

29/03/2021

Notice of Withdrawal of Software Support for Copperchase 16-bit Applications

It is standard industry practice for technology companies to withdraw support for older versions of software. We are constantly developing our software products to improve features and maintain conformance with published standards. We do this in line with regular customer feedback and consider new technology and changes in regulations as provided by ICAO and CAA. Using the latest software is the best way for us to help you run your operations effectively. However, we do appreciate that you have made a significant investment in Copperchase systems and these systems need to provide a return over a period.

The software and technology industries are constantly on the march forward, adding new features and safeguards to operating systems, releasing new versions and patches, often at an alarming rate. We have the task of trying to keep up with this advancement whilst still offering support for older products that run on dated and often obsolete platforms.

Copperchase products which use ATC messaging such as AFGATE, AFTERM, FDMS/DSM and ATIS have been in use at Air Traffic Service Units now for over 20 years. Originating as Microsoft DOS applications in the mid-1990s they made the functional transition to the early 16-bit Microsoft Windows environment, and over time transitioned to 32-bit. Microsoft has already withdrawn support for both its 16-bit and 32-bit Windows operating systems, and we are now finding it a challenge to support these products going forward. We therefore give notice to our users of Copperchase legacy 16-bit applications that **on the 31st March 2024, we will be withdrawing Operational Technical Support**. Naturally, we have functional replacements for these products that will run on modern operating systems in the AFTN or the new AMHS environments. Giving 3 years notice of final termination of support will allow you time to plan and budget for the replacement of your applications.

This announcement does not mean that your software will stop working. Those with operational support contracts can continue to call upon the services of our support team for any problems encountered. Any issues that require software coding changes to the legacy 16-bit applications will not be possible and in this situation an upgrade solution will be offered. An example of such a situation is the ICAO introduced new Global Reporting Format (GRF) for reporting runway state which is scheduled for November 2021. If you need to send the new GRF messages for runway state reporting then, as a minimum, you may need to upgrade to our new AMHSTERM software message client (AFTN or AMHS mode).

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Summary:

1. **On 31st March 2024**

Operational technical support will be withdrawn for the following Copperchase legacy applications:

- AFGATE – Copperchase AFTN Gateway
- AFTERM – Copperchase AFTN Terminal

This may also affect the following Copperchase products that use ATC messaging functionality provided by the Copperchase AFTERM/AFGATE:

- ATIS – Copperchase Automatic Terminal Information System
- FDMS – Copperchase Flight Data Management System
- DSM – Copperchase Departure Slot Monitor
- METSYS – Copperchase Meteorological System.

2. Due to technical restrictions we cannot provide any future software changes to the 16-bit applications with immediate effect.
3. Functional replacements for the legacy products are available from Copperchase that will operate on commercially obtainable operating systems.
4. It may be possible to offer limited support for 32-bit Windows 7 and Windows Server 2008 systems for an additional 18 months subject to not requiring any new hardware. If your PC or Server breaks, compatible hardware will be difficult to source and supply of replacement systems will depend on availability of refurbished hardware.

Copperchase have already withdrawn support for **Windows XP** and **Windows Server 2003** over 18 months ago. If you have systems using these versions, you may need to assess them for Cyber Security vulnerabilities. If the system is isolated and not (ever) connected to the public internet the security risk may be acceptable to you, however Copperchase recommends moving over to newer, supported, operating systems.

New Copperchase deployments will support 64-bit **Windows 10** and **Windows Server 2012** and later.

Between now and the cessation of support in 3 years' time, please do not hesitate to contact the Copperchase Support Team to discuss your options:

support@copperchase.co.uk