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Use Cases and Requirements for MPLS-TP multi-failure protection
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Abstract

For the Multiprotocol Label Switching Transport Profile (MPLS-TP) linear protection capable of 1+1 and 1:1 protection has already been defined. That linear protection mechanism has not been designed for handling multiple, simultaneously occurring failures, i.e. multiple failures that affect the working and the protection entity during the same time period. In these situations currently defined protection mechanisms would fail.

This document introduces use cases and requirements for mechanisms that are capable of protecting against such failures. It does not specify a multi-failure protection mechanism itself.

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[1.](#) Introduction

Today's packet optical transport networks concentrate large volumes of traffic onto a relatively small number of nodes and links. As a result, the failure of a single network element can potentially interrupt a large amount of traffic. For this reason, ensuring survivability through careful network design and appropriate technical means is important.

In MPLS-TP networks, a basic survivability technique is available as specified in [[RFC6378](#)], [[RFC7271](#)] and [[RFC7324](#)]. That protocol

however is limited to 1+1 and 1:1 protection and not designed to handle multiple failures that affect both the working and protection entity at the same time.

There are various scenarios where multi-failure protection is an important requirement for network survivability. E.g for disaster recovery, after catastrophic events such as earthquakes or tsunamis. During the period after such events, network availability is crucial, in particular for high-priority services such as emergency telephone calls. Existing 1+1 or 1:n protection however is limited to cover single failures which has proven as not sufficient during past events.

Beyond the natural disaster use case above, multi-failure protection is also beneficial in situations where the network is particularly vulnerable, e.g., when a working entity or protection entity was closed for maintenance or construction work. During this time, the network service becomes vulnerable to single failures since one entity is already down. If a failure occurs during this time, an operator might not be able to meet service level agreements (SLA). Thus, a technical means for multi-failure protection could take pressure off network operations.

1.1. Document scope

This document describes use cases and requirements for m:1 and m:n protection in MPLS-TP networks without the use of control plane protocols. Existing solutions based on a control plane such as GMPLS may be able to restore user traffic when multiple failures occur. Some networks however do not use full control plane operation for reasons such as service provider preferences, certain limitations or the requirement for fast service restoration (faster than achievable with control plane mechanisms). These networks are the focus of this document which defines a set of requirements for m:1 and m:n protection not based on control plane support. This document imposes no formal time constraints on detection times.

1.2. Requirements notation

The key words "MUST", "MUST NOT", "REQUIRED", "SHALL", "SHALL NOT",

"SHOULD", "SHOULD NOT", "RECOMMENDED", "MAY", and "OPTIONAL" in this document are to be interpreted as described in [[RFC2119](#)].

[1.3](#). Terminology

The terminology used in this document is based on the terminology defined in the MPLS-TP Survivability Framework document [[RFC6372](#)], which in turn is based on [[RFC4427](#)].

In particular, the following protection schemes are defined in [[RFC4427](#)] and used as terms in this document:

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- o 1+1 protection
- o 1:n ($n \geq 1$) protection
- o m:n ($m, n > 1, n \geq m > 1$) protection
- o Further, the following additional terminology is from [[RFC4427](#)] is used:
 - o "broadcast bridge"
 - o "selector bridge"
 - o "working entity"
 - o "protection entity"

This document defines a new protection type:

- o m:1 ($m > 1$) protection: A set of m protection entities protecting a single working entity

[2](#). General m:n protection scenario

The general underlying assumption of this work is that an m:n relationship between protection entity and working entity exists, i.e. there is no artificial limitation on the ratio between protection and working entities.

This general scenario is illustrated in Figure 1 which shows a protection domain with n working entities and m protection entities between Node A and Node Z.

At Node A, traffic is transported over its respective working entity and may be simultaneously transported over one of its protection entities (in case of a broadcast bridge), or it is transported over its working entity and only in case of failure over one of the protection entities (in case of a selector bridge). At Node Z, the traffic is selected from either its working entity or one of the protection entities.

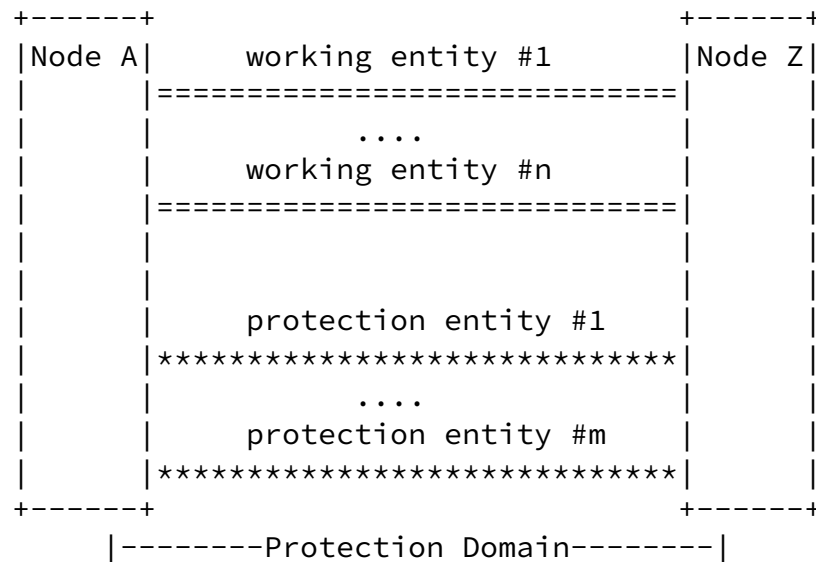


Figure 1: m:n protection domain

[3. Use cases](#)

[3.1. m:1 \(m > 1\) protection](#)

With MPLS-TP linear protection such as 1+1/1:1 protection, when a single failure is detected on the working entity, the service can be restored using the protection entity. During this time however, the traffic is unprotected until the working entity is restored.

m:1 protection can increase service availability and reduce operational pressure since multiple protection entities are available. For any $m > 1$, $m - 1$ protection entities may fail and the service still would have a protection entity available.

There are different ways to provision these alternative protection entities which are outlined in the following sub-sections.

3.1.1. Pre-configuration

The relationship between the working entity and the protection entities is part of the system configuration and needs to be configured before the working entity is being used. The same applies to additional protection entities.

Unprotected traffic can be transported over the m protection entities as long as these entities do not carry protected traffic.

3.1.2. On-demand configuration

The protection relationship between a working entity and a protection entity is configured while the system is in operation.

Additional protection entities are configured by either a control plane protocol or static configuration using a management system directly after failure detection and/or notification of either the working entity or the protection entities.

3.2. m:n ($m, n > 1, n \geq m > 1$) protection

In order to reduce the cost of protection entities, in the m:n scenario, m dedicated protection transport entities are sharing protection resources for n working transport entities.

The bandwidth of each protection entity should be allocated in such a way that it may be possible to protect any of the n working entities in case at least one of the m protection entities is available. When a working entity is determined to be impaired, its traffic first must be assigned to an available protection transport entity followed by a transition from the working to the assigned protection entity at both Node A and Node Z of the protected domain. It is noted that when more than m working entities are impaired, only m working entities can be protected.

4. Requirements

A number of recovery requirements are defined in [[RFC5654](#)]. These requirements however are limited to cover single failure case and not multiple, simultaneously occurring failures. This section extends the list of requirements to support multiple failures scenarios.

R1. MPLS-TP SHOULD support $m:1$ ($m > 1$) protection.

1. An $m:1$ protection mechanism MUST protect against multiple failures that are detected on both the working entity and one or more protection entities.
2. Pre-configuration of protection entities SHOULD be supported.
3. On-demand protection entity configuration MAY be supported.
4. On-demand protection resource activation MAY be supported.
5. A priority scheme MUST be provided, since a protection entity has to be chosen out of two or more protection entities.

R2. MPLS-TP SHOULD support $m:n$ ($m, n > 1, n \geq m > 1$) protection.

1. An $m:n$ protection mechanism MUST protect against multiple failures that are simultaneously detected on both a working entity and a protection entity or multiple working entities.
2. A priority scheme MUST be provided, since protection resources are shared by multiple working entities dynamically.

5. Security Considerations

General security considerations for MPLS-TP are covered in [[RFC5921](#)]. The security considerations for the generic associated control channel are described in [[RFC5586](#)]. The requirements described in this document are extensions to the requirements presented in [[RFC5654](#)] and does not introduce any new security risks.

6. Normative References

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