

6man Working Group  
Internet-Draft  
Intended status: Standards Track  
Expires: March 25, 2013

A. Matsumoto  
T. Fujisaki  
NTT  
T. Chown  
University of Southampton  
September 21, 2012

**Distributing Address Selection Policy using DHCPv6**  
**draft-ietf-6man-addr-select-opt-06.txt**

Abstract

[RFC 6724](#) defines default address selection mechanisms for IPv6 that allow nodes to select appropriate address when faced with multiple source and/or destination addresses to choose between. The [RFC 6724](#) allowed for the future definition of methods to administratively configure the address selection policy information. This document defines a new DHCPv6 option for such configuration, allowing a site administrator to distribute address selection policy overriding the default address selection parameters and policy table, and thus control the address selection behavior of nodes in their site.

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## **1. Introduction**

[RFC 3484](#) [[RFC3484](#)] describes default algorithms for selecting an address when a node has multiple destination and/or source addresses to choose from by using an address selection policy. In [Section 2 of RFC 6724](#), it is suggested that the default policy table may be administratively configured to suit the specific needs of a site. This specification defines a new DHCPv6 option for such configuration.

Some problems have been identified with the default [RFC 3484](#) address selection policy [[RFC5220](#)]. It is unlikely that any default policy will suit all scenarios, and thus mechanisms to control the source address selection policy will be necessary. Requirements for those mechanisms are described in [[RFC5221](#)], while solutions are discussed in [[I-D.ietf-6man-addr-select-sol](#)] and [[I-D.ietf-6man-addr-select-considerations](#)]. Those documents have helped shape the improvements in the default address selection algorithm [[RFC6724](#)] as well as the DHCPv6 option defined in this specification.

### **1.1. Conventions 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 [[RFC2119](#)].



## 1.2. Terminology

This document uses the terminology defined in [RFC2460] and the DHCPv6 specification defined in [RFC3315]

## 2. Address Selection options

The Address Selection option provides the address selection policy table, and some other configuration parameters.

A address selection option contains zero or more policy table options. Multiple policy table options in a Policy Table option constitute a single policy table.

The format of the Address Selection option is given below.

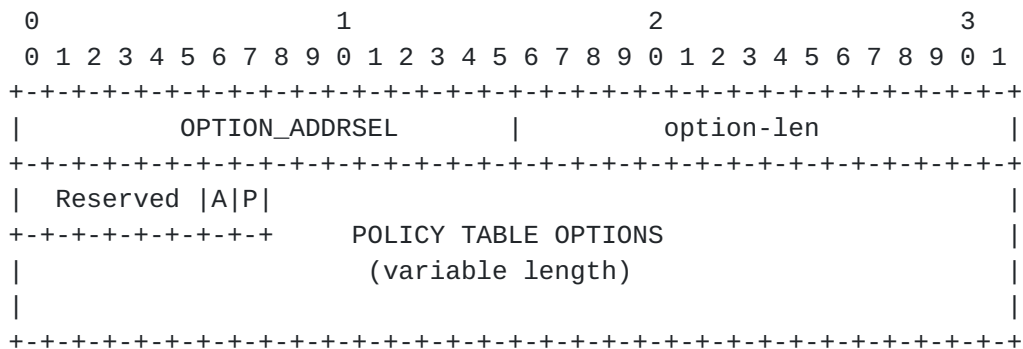


Figure 1: Address Selection option format

option-code: OPTION\_ADDRSEL (TBD).

option-len: The total length of the Reserved field, A, P flags, and POLICY TABLE OPITONS in octets.

Reserved: Reserved field. Server MUST set this value to zero and client MUST ignore its content.

A: Automatic Row Addition flag. This flag toggles the Automatic Row Addition flag at client hosts, which is described in the [section 2.1 in RFC 6724](#) [RFC6724]. If this flag is set to 1, it does not change client host behavior, that is, a client MAY automatically add additional site-specific rows to the policy table. If set to 0, the Automatic Row Addition flag is disabled, and a client MAY NOT automatically add rows to the policy table.



P: Privacy Preference flag. This flag toggles the Privacy Preference flag at client hosts, which is described in the [section 5 in RFC 6724 \[RFC6724\]](#). If this flag is set to 1, it does not change client host behavior, that is, a client SHOULD prefer temporary addresses. If set to 0, the Privacy Preference flag is disabled, and a client SHOULD prefer public addresses.

POLICY TABLE OPTIONS: Zero or more Address Selection Policy Table options described below.

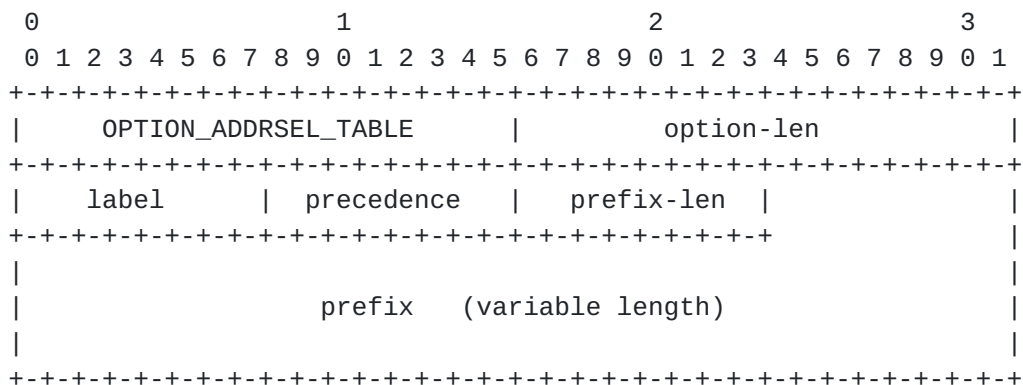


Figure 2: Address Selection Policy Table option format

option-code: OPTION\_ADDRSEL\_TABLE (TBD).

option-len: The total length of the label field, precedence field, prefix-len field, and prefix field.

label: An 8-bit unsigned integer; this value is for correlation of source address prefixes and destination address prefixes.

precedence: An 8-bit unsigned integer; this value is used for sorting destination addresses.

prefix-len: An 8-bit unsigned integer; the number of leading bits in the prefix that are valid. The value ranges from 0 to 128.

prefix: A variable-length field containing an IP address or the prefix of an IP address. An IPv4-mapped address [\[RFC4291\]](#) must be used to represent an IPv4 address as a prefix value. The prefix should be zero padded up to the next octet boundary. So the length of this field should be between 0 and 16 bytes.



### **3. Appearance of the Address Selection options**

The Address Selection options MUST NOT appear in any messages other than the following ones: Solicit, Advertise, Request, Renew, Rebind, Reconfigure, Information-Request, and Reply.

### **4. Processing the Policy Table option**

This section describes how to process received Policy Table option at the DHCPv6 client.

This option's concept is to serve as a hint for a node about how to behave in the network. So, basically, it should be up to the node's administrator how to deal with the received policy information in the way described below.

#### **4.1. Handling of the local policy table**

[RFC 6724](#) defines the default policy table. Also, a user is usually able to configure the policy table to satisfy his requirement.

The client implementation SHOULD provide the following choices to the user:

- a) It receives distributed policy table, and replaces the existing policy tables with that.
- b) It preserves the default policy table, or manually configured policy.

#### **4.2. Handling of the stale policy table**

When the information from the DHCP server goes stale, the policy received from the DHCP server should be removed and the default policy should be restored.

The received information can be considered stale in several cases, such as, when the interface goes down, the DHCP server does not respond for a certain amount of time, and the Information Refresh Time is expired.

#### **4.3. Multi-interface situation**

The policy table, and other parameters specified in this document are node-global information by its nature. One of the reason is that the outbound interface is usually chosen after destination address selection. So, a host cannot make use of multiple address selection policy even if they are stored per interface.





Even if the received policy from one source is merged with one from another source, the effect of both policy are more or less changed. The policy table is defined as a whole, so the slightest addition/deletion from the policy table brings a change in semantics of the policy.

It also should be noted that absence of the distributed policy from a certain network interface should not be treated as absence of policy itself, because it may mean preference for the default address selection policy.

Under the above assumptions, how to handle received policy is specified below.

A node MAY use Address Selection options by default in any of the following two cases:

- 1: The host is single-homed, where the host belongs to one administrative network domain exclusively usually through one active network interface.
- 2: The host implements some advanced heuristics to deal with multiple received policy, which is outside the scope of this document.

The above restrictions do not preclude implementations from providing configuration options to enable this option on a certain network interface.

Nor, they do not preclude implementations from storing distributed address selection policies per interface. They can be used effectively on such implementations that adopt per-application interface selection.

## **5. Implementation Considerations**

- o The value 'label' is passed as an unsigned integer, but there is no special meaning for the value, that is whether it is a large or small number. It is used to select a preferred source address prefix corresponding to a destination address prefix by matching the same label value within the DHCP message. DHCPv6 clients need to convert this label to a representation specified by each implementation (e.g., string).
- o Currently, the label and precedence values are defined as 8-bit unsigned integers. In almost all cases, this value will be enough.



- o The maximum number of address selection rules that may be conveyed in one DHCPv6 message depends on the prefix length of each rule and the maximum DHCPv6 message size defined in [RFC 3315](#). It is possible to carry over 3,000 rules in one DHCPv6 message (maximum UDP message size). However, it should not be expected that DHCP clients, servers and relay agents can handle UDP fragmentation. So, the number of the options and the total size of the options should be taken care of.
- o Since the number of selection rules could be large, an administrator configuring the policy to be distributed should consider the resulting DHCPv6 message size.

## 6. Security Considerations

A rogue DHCPv6 server could issue bogus address selection policies to a client. This might lead to incorrect address selection by the client, and the affected packets might be blocked at an outgoing ISP because of ingress filtering. Alternatively, an IPv6 transition mechanism might be preferred over native IPv6, even if it is available. To guard against such attacks, a legitimate DHCPv6 server should be communicated through a secure, trusted channel, such as a channel protected by IPsec, SEND and DHCP authentication, as described in [section 21 of RFC 3315](#),

Another threat is about privacy concern. As in the security consideration section of [RFC 6724](#), at least a part of, the address selection policy stored in a host can be leaked by a packet from a remote host. This issue will not be degraded regardless of the introduction of this option, or regardless of whether the host is multihomed or not.

## 7. IANA Considerations

IANA is requested to assign option codes to `OPTION_ADDRSEL`, `OPTION_ADDRSEL_TABLE`, and `OPTION_ADDRSEL_ZONE` from the option-code space as defined in section "DHCPv6 Options" of [RFC 3315](#).

## 8. References

### 8.1. Normative References

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## **8.2. Informative References**

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## [Appendix A](#). Acknowledgements

Authors would like to thank to Dave Thaler, Pekka Savola, Remi Denis-Courmont, Francois-Xavier Le Bail, Ole Troan, Bob Hinden, Dmitry Anipko, and the members of 6man's address selection design team for their invaluable contributions to this document.

## [Appendix B](#). Past Discussion

- o The 'zone index' value is used to specify a particular zone for scoped addresses. This can be used effectively to control address selection in the site scope (e.g., to tell a node to use a specified source address corresponding to a site-scoped multicast address). However, in some cases such as a link-local scope address, the value specifying one zone is only meaningful locally within that node. There might be some cases where the administrator knows which clients are on the network and wants specific interfaces to be used though. However, in general case, it is really rare case, and the field was removed.

## Authors' Addresses

Arifumi Matsumoto  
NTT NT Lab  
3-9-11 Midori-Cho  
Musashino-shi, Tokyo 180-8585  
Japan

Phone: +81 422 59 3334  
Email: arifumi@nttv6.net





Tomohiro Fujisaki  
NTT NT Lab  
3-9-11 Midori-Cho  
Musashino-shi, Tokyo 180-8585  
Japan

Phone: +81 422 59 7351  
Email: [fujisaki@nttv6.net](mailto:fujisaki@nttv6.net)

Tim Chown  
University of Southampton  
Southampton, Hampshire SO17 1BJ  
United Kingdom

Email: [tjc@ecs.soton.ac.uk](mailto:tjc@ecs.soton.ac.uk)

