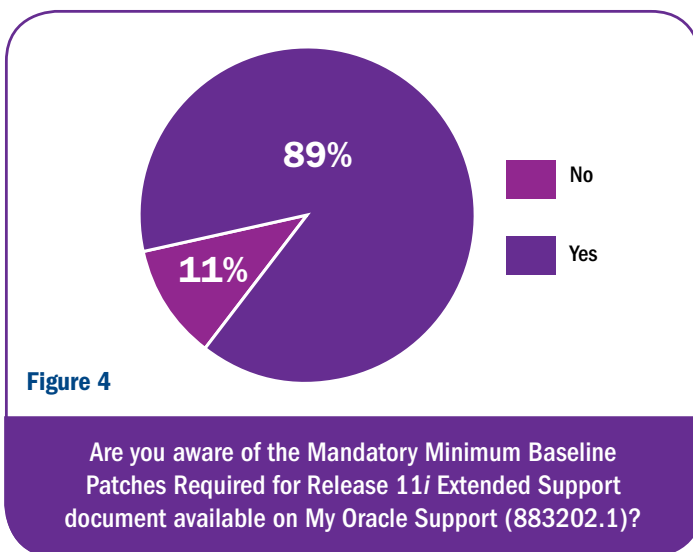
Of those reporting that they are using the Oracle Patch Wizard tool, 45% report that they download the PIB file on an as needed basis, rather than as part of a weekly, monthly or quarterly process, which indicates that many do not understand that this file is updated nightly by Oracle with all high-priority and critical patch fixes. See **Figure 3**.



Awareness of Mandatory Minimum Baseline Patches Required for Release 11i Extended Support Document (883202.1)

The majority of survey respondents reported that they are aware of the Mandatory Minimum Baseline Patches Required for Release 11i Extended Support document (883202.1) and have passed that information on to their technical and functional teams. See **Figures 4 and 5**.

Some respondents indicated that functional users have either not been informed or have only been



provided with basic information on this issue.

- *“Technical yes, functional no.”*
- *“Technical team is aware, functional team only at a high level.”*

Running the New Patch Wizard Tool

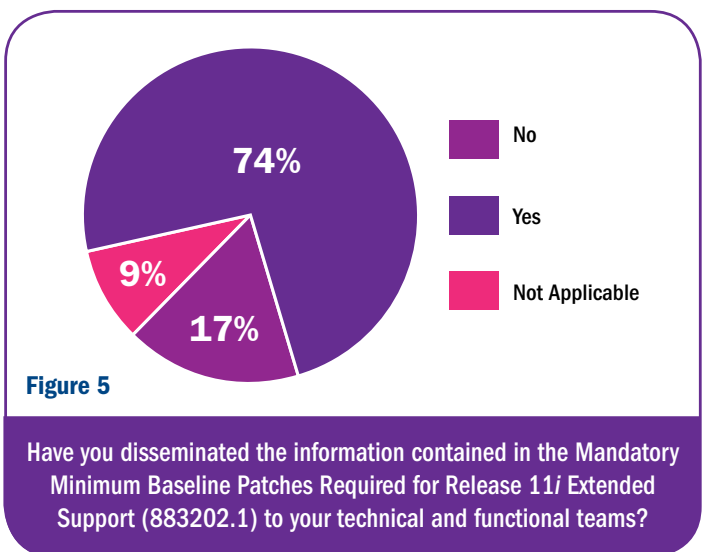
As shown in **Figure 6** on the next page, the majority of respondents (76%) are either not running the new Patch Wizard tool (released September 2010), which now includes the patch requirements outlined in 883202.1, or are not aware of the changes to the Patch Wizard.

Some respondents reported difficulty in using the new Patch Wizard tool or expressed concern about disrupting a current, working environment.

- *“It has issues, don’t report like doc say’s.”*
- *“We have tried to run the new tool but there is a bug in the HP version.”*
- *“Not willing to break a working 11.5.10.2 version to keep the very poor support.”*

When asked to identify the patch impact analysis method they plan to use in their environments, the majority of respondents reported that the process and the effort is largely a manual endeavor.

- *“It was a manual effort to review each of the minimum baseline patches against our applied patches. If the patch wizard was made available sooner, we may have used it.”*
- *“We currently use Quest STAT ACM for impact analysis. We also manually gather impact information from Readme and other Metalink documentation.”*



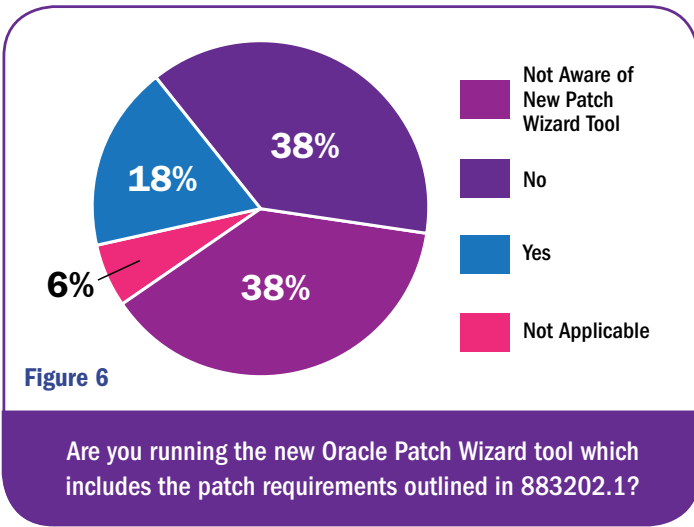


Figure 6

Are you running the new Oracle Patch Wizard tool which includes the patch requirements outlined in 883202.1?

- *"We went through the list manually and have applied all the mandatory patches."*
- *"Manually reviewed the patch files and applied to test environment prior to production."*
- *"Very Manual. We read all the documents and consult with Technical team for the impact."*
- *"Used old patch wizard tool combined with old fashioned manual review of patch readmes to create a set of merged patches. Running the upgrade as I complete this survey."*
- *"Manually collect/install/confirm we are on the patchsets required by note: 883202.1."*
- *"None – Manual."*
- *"Figured it out the hard way . . ."*
- *"We are using a manual time consuming process. Our DBAs have compared our production environment against the baseline patch set distributed by Oracle and discovered that we need to apply 30 patches to be in compliance. 22 of the patches may be applied to our environment with no changes and 8 patches are requiring us to retrofit custom code changes. All in all this is going to require us to conduct a great deal of integration and verification testing and it will derail other projects if we try to apply all of the patches at one time."*
- *"We use patchsets.sh plus manual review. Our primary focus was on the minimum technology baseline, which we will meet in November 2010. Product patches will be reviewed for the coming months as needed."*
- *"Manual testing of all business processes."*
- *"Manual effort prior to the release of the patch wizard."*
- *"Manual analysis. Verify each required patch is installed."*
- *"Manually review the baseline document to determine the patches that need to be applied."*

- *"Old tech human evaluation."*
- *"Reviewing the minimum patch requirements document and manually verifying."*

Other comments included:

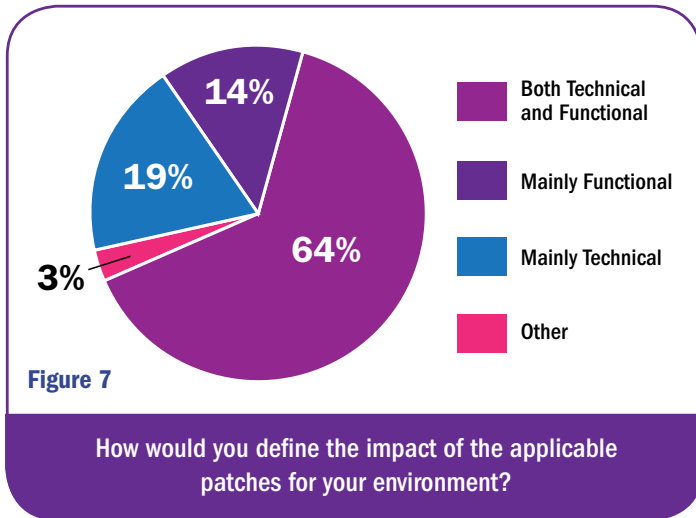
- *"I've sternly warned my organization about the upcoming minimum patch requirements. However, with considerable pain that applying said patches would cause in combination with the sharp decline in the quality of Oracle Support, our Organization has opted to not even try to meet this goal. There was a time when the hazard involved with losing Oracle Support was considerable. Today, the overwhelming response to that is, "So what. Oracle doesn't support us now."*
- *"We are running thousands of test cases."*
- *"We are evaluating whether or not we will even comply with Oracle's requirement since their support is so bad anyway."*
- *"Steven Chan's blog as well as the Metalink documents which exist regarding technical and functional patches."*
- *"Patch impact analysis using Patch Wizard in OAM."*
- *"Running base 11.5.10.2 with a few additional patches. Had plan to compare requirements against info in the patch regarding Family Packs Levels and one-off patches applied."*
- *"Getting validated by Oracle Customer Support."*
- *"Patch impact analysis method? What is that?"*
- *"We test on non-prod instance first."*
- *"I have started applying the baseline patches, but there are so many that I am afraid to apply so many patches on the Prod instance as the impact may be catastrophic."*

Most respondents (64%) report the impact of applicable patches as both technical and functional in their environments. See **Figure 7**.

Preparing to Meet the Minimum Patch Baseline Requirements

As shown in **Figure 8**, most respondents (78%) report that they are not using test scripting tools or creating manual regressions test scripts or are not aware that these types of tools exist.

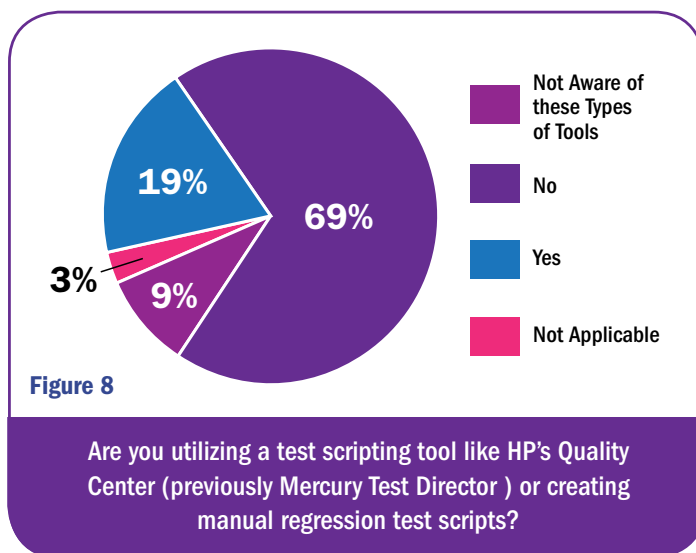
Asked to share how many patches will have to be applied to meet the requirements outlined in 883202.1, respondents reported a wide range – from zero to as many as 450. Most respondents reported that they will be applying approximately 5 – 15 patches. Many also reported that they are still researching and do not yet know how many patches will be required.



Similarly, asked to share the estimated effort in person hours or days, including regression testing, for their organizations to meet the minimum patch baseline requirements, respondents reported a very wide range – from one day to more than one year depending on the complexity of the environment, level of customization and resource availability along with existing business needs.

Comments included:

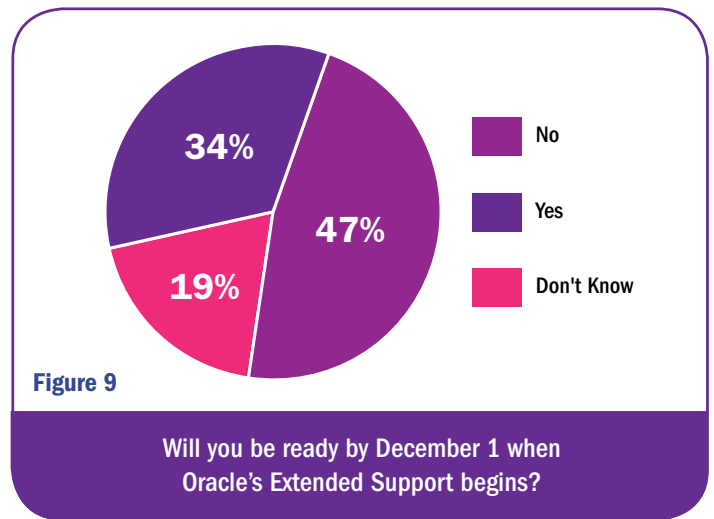
- *“Hard to say because we did other EBS work simultaneously, but I’ll guess 750 – 1000 hours.”*
- *“90 days elapsed over 500 man days effort.”*
- *“Undetermined at this time but it will be months not days.”*
- *“6 months due to custom extensions.”*
- *“6500 person-hours.”*
- *“Started in May, completing in January. 9 months total.”*



- *“4 weeks (1 week Dev, 2-3 week end to end UAT).”*
- *“6 month effort to patch 20 production instances.”*
- *“2 months to get through the whole patch application and testing cycle.”*

Figure 9 shows that during the autumn of 2010 when respondents were completing this survey, only 34% indicated that they would be ready when Oracle’s Extended Support began on December 1, 2010. Nearly half (47%) said they would not be ready.

Many respondents reported that their organizations were still undecided or that there were still too many unknown factors to be able to give a more definitive answer.



- *“Too many patches are required. We are still analyzing impacts. 80 patches were not planned for and were not part of the work required to meet the demands of our business.”*
- *“Not sure yet. Depends on the issues encountered.”*
- *“Will be ready with technical patches but not functional patches.”*
- *“Still investigating impact.”*
- *“We plan to, but there is a significant amount of work both for technical resources and functional resources (for testing).”*
- *“We did not know the requirements to go to extended support.”*
- *“User testing is not happening fast enough.”*

Future Focus

While many respondents indicated that their organizations may not be ready for Extended Support on December 1, 2010, only (22%) say that they intend to skip the minimum requirements and simply wait for

Information, Resources and How the OAUG and Oracle Can Help

The OAUG highly recommends that companies still on EBS Release 11i start planning for Release 12. For some organizations, the benefits from enhancements in the new release are sufficient to justify the transition. In addition, customers on EBS R12 are better positioned to migrate to Fusion Applications. For customers remaining on EBS Release 11i, the challenges associated with upgrading must be weighed against the implications of the higher Extended Support fees that will go into effect in December 2011.

The OAUG does recognize that EBS Release 12.1 represents a major applications release and the associated upgrade should be treated as a major project. The upgrade must be preceded by appropriate up-front analysis, scoping and preparation.

The OAUG Customer Support Council meets monthly with representatives from Oracle Support to discuss challenges and concerns, review and test new support tools and procedures, and advocate to Oracle on behalf of the OAUG membership. The council provides members access to support-related information and tools via its Web page on oaug.org. Questions or requests may be directed to the OAUG Customer Support Council via e-mail sent to support@oaug.com.

Oracle's Steven Chan, Senior Director, Technology Adoption Programs Development, maintains the definitive EBS technical blog about support-related timelines, a summary of support levels, minimum baseline patch requirements, related articles and discussions. His blog is available at <http://blogs.oracle.com/stevenChan/>.

For EBS R12 customers transitioning from Premier Support to Extended Support on February 1, 2012, Steven Chan's December 14, 2010, blog post contains helpful information for preparing for the expiration of the Premier Support. The blog post is available via <http://bit.ly/frbhf>.

For additional information about Oracle Support, click on the Support tab from www.oracle.com.
John Stouffer, Mark C. Clark and Patrick Gresham contributed to this executive summary.

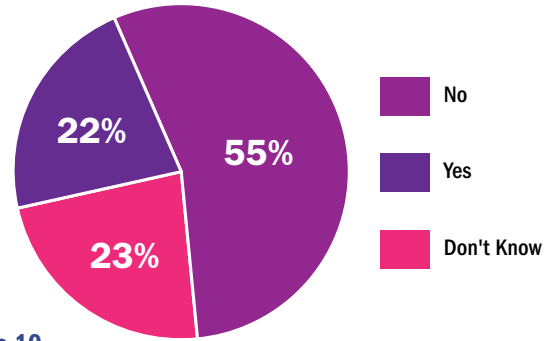


Figure 10

Are you going to skip the minimum requirements and wait for something to break before you patch your environment?

something to break before patching their environments. The majority (55%) report that they do not intend to skip the minimum requirements. See **Figure 10**.

A number of respondents expressed concern about the challenges associated with meeting the minimum patching requirements due to internal staffing or resource constraints in combination with the significant work effort required. While many wish to bring their environments into compliance, the reality is that many may have to focus on the high-priority efforts and either delay or totally opt out of achieving full compliance. Comments included:

- *"Negotiating with Oracle to allow us to focus our efforts on R12 upgrade instead."*
- *"We haven't determined if we will apply all patches or a subset of patches."*
- *"May only patch higher-priority areas vs. all of them."*
- *"We don't have the staffing or resources to keep up."*
- *"Won't know until we see what the requirements are; if significant, will wait until something breaks."*
- *"The plan is to get to the minimum requirements, but it won't be by December 1." 🌐*

