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**The Direction Field in Routing Metric/Constraint Objects Used in RPL
draft-goyal-roll-metrics-direction-00**

Abstract

This document specifies a Direction field in the Routing Metric/Constraint objects used in RPL operation in low power and lossy networks.

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1. Introduction

Asymmetric links are a common observation in low power and lossy networks (LLNs) [[sang_2010](#)]. Many link-level routing metrics have a directional aspect. Although such routing metrics can be defined in a bidirectional manner so as to account for the link properties in both directions, this is not always desirable. In the context of RPL [[I-D.ietf-roll-rpl](#)], the IPv6 routing protocol for LLNs, it may be necessary to measure a link-level routing metric in a particular direction. For example, if the intent is to build a directional acyclic graph (DAG) specifically for the purpose of low latency communication to the DAG root, the routing metric must measure the link latency in Up direction, i.e., towards the DAG root, as defined in [[I-D.ietf-roll-rpl](#)]. Similarly, if a temporary DAG is being constructed to discover a point-to-point route towards a destination [[I-D.ietf-roll-p2p-rpl](#)], the routing metric must calculate the relevant link characteristic in Down direction, i.e., away from the DAG root, as defined in [[I-D.ietf-roll-rpl](#)]. Thus, there is a need to specify the directional aspect of a link-level routing metric.

Accordingly, this document defines a Direction field inside the Routing Metric/Constraint object header, defined in [[I-D.ietf-roll-routing-metrics](#)]. The Direction field is defined in two previously reserved bits inside the Routing Metric/Constraint object header. The modified Routing Metric/Constraint object header is backward compatible with its definition in [[I-D.ietf-roll-routing-metrics](#)].

2. Terminology

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

Additionally, this document uses terminology from [[I-D.ietf-roll-terminology](#)] and [[I-D.ietf-roll-rpl](#)]. Specifically, the term RPL node refers to an RPL router or an RPL host as defined in [[I-D.ietf-roll-rpl](#)].

3. The Direction Field

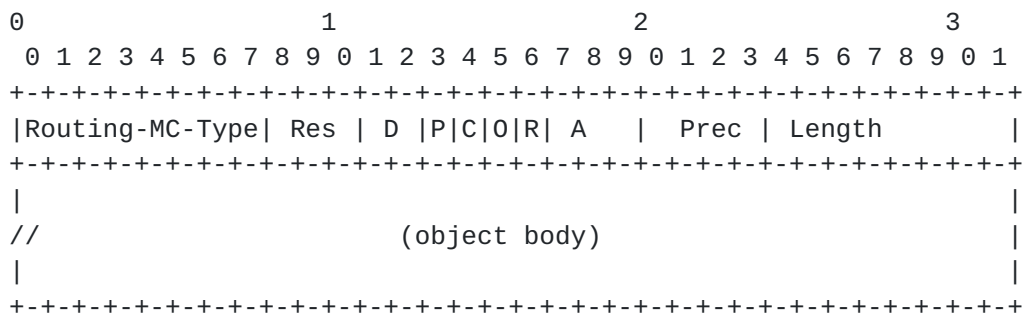


Figure 1: Routing Metric/Constraint object generic format

The modified Routing Metric/Constraint object header is illustrated in Figure 1. The Direction (or D) field is a 2-bit field that indicates the direction associated with the routing metric/constraint:

- o D = 0x00: undefined;
- o D = 0x01: Up;
- o D = 0x02: Down;
- o D = 0x03: Bidirectional.

If the D field has value 0x00, the direction associated with the routing metric/constraint is undefined as in [\[I-D.ietf-roll-routing-metrics\]](#). A value 0x00 for the D field may be suitable for node-level routing metrics/constraints defined in [\[I-D.ietf-roll-routing-metrics\]](#). The D field value in link-level routing metrics/constraints SHOULD NOT be set to 0x00.

This document does not specify how to measure/evaluate a routing metric/constraint object in the direction specified by the D field. The measurement/evaluation methodology for specific routing metrics/constraints, taking in account the D field, may be specified in a separate document.

A routing metric/constraint object MUST be measured/evaluated in accordance with its D field value if defined. In case, an RPL node can not measure/evaluate the routing metric/constraint object in the specified direction, the following rules MUST be applied:

- o If the object is a recorded metric, i.e., has C=0 and R=1 fields, the RPL node MUST set the P flag inside the object, thereby

indicating the partial nature of the recorded metric.

- o If the object is an aggregated metric, i.e., has C=0 and R=0 fields, the RPL node MUST drop the DIO containing the object.
- o If the object is a mandatory constraint, i.e., has C=1 and O=0 fields, the RPL node MUST drop the DIO containing the object.
- o If the object is an optional constraint, i.e., has C=1 and O=1 fields, the RPL node MAY drop the DIO containing the object or it MAY continue processing rest of the DIO ignoring this object.

4. Security Considerations

TBA

5. IANA Considerations

This document does not have any IANA considerations.

6. References

6.1. Normative References

- [I-D.ietf-roll-routing-metrics]
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- [RFC2119] Bradner, S., "Key words for use in RFCs to Indicate Requirement Levels", [BCP 14](#), [RFC 2119](#), March 1997.

6.2. Informative References

- [I-D.ietf-roll-p2p-rpl]
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