

Network Working Group  
Internet-Draft  
Updates: [7050](#) (if approved)  
Intended status: Standards Track  
Expires: August 24, 2020

S. Cheshire  
Apple Inc.  
D. Schinazi  
Google LLC  
February 21, 2020

**Special Use Domain Name 'ipv4only.arpa'**  
**draft-cheshire-sudn-ipv4only-dot-arpa-16**

Abstract

The specification for how a client discovers its local network's NAT64 prefix ([RFC7050](#)) defines the special name 'ipv4only.arpa' for this purpose, but in its Domain Name Reservation Considerations section that specification indicates that the name actually has no particularly special properties would require special handling, and does not request IANA to record the name in the Special-Use Domain Names registry.

Consequently, despite the well articulated special purpose of the name, 'ipv4only.arpa' was not recorded in the Special-Use Domain Names registry as a name with special properties.

This document describes the special treatment required, formally declares the special properties of the name, adds similar declarations for the corresponding reverse mapping names, and updates [RFC7050](#).

Status of This Memo

This Internet-Draft is submitted in full conformance with the provisions of [BCP 78](#) and [BCP 79](#).

Internet-Drafts are working documents of the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF). Note that other groups may also distribute working documents as Internet-Drafts. The list of current Internet-Drafts is at <https://datatracker.ietf.org/drafts/current/>.

Internet-Drafts are draft documents valid for a maximum of six months and may be updated, replaced, or obsoleted by other documents at any time. It is inappropriate to use Internet-Drafts as reference material or to cite them other than as "work in progress."

This Internet-Draft will expire on August 24, 2020.

## Copyright Notice

Copyright (c) 2020 IETF Trust and the persons identified as the document authors. All rights reserved.

This document is subject to [BCP 78](#) and the IETF Trust's Legal Provisions Relating to IETF Documents (<https://trustee.ietf.org/license-info>) in effect on the date of publication of this document. Please review these documents carefully, as they describe your rights and restrictions with respect to this document. Code Components extracted from this document must include Simplified BSD License text as described in Section 4.e of the Trust Legal Provisions and are provided without warranty as described in the Simplified BSD License.

## Table of Contents

<a href="#">1.</a>	Introduction . . . . .	<a href="#">2</a>
<a href="#">2.</a>	Specialness of 'ipv4only.arpa' . . . . .	<a href="#">3</a>
3.	Consequences of 'ipv4only.arpa' not being declared special .	4
<a href="#">4.</a>	Remedies . . . . .	<a href="#">6</a>
<a href="#">5.</a>	Security Considerations . . . . .	<a href="#">8</a>
<a href="#">6.</a>	IANA Considerations . . . . .	<a href="#">10</a>
<a href="#">7.</a>	Domain Name Reservation Considerations . . . . .	<a href="#">10</a>
<a href="#">8.</a>	Acknowledgements . . . . .	<a href="#">17</a>
<a href="#">9.</a>	References . . . . .	<a href="#">17</a>
<a href="#">Appendix A.</a>	Example BIND 9 Configuration . . . . .	<a href="#">19</a>
Authors' Addresses	. . . . .	<a href="#">20</a>

## [1.](#) Introduction

The specification for how a client discovers its local network's NAT64 prefix [[RFC7050](#)] defines the special name 'ipv4only.arpa' for this purpose, but in its Domain Name Reservation Considerations section that specification indicates that the name actually has no particularly special properties would require special handling, and does not request IANA to record the name in the Special-Use Domain Names registry [[SUDN](#)].

Consequently, despite the well articulated special purpose of the name, 'ipv4only.arpa' was not recorded in the Special-Use Domain Names registry [[SUDN](#)] as a name with special properties.

This omission was discussed in the Special-Use Domain Names Problem Statement [[RFC8244](#)].



As a result of this omission, in cases where software needs to give this name special treatment in order for it to work correctly, there was no clear mandate authorizing software authors to implement that special treatment. Software implementers were left with the choice between not implementing the special behavior necessary for the name queries to work correctly, or implementing the special behavior and being accused of being noncompliant with some RFC.

This document describes the special treatment required, formally declares the special properties of the name, and adds similar declarations for the corresponding reverse mapping names.

### **1.1. Conventions and Terminology**

The key words "MUST", "MUST NOT", "REQUIRED", "SHALL", "SHALL NOT", "SHOULD", "SHOULD NOT", "RECOMMENDED", "NOT RECOMMENDED", "MAY", and "OPTIONAL" in this section are to be interpreted as described in "Key words for use in RFCs to Indicate Requirement Levels", when, and only when, they appear in all capitals, as shown here [[RFC2119](#)] [[RFC8174](#)].

## **2. Specialness of 'ipv4only.arpa'**

The hostname 'ipv4only.arpa' is peculiar in that it was never intended to be treated like a normal hostname.

A typical client never looks up the IPv4 address records for 'ipv4only.arpa', because it is already known, by IETF specification [[RFC7050](#)], to have exactly two IPv4 address records, 192.0.0.170 and 192.0.0.171. No client ever has to look up the name in order to learn those two addresses.

In contrast, clients often look up the IPv6 AAAA address records for 'ipv4only.arpa', which is contrary to general DNS expectations, given that it is already known, by IETF specification [[RFC7050](#)], that 'ipv4only.arpa' is an IPv4-only name, which has no IPv6 AAAA address records. And yet, clients expect to receive, and do in fact receive, positive answers for these IPv6 AAAA address records that apparently should not exist.



This is clearly not a typical DNS name. In normal operation, clients never query for the two records that do in fact exist; instead clients query for records that are known to not exist, and then get positive answers to those abnormal queries. Clients are using DNS to perform queries for this name, but they are certainly not using DNS to learn legitimate answers from the name's legitimate authoritative server. Instead, the DNS protocol has, in effect, been co-opted as an impromptu client-to-middlebox communication protocol, to communicate with the NAT64/DNS64 [\[RFC6146\]](#) [\[RFC6147\]](#) gateway, if present, and request that it disclose the prefix it is using for IPv6 address synthesis.

This use of specially-crafted DNS queries as an impromptu client-to-middlebox communication protocol has a number of specific consequences, outlined below, which client software needs to take into account if the queries are to produce the desired results, particularly when used on a multi-homed host, or when a VPN tunnel is in use. The name 'ipv4only.arpa' is most definitely a special name, and needs to be listed in IANA's registry along with other DNS names that have special uses [\[SUDN\]](#).

### **[3.](#) Consequences of 'ipv4only.arpa' not being declared special**

As a result of the original specification [\[RFC7050\]](#) not formally declaring 'ipv4only.arpa' to have special properties, there was no clear mandate for DNS software to treat this name specially. In particular, this lack of mandate for special treatment is relevant (a) to the name resolution APIs and libraries on client devices, and (b) to DNS64 [\[RFC6147\]](#) implementations. These two aspects are discussed in more detail below.

#### **[3.1.](#) Consequences for Name Resolution APIs and Libraries**

A serious problem can occur with NAT64/DNS64 when a device is configured to use a recursive resolver other than the one it learned from the network.

Typically a device joining a NAT64 network will learn the recursive resolver recommended for that network either via IPv6 Router Advertisement Options for DNS Configuration [\[RFC8106\]](#) or via DNS Configuration options for DHCPv6 [\[RFC3646\]](#). On a NAT64 network it is essential that the client use the DNS64 recursive resolver recommended for that network, since only that recursive resolver can be relied upon to know the appropriate prefix(es) to use for synthesizing IPv6 addresses that will be acceptable to the NAT64 gateway.



However, it is becoming increasingly common for users to manually override their default DNS configuration because they wish to use some other public recursive resolver on the Internet, which may offer better speed, better reliability, or better privacy than the local network's default recursive resolver. At the time of writing, examples of widely known public recursive resolver services include 1.1.1.1 [[DNS1](#)], 8.8.8.8 [[DNS8](#)], and 9.9.9.9 [[DNS9](#)].

Another common scenario is the use of corporate VPN client software. The local network's recursive resolver will typically be unable to provide answers for the company's private internal host names, so VPN client software overrides the local network's default configuration, to divert some or all DNS requests to the company's own private internal recursive resolver, reached through the VPN tunnel. As with the case described above of public recursive resolver services, the company's private internal recursive resolver cannot be expected to be able to synthesize IPv6 addresses correctly for use with the local network's NAT64 gateway, because the company's private internal recursive resolver is unlikely to be aware of the NAT64 prefix in use on the NAT64 network to which the client device is currently attached. It is clear that a single recursive resolver cannot meet both needs. The local network's recursive resolver cannot give answers for some company's private internal host names, and some company's private internal recursive resolver cannot give correctly synthesized IPv6 addresses suitable for the local network's NAT64 gateway.

Note that multiple NAT64 services may be simultaneously available to a client. For example, the local network may provide NAT64 service (to allow a IPv6-only client device to access IPv4-only Internet services), while at the same time the corporate VPN may also provide NAT64 service (to allow a client connecting via an IPv6-only VPN tunnel to access IPv4-only corporate services). The NAT64 address synthesis prefixes for the two NAT64 services may be different. In this case it is essential that the NAT64 address synthesis prefix used on the local network be the prefix learned from the local network's recursive resolver, and the NAT64 address synthesis prefix used on the VPN tunnel be the prefix learned from the VPN tunnel's recursive resolver.

The conflict here arises because DNS is being used for two unrelated purposes. The first purpose is retrieving data from a (nominally) global database -- generally retrieving the IP address(es) associated with a hostname. The second purpose is using the DNS protocol as a middlebox communication protocol, to interrogate the local network infrastructure to discover the IPv6 prefix(es) in use by the local NAT64 gateway for address synthesis.





### **3.2. Consequences for DNS64 Implementations**

As a result of there being no mandate for special treatment, queries for 'ipv4only.arpa' had to be handled normally, resulting in DNS64 gateways performing unnecessary IPv6 address record queries (DNS qtype "AAAA", always returning negative responses) and IPv4 address record queries (DNS qtype "A", always returning the same positive responses) to the authoritative 'arpa' name servers.

Having DNS64 gateways around the world issue these queries generated additional load on the authoritative 'arpa' name servers, which was redundant when the name 'ipv4only.arpa' is defined, by IETF specification [[RFC7050](#)], to have exactly two IPv4 address records, 192.0.0.170 and 192.0.0.171, and no other IPv4 or IPv6 address records.

Also, at times, for reasons that remain unclear, the authoritative 'arpa' name servers have been observed to be slow or unresponsive. The failures of these 'ipv4only.arpa' queries result in unnecessary failures of the DNS64 gateways and of the client devices that depend on them for DNS64 [[RFC6147](#)] address synthesis.

Even when the authoritative 'arpa' name servers are operating correctly, having to perform an unnecessary query to obtain an answer that is already known in advance can add precious milliseconds of delay, affecting user experience on the client devices waiting for those synthesized replies.

## **4. Remedies**

This document leverages operational experience to update the Domain Name Reservation Considerations [[RFC6761](#)] section of the earlier specification [[RFC7050](#)] with one that more accurately lists the actual special properties of the name 'ipv4only.arpa', so that software can legitimately implement the correct behavior necessary for better performance, better reliability, and correct operation.

These changes affect two bodies of software, (a) the name resolution APIs and libraries on client devices, and (b) DNS64 implementations.



The new special rules specified in this document for name resolution APIs and libraries state how they should select which recursive resolver to query to learn the IPv6 address synthesis prefix in use on a particular physical or virtual interface. Specifically: When querying for the name 'ipv4only.arpa', name resolution APIs and libraries should use the recursive resolver recommended by the network for the interface in question, rather than a recursive resolver configured manually, a recursive resolver configured by VPN software, or a full-service recursive resolver running on the local host.

The new special rules specified in this document for DNS64 implementations recommend that they avoid performing run-time network queries for values that are known to be fixed by specification.

A useful property of the way NAT64 Prefix Discovery [[RFC7050](#)] was originally specified was that it allowed for incremental deployment. Even if existing DNS64 gateways, that were unaware of the special 'ipv4only.arpa' name, were already deployed, once IANA created the appropriate 'ipv4only.arpa' records, clients could begin to use the new facility immediately. Clients could send their special queries for 'ipv4only.arpa' to an ipv4only-unaware DNS64 gateway, and (after a query to IANA's servers) the DNS64 gateway would then generate the correct synthesized response.

While this was a useful transition strategy to enable rapid adoption, it is not the ideal end situation. For better performance, better reliability, and lower load in IANA's servers, it is preferable for DNS64 gateways to be aware of the special 'ipv4only.arpa' name so that they can avoid issuing unnecessary queries. Network operators who wish to provide reliable, high performance service to their customers are strongly motivated to prefer DNS64 gateways that recognize the special 'ipv4only.arpa' name and apply the appropriate optimizations.



## 5. Security Considerations

One of the known concerns with DNS64 is that it conflicts with DNSSEC. If DNSSEC is used to assert cryptographically that a name has no IPv6 AAAA records, then this interferes with using DNS64 address synthesis to assert that those nonexistent IPv6 AAAA records do exist.

[Section 3](#) of the DNS64 specification [[RFC6147](#)] discusses this:

... DNS64 receives a query with the DO bit set and the CD bit set. In this case, the DNS64 is supposed to pass on all the data it gets to the query initiator. This case will not work with DNS64, unless the validating resolver is prepared to do DNS64 itself.

The NAT64 Prefix Discovery specification [[RFC7050](#)] provides the mechanism for the query initiator to learn the NAT64 prefix so that it can do its own validation and DNS64 synthesis as described above. With this mechanism the client can (i) interrogate the local NAT64/DNS64 gateway with an 'ipv4only.arpa' query to learn the IPv6 address synthesis prefix, (ii) query for the (signed) IPv4 address records itself, and validate the response, and then (iii) perform its own IPv6 address synthesis locally, combining the IPv6 address synthesis prefix learned from the local NAT64/DNS64 gateway with the validated DNSSEC-signed data learned from the global Domain Name System.

It is conceivable that over time, if DNSSEC adoption continues to grow, the majority of clients could move to this validate-and-synthesize-locally model, which reduces the DNS64 machinery to the vestigial role of simply responding to the 'ipv4only.arpa' query to report the local IPv6 address synthesis prefix. In no case does the client care what answer(s) the authoritative 'arpa' name servers might give for that query. The 'ipv4only.arpa' query is being used purely as a local client-to-middlebox communication message.

This approach is even more attractive if it does not create an additional dependency on the authoritative 'arpa' name servers to answer a query that is unnecessary because the NAT64/DNS64 gateway already knows the answer before it even issues the query. Avoiding this unnecessary query improves performance and reliability for the client, and reduces unnecessary load for the authoritative 'arpa' name servers.



Hard-coding the known answers for 'ipv4only.arpa' IPv4 address record queries (DNS qtype "A") in recursive resolvers also reduces the risk of malicious devices intercepting those queries and returning incorrect answers. Because the 'ipv4only.arpa' zone has to be an insecure delegation (see below) DNSSEC cannot be used to protect these answers from tampering by malicious devices on the path.

With respect to the question of whether 'ipv4only.arpa' should be a secure or insecure delegation, we need to consider two paths of information flow through the network: The path from the server authoritative for 'ipv4only.arpa' to the DNS64 recursive resolver, and the path from the DNS64 recursive resolver to the ultimate client.

The path from the authoritative server to the DNS64 recursive resolver (queries for IPv4 address records) need not be protected by DNSSEC, because the DNS64 recursive resolver already knows, by specification, what the answers are. In principle, if this were a secure delegation, and 'ipv4only.arpa' were a signed zone, then the path from the authoritative server to the DNS64 recursive resolver would still work, but DNSSEC is not necessary here. Run-time cryptographic signatures are not needed to verify compile-time constants.

The path from the DNS64 recursive resolver to the ultimate client (queries for IPv6 address records) *cannot* be protected by DNSSEC, because the DNS64 recursive resolver is synthesizing IPv6 address answers, and does not possess the secret key required to sign those answers.

Consequently, the 'ipv4only.arpa' zone **MUST** be an insecure delegation, to give NAT64/DNS64 gateways the freedom to synthesize answers to those queries at will, without the answers being rejected by DNSSEC-capable resolvers. DNSSEC-capable resolvers that follow this specification **MUST NOT** attempt to validate answers received in response to queries for the IPv6 AAAA address records for 'ipv4only.arpa'.

The original NAT64 Prefix Discovery specification [[RFC7050](#)] stated, incorrectly:

A signed "ipv4only.arpa." allows validating DNS64 servers (see [[RFC6147](#)] [Section 3](#), Case 5, for example) to detect malicious AAAA resource records. Therefore, the zone serving the well-known name has to be protected with DNSSEC.

This document updates the previous specification [[RFC7050](#)] to correct that error. The 'ipv4only.arpa' zone **MUST** be an insecure delegation.





## **6. IANA Considerations**

[Once published] IANA has created an insecure delegation for 'ipv4only.arpa' to allow DNS64 recursive resolvers to create synthesized AAAA answers within that zone.

IANA has recorded the following names in the Special-Use Domain Names registry [[SUDN](#)]:

```
ipv4only.arpa.  
170.0.0.192.in-addr.arpa.  
171.0.0.192.in-addr.arpa.
```

IANA has recorded the following IPv4 addresses in the IPv4 Special-Purpose Address Registry [[Suv4](#)]:

```
192.0.0.170  
192.0.0.171
```

## **7. Domain Name Reservation Considerations**

### **7.1. Special Use Domain Name 'ipv4only.arpa'**

The name 'ipv4only.arpa' is defined, by IETF specification [[RFC7050](#)], to have two IPv4 address records with rdata 192.0.0.170 and 192.0.0.171.

When queried via a DNS64 [[RFC6147](#)] recursive resolver, the name 'ipv4only.arpa' is also defined to have IPv6 AAAA records, with rdata synthesized from a combination of the NAT64 IPv6 prefix(es) and the IPv4 addresses 192.0.0.170 and 192.0.0.171. This can return more than one pair of IPv6 addresses if there are multiple NAT64 prefixes.

The name 'ipv4only.arpa' has no other IPv4 or IPv6 address records. There are no subdomains of 'ipv4only.arpa'. All names falling below 'ipv4only.arpa' are defined to be nonexistent (NXDOMAIN).

The name 'ipv4only.arpa' is special to

- (a) client software wishing to perform DNS64 address synthesis,
- (b) APIs responsible for retrieving the correct information, and
- (c) the DNS64 recursive resolver responding to such requests.

These three considerations are listed in items 2, 3 and 4 below:

1. Normal users should never have reason to encounter the 'ipv4only.arpa' domain name. If they do, they should expect queries for 'ipv4only.arpa' to result in the answers required by the specification [[RFC7050](#)]. Normal users have no need to know that 'ipv4only.arpa' is special.



2. Application software may explicitly use the name 'ipv4only.arpa' for NAT64/DNS64 address synthesis, and expect to get the answers required by the specification [[RFC7050](#)]. If application software encounters the name 'ipv4only.arpa' in the normal course of handling user input, the application software should resolve that name as usual and need not treat it in any special way.
3. Name resolution APIs and libraries MUST recognize 'ipv4only.arpa' as special and MUST give it special treatment.

Learning a network's NAT64 prefix is by its nature an interface-specific operation, and the special DNS query used to learn this interface-specific NAT64 prefix MUST be sent to the DNS recursive resolver address(es) the client learned via the configuration machinery for that specific client interface. One implication of this is that, on any host with multiple physical interfaces (e.g., cellular data and Wi-Fi) and/or multiple virtual interfaces (e.g., VPN tunnels), for a client to learn the NAT64 prefix in use on a particular interface, the DNS name resolution APIs used to look up the IPv6 addresses for 'ipv4only.arpa' MUST include a parameter for the client to specify on which interface to perform this query. The NAT64 prefix is a per-interface property, not a per-device property.

Regardless of any manual client DNS configuration, DNS overrides configured by VPN client software, or any other mechanisms that influence the choice of the client's recursive resolver address(es) (including client devices that run their own local recursive resolver and use the loopback address as their configured recursive resolver address) all queries for 'ipv4only.arpa' and any subdomains of that name MUST be sent to the recursive resolver learned from the network interface in question via IPv6 Router Advertisement Options for DNS Configuration [[RFC8106](#)], DNS Configuration options for DHCPv6 [[RFC3646](#)], or other configuration mechanisms. Because DNS queries for 'ipv4only.arpa' are actually a special middlebox communication protocol, it is essential that they go to the correct middlebox for the interface in question, and failure to honor this requirement would cause failure of the NAT64 Prefix Discovery mechanism [[RFC7050](#)].

DNSSEC-capable resolvers MUST NOT attempt to validate answers received in response to queries for the IPv6 AAAA address records for 'ipv4only.arpa', since, by definition, any such answers are generated by the local network's NAT64/DNS64 gateway, not the authoritative server responsible for that name.



4. For the purposes of this section, recursive resolvers fall into three categories. The first category is *\*forwarding\** recursive resolvers, as commonly implemented in residential home gateways. The second category is *\*iterative\** recursive resolvers, as commonly deployed by ISPs. (More information on these terms can be found in DNS Terminology [[RFC8499](#)].) The third category is DNS64 recursive resolvers, whose purpose is to synthesize IPv6 address records.

Forwarding recursive resolvers SHOULD NOT recognize 'ipv4only.arpa' as special or give that name, or subdomains of that name, any special treatment. The rationale for this is that a forwarding recursive resolver, such as built in to a residential home gateway, may itself be downstream of a DNS64 recursive resolver. Passing through the 'ipv4only.arpa' queries to the upstream DNS64 recursive resolver will allow the correct NAT64 prefix to be discovered.

Iterative recursive resolvers complying with this specification MUST recognize 'ipv4only.arpa' as special, and MUST be configured to behave for these names either: (a) like a forwarding recursive resolver as described above (forwarding these queries to a configured upstream resolver), or (b) like a DNS64 recursive resolver as described below.

Since the authoritative name servers for 'ipv4only.arpa' cannot be expected to know the local network's NAT64 address synthesis prefix, all DNS64 recursive resolvers MUST recognize 'ipv4only.arpa' (and all of its subdomains) as special, and MUST NOT attempt to look up NS records for 'ipv4only.arpa', or otherwise query authoritative name servers in an attempt to resolve this name. Instead, DNS64 recursive resolvers MUST act as authoritative for this zone, by generating immediate responses for all queries for 'ipv4only.arpa' (and any subdomain of 'ipv4only.arpa'), with the one exception of queries for the DS record. Queries for the DS record are resolved the usual way to allow a client to securely verify that the 'ipv4only.arpa' zone has an insecure delegation. Note that exception is not expected to received widespread usage, since any client compliant with this specification already knows that 'ipv4only.arpa' is an insecure delegation and will not attempt DNSSEC validation for this name.

DNS64 recursive resolvers MUST generate the 192.0.0.170 and 192.0.0.171 responses for IPv4 address queries (DNS qtype "A"), the appropriate synthesized IPv6 address record responses for IPv6 address queries (DNS qtype "AAAA"), and a negative ("no error no answer") response for all other query types.



For all subdomains of 'ipv4only.arpa', DNS64 recursive resolvers MUST generate immediate NXDOMAIN responses. All names falling below 'ipv4only.arpa' are defined to be nonexistent.

An example configuration for BIND 9 showing how to achieve the desired result is given in [Appendix A](#).

Note that this is *\*not\** a locally served zone in the usual sense of that term [[RFC6303](#)] because this rule applies *\*only\** to DNS64 recursive resolvers, not to forwarding DNS recursive resolvers.

5. Authoritative name server software need not recognize 'ipv4only.arpa' as special or handle it in any special way.
6. Generally speaking, operators of authoritative name servers need not know anything about the name 'ipv4only.arpa', just as they do not need to know anything about any other names they are not responsible for. Only the administrators of the 'arpa' namespace need to be aware of this name's purpose and how it should be configured. In particular, 'ipv4only.arpa' MUST have the required records, and MUST be an insecure delegation, to allow DNS64 recursive resolvers to create synthesized AAAA answers within that zone. Making the 'ipv4only.arpa' zone a secure delegation would make it impossible for DNS64 recursive resolvers to create synthesized AAAA answers that won't fail DNSSEC validation, thereby defeating the entire purpose of the 'ipv4only.arpa' name.
7. DNS Registries/Registrars need not know anything about the name 'ipv4only.arpa', just as they do not need to know anything about any other name they are not responsible for.





## **7.2. Names '170.0.0.192.in-addr.arpa' and '171.0.0.192.in-addr.arpa'**

Since the IPv4 addresses 192.0.0.170 and 192.0.0.171 are defined to be special, and are listed in the IPv4 Special-Purpose Address Registry [[SUVv4](#)], the corresponding reverse mapping names in the in-addr.arpa domain are similarly special.

The name '170.0.0.192.in-addr.arpa' is defined, by IETF specification [[RFC7050](#)], to have only one DNS record, type PTR, with rdata 'ipv4only.arpa'.

The name '171.0.0.192.in-addr.arpa' is defined, by IETF specification [[RFC7050](#)], to have only one DNS record, type PTR, with rdata 'ipv4only.arpa'.

There are no subdomains of '170.0.0.192.in-addr.arpa' or '171.0.0.192.in-addr.arpa'. All names falling below these names are defined to be nonexistent (NXDOMAIN).

Practically speaking these two names are rarely used, but to the extent that they may be, they are special only to resolver APIs and libraries, as described in item 3 below:

1. Normal users should never have reason to encounter these two reverse mapping names. However, if they do, queries for these reverse mapping names should return the expected answer 'ipv4only.arpa'. Normal users have no need to know that these reverse mapping names are special.
2. Application software SHOULD NOT recognize these two reverse mapping names as special, and SHOULD NOT treat them differently. For example, if the user were to issue the Unix command "host 192.0.0.170" then the "host" command should call the name resolution API or library as usual and display the result that is returned.
3. Name resolution APIs and libraries SHOULD recognize these two reverse mapping names as special and generate the required responses locally. For the names '170.0.0.192.in-addr.arpa' and '171.0.0.192.in-addr.arpa' PTR queries yield the result 'ipv4only.arpa'; all other query types yield a negative ("no error no answer") response. For all subdomains of these two reverse mapping domains, all queries yield an NXDOMAIN response. All names falling below these two reverse mapping domains are defined to be nonexistent.



This local self-contained generation of these responses is to avoid placing unnecessary load on the authoritative 'in-addr.arpa' name servers.

4. Recursive resolvers SHOULD NOT recognize these two reverse mapping names as special and SHOULD NOT, by default, give them any special treatment.
5. Authoritative name server software need not recognize these two reverse mapping names as special or handle them in any special way.
6. Generally speaking, most operators of authoritative name servers need not know anything about these two reverse mapping names, just as they do not need to know anything about any other names they are not responsible for. Only the operators of the authoritative name servers for these two reverse mapping names need to be aware that these names are special, and require fixed answers specified by IETF specification.
7. DNS Registries/Registrars need not know anything about these two reverse mapping names, just as they do not need to know anything about any other name they are not responsible for.

#### **7.2.1. ip6.arpa Reverse Mapping PTR Records**

For all IPv6 addresses synthesized by a DNS64 recursive resolver, the DNS64 recursive resolver is responsible for synthesizing the appropriate 'ip6.arpa' reverse mapping PTR records too, if it chooses to provide reverse mapping PTR records. The same applies to the synthesized IPv6 addresses corresponding to the IPv4 addresses 192.0.0.170 and 192.0.0.171.

Generally a DNS64 recursive resolver synthesizes appropriate 'ip6.arpa' reverse mapping PTR records by extracting the embedded IPv4 address from the encoded IPv6 address, performing a reverse mapping PTR query for that IPv4 address, and then synthesizing a corresponding 'ip6.arpa' reverse mapping PTR record containing the same rdata.



In the case of synthesized IPv6 addresses corresponding to the IPv4 addresses 192.0.0.170 and 192.0.0.171, the DNS64 recursive resolver does not issue reverse mapping queries for those IPv4 addresses, but instead, according to rule 3 above, immediately returns the answer 'ipv4only.arpa'.

In the case of a client that uses the 'ipv4only.arpa' query to discover the IPv6 prefixes in use by the local NAT64 gateway, and then proceeds to perform its own address synthesis locally (which has benefits such as allowing DNSSEC validation), that client MUST also synthesize 'ip6.arpa' reverse mapping PTR records for those discovered prefix(es), according to the rules above: When a client's name resolution APIs and libraries receive a request to look up an 'ip6.arpa' reverse mapping PTR record for an address that falls within one of the discovered NAT64 address synthesis prefixes, the software extracts the embedded IPv4 address and then, for IPv4 addresses 192.0.0.170 and 192.0.0.171, returns the fixed answer 'ipv4only.arpa', and for all other IPv4 addresses performs a reverse mapping PTR query for the IPv4 address, and then synthesizes a corresponding 'ip6.arpa' reverse mapping PTR record containing the same rdata.



## **8. Acknowledgements**

Thanks to Jouni Korhonen, Teemu Savolainen, and Dan Wing, for devising the NAT64 Prefix Discovery mechanism [[RFC7050](#)], and for their feedback on this document.

Thanks to Geoff Huston for his feedback on this document.

Thanks to Erik Kline for pointing out that the in-addr.arpa names are special too.

Thanks to Mark Andrews for pointing out the reasons why the 'ipv4only.arpa' zone MUST be an insecure delegation in order for the NAT64 Prefix Discovery mechanism [[RFC7050](#)] to work, and many other very helpful comments.

Thanks particularly to Lorenzo Colitti for an especially spirited hallway discussion at IETF 96 in Berlin, which lead directly to significant improvements in how this document presents the issues.

Thanks to Dave Thaler and Warren Kumari for generously helping shepherd this document through the publication process.

## **9. References**

### **9.1. Normative References**

- [RFC2119] Bradner, S., "Key words for use in RFCs to Indicate Requirement Levels", [BCP 14](#), [RFC 2119](#), DOI 10.17487/RFC2119, March 1997, <<https://www.rfc-editor.org/info/rfc2119>>.
- [RFC3646] Droms, R., Ed., "DNS Configuration options for Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol for IPv6 (DHCPv6)", [RFC 3646](#), DOI 10.17487/RFC3646, December 2003, <<https://www.rfc-editor.org/info/rfc3646>>.
- [RFC6146] Bagnulo, M., Matthews, P., and I. van Beijnum, "Stateful NAT64: Network Address and Protocol Translation from IPv6 Clients to IPv4 Servers", [RFC 6146](#), DOI 10.17487/RFC6146, April 2011, <<https://www.rfc-editor.org/info/rfc6146>>.
- [RFC6147] Bagnulo, M., Sullivan, A., Matthews, P., and I. van Beijnum, "DNS64: DNS Extensions for Network Address Translation from IPv6 Clients to IPv4 Servers", [RFC 6147](#), DOI 10.17487/RFC6147, April 2011, <<https://www.rfc-editor.org/info/rfc6147>>.





- [RFC6761] Cheshire, S. and M. Krochmal, "Special-Use Domain Names", [RFC 6761](#), DOI 10.17487/RFC6761, February 2013, <<https://www.rfc-editor.org/info/rfc6761>>.
- [RFC7050] Savolainen, T., Korhonen, J., and D. Wing, "Discovery of the IPv6 Prefix Used for IPv6 Address Synthesis", [RFC 7050](#), DOI 10.17487/RFC7050, November 2013, <<https://www.rfc-editor.org/info/rfc7050>>.
- [RFC8106] Jeong, J., Park, S., Beloeil, L., and S. Madanapalli, "IPv6 Router Advertisement Options for DNS Configuration", [RFC 8106](#), DOI 10.17487/RFC8106, March 2017, <<https://www.rfc-editor.org/info/rfc8106>>.
- [RFC8174] Leiba, B., "Ambiguity of Uppercase vs Lowercase in [RFC 2119](#) Key Words", [BCP 14](#), [RFC 8174](#), DOI 10.17487/RFC8174, May 2017, <<https://www.rfc-editor.org/info/rfc8174>>.

## **9.2. Informative References**

- [RFC6303] Andrews, M., "Locally Served DNS Zones", [BCP 163](#), [RFC 6303](#), DOI 10.17487/RFC6303, July 2011, <<https://www.rfc-editor.org/info/rfc6303>>.
- [RFC8244] Lemon, T., Droms, R., and W. Kumari, "Special-Use Domain Names Problem Statement", [RFC 8244](#), DOI 10.17487/RFC8244, October 2017, <<https://www.rfc-editor.org/info/rfc8244>>.
- [RFC8499] Hoffman, P., Sullivan, A., and K. Fujiwara, "DNS Terminology", [BCP 219](#), [RFC 8499](#), DOI 10.17487/RFC8499, January 2019, <<https://www.rfc-editor.org/info/rfc8499>>.
- [SUDN] "Special-Use Domain Names Registry", <<https://www.iana.org/assignments/special-use-domain-names/>>.
- [SUV4] "IANA IPv4 Special-Purpose Address Registry", <<https://www.iana.org/assignments/iana-ipv4-special-registry/>>.
- [DNS1] "1.1.1.1 - The free app that makes your Internet safer", <<https://1.1.1.1/>>.
- [DNS8] "Google Public DNS", <<https://developers.google.com/speed/public-dns/>>.
- [DNS9] "Quad9 - Internet Security and Privacy In a Few Easy Steps", <<https://quad9.net/>>.



## [Appendix A](#). Example BIND 9 Configuration

A BIND 9 recursive resolver can be configured to act as authoritative for the necessary DNS64 names as described below.

In `/etc/named.conf` the following line is added:

```
zone "ipv4only.arpa"          { type master; file "ipv4only"; };
```

The file `/var/named/ipv4only` is created with the following content:

```
$TTL 86400                ; Default TTL 24 hours
@ IN SOA nameserver.example. admin.nameserver.example. (
    2016052400            ; Serial
    7200                  ; Refresh ( 7200 = 2 hours)
    3600                  ; Retry   ( 3600 = 1 hour)
    15724800              ; Expire  (15724800 = 6 months)
    60                   ; Minimum
)
@ IN NS  nameserver.example.

@ IN A    192.0.0.170
@ IN A    192.0.0.171
@ IN AAAA 64:ff9b::192.0.0.170 ; If not using Well-Known Prefix
@ IN AAAA 64:ff9b::192.0.0.171 ; place chosen NAT64 prefix here
```



Authors' Addresses

Stuart Cheshire  
Apple Inc.  
One Apple Park Way  
Cupertino, California 95014  
USA

Phone: +1 (408) 996-1010  
Email: cheshire@apple.com

David Schinazi  
Google LLC  
1600 Amphitheatre Parkway  
Mountain View, California 94043  
USA

Email: dschinazi.ietf@gmail.com

