


# PRIMAVERA P6 PROJECT MUST FINISH BY DATE

## by Paul E Harris

### 1 Introduction

The P6 **Project Must Finish By Date** must be used with caution as it does may not operate in the way you may think.

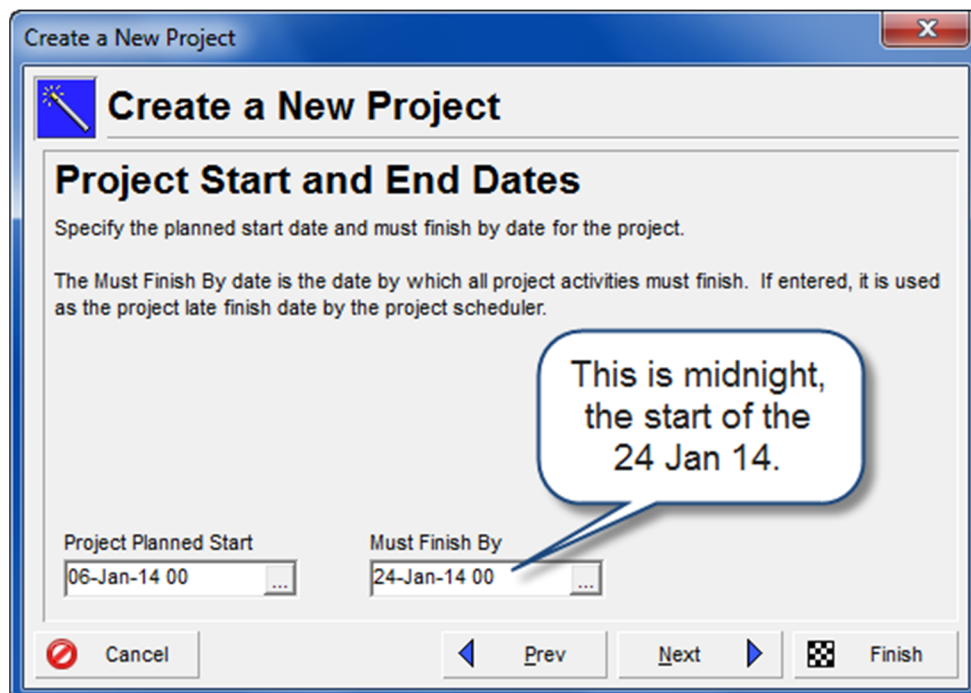
### 2 Setting a Project Must Finish By Date when creating a project

You may create a new project at any point in time by selecting **File, New...** from the menu or clicking on the  icon on the **Edit** toolbar. You will be guided through the **Create a New Project** wizard which will require the following information:

- The **EPS** Node the project is to be assigned to.
- The **Project ID**, a code to represent the project (a maximum of 20 characters), and **Project Name**.
- A **Planned Start** date, which is the earliest date any un-started activity will be scheduled to commence and
- An optional **Project Must Finish By** date.  
**NOTE:** Be sure to check the Start Time.
- When a **Project Must Finish By** date is set the project float will be calculated to this date and not to the latest activity finish.



It is even more important to check the finish time as it often defaults to 00:00 which is midnight of the Finish day, giving you one less day than planned:





### 3 Changing the Project Must Finish By Date

An absolute finish date may be changed or imposed on the project using the **Project Window, Dates** tab:

### 4 How the Project Must Finish By Date Calculates

Imposing a **Must Finish By** date makes Primavera calculate the late dates from the **Must Finish By** date rather than the calculated early finish date. This will introduce positive float to activities when the calculated **Early finish** date is prior to the **Must Finish By** date:

Activity ID	Activity Name	Original Duration	Total Float	Free Float	Oct 31							Nov 07							Nov 14							Nov 21									
					S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S			
<b>7 Activities</b>					120h	16h	0h																												
A1000	Start Milestone	0h	16h	0h	[Gantt chart showing activity bars and dependencies]																														
A1010	Activity 1	40h	16h	0h																															
A1020	Activity 2	40h	16h	0h																															
A1030	Activity 3	40h	16h	0h																															
A1040	Activity 4	16h	104h	24h																															
A1050	Activity 5	16h	80h	64h																															
A1060	Finish Milestone	0h	16h	0h																															

This will also create negative float when the activity's calculated early finish date is after the **Must Finish By** date, but it is not obvious where the negative float is being driven from as there are no constraints assigned to activities:

Activity ID	Activity Name	Original Duration	Total Float	Free Float	Oct 24							Oct 31							Nov 07							Nov 14									
					M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S				
<b>7 Activities</b>					120h	-16h	0h																												
A1000	Start Milestone	0h	-16h	0h	[Gantt chart showing activity bars and dependencies]																														
A1010	Activity 1	40h	-16h	0h																															
A1020	Activity 2	40h	-16h	0h																															
A1030	Activity 3	40h	-16h	0h																															
A1040	Activity 4	16h	72h	24h																															
A1050	Activity 5	16h	48h	64h																															
A1060	Finish Milestone	0h	-16h	0h																															

When opening multiple projects some further issues need to be considered when a **Project Must Finish By** date is set and these are covered in the **Multiple Project Scheduling** chapter.

To remove a **Project Must Finish By** date, highlight the date, press the **Delete** key and then the **Enter** key or tab out of the cell to ensure the date is removed.



It is not obvious where the float is being generated after a **Must Finish By** date is imposed on a project. This is often confusing to people new to scheduling and it is recommended that you do not use a **Must Finish By** date. Instead, tie all activities to a **Finish Milestone** which has a **Late finish** constraint.



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