

Installing and Configuring vCenter Support Assistant

vCenter Support Assistant 6.0.2

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Installing and Configuring vCenter Support Assistant

Installing and Configuring vCenter Support Assistant provides information about the VMware® vCenter™ Support Assistant™ system requirements and instructions for installing vCenter Support Assistant. It also describes the configuration and update process.

Intended Audience

This information is intended for anyone who wants to install, configure, or update vCenter Support Assistant. It is written for VMware® vSphere® administrators.

VMware Technical Publications Glossary

VMware Technical Publications provides a glossary of terms that might be unfamiliar to you. For definitions of terms as they are used in VMware technical documentation, go to <http://www.vmware.com/support/pubs>.

vCenter Support Assistant Overview

VMware® vCenter™ Support Assistant™ is a VMware® vCenter Server™ plug-in that collects diagnostic data about your VMware® vSphere® environment, and alerts you to problems in your virtual environment before they cause outages.

Proactive Support

Proactive Support main functions include:

- Sends proactive alerts and recommended fixes. Automatic notifications within vCenter Server make you aware of problems within your environment and recommend solutions.
- Transmits configuration and usage data automatically. You can configure vCenter Support Assistant to collect configuration and usage data, regularly transmit them to VMware, and automatically match them to a dynamic list of known problems. vCenter Support Assistant sends the collected configuration and usage data directly and securely to VMware without third party interaction.
- Configures data collection times. You can set the collection frequency and transmission time to minimize impact on your system's performance.
- Sends monthly status emails. Monthly emails summarize the status of problems within your environment so that you can track problems over time.

Reactive Support

Reactive Support main functions include:

- Allows you to file support requests from vSphere Web Client. You can create and submit support requests for any vSphere product for which you have purchased VMware support.

NOTE You can file support requests by using vCenter Support Assistant, if you have purchased support directly from VMware.

- Collects and attaches diagnostic information to support requests. You can generate support bundles for vCenter Server and vSphere and automatically attach them and other files to your support requests.
- Allows you to view existing support requests. You can view the status of your existing support requests, add comments for VMware Technical Support, view email exchanges, and upload additional diagnostic data or files.

IMPORTANT Do not use vCenter Support Assistant in situations where support data might contain highly confidential or highly sensitive information. Such information includes, but is not limited to credit card information, financial information, protected health information, government classified information, or any other regulated data.

vCenter Support Assistant System Requirements

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To install vCenter Support Assistant, ensure your system meets the software and hardware requirements.

Software Requirements

- vCenter Server 5.1 or later.
- Adobe Flash Player must be installed on the machine running vSphere Client. You need it for the vCenter Support Assistant configuration UI. If Adobe Flash is not installed already, you might be prompted to install it.

Hardware Requirements

You can run vCenter Support Assistant on any system that meets the minimum hardware requirements.

Hardware requirements for vCenter Support Assistant vary depending on the number of vCenter Server instances and ESXi hosts for which vCenter Support Assistant provides assistance.

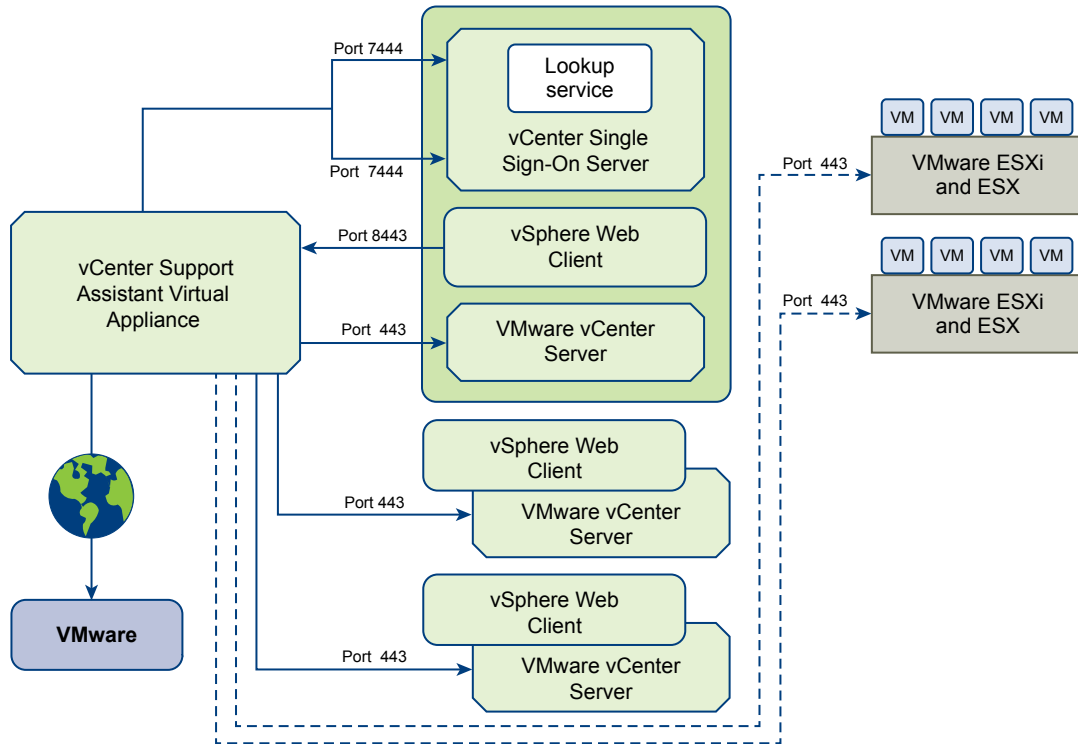
Table 2-1. Minimum Hardware Requirements

Hardware	Requirements
Number of vCPUs	2
vRAM	2GB
Disk space	Minimum 65GB. The disk space is calculated by the equation: Disk space = 50GB + number of vCenter Server instances * 300MB + number of ESXi hosts * 50MB

Networking Requirements

vCenter Support Assistant uses network connections to collect and transfer support information securely. The diagram shows the default networking connections.

Figure 2-1. Default Networking Connections



You can use two main vCenter Support Assistant features, proactive and reactive support, together or separately.

Table 2-2. Default Connectivity Settings for Proactive Support

Machine	Connection To	Connection Type	Protocol	Port
vSphere Web Client	vCenter Support Assistant appliance	Local network connection	HTTPS	8443
vCenter Support Assistant appliance	vCenter Server Lookup Service, vCenter Single Sign-On Security Token Service, vCenter Single Sign-On Administration Service	Local network connection	HTTPS	7444
vCenter Support Assistant appliance	vCenter Server and ESX/ESXi hosts that you want to collect data from	Local network connection	HTTPS	443
vCenter Support Assistant appliance	vcsa.vmware.com/*	Internet connection	HTTPS	443
	vmware.com	Internet connection	HTTP	80
	https://phtransfer.vmware.com/*	Internet connection	HTTPS	443

Table 2-3. Default Connectivity Settings for Reactive Support

Machine	Connection To	Connection Type	Protocol	Port
vSphere Web Client	vCenter Support Assistant	Local network connection	HTTPS	8443
vCenter Support Assistant appliance	vCenter Server Lookup Service, vCenter Single Sign-On Security Token Service, vCenter Single Sign-On Administration Service	Local network connection	HTTPS	7444
vCenter Support Assistant appliance	vCenter Server and ESX/ESXi hosts that you want to collect data from	Local network connection	HTTPS	443
vCenter Support Assistant appliance	https://vmware.com	Internet connection	HTTPS	443
	https://supportassistant.vmware.com/*	Internet connection	HTTPS	443
	ftpsite.vmware.com	Internet connection	FTP	21
	ftpsite.vmware.com/*	Internet connection	HTTPS	443

NOTE The tables contain the default port values and might not match your customized environment.

Typically, vCenter Server Lookup Service, vCenter Single Sign-On Security Token Service, and vCenter Single Sign-On Administration Service run on the vCenter Server machine. If for scalability or other reasons the services in your environment run on different machines, you must know the connection endpoints (machine and port number) used in your environment.

vCenter Support Assistant User Permissions

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During the installation process you must provide a Single Sign-On administrator credentials. vCenter Support Assistant requires those credentials to create a solution user, new Single Sign-On groups, and to perform a set of operations.

Solution User

vCenter Support Assistant creates a solution user during the installation. vCenter Support Assistant requires the solution user to work with the inventory objects you want to monitor.

During the installation vCenter Support Assistant creates a new role and assigns it to the solution user. The name of the role is Support Assistant service.



CAUTION Do not edit or delete the Support Assistant service role, the solution user or the assigned privileges. Doing so can make vCenter Support Assistant unusable.

The Support Assistant service role has the following privileges in vCenter Server:

- **Alarm.Create**
- **Alarm.Delete**
- **Global.Diagnostics**
- **Global.LogEvent**
- **Global.Licenses**
- **Host.Config.Network**

NOTE For details about each privilege, see the *vSphere API/SDK Documentation*.

Single Sign-On Groups

vCenter Support Assistant creates the `__Support_Assistant_Service__` group during the installation. This group contains the solution user.

For more information on Single Sign-On groups, see *vSphere Authentication with vCenter Single Sign-On*.

Installing vCenter Support Assistant

vCenter Support Assistant is distributed as a virtual appliance in Open Virtualization Appliance (OVA) format. You deploy the vCenter Support Assistant appliance by using the vSphere OVF deployment wizard.

An appliance is a preconfigured virtual machine that typically includes a preinstalled guest operating system and other software.

After you deploy the vCenter Support Assistant appliance, you can access the vCenter Support Assistant plug-in by using the vSphere Web Client.

1 [Install the Client Integration Plug-In](#) on page 15

The Client Integration Plug-in provides access to a virtual machine's console in the vSphere Web Client, and provides access to other vSphere infrastructure features. The Client Integration Plug-in also lets you log in to the vSphere Web Client by using Windows session credentials.

2 [Deploy the vCenter Support Assistant Appliance](#) on page 16

vCenter Support Assistant is distributed as a virtual appliance in OVA format that you can deploy by using the vSphere Web Client.

3 [Power On the vCenter Support Assistant Appliance and Open the Home Page](#) on page 17

To use the vCenter Support Assistant appliance, you must first power it on and get an IP address for the appliance.

4 [Provide Lookup Service Address and Review Certificate](#) on page 18

To establish connection to the lookup service server and review the lookup service certificate details, you must provide the lookup service address.

5 [Provide vCenter Single Sign-On Credentials](#) on page 18

To connect to vCenter Server, you must provide the vCenter Single Sign-On credentials for vCenter Support Assistant.

Install the Client Integration Plug-In

The Client Integration Plug-in provides access to a virtual machine's console in the vSphere Web Client, and provides access to other vSphere infrastructure features. The Client Integration Plug-in also lets you log in to the vSphere Web Client by using Windows session credentials.

You use the Client Integration Plug-in to deploy OVF or OVA templates and transfer files with the datastore browser. You can also use the Client Integration Plug-in to connect virtual devices that reside on a client computer to a virtual machine.

Install the Client Integration Plug-in only once to enable all the functionality the plug-in delivers. You must close the Web browser before installing the plug-in.

If you install the Client Integration Plug-in from an Internet Explorer browser, you must first disable Protected Mode and enable pop-up windows on your Web browser. Internet Explorer identifies the Client Integration Plug-in as being on the Internet instead of on the local intranet. In such cases, the plug-in is not installed correctly because Protected Mode is enabled for the Internet.

For information about supported browsers and operating systems, see the *vSphere Installation and Setup* documentation.

Watch the video "Installing the Client Integration Plug-In" for information about the Client Integration Plug-In:



Installing the Client Integration Plug-In

(http://link.brightcove.com/services/player/bcpid2296383276001?bctid=ref:video_client_plug_in)

Prerequisites

If you use Microsoft Internet Explorer, disable Protected Mode.

Procedure

- 1 In the vSphere Web Client, navigate to a link to download the Client Integration Plug-in.

Option	Description
vSphere Web Client login page	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a Open a Web browser and type the URL for the vSphere Web Client. b At the bottom of the vSphere Web Client login page, click Download Client Integration Plug-in. <p>NOTE If the Client Integration Plug-In is already installed on your system, you will not see the link to download the plug-in. If you uninstall the Client Integration Plug-In, the link to download it will display on the vSphere Web Client login page.</p>
OVF deployment wizard	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a Select a host in the inventory and select Actions > Deploy OVF Template. b Click Download Client Integration Plug-in.

- 2 If the browser blocks the installation either by issuing certificate errors or by running a pop-up blocker, follow the Help instructions for your browser to resolve the problem.

Deploy the vCenter Support Assistant Appliance

vCenter Support Assistant is distributed as a virtual appliance in OVA format that you can deploy by using the vSphere Web Client.

Procedure

- 1 Log in to the vSphere Web Client as an administrator.
- 2 In the vSphere Web Client, select an inventory object that is a valid parent object of a virtual machine, such as a datacenter, folder, cluster, resource pool, or host.
- 3 From the **Actions** menu, select **All vCenter Actions > Deploy OVF Template**.
- 4 Enter the path or the URL to the .ova file, and click **Next**.
- 5 Review the OVA details and click **Next**.
- 6 Read the EULA and click **Accept**, and then click **Next**.
- 7 In the Select name and folder step of the Deploy OVF Template wizard, specify the name and folder that the virtual machine will have when it is deployed at the target location.

The name must be unique within each vCenter Server virtual machine folder.

- 8 Select or search for a datacenter or folder for the virtual machine, and click **Next**.

- 9 In the Select Storage for OVF Template step of the wizard, select the disk format to store the virtual machine virtual disks.

Option	Description
Thick Provisioned Lazy Zeroed	Creates a virtual disk in a default thick format. Space required for the virtual disk is allocated when the virtual disk is created. Data remaining on the physical device is not erased during creation, but is zeroed out on demand at a later time on first write from the virtual machine.
Thick Provision Eager Zeroed	A type of thick virtual disk that supports clustering features such as Fault tolerance. Space required for the virtual disk is allocated at creation time. In contrast to the flat format, the data remaining on the physical device is zeroed out when the virtual disk is created. Creating disks in this format might take much longer than creating other types of disks.
Thin Provision	Use this format to save storage space. For the thin disk, you provision as much datastore space as the disk requires based on the value that you enter for the disk size. However, the thin disk starts small, and at first, uses only as much datastore space as the disk needs for its initial operations.

- 10 Select a datastore to store the deployed OVF template and click **Next**.

The configuration file and virtual disk files are stored on the datastore. Select a datastore large enough to accommodate the virtual machine and all associated virtual disk files.

- 11 In the Setup networks step of the wizard, select a Source network in the table and map it to a Destination network.

The **Source** column lists all networks that are defined in the OVF template. The Destination column contains a list of target networks.

- 12 Select the IP protocol, and click **Next**.

The vCenter Support Assistant .ova file is set up to allow network customization.

- 13 In the Customize template step of the wizard, customize the deployment properties, and click **Next**.

NOTE All required properties must have a valid value before you can continue. If you leave the fields empty, the wizard sets the Network configuration to DHCP. The DNS or DHCP must be able to resolve the host names of the Single Sign-On, vCenter Server, and ESXi host.

- 14 After reviewing your settings selections, select **Power on after deployment**, and click **Finish** to complete the wizard and deploy the template.

Power On the vCenter Support Assistant Appliance and Open the Home Page

To use the vCenter Support Assistant appliance, you must first power it on and get an IP address for the appliance.

Procedure

- 1 Log in to the vSphere Client as an administrator.
- 2 Right-click the vCenter Support Assistant appliance and select **Power > Power On**.
- 3 In the vSphere Client, on the **Summary** tab of the vCenter Support Assistant Appliance, view the IP address of the appliance.
- 4 In a Web browser, go to the IP address of the appliance.

https://vCenter_Support_Assistant_Appliance_IP_address

- 5 Log in to the vCenter Support Assistant appliance.
The default user name is **root** and the default password is **vmware**.
- 6 Read the privacy terms and conditions.
- 7 Select **I understand and consent to vCenter Support Assistant's Privacy Terms and Conditions above** and click **Next**.

Provide Lookup Service Address and Review Certificate

To establish connection to the lookup service server and review the lookup service certificate details, you must provide the lookup service address.

vCenter Support Assistant must know the location of the vCenter Server instances that it monitors. To get the list of the vCenter Server instances in your environment you must provide the vCenter Server lookup service address.

Procedure

- 1 In the **Lookup Service Address** text box, type the vCenter Lookup Service address.
You must provide the lookup service address to register vCenter Support Assistant components with vSphere.
For example, **https://vCenter_Server_IP:7444**.
vCenter Support Assistant establishes a connection to the server.
- 2 (Optional) Click **Show Details** to view the full certificate details and click **OK**.
- 3 Click **Next**.

Provide vCenter Single Sign-On Credentials

To connect to vCenter Server, you must provide the vCenter Single Sign-On credentials for vCenter Support Assistant.

vCenter Support Assistant has its own solution user, which vCenter Support Assistant uses to retrieve support information from the vCenter Server instances. To create the vCenter Single Sign-On solution user for vCenter Support Assistant you must provide vCenter Single Sign-On administrative credentials.

This action registers a new vCenter Single Sign-On solution user account for vCenter Support Assistant in vCenter Single Sign-On. For additional information on the solution user account for vCenter Support Assistant, see [Chapter 3, "vCenter Support Assistant User Permissions,"](#) on page 13.

Procedure

- 1 On the SSO Credentials page of the Install vCenter Support Assistant wizard, in the **SSO Administrator user name** and **Password** text boxes, provide the user name and password of the vCenter Single Sign-On administrator.
- 2 Click **Finish** to complete the vCenter Support Assistant installation .

What to do next

To use vCenter Support Assistant, you must configure it.

Configure vCenter Support Assistant

You must configure the vCenter Support Assistant appliance before you start using the vCenter Support Assistant plug-in.

The vCenter Support Assistant is divided in two parts. A vCenter Server plug-in and an appliance. You can configure vCenter Support Assistant appliance during the installation or after. The basic configuration is an optional part of the Install vCenter Support Assistant wizard.

Procedure

- 1 [Configure the Basic vCenter Support Assistant Settings](#) on page 19
To use vCenter Support Assistant you must configure the basic settings. You can change the configuration at any time.
- 2 [Configure vCenter Support Assistant Settings After Installation](#) on page 21
To use vCenter Support Assistant, you must configure it after you install the vCenter Support Assistant appliance.

Configure the Basic vCenter Support Assistant Settings

To use vCenter Support Assistant you must configure the basic settings. You can change the configuration at any time.

Procedure

- 1 [Authorize vCenter Server Instances](#) on page 20
You can configure vCenter Support Assistant to collect support information and receive vCenter Support Assistant alerts from selected vCenter Server instances.
- 2 [Configure Proxy Settings](#) on page 20
If you connect through a corporate firewall, you can configure the vCenter Support Assistant proxy settings.
- 3 [Subscribe for Monthly Email Report](#) on page 21
You can optionally provide your email address and subscribe to monthly vCenter Support Assistant email reports.

Authorize vCenter Server Instances

You can configure vCenter Support Assistant to collect support information and receive vCenter Support Assistant alerts from selected vCenter Server instances.

You must authorize vCenter Support Assistant to interact with the vCenter Server instances for several tasks:

- Generating support bundles
- Collecting configuration and usage data
- Creating and deleting alarms
- Triggering alarms
- Getting licensing information
- Querying for network information about ESXi hosts, for example, IP addresses

Procedure

- 1 In the **Default Administrator User Name** and **Default Administrator Password** text boxes, enter the user name and the password of the vCenter Server administrator.

In this context, default administrator credentials means that these credentials are used for all vCenter Server instances that you want to monitor, and that you must provide them once.
- 2 Select the vCenter Server instances to monitor.
- 3 (Optional) For each vCenter Server instance where the administrator user is different from the default administrator, provide the credentials in the **Administrator User Name** and the **Administrator Password** text boxes.
- 4 (Optional) Select the **Disable strict certificate checks** check box if you do not want to receive error messages when some of the vCenter Server instances use an invalid SSL certificate.

This selection impacts the vCenter Support Assistant connections to all vCenter Server instances and disables all certificate validation checks, such as host name verification and certificate expiry checks. The change is applied when you attempt to authorize the vCenter Server instances.
- 5 Click **Next**.

Configure Proxy Settings

If you connect through a corporate firewall, you can configure the vCenter Support Assistant proxy settings.

By default, the vCenter Support Assistant proxy configuration is disabled.

After you define a proxy server, you might decide to disable it. vCenter Support Assistant saves your configuration settings so that you can use them if you enable the proxy server again.

NOTE vCenter Support Assistant does not support NTLM proxy access authentication.

Prerequisites

Verify that you meet the vCenter Support Assistant networking connectivity requirements described in [Chapter 2, “vCenter Support Assistant System Requirements,”](#) on page 9.

Procedure

- 1 At the Proxy page of the installation wizard, select the **Use proxy server** check box and provide the details about your proxy settings.

- 2 Click **Test Connectivity** to verify the connection to and through the proxy server.
If the test fails, check whether your proxy allows you to connect to all points that vCenter Support Assistant uses.
- 3 Click **Next**.

Subscribe for Monthly Email Report

You can optionally provide your email address and subscribe to monthly vCenter Support Assistant email reports.

Email reports contain a summary of the configuration and usage data, fixed problems, alarms, and recommended updates. vCenter Support Assistant sends reports monthly or when important product updates are available. You can subscribe to the monthly email reports during the installation process.

Procedure

- 1 In the Provide Email Address page of the Installation wizard, in the **Email addresses, one per line** text box, enter the email addresses you want to subscribe to the monthly reports.
You can remove an existing email address to unsubscribe from the email report.
- 2 Click **Finish** to save the changes and exit the wizard.

Configure vCenter Support Assistant Settings After Installation

To use vCenter Support Assistant, you must configure it after you install the vCenter Support Assistant appliance.

To change the vCenter Support Assistant network setting, for example, to change the IP address, the DNS server, the hostname, the Default Gateway, or the Subnet Mask, use the **VA Settings** tab in the vCenter Support Assistant appliance. You must use the **VA Settings** tab to ensure that the changes are applied correctly and vCenter Support Assistant is properly configured.

- [Change Your vCenter Support Assistant Appliance Password](#) on page 21
You can change the password you used to log in to the vCenter Support Assistant appliance.
- [Replace Your SSL Certificate](#) on page 22
vCenter Support Assistant uses a self-signed certificate. You can change your SSL certificate according to your company policy for SSL certificates.
- [Configure Network Settings for the vCenter Support Assistant Appliance](#) on page 22
If you have deployed and configured your vCenter Support Assistant appliance by using the vSphere Web Client, vCenter Support Assistant displays the network settings that you defined during the deployment process. If you configured the vCenter Support Assistant appliance in a different way, for example from the Linux console of the appliance, you might receive an error. In such a case, you must configure the network settings after the vCenter Support Assistant appliance installation.

Change Your vCenter Support Assistant Appliance Password

You can change the password you used to log in to the vCenter Support Assistant appliance.

Procedure

- 1 In a Web browser, go to the IP address of the appliance.
- 2 Log in to the vCenter Support Assistant appliance.
- 3 Click the **VA Settings** tab.

- 4 Provide your current vCenter Support Assistant appliance password, type and confirm your new password, and click **Save**.

Replace Your SSL Certificate

vCenter Support Assistant uses a self-signed certificate. You can change your SSL certificate according to your company policy for SSL certificates.

Procedure

- 1 In a Web browser, go to the IP address of the appliance.
- 2 Log in to the vCenter Support Assistant appliance.
- 3 Click the **VA Settings** tab.
- 4 Under SSL Configuration, in the **Private key (.pem)** text box, click **Choose File**.
- 5 In the file browser window, navigate to the directory that contains your certificate, select the private key (*.pem) that matches the certificate chain, and click **Open**.
- 6 If your private key is protected by a password, in the **Key password** text box, type the password.
- 7 In the **Certificate chain (.pem, .p7b)** text box, click **Choose File** to select your certificate chain file.
- 8 In the file browser window, navigate to the directory that contains your certificate chain, select your SSL certificate chain (*.pem, *.p7b), and click **Open**.

NOTE If you attempt to add an expired certificate, a warning message states that you are not allowed to add the certificate.

- 9 Click **Apply** to apply the changes.

Configure Network Settings for the vCenter Support Assistant Appliance

If you have deployed and configured your vCenter Support Assistant appliance by using the vSphere Web Client, vCenter Support Assistant displays the network settings that you defined during the deployment process. If you configured the vCenter Support Assistant appliance in a different way, for example from the Linux console of the appliance, you might receive an error. In such a case, you must configure the network settings after the vCenter Support Assistant appliance installation.

Procedure

- 1 In a Web browser, go to the IP address of the appliance.
- 2 Log in with your user name and password.
- 3 In the **VA Settings** tab, under Network Configuration, provide the hostname, IPv4 default gateway, and DNS servers addresses.

If your network interface controllers are using DHCP, the Network Configuration is automatically populated.

- 4 For each network interface controller that uses a static IPv4 assignment, you must provide an IPv4 address and an IPv4 mask.
- 5 Click **Save**.

Test vCenter Support Assistant Network Connectivity

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After you configure the vCenter Support Assistant network connectivity settings, you can test the connections to ensure that all vCenter Support Assistant connections are properly working.

Procedure

- 1 In a Web browser, log in to vCenter Support Assistant.
- 2 Click the **Overview** tab.
- 3 In the Miscellaneous section, click **Test connectivity**.

A message displays the connectivity status.

Reinstall vCenter Support Assistant

Reinstall vCenter Support Assistant appliance to redirect it from one lookup service to another.

Procedure

- 1 Log in to the vCenter Support Assistant appliance.
- 2 On the **Overview** tab, under Summary click **Reinstall**.
- 3 Follow the steps of the installation procedure to complete the process.

What to do next

For information, see [“Provide Lookup Service Address and Review Certificate,”](#) on page 18.

Update vCenter Support Assistant

You can regularly check for available updates for vCenter Support Assistant and install them.

Procedure

- 1 In a Web browser, log in to vCenter Support Assistant appliance.
- 2 On the **VA Updates** tab, click the **Check updates** button.

A list of all available updates appears. If you have the latest version of the vCenter Support Assistant Appliance, a message states that no updates are available.

- 3 Click **Install Updates** to update vCenter Support Assistant.
- 4 Read the EULA and click **Accept** to install the updates.

Uninstall vCenter Support Assistant

You can remove the vCenter Support Assistant appliance configuration and all the changes vCenter Support Assistant made to your system.

Procedure

- 1 In a Web browser, log in to vCenter Support Assistant appliance.
- 2 Click the **Overview** tab.
- 3 In the Summary section, click **Uninstall**.

A warning message states that vCenter Support Assistant cannot function until you configure it again.

- 4 Click **OK**.

The uninstall process removes the vCenter Support Assistant authorizations to collect support information from the vCenter Server instances.

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