WinCC OA Archiving in a Nutshell

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Topics

- Archiving in WinCC OA: past, present and future
- Current architecture of WinCC OA archiving
- Retrieval of historical data from WinCC OA – available functions
- Quick tour of the Oracle schema
- Metadata history keeping and fwRDBAPI component

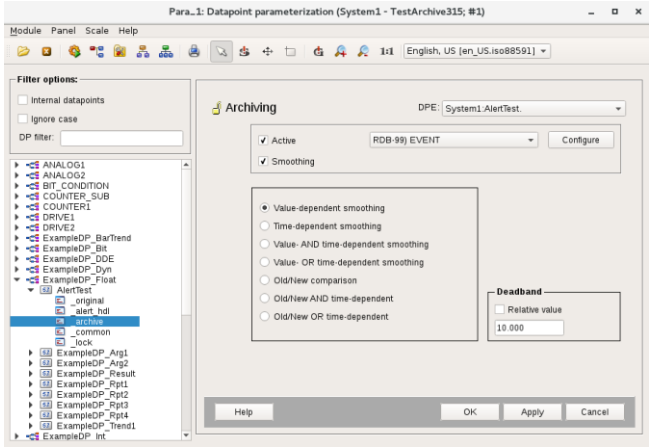
Archiving in WinCC OA

- Archiving of historical process values and alarms is one of the key functions of a SCADA system
  - Without it, the users can only see the current process snapshot

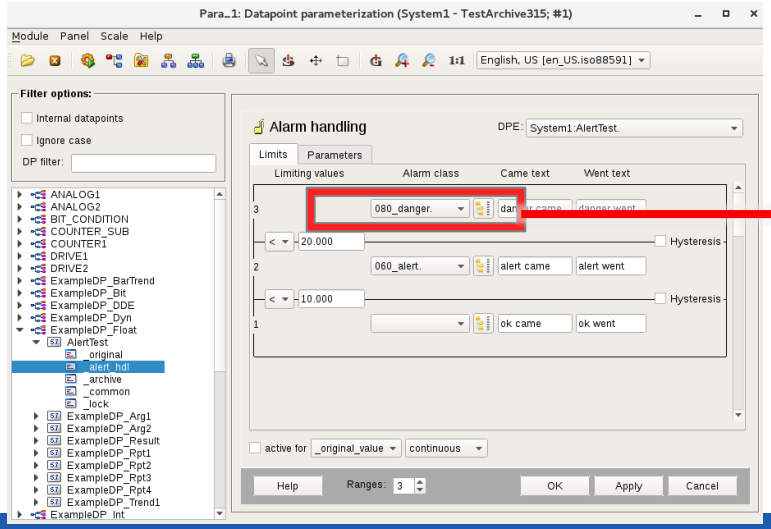
- In WinCC OA, archiving is performed by dedicated managers
  - In the past: Archive Manager (Database Manager for alarms)
  - Currently: RDB Archive Manager
  - In the future: NextGen Archiver Frontend Manager, communicating with various backends

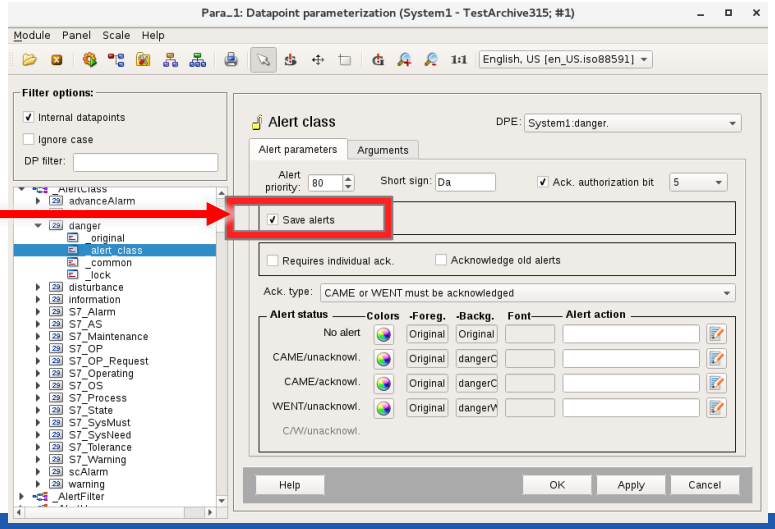
What is archived?

- Value changes of DPEs with enabled `_archive` config (according to smoothing rules)



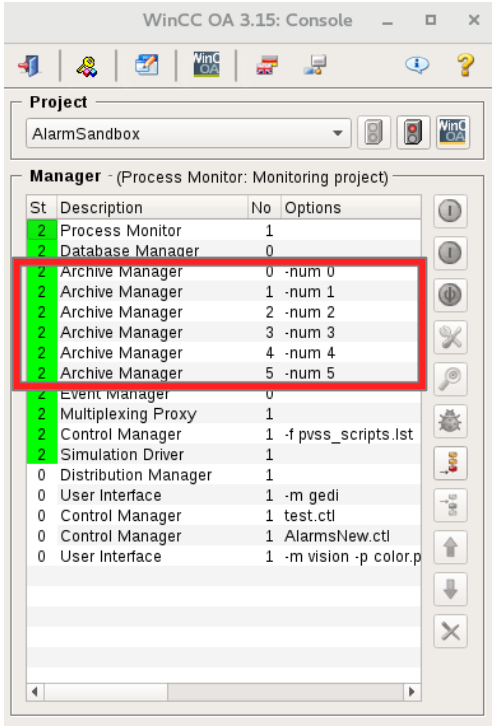
- Alarms with alarm classes that have storage of historical alarms enabled





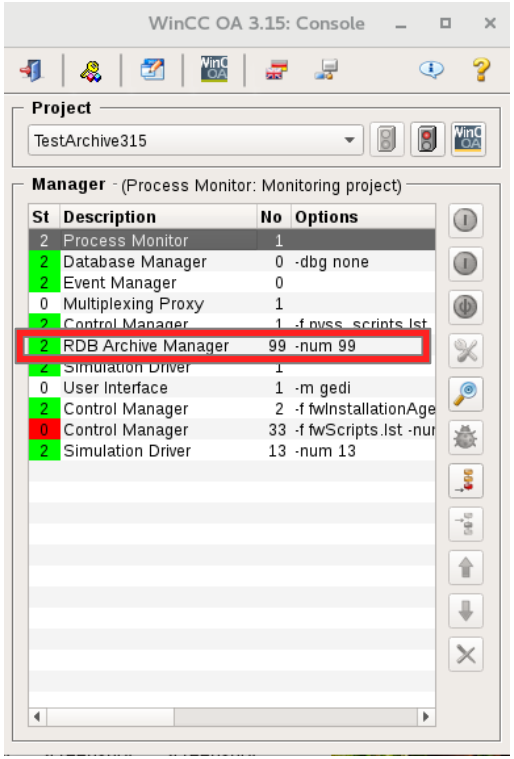
Value Archives (HDB) – (almost) past

- No longer supported at CERN
- History of value changes stored in proprietary file format in project directory
- Historical alarms stored in RAIMA databases (directly by the Database Manager)
- Tricky to configure properly – need to know approximate frequencies of datapoint changes
- Problems with archive consistency after crashes
- Not very scalable – all queries need to go through the Database Manager (direct queries not supported)



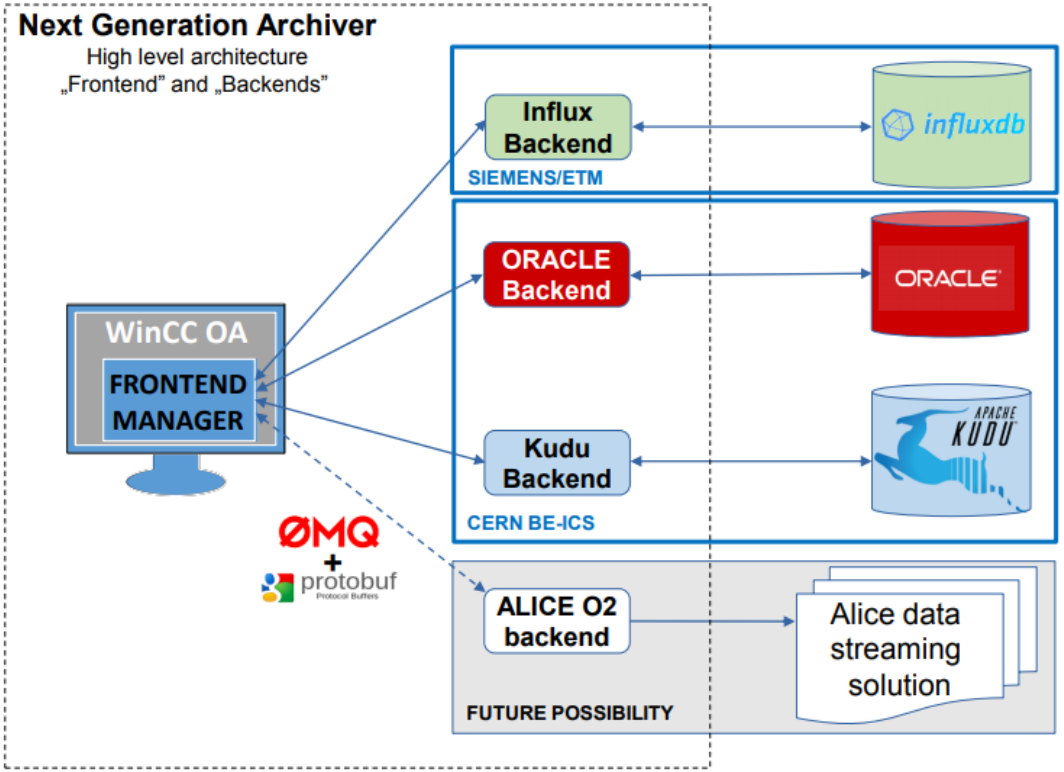
RDB Archive Manager – present

- Almost all production projects currently use the RDB Archive Manager, which writes history to Oracle databases
- Developed in collaboration between ETM and CERN
- Used in parallel with Value Archives in several projects until EYETS 2016/2017
- Can handle high data throughputs when archive groups with limited sets of columns are used – e.g. QPS use case with 200,000 changes per second
- Data retrieval performance can vary greatly and is affected by:
  - Number of queried datapoints and their frequencies of changes
  - Whether or not *bonus values* are retrieved – *n* values from before the query start time and/or after query end time



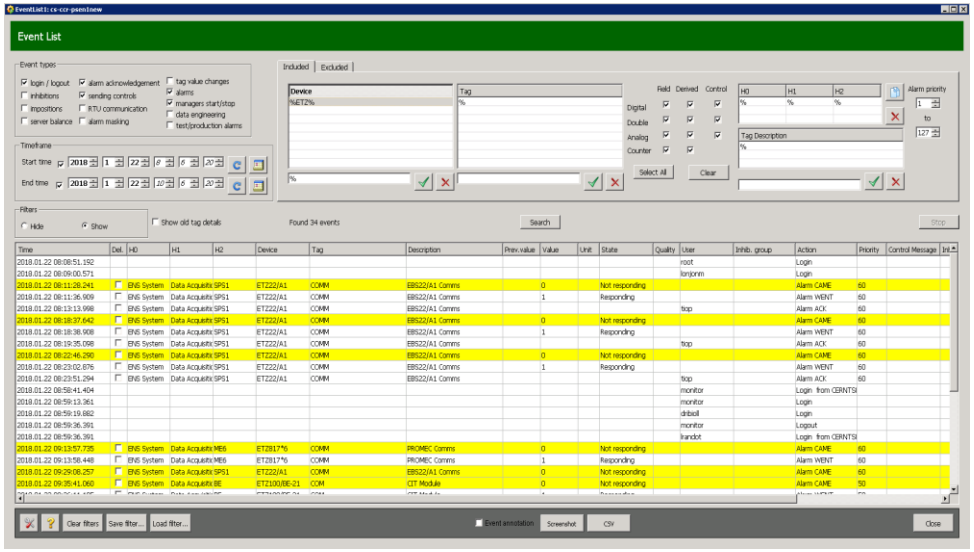
NextGeneration Archiver – future

- Developed in collaboration between CERN and ETM
- Main advantages:
  - Possibility to simultaneously archive to multiple storages
  - Backends implement a high-level communication protocol (ZMQ + Google ProtoBuf) that's not dependend on WinCC OA
- Can act as a general-purpose data *fanout*
  - ALICE O2 use case

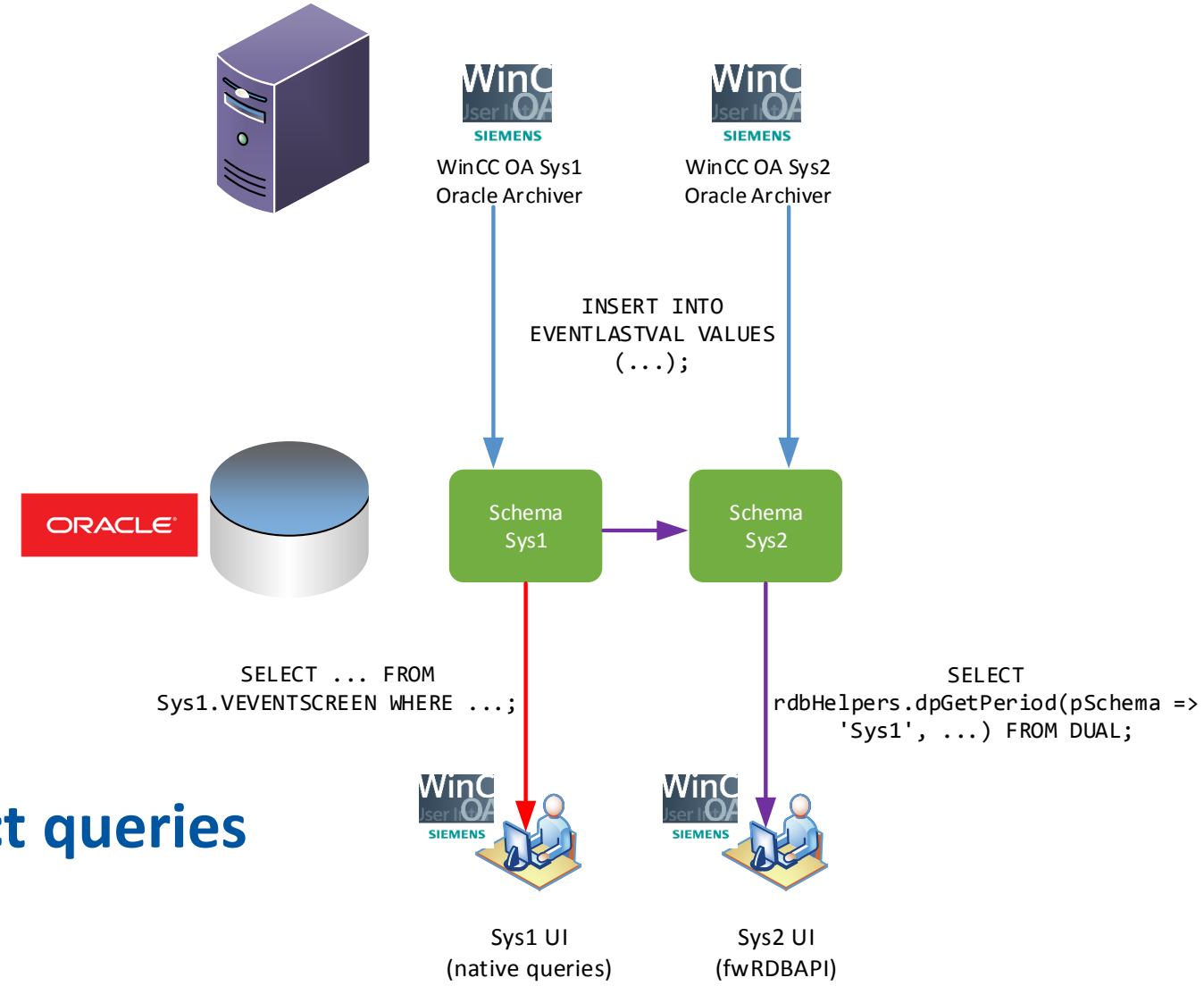


Accessing archived data from WinCC OA

- `dpGetPeriod()` / `alertGetPeriod()`
- `dpGetAsynch()`
- `dpQuery()`
- Custom SQL queries – e.g. in PSEN Event Screen

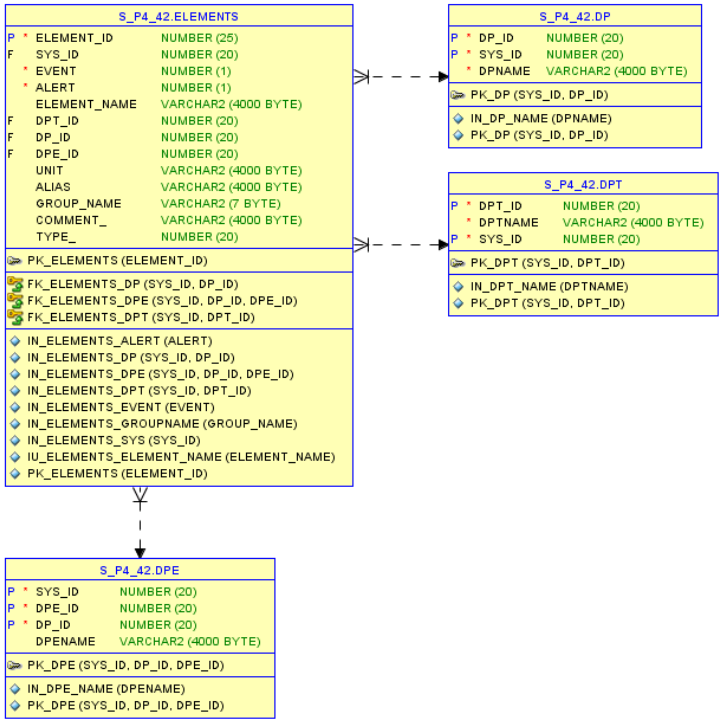


Archiving and data retrieval in WinCC OA – data flows

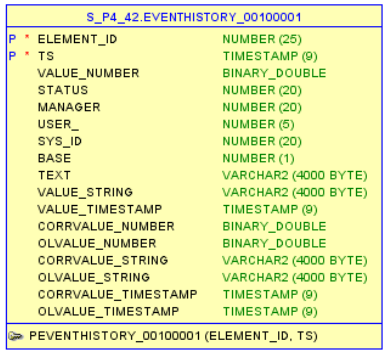


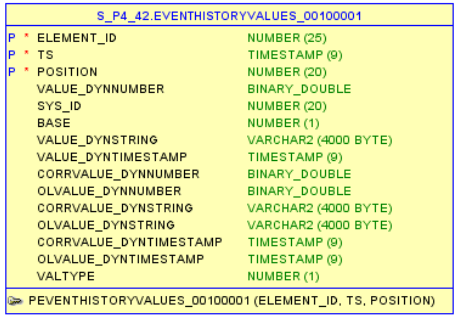
Direct queries

RDB Archive Manager Oracle schema tables

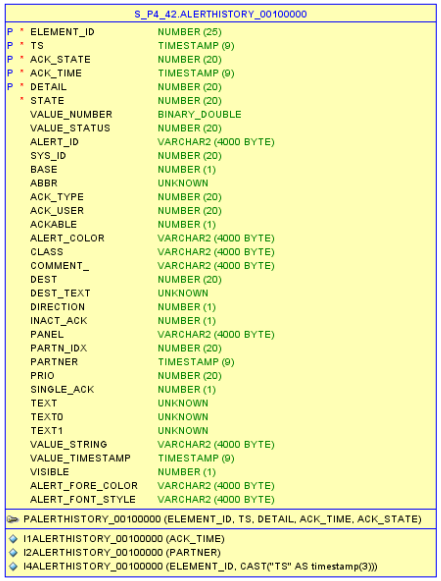


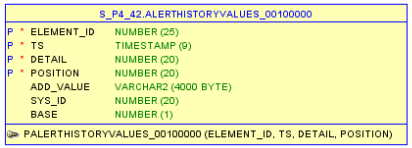
Metadata





Events (datapoint changes)





Alarms

+ tables for configuration, logging, etc.

ALARM and EVENT history tables

- Value changes are stored in EVENT history tables
  - Index Organized Tables on (ELEMENT_ID, TS)
  - Partitioned on TS, typically daily
  - Number of kept partitions defines the data retention

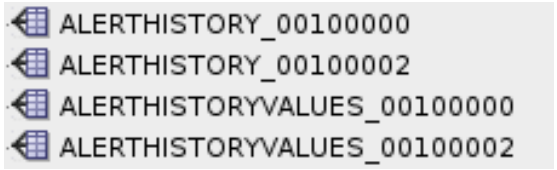
- Alarms are stored in ALERT history tables
  - Index Organized Tables on (ELEMENT_ID, TS)
  - Support for partitioning on TS is planned in the next version of the schema

- VEVENTSCREEN and VALERTSCREEN views join history tables with current datapoint metadata (stored in the ELEMENTS table) and are used in the queries executed from managers when queryFunction is disabled

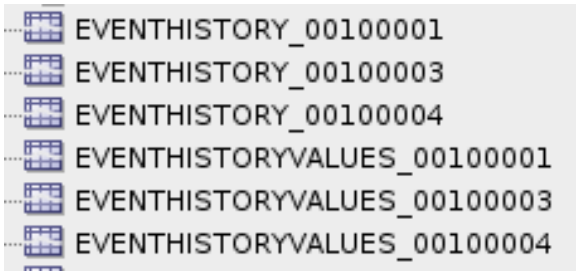
```
SELECT ... FROM
Sys1.VEVENTSCREEN WHERE ...;
```

Archives and archive groups

- EVENT and ALERT are different archive groups
  - Each archived datapoint has an archive group selected (in the `_archive` config)
  - Different sets of columns can be used in different archive groups
  - Each archive group has its own data retention policy



- EVENTHISTORY*, ALERTHISTORY* tables are different archives within the same archive group
  - The mechanism can be used as a substitute for partitioning
  - Makes upgrades easier (e.g. switching from partitioning on system number to partitioning on timestamps)
  - Archives in a group are *glued* by `<group_name>HISTORY` views



Metadata storage, fwRDBAPI and the problem it solves

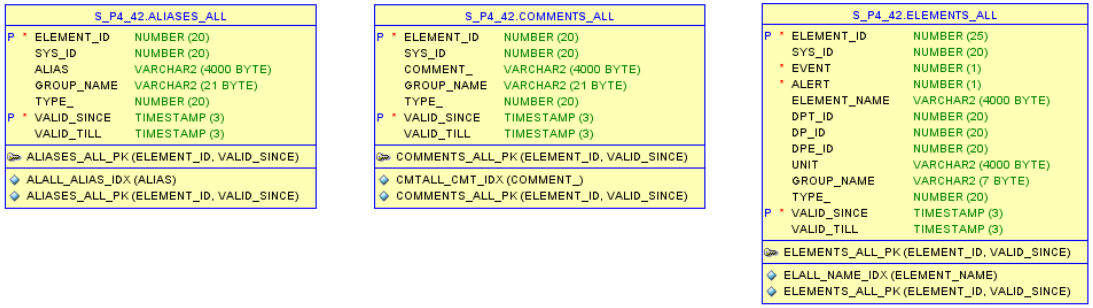
- Metadata tables (ELEMENTS, DPT, DP, DPE) in the schema only store data for datapoints that are currently archived

- The problem
  1. Every newly created datapoint in WinCC OA gets a new, monotonically increasing ID
  2. This ID is used on the Oracle schema side to uniquely identify all its elements
  3. When a datapoint is deleted and recreated with the same name (comment or alias), access to the existing history (saved with a different ID) is lost

- In order to remedy this, fwRDBAPI component enables queries on a specific DP name, comment or alias retrieve events that were archived with different IDs

fwRDBAPI – details

- Trigger on the ELEMENTS table keeps history of metadata in ELEMENTS_ALL, ALIASES_ALL, COMMENTS_ALL tables



S_P4_42.ALIASES_ALL

P *	ELEMENT_ID	NUMBER (20)
	SYS_ID	NUMBER (20)
	ALIAS	VARCHAR2 (4000 BYTE)
	GROUP_NAME	VARCHAR2 (21 BYTE)
	TYPE_	NUMBER (20)
P *	VALID_SINCE	TIMESTAMP (3)
	VALID_TILL	TIMESTAMP (3)

ALIASES_ALL_PK (ELEMENT_ID, VALID_SINCE)

ALALL_ALIAS_IDX (ALIAS)
ALIASES_ALL_PK (ELEMENT_ID, VALID_SINCE)

S_P4_42.COMMENTS_ALL

P *	ELEMENT_ID	NUMBER (20)
	SYS_ID	NUMBER (20)
	COMMENT_	VARCHAR2 (4000 BYTE)
	GROUP_NAME	VARCHAR2 (21 BYTE)
	TYPE_	NUMBER (20)
P *	VALID_SINCE	TIMESTAMP (3)
	VALID_TILL	TIMESTAMP (3)

COMMENTS_ALL_PK (ELEMENT_ID, VALID_SINCE)

CMTALL_CMT_IDX (COMMENT_)
COMMENTS_ALL_PK (ELEMENT_ID, VALID_SINCE)

S_P4_42.ELEMENTS_ALL

P *	ELEMENT_ID	NUMBER (25)
	SYS_ID	NUMBER (20)
*	EVENT	NUMBER (1)
*	ALERT	NUMBER (1)
	ELEMENT_NAME	VARCHAR2 (4000 BYTE)
	DPT_ID	NUMBER (20)
	DP_ID	NUMBER (20)
	DPE_ID	NUMBER (20)
	UNIT	VARCHAR2 (4000 BYTE)
	GROUP_NAME	VARCHAR2 (7 BYTE)
	TYPE_	NUMBER (20)
P *	VALID_SINCE	TIMESTAMP (3)
	VALID_TILL	TIMESTAMP (3)

ELEMENTS_ALL_PK (ELEMENT_ID, VALID_SINCE)

ELALL_NAME_IDX (ELEMENT_NAME)
ELEMENTS_ALL_PK (ELEMENT_ID, VALID_SINCE)

- When queryFunction option is enabled in the config file, events or alarms are retrieved using PL/SQL functions from rdbHelpers package in the schema, instead of using the default SQL queries generated by the UI/CTRL manager

```
SELECT ... FROM
Sys1.VEVENTSCREEN WHERE ...;
```

```
SELECT
rdbHelpers.dpGetPeriod(pSchema =>
'Sys1', ...) FROM DUAL;
```

- We are aiming at integrating the functionality of fwRDBAPI directly in the schema in the NextGeneration Archiver

Want to learn more?

- More detailed description of the schema and the most important queries is available in EDMS 2013374 (working copy)

WinCC OA Oracle Archiving Schema

This document describes the most important aspects of the Oracle Database schema used by the RDB Archiver of WinCC OA, including key tables and views and examples of queries for most important data retrieval scenarios: trending, event and alarm screens and event replay. Extensions to the schema made by the fwRDBAPI component are also discussed, including metadata history keeping and data retrieval functions.

This document describes the schema version 8.9_CERN_1.6 and fwRDBAPI 3.1.2, which are the versions that are currently deployed and supported at CERN. Most of the information, however, is also valid for earlier releases.

Introduction

RDB Archiver is the main archiving solution for WinCC OA systems at CERN. It enables storage of alarms, events (changes of DPEs – Datapoint Elements – which represent properties in the WinCC OA data model) with all necessary metadata. Data from multiple WinCC OA systems can be stored in a single schema or in multiple schemas, depending on configuration. If the latter option is used, cross-system queries are still possible across multiple schemas, even on different databases (through database links).

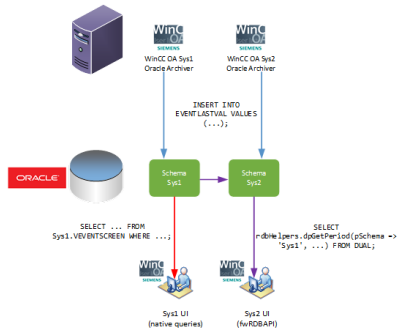


Figure 1: Example of WinCC OA archiving and data retrieval

A simple example of WinCC OA Oracle archiving is presented in Figure 1. WinCC OA allows UIs to execute data retrieval queries directly on the database (when queryRDBdirect option is enabled in system's config file) or through the RDB Archiver. In order to avoid overloading of the archiver and to increase scalability, only direct queries are used at CERN.

fwRDBAPI is an extension of the WinCC OA Oracle Archiver Schema, developed at CERN. It provides access to data archived for datapoints that no longer exist in the WinCC OA system, which is not possible in the standard schema. RDB API is installed only on the schema side – no changes on the client side are required, apart from adding a queryFunction = 1 entry in the config file. When enabled, UI or other managers will not generate SQL queries for dpGetPeriod, dpQuery and other data retrieval functions, but instead call appropriate functions from the rdbHelpers PL/SQL package installed in the database schema.

Tables in the schema

Tables in the Oracle Archiver schema can be divided into four groups: metadata tables, alert history tables, event history tables and internal tables that store archive configuration.

Metadata tables

Metadata tables store information about datapoint types (DPT table), datapoints (DP table) datapoint elements (DPE table) and archived datapoint elements (ELEMENTS table).

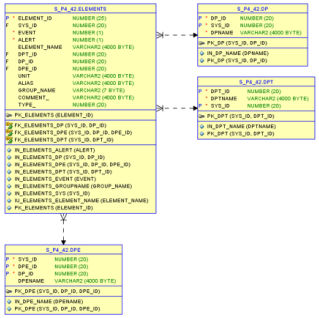


Figure 2: Metadata tables (standard schema)

ELEMENTS table is the most important metadata table, as it stores information about currently archived datapoint elements, such as ID (ELEMENT_ID), name (ELEMENT_NAME), unit (UNIT) and alias (ALIAS). It is the only metadata table used by VALERTSCREEN and VEVENTSCREEN views, which are the source of data for all queries when fwRDBAPI is disabled.

As ELEMENTS table only stores currently archived datapoints, fwRDBAPI extension is added in order to enable queries on datapoints that were removed from the WinCC OA system. Installing fwRDBAPI in the schema creates a few additional tables, among which the most important are metadata history tables: ELEMENTS_ALL, ALIASES_ALL and COMMENTS_ALL. They store history of corresponding parts of metadata, with their intervals of validity (VALID_SINCE and VALID_TILL columns). All changes in the ELEMENTS table all reflected in history tables thanks to the ELEMENTS_TRG trigger (of AFTER EACH ROW type, on INSERT OR UPDATE OR DELETE event).

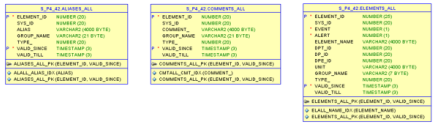


Figure 3: Metadata history tables added to the schema by fwRDBAPI

Event history tables

Event (value change) history is stored in Index-Organized Tables with index on (ELEMENT_ID, TS), partitioned on the TS column. Partitioning settings are stored in COM_TIME_RANGE_PART_TABLES table; management of partitioning is performed by TABLES_PARTITIONING job (by default scheduled to run hourly).

EVENTHISTORY_* tables store all columns required for primitive values; EVENTHISTORYVALUES_* tables store elements of dynamic arrays, with their indexes defined by the POSITION column. Multiple archives (with different numbers after the underscore character) are supported for a single archive group, as defined by the contents of the ARC_ARCHIVE table; access to all events stored in the online ones is provided through the EVENTHISTORY view.

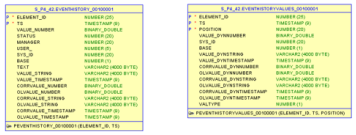


Figure 4: Tables storing history of events

Thank you for your attention!