Verify Direct Upgrade Path for FMC 7.0.x to 7.4.x and CSF 3105 FTD Compatibility

Contents

Issue

An organization operating a Firewall Management Center (FMC) on version 7.0.9 managing multiple Firewall Threat Defense (FTD) devices needs guidance on the recommended upgrade path. The environment consists of FPR2100 devices and FPR1000 devices running FTD version 7.0.8.1. Additionally, the plan is to register to FMC a Cisco Secure Firewall (CSF) 3105 device running FTD software.

The organization requires clarification on:

- Whether a direct upgrade from FMC version 7.0.9 to 7.4.7 is supported or if an intermediate upgrade to version 7.2 is necessary.
- What is the minimum supported FTD version for 3105.

Environment

- FMC 1600 running version 7.0.9.
- Firepower 2100 appliances running FTD version 7.0.8.1.
- Firepower 1000 appliances running FTD version 7.0.8.1.
- 3105 appliance running FTD.

Resolution

The upgrade path verification for FMC and FTD devices involves understanding supported upgrade hops and FMC-to-device version compatibility requirements. These resolution addresses each specific concern:

FMC Direct Upgrade Path from 7.0.9 to 7.4.7

Cisco's upgrade matrix for the 7.4 train confirms that version 7.0 to 7.4 is a supported direct upgrade path. Therefore, upgrading FMC from version 7.0.9 to 7.4.x is supported without requiring an intermediate upgrade to version 7.2.x. The direct upgrade path eliminates the need for a staged approach through version 7.2.

Mixed Version Compatibility Between FMC and FTD Devices

The FMC compatibility guide indicates that FMC version 7.4 can manage FTD devices running the oldest supported version of 7.0. This means that FMC version 7.4.7 can successfully manage existing FTD devices running version 7.0.8.1 without requiring immediate upgrades of those devices. This compatibility allows for a phased approach where the FMC is upgraded first, followed by selective device upgrades based on operational requirements.

Secure Firewall 3105 Version Requirements

The Threat Defense compatibility guide specifies that Secure Firewall 3105 appliances require a minimum FTD version of 7.3.x and do not support FTD version 7.0.x. Since the FMC is upgraded to 7.4.7, the new 3105 appliance must be reimaged to the 7.3.x or 7.4.x version (< 7.4.7) before FMC registration. This constraint means that while existing FPR2100 and FPR1000 devices can remain on version 7.0.8, the new 3105 must run version 7.4.7 or lower.

Pre-Upgrade Safety Procedures

Before initiating major upgrades, these safety procedures are critical:

- Create off-box backups of the FMC and managed devices (whenever possible).
- Execute the Readiness Check feature in FMC for the target upgrade package before beginning the upgrade process.
- Verify hardware compatibility and software version requirements for all devices in the deployment.

For additional details check the Cisco Secure Firewall Threat Defense Upgrade Guide for Management Center guide.

Recommended Upgrade Sequence

Step 1: Upgrade the FMC from version 7.0.9 to 7.4.7.

Step 2: Reimage and bootstrap the new Secure Firewall 3105 with FTD version 7.3.x or 7.4.x (up to a version that is less or equal to FMC).

Step 3: Register the 3105 appliance to the upgraded FMC.

Step 4: Optionally upgrade existing FPR2100 and FPR1000 devices to version 7.4.7 based on operational requirements, or maintain them on version 7.0.8.1 for mixed-version operation.

Cause

The need for upgrade path verification arises from the introduction of newer hardware platforms that require minimum software versions higher than legacy deployments. The Secure Firewall 3105 platform's requirement for FTD version 7.3.x or higher creates a compatibility constraint that necessitates careful planning when integrating with existing FMC and FTD infrastructure running older software versions. Understanding supported upgrade hops and version compatibility matrices is essential for maintaining operational continuity while incorporating new security appliances.

Related Content

- Cisco Secure Firewall Management Center Upgrade Guide
- Cisco Secure Firewall Management Center Compatibility Guide
- Cisco Secure Firewall Threat Defense Compatibility Guide
- Cisco Technical Support & Downloads