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Indicating source of multi-party Real-time text draft-hellstrom-avtcore-multi-party-rtt-source-02

Abstract

Real-time text mixers for multi-party sessions need to identify the source of each transmitted group of text so that the text can be presented by endpoints in suitable grouping with other text from the same source.

Regional regulatory requirements specify provision of real-time text in multi-party calls. RFC 4103 mixer implementations can use traditional RTP functions for source identification, but the mixer source switching performance is limited when using the default transmission with redundancy.

An enhancement for RFC 4103 real-time text mixing is provided in the present specification, suitable for a centralized conference model that enables source identification and efficient source switching. The intended use is for real-time text mixers and multi-party-aware participant endpoints. The mechanism builds on use of the CSRC list in the RTP packet.

A capability exchange is specified so that it can be verified that a participant can handle the multi-party coded real-time text stream. The capability is indicated by an sdp media attribute "rtt-mix".

A brief description about how a mixer can format text for the case when the endpoint is not multi-party aware is also provided.

Status of This Memo

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1. Introduction

RFC 4103[RFC4103] specifies use of RFC 3550 RTP [RFC3550] for transmission of real-time text (RTT) and the "text/t140" format. It also specifies a redundancy format "text/red" for increased robustness. RFC 4102 [RFC4102] registers the "text/red" format. Regional regulatory requirements specify provision of real-time text in multi-party calls.

The redundancy scheme enables efficient transmission of redundant text in packets together with new text. However the redundant header format has no source indicators for the redundant transmissions. An assumption has had to be made that the redundant parts in a packet are from the same source as the new text. The recommended transmission is one new and two redundant generations of text (T140blocks) in each packet and the recommended transmission interval is 300 ms.

A mixer, selecting between text input from different sources and transmitting it in a common stream needs to make sure that the receiver can assign the received text to the proper sources for presentation. Therefore, without any extra rule for source identification, the mixer needs to stop sending new text from that source and then make sure that all text so far has been sent with all intended redundancy levels (usually two) before switching source. That causes the very long time of one second to switch between transmission of text from one source to text from another source. Both the total throughput and the switching performance in the mixer is too low for most applications.

A more efficient source identification scheme requires that each redundant T140block has its source individually preserved. The present specification introduces a source indicator by specific rules for populating the CSRC-list in the RTP-packet.

A negotiation mechanism is also introduced for verification that the receiver is able to handle the multi-party coded stream.

A fall-back mixing procedure is briefly specified for cases when the negotiation fails.

2. Nomenclature

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].

The terms SDES, CNAME, NAME, SSRC, CSRC, CSRC list, CC are explained in [RFC3550]

The term "T140block" is defined in RFC 4103 [RFC4103] to contain one or more T.140 code elements.

3. Intended application

The scheme for identification of source of redundant transmissions is intended for transmission from entities taking the mixer role in centralised mixing configurations for RTT. It is intended for reception by both participants and mixers.

4. Use of fields in the RTP packets

RFC 4103[RFC4103] specifies use of RFC 3550 RTP[RFC3550], and a redundancy format "text/red" for increased robustness. This specification updates RFC 4102[RFC4102] and RFC 4103[RFC4103] by introducing a rule for populating and using the CSRC-list in the RTP packet in order to enhance the performance in multi-party RTT sessions.

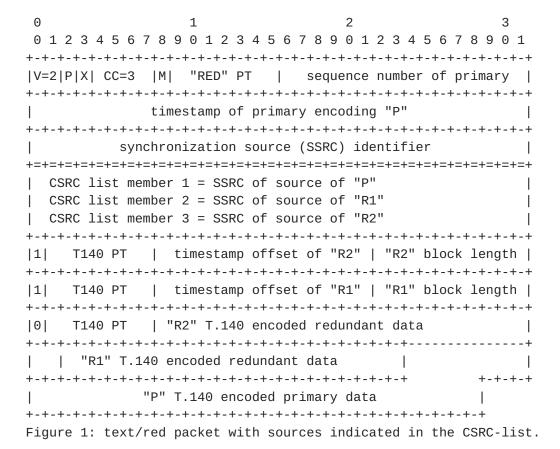
The first member in the CSRC-list shall contain the SSRC of the source of the primary T140block in the packet. The second and further members in the CSRC-list shall contain the SSRC of the source of the first, second, etc redundant generation T140blocks included in the packet. (the recommended level of redundancy is to use one primary and two redundant generations of T140blocks.) In some cases, a primary or redundant T140block is empty, but is still represented by a member in the redundancy header. For such cases, the corresponding CSRC-list member MUST also be included.

The CC field shall show the number of members in the CSRC list.

Note: This specification departs from <u>section 4 of RFC 2198</u> [RFC2198] which associates the whole of the CSRC-list with the primary data and assumes that the same list applies to reconstructed redundant data. In this specification a text block is associated with exactly one CSRC list member as described above. Also <u>RFC 2198</u> [RFC2198] anticipates infrequent change to CSRCs; implementers should be aware that the order of the CSRC-list according to this specification will

rotate during transitions between transmission from the mixer of text originated by different participants.

The picture below shows a typical RTP packet with multi-party RTT contents and coding according to the present specification.



5. Actions at transmission by a mixer

A text/red transmitter is usually sending packets at a regular transmission interval as long as there is something (new or redundant T140blocks) to transmit. The default transmission interval for point-to-point operation is 300 ms.

For multi-party operation, the transmission interval should be decreased to 100 ms for periods when there is text available for transmission from more than one source. The mixer has its own SSRC, and its own RTP sequence number series. At time of transmission, the RTP packet SHALL be populated with a T140block combined from all T140blocks queued for transmission originating from next source in turn for getting its text transmitted (as long as this is not in conflict with the allowed number of characters per second). This T140block shall be placed in the primary area of the packet. The

SSRC of its source shall be placed as the first member in the CSRC-list. The current time is inserted in the timestamp.

If no unsent T140blocks were available at this time, but T140blocks are available which have not yet been sent the full intended number of redundant transmissions, then the primary T140block is composed of an empty T140block, and populated (without taking up any length) in a packet for transmission. The SSRC of the mixer is included in the first place of the CSRC-list.

The primary T140block, in the latest transmission is used to populate the first redundant T140block, and its source is placed as the second member of the CSRC-list. The first redundant T140block from the latest transmission is now placed as the second redundant T140block, and the corresponding CSRC placed in its place in the CSRC-list.

Usually this is the level of redundancy used. If a higher number of redundancy is used, then the procedure is maintained until all available redundant levels of T140blocks and their sources are placed in the packet. If a receiver has negotiated a lower number of text/red generations, then that level shall be the maximum used by the transmitter.

The timer offset values are inserted in the redundancy header, with the time offset from when the corresponding T140block was sent as original.

The number of members in the CSRC list shall be placed in the "CC" header field.

When there is no new T140block to transmit, and no redundant T140block that has not been retransmitted the intended number of times, the transmission process can stop until either new T140blocks arrive, or a keep-alive method calls for transmission of keep-alive packets.

Actions at reception

The enhanced "text/red" receiver included in an endpoint with presentation functions will receive RTP packets in the single stream from the mixer, and shall distribute the T140blocks for presentation in presentation areas for each source. Other tasks for receivers, such as gateways or chained mixers are also feasible, and requires consideration if the stream shall just be forwarded, or a distribution based on different sources is needed.

The CC field of the received packets indicate the used level of redundancy for the current packet.

The RTP sequence numbers of the received packets are monitored for gaps or packets out of order.

As long as the sequence is correct, each packet is unpacked in order. The T140blocks are extracted from the primary area, and the corresponding SSRC is extracted from the first position in the CSRC list and used for assigning the new T140block to the correct presentation area (or correspondingly).

If a sequence number gap appears and is still there after some defined time for jitter resolution, T140data needs to be recovered from redundant data. If the gap is wider than the number of generations of redundant T140blocks in the packet, then a t140block is created with a marker for text loss [T140ad1] and assigned to the SSRC of the transmitter as a general input from the mixer.

Then, the T140blocks in the received packet are retrieved beginning with the highest redundant generation, grouping them with the corresponding SSRC from the CSRC-list and assigning them to the presentation areas per source. Finally the primary T140block is retrieved from the packet and similarly its source retrieved from the first position in the CSRC-list, and then assigned to the corresponding presentation handling for that source.

If the sequence number gap was equal to or less than the number of redundancy generations in the received packet, no missing text marker shall be inserted, and instead the T140blocks and their SSRCs fully recovered from the redundancy information and the CSRC-list in the way indicated above.

Unicode character BOM is sometimes used as a filler or keep alive by transmission implementations. These should be deleted on reception.

Note that empty T140blocks are sometimes included in the packets. They just do not provide any contents.

7. RTCP considerations

A mixer should send RTCP reports with SDES, CNAME and NAME information about the sources in the conference. This makes it possible for participants to compose a suitable label for text from each source.

8. Chained operation

By strictly applying the rules for CSRC-list population by all conforming devices, mixers can be arranged in chains.

9. Usage without redundancy

The CSRC list member should be used as source indicator also for cases when the text/t140 format is used. That may be the case when robustness in transmission is provided by some other means than by redundancy and the text/red format. All aspects of this memo applies except the redundant generations in transmission.

For the use case without redundancy using the text/t140 format, the CC field in the RTP packet shall have the value 1, and the CSRC list contain one member.

The text/red format SHOULD be used unless some other protection against packet loss is utilized, for example a reliable network or transport.

10. Use with SIP centralized conferencing framework

The SIP conferencing framework, mainly specified in RFC 4353[RFC4353], RFC 4579[RFC4579] and RFC 4575[RFC4575] is suitable for coordinating sessions including multi-party RTT. The RTT stream between the mixer and a participant is one and the same during the conference. Participants get announced by notifications when participants are joining or leaving, and further user information may be provided. The SSRC of the text to expect from joined users can be included in a notification. This can be used both for security purposes and for translation to a label for presentation to other users.

Note: The CSRC-list in an RTP packet only includes participants who's text is included in one or more text blocks. It is not the same as the list of participants in a conference. With audio and video media, the CSRC-list would often contain all participants who are not muted whereas text participants that don't type are completely silent and thus are not represented in RTP packet CSRC-lists.

11. SDP Capability negotiation

There are RTT implementations which implement RFC 4103 [RFC4103] but not the present specification. Sending mixed text according to the present specification to a device implementing only RFC 4103 [RFC4103] would lead to unreadable presented text. Therefore, in order to negotiate RTT mixing capability according to the present specification, all devices supporting the present specification shall include an sdp media attribute "rtt-mix" in the sdp, indicating this capability in offers and answers. Multi-party streams using the coding of the present specification intended for multi-party aware

endpoints must not be sent to devices which have not indicated the "rtt-mix" capability.

Implementations not understanding this parameter MUST ignore it according to common SDP rules.

The sdp media attribute defined here, is named "rtt-mix". It has no parameters. It is intended to be used in "text" media descriptions with "text/red" and "text/t140" formats. It indicates capability to use source indications in the CSRC list according to this specification. It also indicates ability to receive RTT packets with an interval of 100 ms.

Syntax:

a=rtt-mix

The attribute is used in offer/answer procedures in a declarative way. Both parties express their capability to use sources in the CSRC list as specified in the present specification.

A party who has expressed the "rtt-mix" capability MUST populate the CSRC-list according to the present specification if it acts as an rtp-mixer and sends to a party who has expressed the "rtt-mix" capability.

A party who has expressed the "rtt-mix" capability MUST interpret the contents of the CSRC-list according to the present specification in received rtp packets from parties who have expressed "rtt-mix" capability .

A party MUST NOT transmit packets with the multi-party format according to the present specification to a party who has not expressed "rtt-mix" capability.

A party performing as a mixer, which has expressed the "rtt-mix" capability, but not received "rtt-mix" capability indication in a session with a participant SHOULD, if nothing else is specified for the application, format transmitted text to that participant to be suitable to present on a multi-party unaware endpoint as further specified in section Section 14.2.

12. Examples

This example shows a symbolic flow of packets from a mixer with loss and recovery. A, B and C are sources of RTT. M is the mixer. P indicates primary data. R1 is first redundant generation data and R2 is second redundant generation data. A1, B1, A2 etc are text chunks

(T140blocks) received from the respective sources. X indicates dropped packet between the mixer and a receiver.

```
|-----|
|Seq no 1 |
|CSRC list A, M, B |
|R2 B99 |
|R1: Empty
|P: A1
|-----|
```

Assuming that earlier packets were received in sequence, text A1 is received from packet 1 and assigned to reception area A.

```
|-----|
|Seq no 2
CC=3
|CSRC list C,A,M |
|R2 Empty |
|R1: A1
|P: C1
|----|
```

Text C1 is received from packet 2 and assigned to reception area C.

```
X-----|
X Seq no 3
X CC=3
X CSRC list A, C, A
X R2: A1 |
X R1: C1
X P: A2
X-----|
```

Packet 3 is assumed to be dropped in network problems

```
X-----|
X Seq no 4
X CC=3
X CSRC list B, A, C|
X R2: C1 |
X R1: A2
X P: B1
X-----
```

Packet 4 is assumed to be dropped in network problems

```
X-----|
X Seq no 5
X CC=3
X CSRC list A, B, A|
X R2: A2
X R1: B1
X P: A3
X-----|
```

Packet 5 is assumed to be dropped in network problems

```
[-----]
|Seq no 6
|CC=3
|CSRC list C,A,B |
|R2: B1 |
|R1: A3
|P: C2
|----|
```

Packet 6 is received. The latest received sequence number before 6 was 2. Recovery is therefore tried for 3,4,5.

But there is no coverage for seq no 3. A missing text mark (U'FFFD) is created and appended to the mixer reception area.

For segno 4, text B1 is recovered and appended to reception area B. For segno 5, text A3 is recovered and appended to reception area A. Primary text C2 is received and appended to reception area C.

With only one or two packets lost, there would not be any need to create a missing text marker, and all text would be recovered.

It will be a design decision how to present the missing text markers assigned to the mixer as a source.

13. Performance considerations

This specification allows new text from one source per packet. Packets are transmitted with timed intervals. The default transmission interval is 300 ms for RFC 4103 [RFC4103], and is suitable for transmission from single sources. However when more sources contribute to the flow, a shorter transmission interval may be applicable. The transmission interval is therefore recommended to be 100 ms for mixers when there is text from more than one source available for transmission. This interval provides for smooth flow of text with acceptable latency from at least 5 sources simultaneously.

14. Presentation level considerations

ITU-T T.140 [T140] provides the presentation level requirements for the RFC 4103 [RFC4103] transport. T.140 [T140] has functions for erasure and other formatting functions and has the following general statement for the presentation:

"The display of text from the members of the conversation should be arranged so that the text from each participant is clearly readable, and its source and the relative timing of entered text is visualized in the display. Mechanisms for looking back in the contents from the current session should be provided. The text should be displayed as soon as it is received."

Strict application of T.140 [T140] is of essence for the interoperability of real-time text implementations and to fulfill the intention that the session participants have the same information of the text contents of the conversation without necessarily having the exact same layout of the conversation. This also includes the ability to ignore optional presentation control codes not supported by a receiving application.

T.140 [T140] specifies a set of presentation control codes to include in the stream. Some of them are optional. It is essential that implementations are able to ignore

There is no strict "message" concept in real-time text. Line separator is used as a separator allowing a part of received text to be grouped in presentation. The characters CR LF are allowed as replacement for Line Separator. The CR LF combination is erased by just one erasing action. Presentation functions are allowed to group text for presentation in smaller groups than the line separators imply and present such groups with source indication together with text groups from other sources (see the following presentation examples). Erasure has no specific limit by any delimiter in the text stream.

14.1. Presentation by multi-party aware endpoints

A multi-party aware receiving party, presenting real-time text MUST separate text from different sources and present them in separate presentation areas. The receiving party may separate presentation of parts of text from a source in readable groups based on other criteria than line separator and merge these groups in the presentation area when it benefits the user to most easily find and read text from the different participants. The criteria may e.g. be a received comma, full stop, or other phrase delimiters, or a long pause.

When text is received from multiple original sources, the presentation provides a view where text is added in multiple places simultaneously.

If the presentation presents text from different sources in one common area, the endpoint SHOULD insert text from the local user ended at suitable points merged with received text to indicate the relative timing for when the text groups were completed. In this presentation mode, the receiving endpoint SHALL present the source of the different groups of text.

A view of a three-party RTT call in chat style is shown in this example .

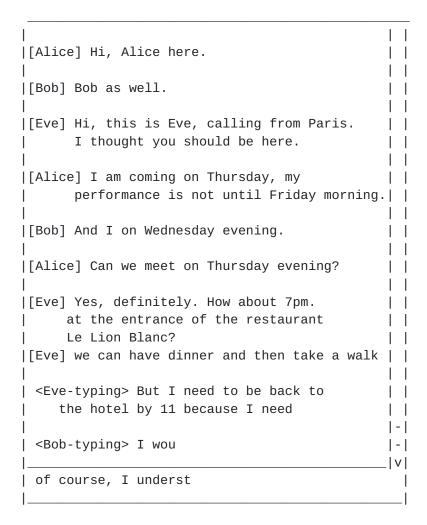


Figure 2: Example of a three-party RTT call presented in chat style.

Figure 1: Example of a three-party call with chat style.

Other presentation styles than the chat style may be arranged.

This figure shows how a coordinated column view MAY be presented.

Bob	Eve	Alice							
	 	 I will arrive by TGV.							
My flight is to Orly	' 	Convenient to the main							
1	Hi all, can we plan	station.							
1	for the seminar?	1							
Eve, will you do	1	1							
your presentation on	1								
Friday?	Yes, Friday at 10.	1							
Fine, wo	[We need to meet befo							

Figure 3: An example of a coordinated column-view of a three-party session with entries ordered vertically in approximate time-order.

14.2. Multi-party mixing for multi-party unaware endpoints

When the mixer has indicated multi-party capability in an sdp negotiation, but the multi-party capability negotiation fails with an endpoint, then the mixer SHOULD compose a best-effort presentation of multi-party real-time text in one stream intended to be presented by an endpoint with no multi-party awareness.

This presentation format has severe functional limitations and should be used only to enable participation in multi-party calls by legacy deployed endpoints.

The text should be formatted by the mixer for presentation in one single presentation area. When there is text available for transmission from the mixer to the participant for more than one participant, the mixer shall switch between transmission of text from different sources at suitable points in the transmitted stream. When switching source, the mixer shall insert a line separator and a label composed from information in the CNAME and NAME fields in RTCP reports from the participant to have its text transmitted. The label SHALL be delimited by suitable characters. Then text from that selected participant shall be transmitted until a new suitable point for switching source is reached.

Suitable points for switching are: a completed phrase ended by comma, a completed sentence, a line separator or other valid code for new line. A long pause (e.g. > 10 seconds) in received text from the currently transmitted source is also a suitable switching point. If text from one participant has been transmitted with text from other sources waiting for transmission for a long time (e.g. > 1 minute)

and none of the suitable points for switching has occurred, a source switch MAY be forced by the mixer at next word separator. When switching source, the text that has been waiting longest should be selected to be transmitted.

Erasure by backspace can not always be performed as the erasing party intended. If an erasing action erases all text up to the leading label after a source switch, then the mixer must not transmit more backspaces. Instead it is recommended that a letter "X" is inserted in the text stream for each backspace, as an indication of the intent to erase more. A new line is usually coded by a Line Separator, but the character combination CR LF may be used instead. Erasure of a new line is in both cases done by just one erasing action (Backspace).

A mixer transmitting to a multi-party unaware terminal shall send primary data only from one source per packet. The SSRC shall be the SSRC of the mixer. The CSRC list SHOULD contain one member and be the SSRC of the source of the primary data.

When a multi-party unaware endpoint presents a conversation in one display area in a chat style, it inserts source indications for remote text and local user text as they are merged in completed text groups. When an endpoint using this layout receives and presents text mixed for multi-party unaware endpoints, there will be two levels of source indicators for the received text; one generated by the mixer and inserted in a label after each source switch, and another generated by the receiving endpoint and inserted after each switch between local and remote source in the presentation area. This will waste display space and look inconsistent to the reader.

This fact, combined with the slowness in source switching and the limited support of erasure makes it strongly RECOMMENDED to implement multi-party awareness in RTT endpoints. The use of the multi-party-unaware mixing method should be left for use with endpoints which are impossible to upgrade to become multi-party aware.

The following pictures are examples of the view on a participant's display for the multi-party-unaware case.

Conference	Alice							
 [Bob]:My flight is to Orly.								
[Eve]:Hi all, can we plan for the seminar.	 							
[Bob]:Eve, will you do your presentation on Friday?								
[Eve]:Yes, Friday at 10. [Bob]: Fine, wo 	 We need to meet befo							

Figure 4: Alice who has a conference-unaware client is receiving the multi-party real-time text in a single-stream. This figure shows how a coordinated column view MAY be presented on Alice's device.

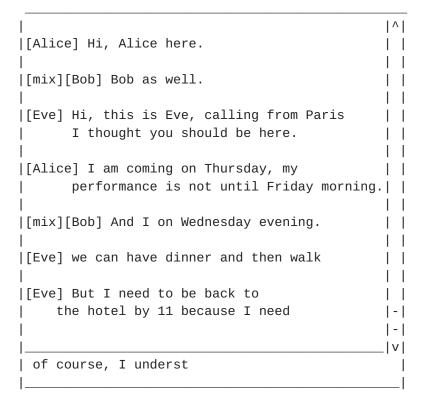


Figure 5: An example of a view of the multi-party unaware presentation in chat style. Alice is the local user.

15. Gateway Considerations

Multi-party RTT sessions may involve gateways of different kinds. It is essential that gateways involved in setting up sessions correctly reflect the multi-party capability or unawareness of the combination of the gateway and the remote endpoint beyond the gateway.

One case that may occur is a gateway to PSTN for communication with textphones (e.g. TTYs). Textphones are limited devices with no multi-party awareness, and it would therefore be suitable for the gateway to not indicate multi-party awareness for that case.

16. Congestion considerations

The congestion considerations and recommended actions from RFC 4103 [RFC4103] are valid also in multi-party situations.

17. Acknowledgements

18. IANA Considerations

[RFC EDITOR NOTE: Please replace all instances of RFCXXXX with the RFC number of this document.]

IANA is asked to register the new sdp attribute "rtt-mix".

+-----| Contact name: | IESG | Contact email: | iesg@ietf.org | Attribute name: | rtt-mix Attribute syntax | a=rtt-mix | Attribute semantics | See RFCXXXX section 11. | Attribute value | -| O/A procedure | Declarative | Mux Category | normal | Reference: | RFCXXXX

19. Security Considerations

The RTP-mixer model requires the mixer to be allowed to decrypt, pack and encrypt secured text from the conference participants. Therefore the mixer needs to be trusted. This is similar to the situation for central mixers of audio and video.

The requirement to transfer information about the user in RTCP reports in SDES, CNAME and NAME fields for creation of labels may have privacy concerns as already stated in RFC 3550 [RFC 3550], and may be restricted of privacy reasons. The receiving user will then get a more symbolic label for the source.

20. Change history

20.1. Changes from version -00 to -01

Editorial cleanup.

Changed capability indication from fmtp-parameter to sdp attribute "rtt-mix".

Swapped order of redundancy elements in the example to match reality.

Increased the SDP negotiation section

20.2. Changes from version -01 to -02

In Abstract and 1. Introduction: Introduced wording about regulatory requirements.

In $\underline{\text{section 5}}$: The transmission interval is decreased to 100 ms when there is text from more than one source to transmit.

In <u>section 11</u> about sdp negotiation, a SHOULD-requirement is introduced that the mixer should make a mix for multi-party unaware endpoints if the negotiation is not successful. And a reference to a later chapter about it.

The presentation considerations chapter 14 is extended with more information about presentation on multi-party aware endpoints, and a new section on the multi-party unaware mixing with low functionality but SHOULD a be implemented in mixers. Presentation examples are added.

A short chapter 15 on gateway considerations is introduced.

Clarification about the text/t140 format included in chapter 10.

This sentence added to the chapter 10 about use without redundancy. "The text/red format SHOULD be used unless some other protection against packet loss is utilized, for example a reliable network or transport."

Note about deviation from RFC 2198 added in chapter 4.

In chapter 9. "Use with SIP centralized conferencing framework" the following note is inserted: Note: The CSRC-list in an RTP packet only includes participants who's text is included in one or more text blocks. It is not the same as the list of participants in a conference. With audio and video media, the CSRC-list would often contain all participants who are not muted whereas text participants that don't type are completely silent and so don't show up in RTP packet CSRC-lists.

21. References

21.1. Normative References

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