

## CHASE: how it has developed over more than a quarter of a century

Hastam's CHASE ("Complete Health And Safety Evaluation") system has a long history, starting life as two books in the late 1980s: CHASE-I for small organisations and CHASE-II for larger ones.

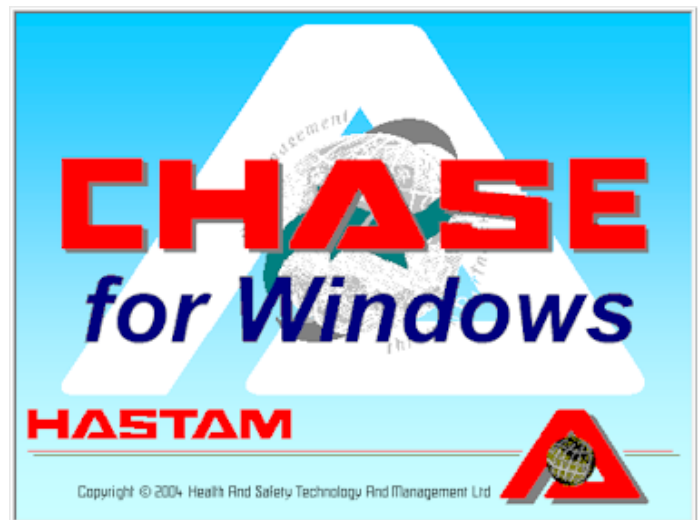
In 1989, the first computerised version, C-CHASE, appeared which incorporated the CHASE-I and CHASE-II questions in a single software package designed for IBM PC compatible computers and was supplied on a single 1.44MB floppy disk. Unlike the printed versions, users had the freedom to tailor the questions to suit their organisation.



Through the 1990s the package was developed further with a new version (S-CHASE) adding more flexible content structure, more answer types, question tagging and greater adaptability all round. An environment audit module was also added.

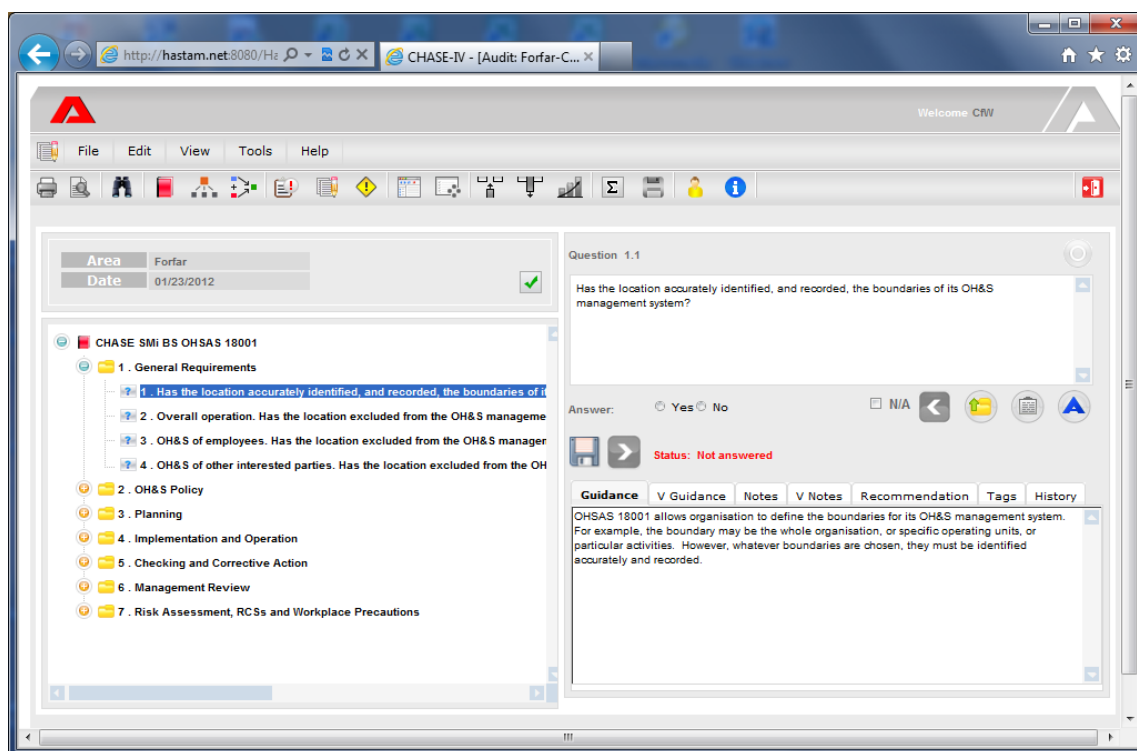
With the increasing dominance of Windows in the business world, and the arrival of Windows 95 and NT4, Hastam released CHASE for Windows in January 1996 which offered the functionality of S-CHASE but in a more attractive Windows format.

Since that launch at the National History Museum, Hastam has added more functionality to CHASE, which gave it even more flexibility, spell-check, Crystal Reports and improved performance with



large data sets.

By the mid 2000s larger users were looking for a solution that did not require any software installation but instead wanted fully web-enabled software and Hastam teamed up with Tabaq software in Bracknell to re-engineer the product as a web application.



This application has now been tested on various platforms and, initially, a number of performance issues had to be addressed, but now the CHASE for Windows software is about to become available as an application for Internet Explorer – no additional software will be needed (apart from Internet Explorer 7 or later). The first version will be available as a hosted application, with the system housed on a UKFast secure server, but we hope to soon have it available as an application that large organisations can install on their own server if they want keep everything securely in-house.

Inevitably, some compromises have had to be made as we have had to work within the constraints of a web browser. The new application is slightly slower than the Windows version, unless you have very fast computers and a very fast internet connection. However, one of the common first comments about CHASE for Windows was that it was slow compared to the MS-DOS version but as hardware performance improved rapidly in the late 1990s this issue was soon forgotten as users found the new interface much easier to learn and use.



Also, the Windows version allowed users to have many evaluations open at the same time in multiple windows but technical limitations mean that only one evaluation can be open at a time in the web version. However, a lot of users seem unaware that multiple evaluations can be open in the Windows version so perhaps that's not a great limitation.

To make it easy for existing users to upgrade, the look and feel of the web version is similar to the Windows version so any users already familiar with CHASE will find no difficulty in using it. Most of the functions are in the same place and we have managed to keep the familiar menus and buttons. In the longer term, we expect the interface to develop and in a few years it is likely that it will look nothing like the current version.

I have been closely involved with and have had a big hands-on role in the CHASE development since 1988, but this latest change has meant handing over to another development team. The Tabaq software engineers have already achieved a lot in taking a very complex system (at least it is complex behind the scenes) and translated it into the new web application. We now look forward to adding more functionality, even better performance and a slicker interface over the next few years.

We also plan a closer integration with Tabaq's jComply software so that we can offer a 'one-stop' solution to the development of health and safety management systems that follow the BS OHSAS 18001 standard.

If you would like to find out more please contact [liz.shuttleworth@hastam.co.uk](mailto:liz.shuttleworth@hastam.co.uk) who will be happy to help.

David Hewitt  
IT Director, Hastam



Suite 729, Hastam, 10 Sovereign Court,  
8 Graham Street, Birmingham, B1 3JR

[www.hastam.co.uk](http://www.hastam.co.uk)

For further details please contact  
**Liz Shuttleworth** on **0788 9318775** or  
[liz.shuttleworth@hastam.co.uk](mailto:liz.shuttleworth@hastam.co.uk)