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**Security Considerations in the IP-based Internet of Things  
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Abstract

A direct interpretation of the Internet of Things concept refers to the usage of standard Internet protocols to allow for human-to-thing or thing-to-thing communication. Although the security needs are well-recognized, it is still not fully clear how existing IP-based security protocols can be applied to this new setting. This Internet-Draft first provides an overview of security architecture, its deployment model and general security needs in the context of the lifecycle of a thing. Then, it presents challenges and requirements for the successful roll-out of new applications and usage of standard IP-based security protocols when applied to get a functional Internet of Things.

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## **1. Conventions and Terminology Used in this Document**

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 "Key words for use in RFCs to Indicate Requirement Levels" [[RFC2119](#)].

## **2. Introduction**

The Internet of Things (IoT) denotes the interconnection of highly heterogeneous networked entities and networks following a number of communication patterns such as: human-to-human (H2H), human-to-thing (H2T), thing-to-thing (T2T), or thing-to-things (T2Ts). The term IoT was first coined by the Auto-ID center [AUTO-ID] in 1999. Since then, the development of the underlying concepts has ever increased its pace. Nowadays, the IoT presents a strong focus of research with various initiatives working on the (re)design, application, and usage of standard Internet technology in the IoT.

The introduction of IPv6 and web services as fundamental building blocks for IoT applications [[RFC6568](#)] promises to bring a number of basic advantages including: (i) a homogeneous protocol ecosystem that allows simple integration with Internet hosts; (ii) simplified development of very different appliances; (iii) an unified interface for applications, removing the need for application-level proxies. Such features greatly simplify the deployment of the envisioned scenarios ranging from building automation to production environments to personal area networks, in which very different things such as a temperature sensor, a luminaire, or an RFID tag might interact with each other, with a human carrying a smart phone, or with backend services.

This Internet Draft presents an overview of the security aspects of the envisioned all-IP architecture as well as of the lifecycle of an IoT device, a thing, within this architecture. In particular, we review the most pressing aspects and functionalities that are required for a secure all-IP solution.

With this, this Internet-Draft pursues several goals. First, we aim at presenting a comprehensive view of the interactions and relationships between an IoT application and security. Second, we aim at describing challenges for a secure IoT in the specific context of the lifecycle of a resource-constrained device. The final goal of this draft is to discuss the next steps towards a secure IoT.

The rest of the Internet-Draft is organized as follows. [Section 3](#) depicts the lifecycle of a thing and gives general definitions for



the main security aspects within the IoT domain. In [Section 4](#), we review existing protocols and work done in the area of security for wireless sensor networks. [Section 5](#) identifies general challenges and needs for an IoT security protocol design and discusses existing protocols and protocol proposals against the identified requirements. [Section 6](#) proposes a number of illustrative security suites describing how different applications involve distinct security needs. [Section 7](#) includes final remarks and conclusions.

### **3. The Thing Lifecycle and Architectural Considerations**

We consider the installation of a Building Automation and Control (BAC) system to illustrate the lifecycle of a thing in a BAC scenario. A BAC system consists of a network of interconnected nodes that perform various functions in the domains of HVAC (Heating, Ventilating, and Air Conditioning), lighting, safety etc. The nodes vary in functionality and a majority of them represent resource constrained devices such as sensors and luminaries. Some devices may also be battery operated or battery-less nodes, demanding for a focus on low energy consumption and on sleeping devices.

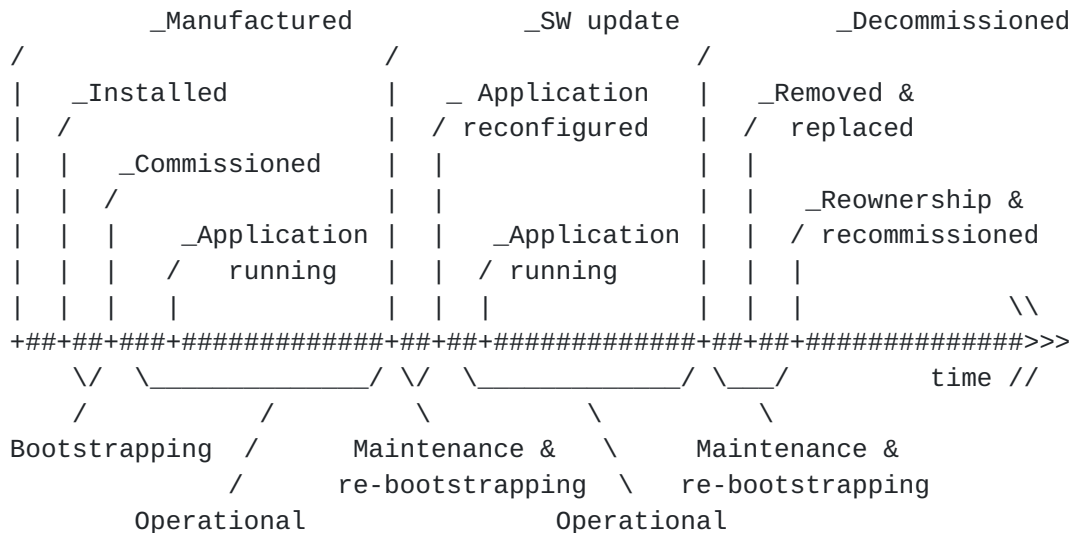
In our example, the life of a thing starts when it is manufactured. Due to the different application areas (i.e., HVAC, lighting, safety) nodes are tailored to a specific task. It is therefore unlikely that one single manufacturer will create all nodes in a building. Hence, interoperability as well as trust bootstrapping between nodes of different vendors is important. The thing is later installed and commissioned within a network by an installer during the bootstrapping phase. Specifically, the device identity and the secret keys used during normal operation are provided to the device during this phase. Different subcontractors may install different IoT devices for different purposes. Furthermore, the installation and bootstrapping procedures may not be a defined event but may stretch over an extended period of time. After being bootstrapped, the device and the system of things are in operational mode and run the functions of the BAC system. During this operational phase, the device is under the control of the system owner. For devices with lifetimes spanning several years, occasional maintenance cycles may be required. During each maintenance phase, the software on the device can be upgraded or applications running on the device can be reconfigured. The maintenance tasks can thereby be performed either locally or from a backend system. Depending on the operational changes of the device, it may be required to re-bootstrap at the end of a maintenance cycle. The device continues to loop through the operational phase and the eventual maintenance phase until the device is decommissioned at the end of its lifecycle. However, the end-of-life of a device does not necessarily mean that it is defective but





rather denotes a need to replace and upgrade the network to next-generation devices in order to provide additional functionality. Therefore the device can be removed and re-commissioned to be used in a different network under a different owner by starting the lifecycle over again. Figure 1 shows the generic lifecycle of a thing. This generic lifecycle is also applicable for IoT scenarios other than BAC systems.

At present, BAC systems use legacy building control standards such as BACnet [BACNET] or DALI [DALI] with independent networks for each subsystem (HVAC, lighting, etc.). However, this separation of functionality adds further complexity and costs to the configuration and maintenance of the different networks within the same building. As a result, more recent building control networks employ IP-based standards allowing seamless control over the various nodes with a single management system. While allowing for easier integration, this shift towards IP-based standards results in new requirements regarding the implementation of IP security protocols on constrained devices and the bootstrapping of security keys for devices across multiple manufacturers.



The lifecycle of a thing in the Internet of Things.

Figure 1

### 3.1. Threat Analysis

This section explores the security threats and vulnerabilities of a network of things in the IoTs. Security threats have been analyzed in related IP protocols including HTTPS [RFC2818], 6LoWPAN [RFC4919], ANCP [RFC5713], DNS security threats [RFC3833], SIP [RFC3261], IPv6



ND [[RFC3756](#)], and PANA [[RFC4016](#)]. Nonetheless, the challenge is about their impacts on scenarios of the IoTs. In this section, we specifically discuss the threats that could compromise an individual thing, or network as a whole, with regard to different phases in the thing's lifecycle. Note that these set of threats might go beyond the scope of Internet protocols but we gather them here for the sake of completeness.

- 1 Cloning of things: During the manufacturing process of a thing, an untrusted manufacturer can easily clone the physical characteristics, firmware/software, or security configuration of the thing. Subsequently, such a cloned thing may be sold at a cheaper price in the market, and yet be still able to function normally, as a genuine thing. For example, two cloned devices can still be associated and work with each other. In the worst case scenario, a cloned device can be used to control a genuine device. One should note here, that an untrusted manufacturer may also change functionality of the cloned thing, resulting in degraded functionality with respect to the genuine thing (thereby, inflicting potential reputational risk to the original thing manufacturer). Moreover, it can implement additional functionality with the cloned thing, such as a backdoor.
- 2 Malicious substitution of things: During the installation of a thing, a genuine thing may be substituted with a similar variant of lower quality without being detected. The main motivation may be cost savings, where the installation of lower-quality things (e.g., non-certified products) may significantly reduce the installation and operational costs. The installers can subsequently resell the genuine things in order to gain further financial benefits. Another motivation may be to inflict reputational damage on a competitor's offerings.
- 3 Eavesdropping attack: During the commissioning of a thing into a network, it may be susceptible to eavesdropping, especially if operational keying materials, security parameters, or configuration settings, are exchanged in clear using a wireless medium. After obtaining the keying material, the attacker might be able to recover the secret keys established between the communicating entities (e.g., H2T, T2Ts, or Thing to the backend management system), thereby compromising the authenticity and confidentiality of the communication channel, as well as the authenticity of commands and other traffic exchanged over this communication channel. When the network is in operation, T2T communication may be eavesdropped upon if the communication channel is not sufficiently protected or in the event of session key compromise due to a long period of usage without key renewal or updates.



- 4 Man-in-the-middle attack: The commissioning phase may also be vulnerable to man-in-the-middle attacks, e.g., when keying material between communicating entities is exchanged in the clear and the security of the key establishment protocol depends on the tacit assumption that no third party is able to eavesdrop on or sit in between the two communicating entities during the execution of this protocol. Additionally, device authentication or device authorization may be nontrivial, or may need support of a human decision process, since things usually do not have a priori knowledge about each other and can, therefore, not always be able to differentiate friends and foes via completely automated mechanisms. Thus, even if the key establishment protocol provides cryptographic device authentication, this knowledge on device identities may still need complementing with a human-assisted authorization step (thereby, presenting a weak link and offering the potential of man-in-the-middle attacks this way).
- 5 Firmware Replacement attack: When a thing is in operation or maintenance phase, its firmware or software may be updated to allow for new functionality or new features. An attacker may be able to exploit such a firmware upgrade by replacing the thing's with malicious software, thereby influencing the operational behaviour of the thing. For example, an attacker could add a piece of malicious code to the firmware that will cause it to periodically report the energy usage of the lamp to a data repository for analysis.
- 6 Extraction of security parameters: A thing deployed in the ambient environment (such as sensors, actuators, etc.) is usually physically unprotected and could easily be captured by an attacker. Such an attacker may then attempt to extract security information such as keys (e.g., device's key, private-key, group key) from this thing or try and re-program it to serve his needs. If a group key is used and compromised this way, the whole network may be compromised as well. Compromise of a thing's unique key has less security impact, since only the communication channels of this particular thing in question are compromised. Here, one should caution that compromise of the communication channel may also compromise all data communicated over this channel. In particular, one has to be wary of, e.g., compromise of group keys communicated over this channel (thus, leading to transitive exposure ripple effects).
- 7 Routing attack: As highlighted in [ID-Daniel], routing information in IoT can be spoofed, altered, or replayed, in order to create routing loops, attract/repel network traffic, extend/shorten source routes, etc. Other relevant routing attacks



include 1) Sinkhole attack (or blackhole attack), where an attacker declares himself to have a high-quality route/path to the base station, thus allowing him to do anything to all packets passing through it. 2) Selective forwarding, where an attacker may selectively forward packets or simply drop a packet. 3) Wormhole attack, where an attacker may record packets at one location in the network and tunnel them to another location, thereby influencing perceived network behaviour and potentially distorting statistics, thus greatly impacting the functionality of routing. 4) Sybil attack, whereby an attacker presents multiple identities to other things in the network.

- 8 Privacy threat: The tracking of a thing's location and usage may pose a privacy risk to its users. An attacker can infer information based on the information gathered about individual things, thus deducing behavioural patterns of the user of interest to him. Such information can subsequently be sold to interested parties for marketing purposes and targeted advertizing.
- 9 Denial-of-Service attack: Typically, things have tight memory and limited computation, they are thus vulnerable to resource exhaustion attack. Attackers can continuously send requests to be processed by specific things so as to deplete their resources. This is especially dangerous in the IoTs since an attacker might be located in the backend and target resource-constrained devices in an LLN. Additionally, DoS attack can be launched by physically jamming the communication channel, thus breaking down the T2T communication channel. Network availability can also be disrupted by flooding the network with a large number of packets.

The following table summarizes the security threats we identified above and the potential point of vulnerabilities at different layers of the communication stack. We also include related RFCs that include a threat model that might apply to the IoTs.





	Manufacturing	Installation/ Commissioning	Operation
Thing's Model	Device Cloning	Substitution	Privacy threat Extraction of security params
Application Layer		<a href="#">RFC2818</a> <a href="#">RFC4016</a>	<a href="#">RFC2818</a> , Firmware replacement
Transport Layer		Eavesdropping & Man-in-the-middle attack	Eavesdropping Man-in-the-middle <a href="#">RFC4919</a> , DoS attack
Network Layer		<a href="#">RFC4919</a> , <a href="#">RFC5713</a> <a href="#">RFC3833</a> , <a href="#">RFC3756</a>	Routing attack <a href="#">RFC3833</a>
Physical Layer			DoS attack

The security threat analysis

Figure 2

### 3.2. Security Aspects

The term security subsumes a wide range of different concepts. In the first place, it refers to the basic provision of security services including confidentiality, authentication, integrity, authorization, non-repudiation, and availability, and some augmented services, such as duplicate detection and detection of stale packets (timeliness). These security services can be implemented by a combination of cryptographic mechanisms, such as block ciphers, hash functions, or signature algorithms, and non-cryptographic mechanisms, which implement authorization and other security policy enforcement aspects. For each of the cryptographic mechanisms, a solid key management infrastructure is fundamental to handling the required cryptographic keys, whereas for security policy enforcement, one needs to properly codify authorizations as a function of device roles and a security policy engine that implements these authorization checks and that can implement changes hereto throughout the system's lifecycle.

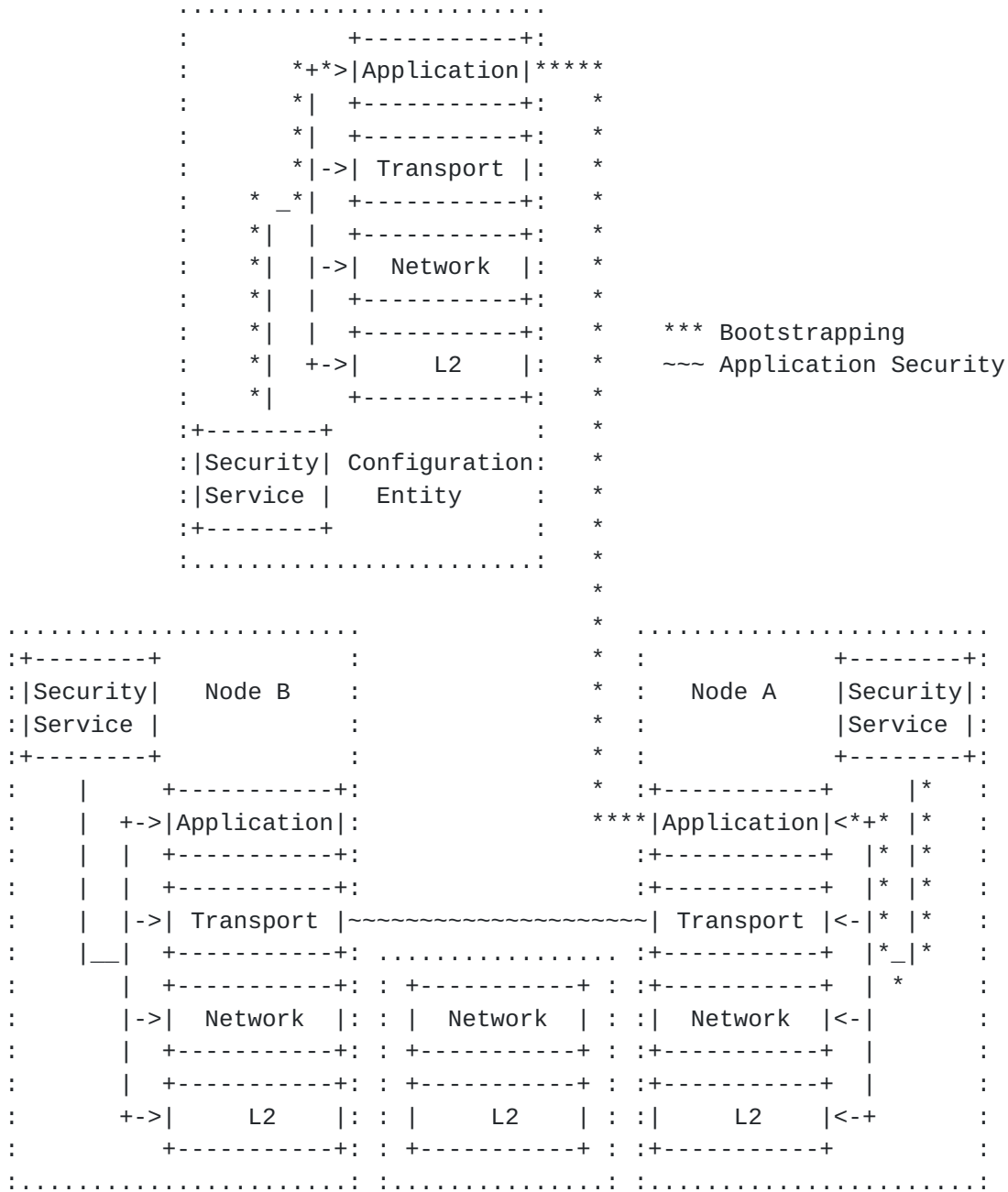
In the context of the IoT, however, the security must not only focus on the required security services, but also how these are realized in the overall system and how the security functionalities are executed.



To this end, we use the following terminology to analyze and classify security aspects in the IoT:

- 1    The security architecture refers to the system elements involved in the management of the security relationships between things and the way these security interactions are handled (e.g., centralized or distributed) during the lifecycle of a thing.
- 2    The security model of a node describes how the security parameters, processes, and applications are managed in a thing. This includes aspects such as process separation, secure storage of keying materials, etc.
- 3    Security bootstrapping denotes the process by which a thing securely joins the IoT at a given location and point in time. Bootstrapping includes the authentication and authorization of a device as well as the transfer of security parameters allowing for its trusted operation in a given network.
- 4    Network security describes the mechanisms applied within a network to ensure trusted operation of the IoT. Specifically, it prevents attackers from endangering or modifying the expected operation of networked things. Network security can include a number of mechanisms ranging from secure routing to data link layer and network layer security.
- 5    Application security guarantees that only trusted instances of an application running in the IoT can communicate with each other, while illegitimate instances cannot interfere.





\*\*\* Bootstrapping  
 ~~~ Application Security

Overview of Security Mechanisms.

Figure 3

We now discuss an exemplary security architecture relying on a configuration entity for the management of the system with regard to the introduced security aspects (see Figure 2). Inspired by the security framework for routing over low power and lossy network [ID-Tsao], we show an example of security model and illustrates how different security concepts and the lifecycle phases map to the Internet communication stack. Assume a centralized architecture in



which a configuration entity stores and manages the identities of the things associated with the system along with their cryptographic keys. During the bootstrapping phase, each thing executes the bootstrapping protocol with the configuration entity, thus obtaining the required device identities and the keying material. The security service on a thing in turn stores the received keying material for the network layer and application security mechanisms for secure communication. Things can then securely communicate with each other during their operational phase by means of the employed network and application security mechanisms.

#### **4. State of the Art**

Nowadays, there exists a multitude of control protocols for the IoT. For BAC systems, the ZigBee standard [ZB], BACNet [BACNET], or DALI [DALI] play key roles. Recent trends, however, focus on an all-IP approach for system control.

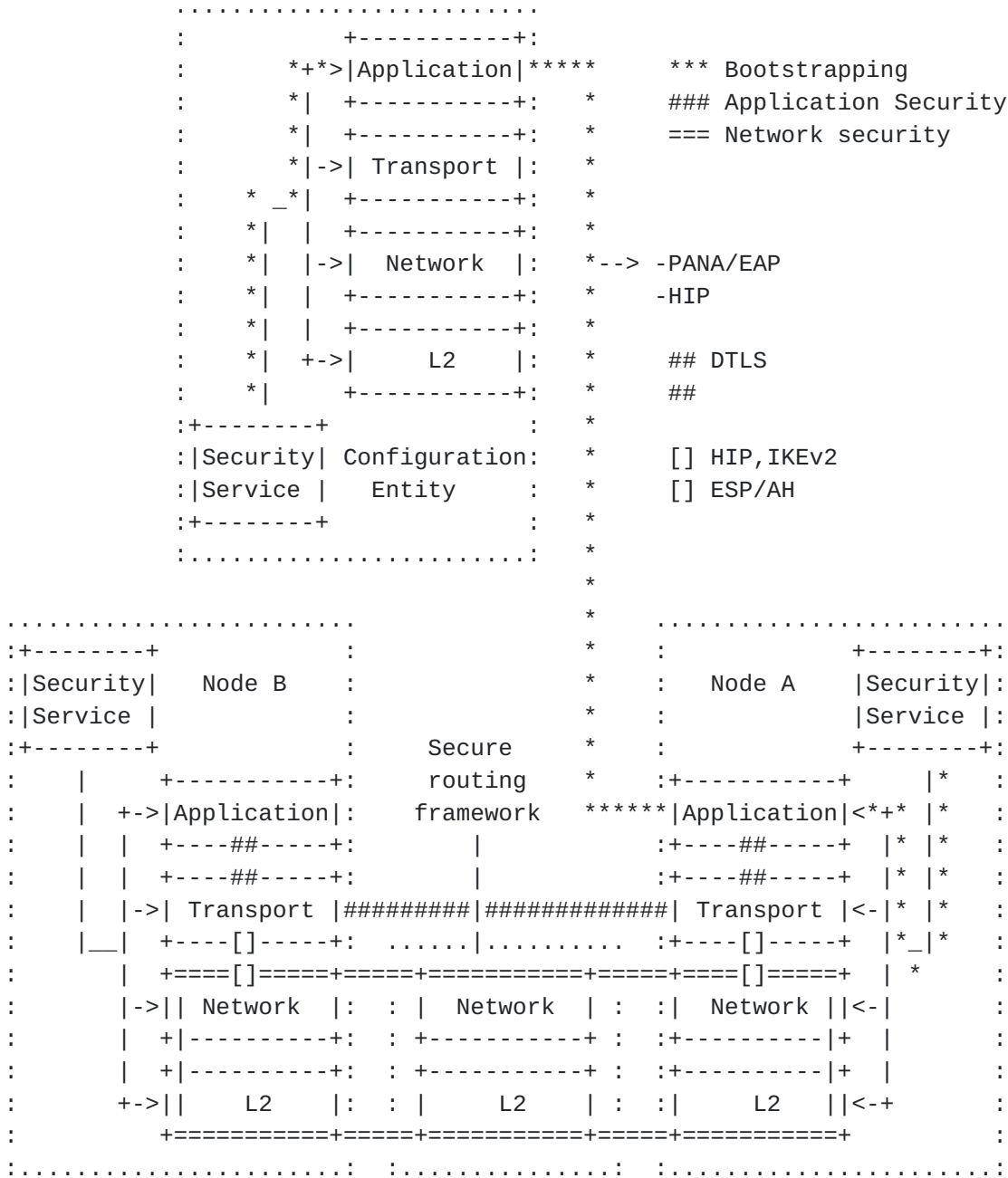
In this setting, a number of IETF working groups are designing new protocols for resource constrained networks of smart things. The 6LoWPAN working group [WG-6LoWPAN] concentrates on the definition of methods and protocols for the efficient transmission and adaptation of IPv6 packets over IEEE 802.15.4 networks [[RFC4944](#)]. The CoRE working group [WG-CoRE] provides a framework for resource-oriented applications intended to run on constrained IP network (6LoWPAN). One of its main tasks is the definition of a lightweight version of the HTTP protocol, the Constrained Application Protocol (CoAP) [ID-CoAP], that runs over UDP and enables efficient application-level communication for things.

##### **4.1. IP-based Security Solutions**

In the context of the IP-based IoT solutions, consideration of TCP/IP security protocols is important as these protocols are designed to fit the IP network ideology and technology. While a wide range of specialized as well as general-purpose key exchange and security solutions exist for the Internet domain, we discuss a number of protocols and procedures that have been recently discussed in the context of the above working groups. The considered protocols are IKEv2/IPsec [[RFC4306](#)], TLS/SSL [[RFC5246](#)], DTLS [[RFC5238](#)], HIP [[RFC5201](#)][ID-Moskowitz], PANA [[RFC5191](#)], and EAP [[RFC3748](#)] in this Internet-Draft. Application layer solutions such as SSH [[RFC4251](#)] also exist, however, these are currently not considered. Figure 3 depicts the relationships between the discussed protocols in the context of the security terminology introduced in [Section 3.1](#).







Relationships between IP-based security protocols.

Figure 4

The Internet Key Exchange (IKEv2)/IPsec and the Host Identity protocol (HIP) reside at or above the network layer in the OSI model. Both protocols are able to perform an authenticated key exchange and set up the IPsec transforms for secure payload delivery. Currently, there are also ongoing efforts to create a HIP variant coined Diet HIP [ID-HIP] that takes lossy low-power networks into account at the authentication and key exchange level.



Transport Layer Security (TLS) and its datagram-oriented variant DTLS secure transport-layer connections. TLS provides security for TCP and requires a reliable transport, while DTLS secures and uses datagram-oriented protocols such as UDP. Both protocols are intentionally kept similar and share the same ideology and cipher suites.

The Extensible Authentication Protocol (EAP) is an authentication framework supporting multiple authentication methods. EAP runs directly over the data link layer and, thus, does not require the deployment of IP. It supports duplicate detection and retransmission, but does not allow for packet fragmentation. The Protocol for Carrying Authentication for Network Access (PANA) is a network-layer transport for EAP that enables network access authentication between clients and the network infrastructure. In EAP terms, PANA is a UDP-based EAP lower layer that runs between the EAP peer and the EAP authenticator.

#### **4.2. Wireless Sensor Network Security and Beyond**

A variety of key agreement and privacy protection protocols that are tailored to IoT scenarios have been introduced in the literature. For instance, random key pre-distribution schemes [PROC-Chan] or more centralized solutions, such as SPINS [JOURNAL-Perrig], have been proposed for key establishment in wireless sensor networks. The ZigBee standard [ZB] for sensor networks defines a security architecture based on an online trust center that is in charge of handling the security relationships within a ZigBee network. Personal privacy in ubiquitous computing has been studied extensively, e.g., in [THESIS-Langheinrich]. Due to resource constraints and the specialization to meet specific requirements, these solutions often implement a collapsed cross layer optimized communication stack (e.g., without task-specific network layers and layered packet headers). Consequently, they cannot directly be adapted to the requirements of the Internet due to the nature of their design.

Despite important steps done by, e.g., Gupta et al. [PROC-Gupta], to show the feasibility of an end-to-end standard security architecture for the embedded Internet, the Internet and the IoT domain still do not fit together easily. This is mainly due to the fact that IoT security solutions are often tailored to the specific scenario requirements without considering interoperability with Internet protocols. On the other hand, the direct use of existing Internet security protocols in the IoT might lead to inefficient or insecure operation as we show in our discussion below.



## **5. Challenges for a Secure Internet of Things**

In this section, we take a closer look at the various security challenges in the operational and technical features of the IoT and then discuss how existing Internet security protocols cope with these technical and conceptual challenges through the lifecycle of a thing. Table 1 summarizes which requirements need to be met in the lifecycle phases as well as the considered protocols. The structure of this section follows the structure of the table. This discussion should neither be understood as a comprehensive evaluation of all protocols, nor can it cover all possible aspects of IoT security. Yet, it aims at showing concrete limitations of existing Internet security protocols in some areas rather than giving an abstract discussion about general properties of the protocols. In this regard, the discussion handles issues that are most important from the authors' perspectives.

### **5.1. Constraints and Heterogeneous Communication**

Coupling resource constrained networks and the powerful Internet is a challenge because the resulting heterogeneity of both networks complicates protocol design and system operation. In the following we briefly discuss the resource constraints of IoT devices and the consequences for the use of Internet Protocols in the IoT domain.

#### **5.1.1. Tight Resource Constraints**

The IoT is a resource-constrained network that relies on lossy and low-bandwidth channels for communication between small nodes, regarding CPU, memory, and energy budget. These characteristics directly impact the threats to and the design of security protocols for the IoT domain. First, the use of small packets, e.g., IEEE 802.15.4 supports 127-byte sized packets at the physical layer, may result in fragmentation of larger packets of security protocols. This may open new attack vectors for state exhaustion DoS attacks, which is especially tragic, e.g., if the fragmentation is caused by large key exchange messages of security protocols. Moreover, packet fragmentation commonly downgrades the overall system performance due to fragment losses and the need for retransmissions. For instance, fate-sharing packet flight as implemented by DTLS might aggravate the resulting performance loss.



|              | Bootstrapping phase                                                                                     | Operational Phase                                                      |
|--------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Requirements | Incremental deployment<br>Identity and key management<br>Privacy-aware identification<br>Group creation | End-to-End security<br>Mobility support<br>Group membership management |
| Protocols    | IKEv2<br>TLS/DTLS<br>HIP/Diet-HIP<br>PANA/EAP                                                           | IKEv2/MOBIKE<br>TLS/DTLS<br>HIP/Diet-HIP                               |

Relationships between IP-based security protocols.

Figure 5

The size and number of messages should be minimized to reduce memory requirements and optimize bandwidth usage. In this context, layered approaches involving a number of protocols might lead to worse performance in resource-constrained devices since they combine the headers of the different protocols. In some settings, protocol negotiation can increase the number of exchanged messages. To improve performance during basic procedures such as, e.g., bootstrapping, it might be a good strategy to perform those procedures at a lower layer.

Small CPUs and scarce memory limit the usage of resource-expensive cryptoprimitives such as public-key cryptography as used in most Internet security standards. This is especially true, if the basic cryptoblocks need to be frequently used or the underlying application demands a low delay.

Independently from the development in the IoT domain, all discussed security protocols show efforts to reduce the cryptographic cost of the required public-key-based key exchanges and signatures with ECC[RFC5246][RFC5903][ID-Moskowitz][ID-HIP]. Moreover, all protocols have been revised in the last years to enable crypto agility, making cryptographic primitives interchangeable. Diet HIP takes the reduction of the cryptographic load one step further by focusing on cryptographic primitives that are to be expected to be enabled in hardware on IEEE 802.15.4 compliant devices. For example, Diet HIP does not require cryptographic hash functions but uses a CMAC [NIST] based mechanism, which can directly use the AES hardware available in standard sensor platforms. However, these improvements are only a first step in reducing the computation and communication overhead of Internet protocols. The question remains if other approaches can be





applied to leverage key agreement in these heavily resource-constrained environments.

A further fundamental need refers to the limited energy budget available to IoT nodes. Careful protocol (re)design and usage is required to reduce not only the energy consumption during normal operation, but also under DoS attacks. Since the energy consumption of IoT devices differs from other device classes, judgments on the energy consumption of a particular protocol cannot be made without tailor-made IoT implementations.

### **5.1.2. Denial-of-Service Resistance**

The tight memory and processing constraints of things naturally alleviate resource exhaustion attacks. Especially in unattended T2T communication, such attacks are difficult to notice before the service becomes unavailable (e.g., because of battery or memory exhaustion). As a DoS countermeasure, DTLS, IKEv2, HIP, and Diet HIP implement return routability checks based on a cookie mechanism to delay the establishment of state at the responding host until the address of the initiating host is verified. The effectiveness of these defenses strongly depends on the routing topology of the network. Return routability checks are particularly effective if hosts cannot receive packets addressed to other hosts and if IP addresses present meaningful information as is the case in today's Internet. However, they are less effective in broadcast media or when attackers can influence the routing and addressing of hosts (e.g., if hosts contribute to the routing infrastructure in ad-hoc networks and meshes).

In addition, HIP implements a puzzle mechanism that can force the initiator of a connection (and potential attacker) to solve cryptographic puzzles with variable difficulties. Puzzle-based defense mechanisms are less dependent on the network topology but perform poorly if CPU resources in the network are heterogeneous (e.g., if a powerful Internet host attacks a thing). Increasing the puzzle difficulty under attack conditions can easily lead to situations, where a powerful attacker can still solve the puzzle while weak IoT clients cannot and are excluded from communicating with the victim. Still, puzzle-based approaches are a viable option for sheltering IoT devices against unintended overload caused by misconfigured or malfunctioning things.

### **5.1.3. Protocol Translation and End-to-End Security**

Even though 6LoWPAN and CoAP progress towards reducing the gap between Internet protocols and the IoT, they do not target protocol specifications that are identical to their Internet pendants due to



performance reasons. Hence, more or less subtle differences between IoT protocols and Internet protocols will remain. While these differences can easily be bridged with protocol translators at gateways, they become major obstacles if end-to-end security measures between IoT devices and Internet hosts are used.

Cryptographic payload processing applies message authentication codes or encryption to packets. These protection methods render the protected parts of the packets immutable as rewriting is either not possible because a) the relevant information is encrypted and inaccessible to the gateway or b) rewriting integrity-protected parts of the packet would invalidate the end-to-end integrity protection.

There are essentially four solutions for this problem:

- 1 Sharing symmetric keys with gateways enables gateways to transform (e.g., de-compress, convert, etc.) packets and re-apply the security measures after transformation. This method abandons end-to-end security and is only applicable to simple scenarios with a rudimentary security model.
- 2 Reusing the Internet wire format in the IoT makes conversion between IoT and Internet protocols unnecessary. However, it leads to poor performance because IoT specific optimizations (e.g., stateful or stateless compression) are not possible.
- 3 Selectively protecting vital and immutable packet parts with a MAC or with encryption requires a careful balance between performance and security. Otherwise, this approach will either result in poor performance (protect as much as possible) or poor security (compress and transform as much as possible).
- 4 Message authentication codes that sustain transformation can be realized by considering the order of transformation and protection (e.g., by creating a signature before compression so that the gateway can decompress the packet without recalculating the signature). This enables IoT specific optimizations but is more complex and may require application-specific transformations before security is applied. Moreover, it cannot be used with encrypted data because the lack of cleartext prevents gateways from transforming packets.

To the best of our knowledge, none of the mentioned security protocols provides a fully customizable solution in this problem space. In fact, they usually offer an end-to-end secured connection. An exception is the usage layered approach as might be PANA and EAP. In such a case, this configuration (i) allows for a number of configurations regarding the location of, e.g., the EAP authenticator



and authentication server and (ii) the layered architecture might allow for authentication at different places. The drawback of this approach, however, lies in its high signaling traffic volume compared to other approaches. Hence, future work is required to ensure security, performance and interoperability between IoT and the Internet.

## **5.2. Bootstrapping of a Security Domain**

Creating a security domain from a set of previously unassociated IoT devices is a key operation in the lifecycle of a thing and in the IoT network. In this section, we discuss general forms of network operation, how to communicate a thing's identity and the privacy implications arising from the communication of this identity.

### **5.2.1. Distributed vs. Centralized Architecture and Operation**

Most things might be required to support both centralized and distributed operation patterns. Distributed thing-to-thing communication might happen on demand, for instance, when two things form an ad-hoc security domain to cooperatively fulfill a certain task. Likewise, nodes may communicate with a backend service located in the Internet without a central security manager. The same nodes may also be part of a centralized architecture with a dedicated node being responsible for the security management for group communication between things in the IoT domain. In today's IoT, most common architectures are fully centralized in the sense that all the security relationships within a segment are handled by a central party. In the ZigBee standard, this entity is the trust center. Current proposals for 6LoWPAN/CoRE identify the 6LoWPAN Border Router (6LBR) as such a device.

A centralized architecture allows for central management of devices and keying materials as well as for the backup of cryptographic keys. However, it also imposes some limitations. First, it represents a single point of failure. This is a major drawback, e.g., when key agreement between two devices requires online connectivity to the central node. Second, it limits the possibility to create ad-hoc security domains without dedicated security infrastructure. Third, it codifies a more static world view, where device roles are cast in stone, rather than a more dynamic world view that recognizes that networks and devices, and their roles and ownership, may change over time (e.g., due to device replacement and hand-over of control).

Decentralized architectures, on the other hand, allow creating ad-hoc security domains that might not require a single online management entity and are operative in a much more stand-alone manner. The ad-hoc security domains can be added to a centralized architecture at a



later point in time, allowing for central or remote management.

### **5.2.2. Bootstrapping a thing's identity and keying materials**

Bootstrapping refers to the process by which a device is associated to another one, to a network, or to a system. The way it is performed depends upon the architecture: centralized or distributed. It is important to realize that bootstrapping may involve different types of information, ranging from network parameters and information on device capabilities and their presumed functionality, to management information related to, e.g., resource scheduling and trust initialization/management. Furthermore, bootstrapping may occur in stages during the lifecycle of a device and may include provisioning steps already conducted during device manufacturing (e.g., imprinting a unique identifier or a root certificate into a device during chip testing), further steps during module manufacturing (e.g., setting of application-based configurations, such as temperature read-out frequencies and push-thresholds), during personalization (e.g., fine-tuned settings depending on installation context), during hand-over (e.g., transfer of ownership from supplier to user), and, e.g., in preparation of operation in a specific network. In what follows, we focus on bootstrapping of security-related information, since bootstrapping of all other information can be conducted as ordinary secured communications, once a secure and authentic channel between devices has been put in place.

In a distributed approach, a Diffie-Hellman type of handshake can allow two peers to agree on a common secret. In general, IKEv2, HIP, TLS, DTLS, can perform key exchanges and the setup of security associations without online connections to a trust center. If we do not consider the resource limitations of things, certificates and certificate chains can be employed to securely communicate capabilities in such a decentralized scenario. HIP and Diet HIP do not directly use certificates for identifying a host, however certificate handling capabilities exist for HIP and the same protocol logic could be used for Diet HIP. It is noteworthy, that Diet HIP does not require a host to implement cryptographic hashes. Hence, some lightweight implementations of Diet HIP might not be able to verify certificates unless a hash function is implemented by the host.

In a centralized architecture, preconfigured keys or certificates held by a thing can be used for the distribution of operational keys in a given security domain. A current proposal [ID-OFlynn] refers to the use of PANA for the transport of EAP messages between the PANA client (the joining thing) and the PANA Authentication Agent (PAA), the 6LBR. EAP is thereby used to authenticate the identity of the joining thing. After the successful authentication, the PANA PAA





provides the joining thing with fresh network and security parameters.

IKEv2, HIP, TLS, and DTLS could be applied as well for the transfer of configuration parameters in a centralized scenario. While HIP's cryptographic secret identifies the thing, the other protocols do not represent primary identifiers but are used instead to bind other identifiers such as the operation keys to the public-key identities.

In addition to the protocols, operational aspects during bootstrapping are of key importance as well. Many other standard Internet protocols assume that the identity of a host is either available by using secondary services like certificate authorities or secure name resolution (e.g., DNSsec) or can be provided over a side channel (entering passwords via screen and keyboard). While these assumptions may hold in traditional networks, intermittent connectivity, localized communication, and lack of input methods complicate the situation for the IoT.

The order in which the things within a security domain are bootstrapped plays an important role as well. In [[RFC6345](#)], the PANA relay element is introduced, relaying PANA messages between a PaC (joining thing) and PAA of a segment [ID-OFlynn]. This approach forces commissioning based on distance to PAA, i.e., things can only be bootstrapped hop-by-hop starting from those closer to the PAA, all things that are 1-hop away are bootstrapped first, followed by those that are 2-hop away, and so on. Such an approach might impose important limitations on actual use cases in which, e.g., an installer without technical background has to roll-out the system.

### **5.2.3. Privacy-aware Identification**

During the last years, the introduction of RFID tags has raised privacy concerns because anyone might access and track tags. As the IoT involves not only passive devices, but also includes active and sensing devices, the IoT might irrupt even deeper in people's privacy spheres. Thus, IoT protocols should be designed to avoid these privacy threats during bootstrapping and operation where deemed necessary. In H2T and T2T interactions, privacy-aware identifiers might be used to prevent unauthorized user tracking. Similarly, authentication can be used to prove membership of a group without revealing unnecessary individual information.

TLS and DTLS provide the option of only authenticating the responding host. This way, the initiating host can stay anonymous. If authentication for the initiating host is required as well, either public-key certificates or authentication via the established encrypted payload channel can be employed. Such a setup allows to



only reveal the responder's identity to possible eavesdroppers.

HIP and IKEv2 use public-key identities to authenticate the initiator of a connection. These identities could easily be traced if no additional protection were in place. IKEv2 transmits this information in an encrypted packet. Likewise, HIP provides the option to keep the identity of the initiator secret from eavesdroppers by encrypting it with the symmetric key generated during the handshake. However, Diet HIP cannot provide a similar feature because the identity of the initiator simultaneously serves as static Diffie-Hellman key. Note that all discussed solutions could use anonymous public-key identities that change for each communication. However, such identity cycling may require a considerable computational effort for generating new asymmetric key pairs. In addition to the built-in privacy features of the here discussed protocols, a large body of anonymity research for key exchange protocols exists. However, the comparison of these protocols and protocol extensions is out of scope for this work.

### **5.3. Operation**

After the bootstrapping phase, the system enters the operational phase. During the operational phase, things can relate to the state information created during the bootstrapping phase in order to exchange information securely and in an authenticated fashion. In this section, we discuss aspects of communication patterns and network dynamics during this phase.

#### **5.3.1. End-to-End Security**

Providing end-to-end security is of great importance to address and secure individual T2T or H2T communication within one IoT domain. Moreover, end-to-end security associations are an important measure to bridge the gap between the IoT and the Internet. IKEv2 and HIP, TLS and DTLS provide end-to-end security services including peer entity authentication, end-to-end encryption and integrity protection above the network layer and the transport layer respectively. Once bootstrapped, these functions can be carried out without online connections to third parties, making the protocols applicable for decentralized use in the IoT. However, protocol translation by intermediary nodes may invalidate end-to-end protection measures (see [Section 5.1](#)).

#### **5.3.2. Group Membership and Security**

In addition to end-to-end security, group key negotiation is an important security service for the T2Ts and Ts2T communication patterns in the IoT as efficient local broadcast and multicast relies



on symmetric group keys.

All discussed protocols only cover unicast communication and therefore do not focus on group-key establishment. However, the Diffie-Hellman keys that are used in IKEv2 and HIP could be used for group Diffie-Hellman key-negotiations. Conceptually, solutions that provide secure group communication at the network layer (IPsec/IKEv2, HIP/Diet HIP) may have an advantage regarding the cryptographic overhead compared to application-focused security solutions (TLS/DTLS). This is due to the fact that application-focused solutions require cryptographic operations per group application, whereas network layer approaches may allow to share secure group associations between multiple applications (e.g., for neighbor discovery and routing or service discovery). Hence, implementing shared features lower in the communication stack can avoid redundant security measures.

A number of group key solutions have been developed in the context of the IETF working group MSEC in the context of the MIKEY architecture [WG-MSEC][RFC4738]. These are specifically tailored for multicast and group broadcast applications in the Internet and should also be considered as candidate solutions for group key agreement in the IoT. The MIKEY architecture describes a coordinator entity that disseminates symmetric keys over pair-wise end-to-end secured channels. However, such a centralized approach may not be applicable in a distributed environment, where the choice of one or several coordinators and the management of the group key is not trivial.

### **5.3.3. Mobility and IP Network Dynamics**

It is expected that many things (e.g., wearable sensors, and user devices) will be mobile in the sense that they are attached to different networks during the lifetime of a security association. Built-in mobility signaling can greatly reduce the overhead of the cryptographic protocols because unnecessary and costly re-establishments of the session (possibly including handshake and key agreement) can be avoided. IKEv2 supports host mobility with the MOBIKE [RFC4555][RFC4621] extension. MOBIKE refrains from applying heavyweight cryptographic extensions for mobility. However, MOBIKE mandates the use of IPsec tunnel mode which requires to transmit an additional IP header in each packet. This additional overhead could be alleviated by using header compression methods or the Bound End-to-End Tunnel (BEET) mode [ID-Nikander], a hybrid of tunnel and transport mode with smaller packet headers.

HIP offers a simple yet effective mobility management by allowing hosts to signal changes to their associations [RFC5206]. However, slight adjustments might be necessary to reduce the cryptographic



costs, for example, by making the public-key signatures in the mobility messages optional. Diet HIP does not define mobility yet but it is sufficiently similar to HIP to employ the same mechanisms. TLS and DTLS do not have standards for mobility support, however, work on DTLS mobility exists in the form of an Internet draft [ID-Williams]. The specific need for IP-layer mobility mainly depends on the scenario in which nodes operate. In many cases, mobility support by means of a mobile gateway may suffice to enable mobile IoT networks, such as body sensor networks. However, if individual things change their point of network attachment while communicating, mobility support may gain importance.

## 6. Security Suites for the IP-based Internet of Things

Different applications have different security requirements and needs and, depending on various factors, such as device capability, availability of network infrastructure, security services needed, usage, etc., the required security protection may vary from "no security" to "full-blown security". For example, applications may have different needs regarding authentication and confidentiality. While some application might not require any authentication at all, others might require strong end-to-end authentication. In terms of secure bootstrapping of keys, some applications might assume the existence and online availability of a central key-distribution-center (KDC) within the 6LoWPAN network to distribute and manage keys; while other applications cannot rely on such a central party or their availability.

Thus, it is essential to define security profiles to better tailor security solutions for different applications with the same characteristics and requirements. This provides a means of grouping applications into profiles and then defines the minimal required security primitives to enable and support the security needs of the profile. The security elements in a security profile can be classified according to [Section 3.1](#), namely:

- 1 Security architecture,
- 2 Security model,
- 3 Security bootstrapping,
- 4 Network security, and





## 5 Application security.

In order to (i) guide the design process by identifying open gaps; (ii) allow for later interoperability; and (iii) prevent possible security misconfigurations, this section defines a number of generic security profiles with different security needs. Each security profile is identified by:

- 1 a short description,
- 2 an exemplary application that might use/require such a security policy,
- 3 the security requirements for each of the above security aspects according to our classification in [Section 3.1](#).

These security profiles can serve to guide the standardization process, since these explicitly describe the basic functionalities and protocols required to get different use cases up and running. It can allow for later interoperability since different manufacturers can describe the implemented security profile in their products. Finally, the security profiles can avoid possible security misconfigurations, since each security profile can be bound to a different application area so that it can be clearly defined which security protocols and approaches can be applied where and under which circumstances.

Note that each of these security profiles aim at summarizing the required security requirements for different applications and at providing a set of initial security features. In other words, these profiles reflect the need for different security configurations, depending on the threat and trust models of the underlying applications. In this sense, this section does not provide an overview of existing protocols as done in previous sections of the Internet Draft, but it rather explicitly describes what should be in place to ensure secure system operation. Observe also that this list of security profiles is not exhaustive and that it should be considered just as an example not related to existing legal regulations for any existing application. These security profiles are summarized in the table below:



| Application                           | Description                                                                                                    |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| SecProf_0   No security needs         | 6LoWPAN/CoAP is used without security                                                                          |
| SecProf_1   Home usage                | Enables operation between home things   without interaction with central device                                |
| SecProf_2   Managed Home usage        | Enables operation between home things.   Interaction with a central and local   device is possible             |
| SecProf_3   Industrial usage          | Enables operation between things.   Relies on central (local or backend)   device for security                 |
| SecProf_4   Advanced Industrial usage | Enables ad-hoc operation between things   and relies on central device or   on a collection of control devices |

Security profiles and application areas.

Figure 6

The classification in the table considers different potential applications and situations in which their security needs change due to different operational features (network size, existence of a central device, connectivity to the Internet, importance of the exchanged information, etc) or threat model (what are the assets that an attacker looks for). As already pointed out, this set of scenarios is exemplary and they should be further discussed based on a broader consensus.

SecProf\_0 is meant for any application that does not require security. Examples include applications during system development, system testing, or some very basic applications in which security is not required at all.

The second security suite (SecProf\_1) is catered for environments in which 6LoWPAN/CoAP can be used to enable communication between things in an ad-hoc manner and the security requirements are minimal. An example, is a home application in which two devices should exchange information and no further connection with other devices (local or with a backend) is required. In this scenario, value of the exchanged information is low and that it usually happen in a confined room, thus, it is possible to have a short period of time during



which initial secrets can be exchanged in the clear. Due to this fact, there is no requirement to enable devices from different manufacturers to interoperate in a secure way (keys are just exchanged). The expected network size of applications using this profile is expected to be small such that the provision of network security, e.g., secure routing, is of low importance.

The next security suite (SecProf\_2) represents an evolution of SecProf\_1 in which, e.g., home devices, can be managed locally. A first possibility for the securing domain management refers to the creation of a centrally managed security domain without any connectivity to the Internet. The central device used for management can serve as, e.g., a key distribution center including policies for key update, storage, etc. The presence of a central device can help in the management of larger networks. Network security becomes more relevant in this scenario since the 6LoWPAN/CoAP network can be prone to Denial of Service attacks (e.g., flooding if L2 is not protected) or routing attacks.

SecProf\_3 considers that a central device is always required for network management. Example applications of this profile include building control and automation, sensor networks for industrial use, environmental monitoring, etc. As before, the network manager can be located in the 6LoWPAN/CoAP network and handle key management. In this case, the first association of devices to the network is required to be done in a secure way. In other words, the threat model requires measurements to protect against any vulnerable period of time. This step can involve the secure transmission of keying materials used for network security at different layers. The information exchanged in the network is considered to be valuable and it should be protected in the sense of pairwise links. Commands should be secured and broadcast should be secured with entity authentication [ID-CoAPMulticast]. Network should be protected from attacks. A further extension to this use case is to allow for remote management. A "backend manager" is in charge of managing SW or information exchanged or collected within the 6LoWPAN/CoAP network. This requires connection of devices to the Internet over a 6LBR involving a number of new threats that were not present before. A list of potential attacks include: resource-exhaustion attacks from the Internet; amplification attacks; trust issues related a HTTP-CoAP proxy [ID-proHTTPCoAP], etc. This use case requires protecting the communication from a device in the backend to a device in the 6LoWPAN/CoAP network, end-to-end. This use case also requires measures to provide the 6LBR with the capability of dropping fake requests coming from the Internet. This becomes especially challenging when the 6LBR is not trusted and access to the exchanged information is limited; and even more in the case of a HTTP-CoAP proxy since protocol translation is required. This use case should



take care of protecting information accessed from the backend due to privacy issues (e.g., information such as type of devices, location, usage, type and amount of exchanged information, or mobility patterns can be gathered at the backend threatening the privacy sphere of users) so that only required information is disclosed.

The last security suite (SecProf\_4) essentially represents interoperability of all the security profiles defined previously. It considers applications with some additional requirements regarding operation such as: (i) ad-hoc establishment of security relationships between things (potentially from different manufacturers) in non-secure environments or (ii) dynamic roaming of things between different 6LoWPAN/CoAP security domains. Such operational requirements pose additional security requirements, e.g., in addition to secure bootstrapping of a device within a 6LoWPAN/CoAP security domain and the secure transfer of network operational key, there is a need to enable inter-domains secure communication to facilitate data sharing.

The above description illustrates how different applications of 6LoWPAN/CoAP networks involve different security needs. In the following sections, we summarize the expected security features or capabilities for each the security profile with regards to "Security Architecture", "Security Model", "Security Bootstrapping", "Network Security", and "Application Security".

### **6.1. Security Architecture**

The choice of security architecture has many implications regarding key management, access control, or security scope. A distributed (or ad-hoc) architecture means that security relationships between things are setup on the fly between a number of objects and kept in a decentralized fashion. A locally centralized security architecture means that a central device, e.g., the 6LBR, handles the keys for all the devices in the security domain. Alternatively, a central security architecture could also refer to the fact that smart objects are managed from the backend. The security architecture for the different security profiles is classified as follows.





|           | Description                                    |
|-----------|------------------------------------------------|
| SecProf_0 | -                                              |
| SecProf_1 | Distributed                                    |
| SecProf_2 | Distributed able to move centralized (local)   |
| SecProf_3 | Centralized (local &/or backend)               |
| SecProf_4 | Distributed & centralized (local &/or backend) |

Security architectures in different security profiles.

Figure 7

In "SecProf\_1", management mechanisms for the distributed assignment and management of keying materials is required. Since this is a very simple use case, access control to the security domain can be enabled by means of a common secret known to all devices. In the next security suite (SecProf\_2), a central device can assume key management responsibilities and handle the access to the network. The last two security suites (SecProf\_3 and SecProf\_4) further allow for the management of devices or some keying materials from the backend.

## 6.2. Security Model

While some applications might involve very resource-constrained things such as, e.g., a humidity, pollution sensor, other applications might target more powerful devices aimed at more exposed applications. Security parameters such as keying materials, certificates, etc must be protected in the thing, for example by means of tamper-resistant hardware. Keys may be shared across a thing's networking stack to provide authenticity and confidentiality in each networking layer. This would minimize the number of key establishment/agreement handshake and incurs less overhead for constrained thing. While more advance applications may require key separation at different networking layers, and possibly process separation and sandboxing to isolate one application from another. In this sense, this section reflects the fact that different applications require different sets of security mechanisms.



|           | Description                                                                                |
|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| SecProf_0 | -                                                                                          |
| SecProf_1 | No tamper resistant<br>Sharing keys between layers                                         |
| SecProf_2 | No tamper resistant<br>Sharing keys between layers                                         |
| SecProf_3 | Tamper resistant<br>Key and process separation                                             |
| SecProf_4 | (no) Tamper resistant<br>Sharing keys between layers/Key and process separation<br>Sandbox |

Thing security models in different security profiles.

Figure 8

### 6.3. Security Bootstrapping and Management

Bootstrapping refers to the process by which a thing initiates its life within a security domain and includes the initialization of secure and/or authentic parameters bound to the thing and at least one other device in the network. Here, different mechanisms may be used to achieve confidentiality and/or authenticity of these parameters, depending on deployment scenario assumptions and the communication channel(s) used for passing these parameters. The simplest mechanism for initial set-up of secure and authentic parameters is via communication in the clear using a physical interface (USB, wire, chip contact, etc.). Here, one commonly assumes this communication channel is secure, since eavesdropping and/or manipulation of this interface would generally require access to the physical medium and, thereby, to one or both of the devices themselves. This mechanism was used with the so-called original "resurrecting duckling" model, as introduced in [PROC-Stajano]. This technique may also be used securely in wireless, rather than wired, set-ups, if the prospect of eavesdropping and/or manipulating this channel are dim (a so-called "location-limited" channel [PROC-Smetters-04, PROC-Smetters-02]). Examples hereof include the communication of secret keys in the clear using near field communication (NFC) - where the physical channel is purported to have very limited range (roughly 10cm), thereby thwarting eavesdropping by



far-away adversarial devices, and in-the-clear communication during a small time window (triggered by, e.g., a button-push) - where eavesdropping is presumed absent during this small time window. With the use of public-key based techniques, assumptions on the communication channel can be relaxed even further, since then the cryptographic technique itself provides for confidentiality of the channel set-up and the location-limited channel - or use of certificates - rules out man-in-the-middle attacks, thereby providing authenticity [PROC-Smetters-02]. The same result can be obtained using password-based public-key protocols [SPEKE], where authenticity depends on the (weak) password not being guessed during execution of the protocol. It should be noted that while most of these techniques realize a secure and authentic channel for passing parameters, these generally do not provide for explicit authorization. As an example, with use of certificate-based public-key based techniques, one may obtain hard evidence on whom one shares secret and/or authentic parameters with, but this does not answer the question as to whether one wishes to share this information at all with this specifically identified device (the latter usually involves a human-decision element). Thus, the bootstrapping mechanisms above should generally be complemented by mechanisms that regulate (security policies for) authorization. Furthermore, the type of bootstrapping is very related to the required type of security architecture. Distributed bootstrapping means that a pair of devices can setup a security relationship on the fly, without interaction with a central device elsewhere within the system. In many cases, it is handy to have a distributed bootstrapping protocol based on existing security protocols (e.g., DTLS in CoAP) required for other purposes: this reduces the amount of required software. A centralized bootstrapping protocol is one in which a central device manages the security relationships within a network. This can happen locally, e.g., handled by the 6LBR, or remotely, e.g., from a server connected via the Internet. The security bootstrapping for the different security profiles is as follows.



|           | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| SecProf_0 | -                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| SecProf_1 | * Distributed, (e.g., Resurrecting duckling)<br>* First key distribution happens in the clear                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| SecProf_2 | * Distributed, (e.g., Resurrecting duckling )<br>* Centralized (local), 6LBR acts as KDC<br>* First key distribution occurs in the clear, if the KDC is available, the KDC can manage network access                                                                                                                              |
| SecProf_3 | * 6LBR acts as KDC. It handles node joining, provides them with keying material from L2 to application layers<br>* Bootstrapping occurs in a secure way - either in secure environment or the security mechanisms ensure that eavesdropping is not possible.<br>* KDC and backend can implement secure methods for network access |
| SecProf_4 | * As in SecProf_3.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

Security bootstrapping methods in different security profiles

Figure 9

#### 6.4. Network Security

Network security refers to the mechanisms used to ensure the secure transport of 6LoWPAN frames. This involves a multitude of issues ranging from secure discovery, frame authentication, routing security, detection of replay, secure group communication, etc. Network security is important to thwart potential attacks such as denial-of-service (e.g., through message flooding) or routing attacks.

The Internet Draft [ID-Tsao] presents a very good overview of attacks and security needs classified according to the confidentiality, integrity, and availability needs. A potential limitation is that there exist no differentiation in security between different use cases and the framework is limited to L3. The security suites gathered in the present ID aim at solving this by allowing for a more flexible selection of security needs at L2 and L3.





| +-----+   |                                                          |
|-----------|----------------------------------------------------------|
|           | Description                                              |
| +-----+   |                                                          |
| SecProf_0 | -                                                        |
| +-----+   |                                                          |
| SecProf_1 | * Network key creating a home security domain at L2      |
|           | ensuring authentication and freshness of exchanged data  |
|           | * Secure multicast does not ensure origin authentication |
|           | * No need for secure routing at L3                       |
| +-----+   |                                                          |
| SecProf_2 | * Network key creating a home security domain at L2      |
|           | ensuring authentication and freshness of exchanged data  |
|           | * Secure multicast does not ensure origin authentication |
|           | * No need for secure routing at L3                       |
| +-----+   |                                                          |
| SecProf_3 | * Network key creating an industry security domain at L2 |
|           | ensuring authentication and freshness of exchanged data  |
|           | * Secure routing needed (integrity & availability) at L3 |
|           | within 6LoWPAN/CoAP                                      |
|           | * Secure multicast requires origin authentication        |
| +-----+   |                                                          |
| SecProf_4 | * Network key creating an industry security domain at L2 |
|           | ensuring authentication and freshness of exchanged data  |
|           | * Inter-domain authentication/secure handoff             |
|           | * Secure routing needed at L3                            |
|           | * Secure multicast requires origin authentication        |
|           | * 6LBR (HTTP-CoAP proxy) requires verification of        |
|           | forwarded messages and messages leaving or entering the  |
|           | 6LoWPAN/CoAP network.                                    |
| +-----+   |                                                          |

Network security needs in different security profiles

Figure 10

### 6.5. Application Security

In the context of 6LoWPAN/CoAP networks, application security refers firstly to the configuration of DTLS used to protect the exchanged information. It further refers to the measures required in potential translation points (e.g., a (HTTP-CoAP) proxy) where information can be collected and the privacy sphere of users in a given security domain is endangered. Application security for the different security profiles is as follows.



|           | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| SecProf_0 | -                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| SecProf_1 | -                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| SecProf_2 | * DTLS is used for end-to-end application security between management device and things and between things<br>* DTLS ciphersuites configurable to provide confidentiality and/or authentication and/or freshness<br>* Key transport and policies for generation of session keys are required                                                             |
| SecProf_3 | * Requirements as in SecProf_2 and<br>* DTLS is used for end-to-end application security between management device and things and between things<br>* Communication between KDC and each thing secured by pairwise keys<br>* Group keys for communication in a group distributed by KDC<br>* Privacy protection should be provided in translation points |
| SecProf_4 | * Requirements as in SecProf_3 and<br>* TLS or DTLS can be used to send commands from the backend to the 6LBR or things in a 6LoWPAN/CoAP network<br>* End-to-end secure connectivity from backend required<br>* Secure broadcast in a network from backend required                                                                                     |

Application security methods in different security profiles

Figure 11

The first two security profiles do not include any security at the application layer. The reason is that, in the first case, security is not provided and, in the second case, it seems reasonable to provide basic security at L2. In the third security profile (SecProf\_2), DTLS becomes the way of protecting messages at application layer between things and with the KDC running on a 6LBR. A key option refers to the capability of easily configuring DTLS to provide a subset of security services (e.g., some applications do not require confidentiality) to reduce the impact of security in the system operation of resource-constrained things. In addition to basic key management mechanisms running within the KDC, communication protocols for key transport or key update are required. These



protocols could be based on DTLS. The next security suite (SecProf\_3) requires pairwise keys for communication between things within the security domain. Furthermore, it can involve the usage of group keys for group communication. If secure multicast is implemented, it should provide origin authentication. Finally, privacy protection should be taken into account to limit access to valuable information -- such as identifiers, type of collected data, traffic patterns -- in potential translation points (proxies) or in the backend. The last security suite (SecProf\_4) further extends the previous set of requirements considering security mechanisms to deal with translations between TLS and DTLS or for the provision of secure multicast within a 6LoWPAN/CoAP network from the backend.

## **7. Next Steps towards a Flexible and Secure Internet of Things**

This Internet Draft included an overview of both operational and security requirements of things in the Internet of Things, discussed a general threat model and security issues, and introduced a number of potential security suites fitting different types of IoT deployments.

We conclude this document by giving our assessment of the current status of CoAP security with respect to addressing the IP security challenges we identified, so as to facilitate discussion of next steps towards workable security design concepts suitable for IP-based IoT in the broader community. Hereby, we focus on the employed security protocols and the type of security architecture.

With current status, we refer to the feasibility of realizing secure deployments with existing CoAP protocols and the practicality of creating comprehensive security architectures based on those protocols:

- 1 DTLS has been defined as the basic building block for protecting CoAP. At the time it was first proposed, no DTLS implementation for small, constrained devices was available. In the mean-time, TinyDTLS [TinyDTLS] has been developed offering the first open-source implementation of the protocol for small devices. However, more experience with the protocol is required. In particular, a performance evaluation and comparison should be made with a well-defined set of standard node platforms/networks. The results will help understand the limitations and the benefits of DTLS as well as to give recommended usage scenarios for this security protocol.



- 2 (D)TLS was designed for traditional computer networks and, thus, some of its features may not be optimal for resource-constrained networks. This includes:
  - a Basic DTLS features that are, in our view, not ideal for resource-constrained devices. For instance, the loss of a message in-flight requires the retransmission of all messages in-flight. On the other hand, if all messages in-flight are transmitted together in a single UDP packet, more resources are required for handling of large buffers. As pointed out in [ID-Hartke] , the number of flights in the DTLS handshake should be reduced, so that a faster setup of a secure channel can be realized. This would definitely improve the performance of DTLS significantly.
  - b Fragmentation of messages due to smaller MTUs in resource-constrained networks is problematic. This implies that the node must have a large buffer to store all the fragments and subsequently perform re-ordering and reassembly in order to construct the entire DTLS message. The fragmentation of the handshake messages can, e.g., allow for a very simple method to carry out a denial of service attack.
  - c The completion of the DTLS handshake is based on the successful verification of the Finished message by both client and server. As the Finished message is computed based on the hash of all handshake messages in the correct order, the node must allocate a large buffer to queue all handshake messages.
  - d DTLS is thought to offer end-to-end security; however, end-to-end security also has to be considered from the point of view of LLN protection, so that end-to-end exchanges can still be verified and the LLN protected from, e.g., DoS attacks.
- 3 Raw public-key in DTLS has been defined as mandatory. However, memory-optimized public-key libraries still require several KB of flash and several hundreds of B of RAM. Although Moore's law still applies and an increase of platform resources is expected, many IoT scenarios are cost-driven, and in many use cases, the same work could be done with symmetric-keys. Thus, a key question is whether the choice for raw public-key is the best one. In addition, using raw public keys rather than certified public keys hard codes identities to public keys, thereby inhibiting public key updates and potentially complicating initial configuration.





- 4 Performance of DTLS from a system perspective should be evaluated involving not just the cryptographic constructs and protocols, but should also include implementation benchmarks for security policies, since these may impact overall system performance and network traffic (an example of this would be policies on the frequency of key updates, which would necessitate securely propagating these to all devices in the network).
- 5 Protection of lower protocol layers is a must in networks of any size to guarantee resistance against routing attacks such as flooding or wormhole attacks. The wireless medium that is used by things to communicate is broadcast in nature and allows anybody on the right frequency to overhear and even inject packets at will. Hence, IP-only security solutions may not suffice in many IoT scenarios. At the time of writing the document, comprehensive methods are either not in place or have not been evaluated yet. This limits the deployment of large-scale systems and makes the secure deployment of large scale networks rather infeasible.
- 6 The term "bootstrapping" has been discussed in many occasions. Although everyone agrees on its importance, finding a good solution applicable to most use cases is rather challenging. While usage of existing methods for network access might partially address bootstrapping in the short-term and facilitate integration with legacy back-end systems, we feel that, in the medium-term, this may lead to too large of an overhead and imposes unnecessary constraints on flexible deployment models. The bootstrapping protocol should be reusable and light-weight to fit with small devices. Such a standard bootstrapping protocol must allow for commissioning of devices from different manufacturers in both centralized and ad-hoc scenarios and facilitate transitions of control amongst devices during the device's and system's lifecycle. Examples of the latter include scenarios that involve hand-over of control, e.g., from a configuration device to an operational management console and involving replacement of such a control device. A key challenge for secure bootstrapping of a device in a centralized architecture is that it is currently not feasible to commission a device when the adjacent devices have not been commissioned yet. In view of the authors, a light-weight approach is still required that allows for the bootstrapping of symmetric-keys and of identities in a certified public-key setting.
- 7 Secure resource discovery has not been discussed so far. However, this issue is currently gaining relevance. The IoT, comprising sensors and actuators, will provide access to many resources to sense and modify the environment. The usage of DNS presents



well-known security issues, while the application of secure DNS may not be feasible on small devices. In general, security issues and solutions related to resource discovery are still unclear.

- 8 A security architecture involves, beyond the basic protocols, many different aspects such as key management and the management of evolving security responsibilities of entities during the lifecycle of a thing. This document discussed a number of security suites and argued that different types of security architectures are required. A flexible IoT security architecture should incorporate the properties of a fully centralized architecture as well as allow devices to be paired together initially without the need for a trusted third party to create ad-hoc security domains comprising a number of nodes. These ad-hoc security domains could then be added later to the Internet via a single, central node or via a collection of nodes (thus, facilitating implementation of a centralized or distributed architecture, respectively). The architecture should also facilitate scenarios, where an operational network may be partitioned or merged, and where hand-over of control functionality of a single device or even of a complete subnetwork may occur over time (if only to facilitate smooth device repair/replacement without the need for a hard "system reboot" or to realize ownership transfer). This would allow the IoT to transparently and effortlessly move from an ad-hoc security domain to a centrally-managed single security domain or a heterogeneous collection of security domains, and vice-versa. However, currently, these features still lack validation in real-life, large-scale deployments.
- 9 Currently, security solutions are layered, in the sense that each layer takes care of its own security needs. This approach fits well with traditional computer networks, but it has some limitations when resource-constrained devices are involved and these devices communicate with more powerful devices in the back-end. We argue that protocols should be more interconnected across layers to ensure efficiency as resource limitations make it challenging to secure (and manage) all layers individually. In this regard, securing only the application layer leaves the network open to attacks, while security focused only at the network or link layer might introduce possible inter-application security threats. Hence, the limited resources of things may require sharing of keying material and common security mechanisms between layers. It is required that the data format of the keying material is standardized to facilitate cross-layer interaction. Additionally, cross-layer concepts should be considered for an IoT-driven re-design of Internet security



protocols.

## **8. Security Considerations**

This document reflects upon the requirements and challenges of the security architectural framework for Internet of Things.

## **9. IANA Considerations**

This document contains no request to IANA.

## **10. Acknowledgements**

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