

CoRE Working Group
Internet-Draft
Intended status: Standards Track
Expires: September 20, 2018

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March 19, 2018

Object Security for Constrained RESTful Environments (OSCORE)
draft-ietf-core-object-security-11

Abstract

This document defines Object Security for Constrained RESTful Environments (OSCORE), a method for application-layer protection of the Constrained Application Protocol (CoAP), using CBOR Object Signing and Encryption (COSE). OSCORE provides end-to-end protection between endpoints communicating using CoAP or CoAP-mappable HTTP. OSCORE is designed for constrained nodes and networks supporting a range of proxy operations, including translation between different transport protocols.

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1. Introduction

The Constrained Application Protocol (CoAP) [[RFC7252](#)] is a web transfer protocol, designed for constrained nodes and networks [[RFC7228](#)], and may be mapped from HTTP [[RFC8075](#)]. CoAP specifies the use of proxies for scalability and efficiency and references DTLS [[RFC6347](#)] for security. CoAP-to-CoAP, HTTP-to-CoAP, and CoAP-to-HTTP proxies require (D)TLS to be terminated at the proxy. The proxy therefore not only has access to the data required for performing the intended proxy functionality, but is also able to eavesdrop on, or

manipulate any part of, the message payload and metadata in transit between the endpoints. The proxy can also inject, delete, or reorder packets since they are no longer protected by (D)TLS.

This document defines the Object Security for Constrained RESTful Environments (OSCORE) security protocol, protecting CoAP and CoAP-mappable HTTP requests and responses end-to-end across intermediary nodes such as CoAP forward proxies and cross-protocol translators including HTTP-to-CoAP proxies [RFC8075]. In addition to the core CoAP features defined in [RFC7252], OSCORE supports Observe [RFC7641], Block-wise [RFC7959], No-Response [RFC7967], and PATCH and FETCH [RFC8132]. An analysis of end-to-end security for CoAP messages through some types of intermediary nodes is performed in [I-D.hartke-core-e2e-security-reqs]. OSCORE essentially protects the RESTful interactions; the request method, the requested resource, the message payload, etc. (see Section 4). OSCORE protects neither the CoAP Messaging Layer nor the CoAP Token which may change between the endpoints, and those are therefore processed as defined in [RFC7252]. Additionally, since the message formats for CoAP over unreliable transport [RFC7252] and for CoAP over reliable transport [RFC8323] differ only in terms of CoAP Messaging Layer, OSCORE can be applied to both unreliable and reliable transports (see Figure 1).

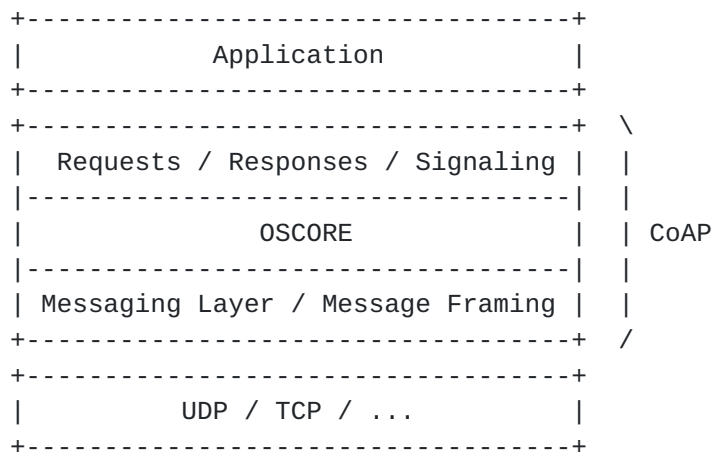


Figure 1: Abstract Layering of CoAP with OSCORE

OSCORE works in very constrained nodes and networks, thanks to its small message size and the restricted code and memory requirements in addition to what is required by CoAP. Examples of the use of OSCORE are given in Appendix A. OSCORE does not depend on underlying layers, and can be used anywhere where CoAP or HTTP can be used, including non-IP transports (e.g., [I-D.bormann-6lo-coap-802-15-4e]). OSCORE may be used together with (D)TLS over one or more hops in the end-to-end path, e.g. with HTTPS in one hop and with plain CoAP in another hop.

The use of OSCORE does not affect the URI scheme and OSCORE can therefore be used with any URI scheme defined for CoAP or HTTP. The application decides the conditions for which OSCORE is required.

OSCORE uses pre-shared keys which may have been established out-of-band or with a key establishment protocol (see [Section 3.2](#)). The technical solution builds on CBOR Object Signing and Encryption (COSE) [[RFC8152](#)], providing end-to-end encryption, integrity, replay protection, and secure binding of response to request. A compressed version of COSE is used, as specified in [Section 6](#). The use of OSCORE is signaled with the new Object-Security CoAP option or HTTP header field, defined in [Section 2](#) and [Section 10.3](#). The solution transforms a CoAP/HTTP message into an "OSCORE message" before sending, and vice versa after receiving. The OSCORE message is a CoAP/HTTP message related to the original message in the following way: the original CoAP/HTTP message is translated to CoAP (if not already in CoAP) and protected in a COSE object. The encrypted message fields of this COSE object are transported in the CoAP payload/HTTP body of the OSCORE message, and the Object-Security option/header field is included in the message. A sketch of an OSCORE message exchange in the case of the original message being CoAP is provided in Figure 2).

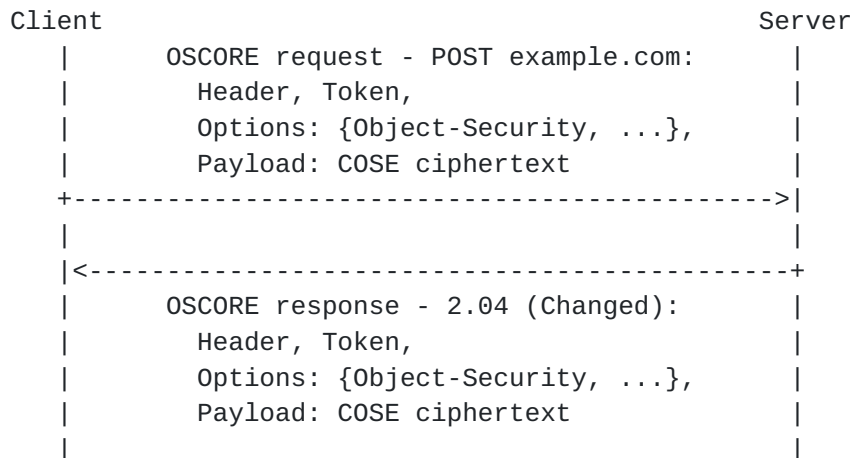


Figure 2: Sketch of CoAP with OSCORE

An implementation supporting this specification MAY implement only the client part, MAY implement only the server part, or MAY implement only one of the proxy parts. OSCORE is designed to protect as much information as possible while still allowing proxy operations ([Section 10](#)). It works with legacy CoAP-to-CoAP forward proxies [[RFC7252](#)], but an OSCORE-aware proxy will be more efficient. HTTP-to-CoAP proxies [[RFC8075](#)] and CoAP-to-HTTP proxies can also be used with OSCORE, as specified in [Section 10](#).

1.1. 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 [BCP 14](#) [[RFC2119](#)] [[RFC8174](#)] when, and only when, they appear in all capitals, as shown here.

Readers are expected to be familiar with the terms and concepts described in CoAP [[RFC7252](#)], Observe [[RFC7641](#)], Block-wise [[RFC7959](#)], COSE [[RFC8152](#)], CBOR [[RFC7049](#)], CDDL [[I-D.ietf-cbor-cddl](#)] as summarized in [Appendix E](#), and constrained environments [[RFC7228](#)].

The term "hop" is used to denote a particular leg in the end-to-end path. The concept "hop-by-hop" (as in "hop-by-hop encryption" or "hop-by-hop fragmentation") opposed to "end-to-end", is used in this document to indicate that the messages are processed accordingly in the intermediaries, rather than just forwarded to the next node.

The term "stop processing" is used throughout the document to denote that the message is not passed up to the CoAP Request/Response layer (see Figure 1).

The terms Common/Sender/Recipient Context, Master Secret/Salt, Sender ID/Key, Recipient ID/Key, and Common IV are defined in [Section 3.1](#).

2. The CoAP Object-Security Option

The CoAP Object-Security option (see Figure 3, which extends Table 4 of [[RFC7252](#)]) indicates that the CoAP message is an OSCORE message and that it contains a compressed COSE object (see [Section 5](#) and [Section 6](#)). The Object-Security option is critical, safe to forward, part of the cache key, and not repeatable.

No.	C	U	N	R	Name	Format	Length	Default
TBD	x				Object-Security	(*)	0-255	(none)

C = Critical, U = Unsafe, N = NoCacheKey, R = Repeatable
(*) See below.

Figure 3: The Object-Security Option

The Object-Security option includes the OSCORE flag bits ([Section 6](#)), the Sender Sequence Number and the Sender ID when present ([Section 3](#)). The detailed format and length is specified in [Section 6](#). If the OSCORE flag bits is all zero (0x00) the Option

value SHALL be empty (Option Length = 0). An endpoint receiving a CoAP message without payload, that also contains an Object-Security option SHALL treat it as malformed and reject it.

A successful response to a request with the Object-Security option SHALL contain the Object-Security option. Whether error responses contain the Object-Security option depends on the error type (see [Section 8](#)).

A CoAP proxy SHOULD NOT cache a response to a request with an Object-Security option, since the response is only applicable to the original request (see [Section 10.1](#)). As the compressed COSE Object is included in the cache key, messages with the Object-Security option will never generate cache hits. For Max-Age processing, see [Section 4.1.3.1](#).

3. The Security Context

OSCORE requires that client and server establish a shared security context used to process the COSE objects. OSCORE uses COSE with an Authenticated Encryption with Additional Data (AEAD, [[RFC5116](#)]) algorithm for protecting message data between a client and a server. In this section, we define the security context and how it is derived in client and server based on a shared secret and a key derivation function (KDF).

3.1. Security Context Definition

The security context is the set of information elements necessary to carry out the cryptographic operations in OSCORE. For each endpoint, the security context is composed of a "Common Context", a "Sender Context", and a "Recipient Context".

The endpoints protect messages to send using the Sender Context and verify messages received using the Recipient Context, both contexts being derived from the Common Context and other data. Clients and servers need to be able to retrieve the correct security context to use.

An endpoint uses its Sender ID (SID) to derive its Sender Context, and the other endpoint uses the same ID, now called Recipient ID (RID), to derive its Recipient Context. In communication between two endpoints, the Sender Context of one endpoint matches the Recipient Context of the other endpoint, and vice versa. Thus, the two security contexts identified by the same IDs in the two endpoints are not the same, but they are partly mirrored. Retrieval and use of the security context are shown in Figure 4.

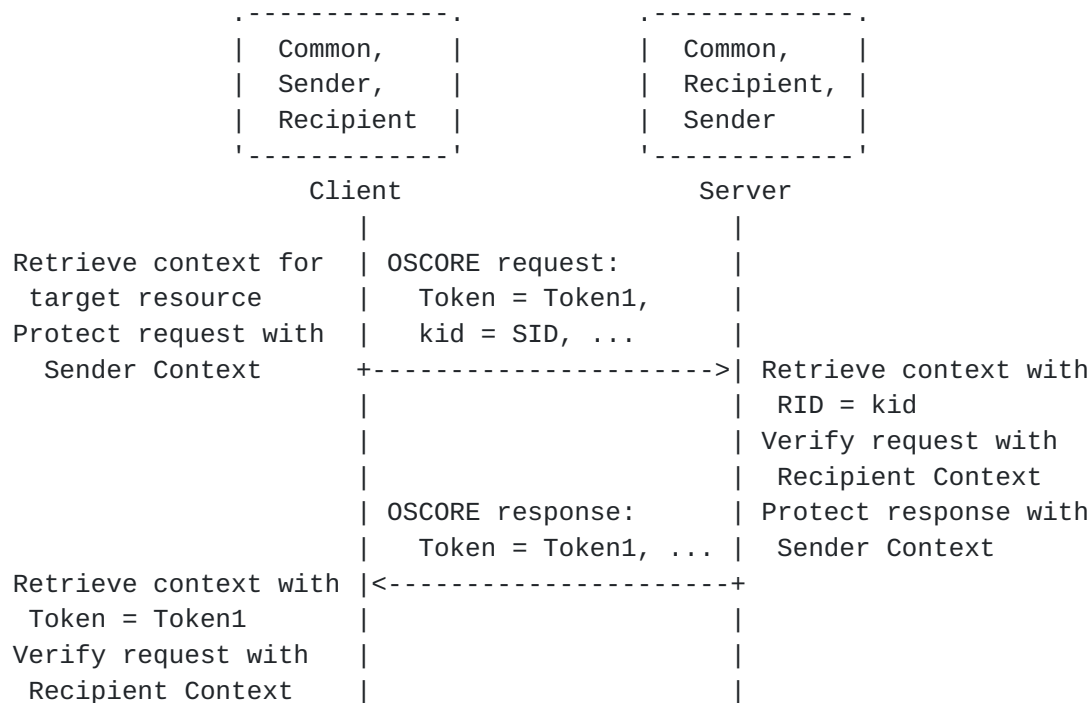


Figure 4: Retrieval and use of the Security Context

The Common Context contains the following parameters:

- o AEAD Algorithm. The COSE AEAD algorithm to use for encryption.
- o Key Derivation Function. The HMAC based HKDF [[RFC5869](#)] used to derive Sender Key, Recipient Key, and Common IV.
- o Master Secret. Variable length, uniformly random byte string containing the key used to derive traffic keys and IVs.
- o Master Salt. Variable length byte string containing the salt used to derive traffic keys and IVs.
- o Common IV. Byte string derived from Master Secret and Master Salt. Length is determined by the AEAD Algorithm.

The Sender Context contains the following parameters:

- o Sender ID. Byte string used to identify the Sender Context and to assure unique AEAD nonces. Maximum length is determined by the AEAD Algorithm.
- o Sender Key. Byte string containing the symmetric key to protect messages to send. Derived from Common Context and Sender ID. Length is determined by the AEAD Algorithm.

- o Sender Sequence Number. Non-negative integer used by the sender to protect requests and Observe notifications. Used as 'Partial IV' [[RFC8152](#)] to generate unique nonces for the AEAD. Maximum value is determined by the AEAD Algorithm.

The Recipient Context contains the following parameters:

- o Recipient ID. Byte string used to identify the Recipient Context and to assure unique AEAD nonces. Maximum length is determined by the AEAD Algorithm.
- o Recipient Key. Byte string containing the symmetric key to verify messages received. Derived from Common Context and Recipient ID. Length is determined by the AEAD Algorithm.
- o Replay Window (Server only). The replay window to verify requests received.

All parameters except Sender Sequence Number and Replay Window are immutable once the security context is established. An endpoint may free up memory by not storing the Common IV, Sender Key, and Recipient Key, deriving them from the Master Key and Master Salt when needed. Alternatively, an endpoint may free up memory by not storing the Master Secret and Master Salt after the other parameters have been derived.

Endpoints MAY operate as both client and server and use the same security context for those roles. Independent of being client or server, the endpoint protects messages to send using its Sender Context, and verifies messages received using its Recipient Context. The endpoints MUST NOT change the Sender/Recipient ID when changing roles. In other words, changing the roles does not change the set of keys to be used.

3.2. Establishment of Security Context Parameters

The parameters in the security context are derived from a small set of input parameters. The following input parameters SHALL be pre-established:

- o Master Secret
- o Sender ID
- o Recipient ID

The following input parameters MAY be pre-established. In case any of these parameters is not pre-established, the default value indicated below is used:

- o AEAD Algorithm
 - * Default is AES-CCM-16-64-128 (COSE algorithm encoding: 10)
- o Master Salt
 - * Default is the empty string
- o Key Derivation Function (KDF)
 - * Default is HKDF SHA-256
- o Replay Window Type and Size
 - * Default is DTLS-type replay protection with a window size of 32 [[RFC6347](#)]

All input parameters need to be known to and agreed on by both endpoints, but the replay window may be different in the two endpoints. The way the input parameters are pre-established, is application specific. The OSCORE profile of the ACE framework may be used to establish the necessary input parameters [[I-D.ietf-ace-oscore-profile](#)], or a key exchange protocol for providing forward secrecy. Other examples of deploying OSCORE are given in [Appendix B](#).

[3.2.1](#). Derivation of Sender Key, Recipient Key, and Common IV

The KDF MUST be one of the HMAC based HKDF [[RFC5869](#)] algorithms defined in COSE. HKDF SHA-256 is mandatory to implement. The security context parameters Sender Key, Recipient Key, and Common IV SHALL be derived from the input parameters using the HKDF, which consists of the composition of the HKDF-Extract and HKDF-Expand steps [[RFC5869](#)]:

output parameter = HKDF(salt, IKM, info, L)

where:

- o salt is the Master Salt as defined above
- o IKM is the Master Secret as defined above
- o info is a CBOR array consisting of:


```
info = [  
    id : bstr,  
    alg_aead : int / tstr,  
    type : tstr,  
    L : uint  
]
```

where:

- o id is the Sender ID or Recipient ID when deriving keys and the empty string when deriving the Common IV. The encoding is described in [Section 5](#).
- o alg_aead is the AEAD Algorithm, encoded as defined in [\[RFC8152\]](#).
- o type is "Key" or "IV". The label is an ASCII string, and does not include a trailing NUL byte.
- o L is the size of the key/IV for the AEAD algorithm used, in bytes.

For example, if the algorithm AES-CCM-16-64-128 (see [Section 10.2 in \[RFC8152\]](#)) is used, the integer value for alg_aead is 10, the value for L is 16 for keys and 13 for the Common IV.

[3.2.2](#). Initial Sequence Numbers and Replay Window

The Sender Sequence Number is initialized to 0. The supported types of replay protection and replay window length is application specific and depends on how OSCORE is transported, see [Section 7.4](#). The default is DTLS-type replay protection with a window size of 32 initiated as described in [Section 4.1.2.6 of \[RFC6347\]](#).

[3.3](#). Requirements on the Security Context Parameters

As collisions may lead to the loss of both confidentiality and integrity, Sender ID SHALL be unique in the set of all security contexts using the same Master Secret and Master Salt. When a trusted third party assigns identifiers (e.g., using [\[I-D.ietf-ace-oauth-authz\]](#)) or by using a protocol that allows the parties to negotiate locally unique identifiers in each endpoint, the Sender IDs can be very short. The maximum length of Sender ID in bytes equals the length of AEAD nonce minus 6. For AES-CCM-16-64-128 the maximum length of Sender ID is 7 bytes.

To simplify retrieval of the right Recipient Context, the Recipient ID SHOULD be unique in the sets of all Recipient Contexts used by an endpoint. If an endpoint has the same Recipient ID with different Recipient Contexts, i.e. the Recipient Contexts are derived from

different keying material, then the endpoint may need to try multiple times before finding the right security context associated to the Recipient ID. The Client MAY provide a 'kid context' parameter ([Section 5.1](#)) to help the Server find the right context.

While the triple (Master Secret, Master Salt, Sender ID) MUST be unique, the same Master Salt MAY be used with several Master Secrets and the same Master Secret MAY be used with several Master Salts.

4. Protected Message Fields

OSCORE transforms a CoAP message (which may have been generated from an HTTP message) into an OSCORE message, and vice versa. OSCORE protects as much of the original message as possible while still allowing certain proxy operations (see [Section 10](#)). This section defines how OSCORE protects the message fields and transfers them end-to-end between client and server (in any direction).

The remainder of this section and later sections discuss the behavior in terms of CoAP messages. If HTTP is used for a particular hop in the end-to-end path, then this section applies to the conceptual CoAP message that is mappable to/from the original HTTP message as discussed in [Section 10](#). That is, an HTTP message is conceptually transformed to a CoAP message and then to an OSCORE message, and similarly in the reverse direction. An actual implementation might translate directly from HTTP to OSCORE without the intervening CoAP representation.

Protection of Signaling messages ([Section 5 of \[RFC8323\]](#)) is specified in [Section 4.3](#). The other parts of this section target Request/Response messages.

Message fields of the CoAP message may be protected end-to-end between CoAP client and CoAP server in different ways:

- o Class E: encrypted and integrity protected,
- o Class I: integrity protected only, or
- o Class U: unprotected.

The sending endpoint SHALL transfer Class E message fields in the ciphertext of the COSE object in the OSCORE message. The sending endpoint SHALL include Class I message fields in the Additional Authenticated Data (AAD) of the AEAD algorithm, allowing the receiving endpoint to detect if the value has changed in transfer. Class U message fields SHALL NOT be protected in transfer. Class I

and Class U message field values are transferred in the header or options part of the OSCORE message, which is visible to proxies.

Message fields not visible to proxies, i.e., transported in the ciphertext of the COSE object, are called "Inner" (Class E). Message fields transferred in the header or options part of the OSCORE message, which is visible to proxies, are called "Outer" (Class I or U). There are currently no Class I options defined.

An OSCORE message may contain both an Inner and an Outer instance of a certain CoAP message field. Inner message fields are intended for the receiving endpoint, whereas Outer message fields are used to enable proxy operations. Inner and Outer message fields are processed independently.

4.1. CoAP Options

A summary of how options are protected is shown in Figure 5. Note that some options may have both Inner and Outer message fields which are protected accordingly. The options which require special processing are labelled with asterisks.

No.	Name	E	U
1	If-Match	x	
3	Uri-Host		x
4	ETag	x	
5	If-None-Match	x	
6	Observe		*
7	Uri-Port		x
8	Location-Path	x	
TBD	Object-Security		*
11	Uri-Path	x	
12	Content-Format	x	
14	Max-Age	*	*
15	Uri-Query	x	
17	Accept	x	
20	Location-Query	x	
23	Block2	*	*
27	Block1	*	*
28	Size2	*	*
35	Proxy-Uri		*
39	Proxy-Scheme		x
60	Size1	*	*
258	No-Response	*	*

E = Encrypt and Integrity Protect (Inner)

U = Unprotected (Outer)

* = Special

Figure 5: Protection of CoAP Options

Options that are unknown or for which OSCORE processing is not defined SHALL be processed as class E (and no special processing). Specifications of new CoAP options SHOULD define how they are processed with OSCORE. A new COAP option SHOULD be of class E unless it requires proxy processing.

4.1.1. Inner Options

Inner option message fields (class E) are used to communicate directly with the other endpoint.

The sending endpoint SHALL write the Inner option message fields present in the original CoAP message into the plaintext of the COSE object ([Section 5.3](#)), and then remove the Inner option message fields from the OSCORE message.

The processing of Inner option message fields by the receiving endpoint is specified in [Section 8.2](#) and [Section 8.4](#).

4.1.2. Outer Options

Outer option message fields (Class U or I) are used to support proxy operations.

The sending endpoint SHALL include the Outer option message field present in the original message in the options part of the OSCORE message. All Outer option message fields, including Object-Security, SHALL be encoded as described in [Section 3.1 of \[RFC7252\]](#), where the delta is the difference to the previously included instance of Outer option message field.

The processing of Outer options by the receiving endpoint is specified in [Section 8.2](#) and [Section 8.4](#).

A procedure for integrity-protection-only of Class I option message fields is specified in [Section 5.4](#). Proxies MUST NOT change the order of option's occurrences, for options repeatable and of class I.

Note: There are currently no Class I option message fields defined.

4.1.3. Special Options

Some options require special processing, marked with an asterisk '*' in Figure 5; the processing is specified in this section.

4.1.3.1. Max-Age

An Inner Max-Age message field is used to indicate the maximum time a response may be cached by the client (as defined in [\[RFC7252\]](#)), end-to-end from the server to the client, taking into account that the option is not accessible to proxies. The Inner Max-Age SHALL be processed by OSCORE as specified in [Section 4.1.1](#).

An Outer Max-Age message field is used to avoid unnecessary caching of OSCORE error responses at OSCORE unaware intermediary nodes. A server MAY set a Class U Max-Age message field with value zero to OSCORE error responses, which are described in [Section 7.4](#), [Section 8.2](#) and [Section 8.4](#). Such message field is then processed according to [Section 4.1.2](#).

Successful OSCORE responses do not need to include an Outer Max-Age option since the responses are non-cacheable by construction (see [Section 4.2](#)).

4.1.3.2. The Block Options

Block-wise [[RFC7959](#)] is an optional feature. An implementation MAY support [[RFC7252](#)] and the Object-Security option without supporting block-wise transfers. The Block options (Block1, Block2, Size1, Size2), when Inner message fields, provide secure message segmentation such that each segment can be verified. The Block options, when Outer message fields, enables hop-by-hop fragmentation of the OSCORE message. Inner and Outer block processing may have different performance properties depending on the underlying transport. The end-to-end integrity of the message can be verified both in case of Inner and Outer Block-wise transfers provided all blocks are received.

4.1.3.2.1. Inner Block Options

The sending CoAP endpoint MAY fragment a CoAP message as defined in [[RFC7959](#)] before the message is processed by OSCORE. In this case the Block options SHALL be processed by OSCORE as Inner options ([Section 4.1.1](#)). The receiving CoAP endpoint SHALL process the OSCORE message according to [Section 4.1.1](#) before processing Block-wise as defined in [[RFC7959](#)].

4.1.3.2.2. Outer Block Options

Proxies MAY fragment an OSCORE message using [[RFC7959](#)], by introducing Block option message fields that are Outer ([Section 4.1.2](#)) and not generated by the sending endpoint. Note that the Outer Block options are neither encrypted nor integrity protected. As a consequence, a proxy can maliciously inject block fragments indefinitely, since the receiving endpoint needs to receive the last block (see [[RFC7959](#)]) to be able to compose the OSCORE message and verify its integrity. Therefore, applications supporting OSCORE and [[RFC7959](#)] MUST specify a security policy defining a maximum unfragmented message size (MAX_UNFRAGMENTED_SIZE) considering the maximum size of message which can be handled by the endpoints. Messages exceeding this size SHOULD be fragmented by the sending endpoint using Inner Block options ([Section 4.1.3.2.1](#)).

An endpoint receiving an OSCORE message with an Outer Block option SHALL first process this option according to [[RFC7959](#)], until all blocks of the OSCORE message have been received, or the cumulated message size of the blocks exceeds MAX_UNFRAGMENTED_SIZE. In the former case, the processing of the OSCORE message continues as defined in this document. In the latter case the message SHALL be discarded.

Because of encryption of Uri-Path and Uri-Query, messages to the same server may, from the point of view of a proxy, look like they also target the same resource. A proxy SHOULD mitigate a potential mix-up of blocks from concurrent requests to the same server, for example using the Request-Tag processing specified in Section 3.3.2 of [\[I-D.ietf-core-echo-request-tag\]](#).

4.1.3.3. Proxy-Uri

Proxy-Uri, when present, is split by OSCORE into class U options and class E options, which are processed accordingly. When Proxy-Uri is used in the original CoAP message, Uri-* are not present [\[RFC7252\]](#).

The sending endpoint SHALL first decompose the Proxy-Uri value of the original CoAP message into the Proxy-Scheme, Uri-Host, Uri-Port, Uri-Path, and Uri-Query options (if present) according to [Section 6.4 of \[RFC7252\]](#).

Uri-Path and Uri-Query are class E options and SHALL be protected and processed as Inner options ([Section 4.1.1](#)).

The Proxy-Uri option of the OSCORE message SHALL be set to the composition of Proxy-Scheme, Uri-Host, and Uri-Port options (if present) as specified in [Section 6.5 of \[RFC7252\]](#), and processed as an Outer option of Class U ([Section 4.1.2](#)).

Note that replacing the Proxy-Uri value with the Proxy-Scheme and Uri-* options works by design for all CoAP URIs (see [Section 6 of \[RFC7252\]](#)). OSCORE-aware HTTP servers should not use the userinfo component of the HTTP URI (as defined in [Section 3.2.1 of \[RFC3986\]](#)), so that this type of replacement is possible in the presence of CoAP-to-HTTP proxies. In future documents specifying cross-protocol proxying behavior using different URI structures, it is expected that the authors will create Uri-* options that allow decomposing the Proxy-Uri, and specify in which OSCORE class they belong.

An example of how Proxy-Uri is processed is given here. Assume that the original CoAP message contains:

- o Proxy-Uri = "coap://example.com/resource?q=1"

During OSCORE processing, Proxy-Uri is split into:

- o Proxy-Scheme = "coap"
- o Uri-Host = "example.com"
- o Uri-Port = "5683"

- o Uri-Path = "resource"
- o Uri-Query = "q=1"

Uri-Path and Uri-Query follow the processing defined in [Section 4.1.1](#), and are thus encrypted and transported in the COSE object. The remaining options are composed into the Proxy-Uri included in the options part of the OSCORE message, which has value:

- o Proxy-Uri = "coap://example.com"

See Sections [6.1](#) and [12.6](#) of [\[RFC7252\]](#) for more information.

[4.1.3.4](#). Observe

Observe [\[RFC7641\]](#) is an optional feature. An implementation MAY support [\[RFC7252\]](#) and the Object-Security option without supporting [\[RFC7641\]](#). The Observe option as used here targets the requirements on forwarding of [\[I-D.hartke-core-e2e-security-reqs\]](#) ([Section 2.2.1](#)).

In order for an OSCORE-unaware proxy to support forwarding of Observe messages [\[RFC7641\]](#), there SHALL be an Outer Observe option, i.e., present in the options part of the OSCORE message. The processing of the CoAP Code for Observe messages is described in [Section 4.2](#).

To secure the order of notifications, the client SHALL maintain a Notification Number for each Observation it registers. The Notification Number is a non-negative integer containing the largest Partial IV of the successfully received notifications for the associated Observe registration (see [Section 7.4](#)). The Notification Number is initialized to the Partial IV of the first successfully received notification response to the registration request. In contrast to [\[RFC7641\]](#), the received Partial IV MUST always be compared with the Notification Number, which thus MUST NOT be forgotten after 128 seconds. The client MAY ignore the Observe option value.

If the verification fails, the client SHALL stop processing the response.

The Observe option in the CoAP request may be legitimately removed by a proxy. If the Observe option is removed from a CoAP request by a proxy, then the server can still verify the request (as a non-Observe request), and produce a non-Observe response. If the OSCORE client receives a response to an Observe request without an Outer Observe value, then it MUST verify the response as a non-Observe response. If the OSCORE client receives a response to a non-Observe request

with an Outer Observe value, it stops processing the message, as specified in [Section 8.4](#).

Clients can re-register observations to ensure that the observation is still active and establish freshness again ([\[RFC7641\]](#) [Section 3.3.1](#)). When an OSCORE observation is refreshed, not only the ETags, but also the partial IV (and thus the payload and Object-Security option) change. The server uses the new request's Partial IV as the 'request_piv' of new responses.

[4.1.3.5](#). No-Response

No-Response is defined in [\[RFC7967\]](#). Clients using No-Response MUST set both an Inner (Class E) and an Outer (Class U) No-Response option, with same value.

The Inner No-Response option is used to communicate to the server the client's disinterest in certain classes of responses to a particular request. The Inner No-Response SHALL be processed by OSCORE as specified in [Section 4.1.1](#).

The Outer No-Response option is used to support proxy functionality, specifically to avoid error transmissions from proxies to clients, and to avoid bandwidth reduction to servers by proxies applying congestion control when not receiving responses. The Outer No-Response option is processed according to [Section 4.1.2](#).

In particular, step 8 of [Section 8.4](#) is applied to No-Response.

Applications should consider that a proxy may remove the Outer No-Response option from the request. Applications using No-Response can specify policies to deal with cases where servers receive an Inner No-Response option only, which may be the result of the request having traversed a No-Response unaware proxy, and update the processing in [Section 8.4](#) accordingly. This avoids unnecessary error responses to clients and bandwidth reductions to servers, due to No-Response unaware proxies.

[4.1.3.6](#). Object-Security

The Object-Security option is only defined to be present in OSCORE messages, as an indication that OSCORE processing have been performed. The content in the Object-Security option is neither encrypted nor integrity protected as a whole but some part of the content of this option is protected (see [Section 5.4](#)). "OSCORE within OSCORE" is not supported: If OSCORE processing detects an Object-Security option in the original CoAP message, then processing SHALL be stopped.

4.2. CoAP Header Fields and Payload

A summary of how the CoAP header fields and payload are protected is shown in Figure 6, including fields specific to CoAP over UDP and CoAP over TCP (marked accordingly in the table).

Field	E	U
Version (UDP)		x
Type (UDP)		x
Length (TCP)		x
Token Length		x
Code	x	
Message ID (UDP)		x
Token		x
Payload	x	

E = Encrypt and Integrity Protect (Inner)

U = Unprotected (Outer)

Figure 6: Protection of CoAP Header Fields and Payload

Most CoAP Header fields (i.e. the message fields in the fixed 4-byte header) are required to be read and/or changed by CoAP proxies and thus cannot in general be protected end-to-end between the endpoints. As mentioned in [Section 1](#), OSCORE protects the CoAP Request/Response layer only, and not the Messaging Layer ([Section 2 of \[RFC7252\]](#)), so fields such as Type and Message ID are not protected with OSCORE.

The CoAP Header field Code is protected by OSCORE. Code SHALL be encrypted and integrity protected (Class E) to prevent an intermediary from eavesdropping on or manipulating the Code (e.g., changing from GET to DELETE).

The sending endpoint SHALL write the Code of the original CoAP message into the plaintext of the COSE object (see [Section 5.3](#)). After that, the Outer Code of the OSCORE message SHALL be set to 0.02 (POST) for requests without Observe option, to 0.05 (FETCH) for requests with Observe option, and to 2.04 (Changed) for responses. Using FETCH with Observe allows OSCORE to be compliant with the Observe processing in OSCORE-unaware proxies. The choice of POST and FETCH [[RFC8132](#)] allows all OSCORE messages to have payload.

The receiving endpoint SHALL discard the Code in the OSCORE message and write the Code of the plaintext in the COSE object ([Section 5.3](#)) into the decrypted CoAP message.

The other currently defined CoAP Header fields are Unprotected (Class U). The sending endpoint SHALL write all other header fields of the original message into the header of the OSCORE message. The receiving endpoint SHALL write the header fields from the received OSCORE message into the header of the decrypted CoAP message.

The CoAP Payload, if present in the original CoAP message, SHALL be encrypted and integrity protected and is thus an Inner message field. The sending endpoint writes the payload of the original CoAP message into the plaintext ([Section 5.3](#)) input to the COSE object. The receiving endpoint verifies and decrypts the COSE object, and recreates the payload of the original CoAP message.

4.3. Signaling Messages

Signaling messages (CoAP Code 7.00-7.31) were introduced to exchange information related to an underlying transport connection in the specific case of CoAP over reliable transports [[RFC8323](#)].

OSCORE MAY be used to protect Signaling if the endpoints for OSCORE coincide with the endpoints for the signaling message. If OSCORE is used to protect Signaling then:

- o To comply with [[RFC8323](#)], an initial empty CSM message SHALL be sent. The subsequent signaling message SHALL be protected.
- o Signaling messages SHALL be protected as CoAP Request messages, except in the case the Signaling message is a response to a previous Signaling message, in which case it SHALL be protected as a CoAP Response message. For example, 7.02 (Ping) is protected as a CoAP Request and 7.03 (Pong) as a CoAP response.
- o The Outer Code for Signaling messages SHALL be set to 0.02 (POST), unless it is a response to a previous Signaling message, in which case it SHALL be set to 2.04 (Changed).
- o All Signaling options, except the Object-Security option, SHALL be Inner (Class E).

NOTE: Option numbers for Signaling messages are specific to the CoAP Code (see [Section 5.2 of \[RFC8323\]](#)).

If OSCORE is not used to protect Signaling, Signaling messages SHALL be unaltered by OSCORE.

5. The COSE Object

This section defines how to use COSE [RFC8152] to wrap and protect data in the original message. OSCORE uses the untagged COSE_Encrypt0 structure with an Authenticated Encryption with Additional Data (AEAD) algorithm. The key lengths, IV length, nonce length, and maximum Sender Sequence Number are algorithm dependent.

The AEAD algorithm AES-CCM-16-64-128 defined in [Section 10.2 of \[RFC8152\]](#) is mandatory to implement. For AES-CCM-16-64-128 the length of Sender Key and Recipient Key is 128 bits, the length of nonce and Common IV is 13 bytes. The maximum Sender Sequence Number is specified in [Section 11](#).

As specified in [RFC5116], plaintext denotes the data that is to be encrypted and integrity protected, and Additional Authenticated Data (AAD) denotes the data that is to be integrity protected only.

The COSE Object SHALL be a COSE_Encrypt0 object with fields defined as follows

- o The 'protected' field is empty.
- o The 'unprotected' field includes:
 - * The 'Partial IV' parameter. The value is set to the Sender Sequence Number. All leading zeroes SHALL be removed when encoding the Partial IV, except in the case of value 0 which is encoded to the byte string 0x00. This parameter SHALL be present in requests. In case of Observe ([Section 4.1.3.4](#)) the Partial IV SHALL be present in responses, and otherwise the Partial IV will not typically be present in responses. (A non-Observe example where the Partial IV is included in a response is provided in [Section 7.5.2](#).)
 - * The 'kid' parameter. The value is set to the Sender ID. This parameter SHALL be present in requests and will not typically be present in responses. An example where the Sender ID is included in a response is the extension of OSCORE to group communication [[I-D.ietf-core-oscore-groupcomm](#)].
 - * Optionally, a 'kid context' parameter as defined in [Section 5.1](#). This parameter MAY be present in requests and SHALL NOT be present in responses.
- o The 'ciphertext' field is computed from the secret key (Sender Key or Recipient Key), AEAD nonce (see [Section 5.2](#)), plaintext (see

[Section 5.3](#)), and the Additional Authenticated Data (AAD) (see [Section 5.4](#)) following [Section 5.2 of \[RFC8152\]](#).

The encryption process is described in [Section 5.3 of \[RFC8152\]](#).

5.1. Kid Context

For certain use cases, e.g. deployments where the same kid is used with multiple contexts, it is necessary or favorable for the sender to provide an additional identifier of the security material to use, in order for the receiver to retrieve or establish the correct key. The kid context parameter is used to provide such additional input. The kid context and kid are used to determine the security context, or to establish the necessary input parameters to derive the security context (see [Section 3.2](#)). The application defines how this is done.

The kid context is implicitly integrity protected, as manipulation that leads to the wrong key (or no key) being retrieved which results in an error, as described in [Section 8.2](#).

A summary of the COSE header parameter kid context defined above can be found in Figure 7.

Some examples of relevant uses of kid context are the following:

- o If the client has an identifier in some other namespace which can be used by the server to retrieve or establish the security context, then that identifier can be used as kid context. The kid context may be used as Master Salt ([Section 3.1](#)) for additional entropy of the security contexts (see for example [Appendix B.2](#) or [\[I-D.ietf-6tisch-minimal-security\]](#)).
- o In case of a group communication scenario [\[I-D.ietf-core-oscore-groupcomm\]](#), if the server belongs to multiple groups, then a group identifier can be used as kid context to enable the server to find the right security context.

name	label	value type	value registry	description
kid context	kidctx	bstr		Identifies the kid context

Figure 7: Additional common header parameter for the COSE object

5.2. Nonce

The AEAD nonce is constructed in the following way (see Figure 8):

1. left-padding the Partial IV (in network byte order) with zeroes to exactly 5 bytes,
2. left-padding the (Sender) ID of the endpoint that generated the Partial IV (in network byte order) with zeroes to exactly nonce length - 6 bytes,
3. concatenating the size of the ID (S) with the padded ID and the padded Partial IV,
4. and then XORing with the Common IV.

Note that in this specification only algorithms that use nonces equal or greater than 7 bytes are supported. The nonce construction with S, ID of PIV generator, and Partial IV together with endpoint unique IDs and encryption keys make it easy to verify that the nonces used with a specific key will be unique.

When Observe is not used, the request and the response may use the same nonce. In this way, the Partial IV does not have to be sent in responses, which reduces the size. For processing instructions see [Section 8](#).

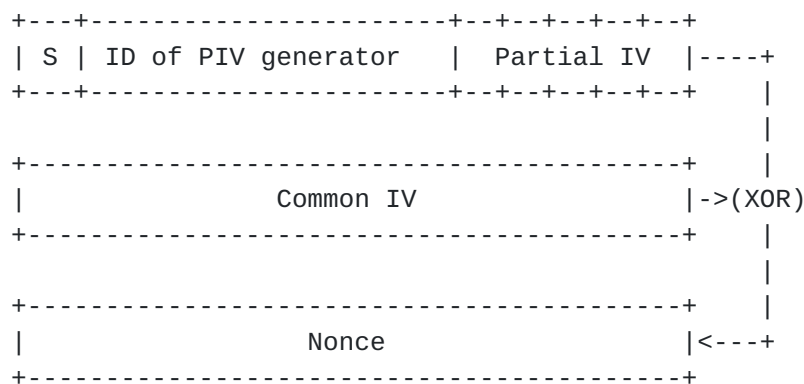


Figure 8: AEAD Nonce Formation

5.3. Plaintext

The plaintext is formatted as a CoAP message without Header (see Figure 9) consisting of:

- o the Code of the original CoAP message as defined in [Section 3 of \[RFC7252\]](#); and

- o all Inner option message fields (see [Section 4.1.1](#)) present in the original CoAP message (see [Section 4.1](#)). The options are encoded as described in [Section 3.1 of \[RFC7252\]](#), where the delta is the difference to the previously included instance of Class E option; and
- o the Payload of original CoAP message, if present, and in that case prefixed by the one-byte Payload Marker (0xFF).

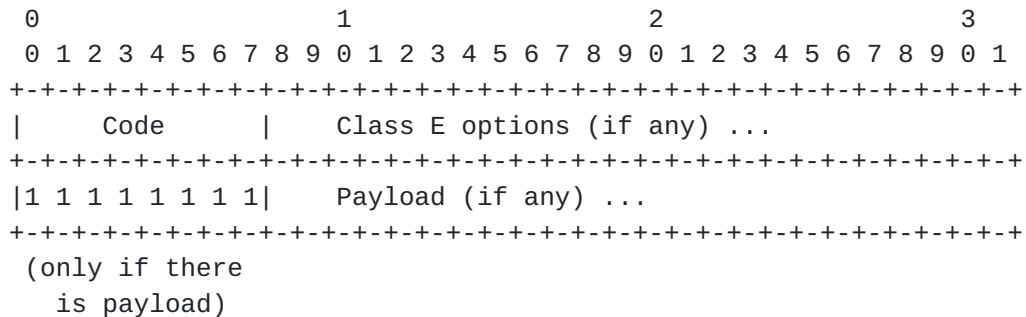


Figure 9: Plaintext

NOTE: The plaintext contains all CoAP data that needs to be encrypted end-to-end between the endpoints.

5.4. Additional Authenticated Data

The external_aad SHALL be a CBOR array as defined below:

```

external_aad = [
  oscore_version : uint,
  algorithms : [ alg_aead : int / tstr ],
  request_kid : bstr,
  request_piv : bstr,
  options : bstr
]

```

where:

- o oscore_version: contains the OSCORE version number. Implementations of this specification MUST set this field to 1. Other values are reserved for future versions.
- o algorithms: contains (for extensibility) an array of algorithms, according to this specification only containing alg_aead.
- o alg_aead: contains the AEAD Algorithm from the security context used for the exchange (see [Section 3.1](#)).

- o request_kid: contains the value of the 'kid' in the COSE object of the request (see [Section 5](#)).
- o request_piv: contains the value of the 'Partial IV' in the COSE object of the request (see [Section 5](#)).
- o options: contains the Class I options (see [Section 4.1.2](#)) present in the original CoAP message encoded as described in [Section 3.1 of \[RFC7252\]](#), where the delta is the difference to the previously included instance of class I option.

NOTE: The format of the external_aad is for simplicity the same for requests and responses, although some parameters, e.g. request_kid need not be integrity protected in the requests.

6. OSCORE Header Compression

The Concise Binary Object Representation (CBOR) [[RFC7049](#)] combines very small message sizes with extensibility. The CBOR Object Signing and Encryption (COSE) [[RFC8152](#)] uses CBOR to create compact encoding of signed and encrypted data. COSE is however constructed to support a large number of different stateless use cases, and is not fully optimized for use as a stateful security protocol, leading to a larger than necessary message expansion. In this section, we define a stateless header compression mechanism, simply removing redundant information from the COSE objects, which significantly reduces the per-packet overhead. The result of applying this mechanism to a COSE object is called the "compressed COSE object".

The COSE_Encrypt0 object used in OSCORE is transported in the Object-Security option and in the Payload. The Payload contains the Ciphertext and the headers of the COSE object are compactly encoded as described in the next section.

6.1. Encoding of the Object-Security Value

The value of the Object-Security option SHALL contain the OSCORE flag bits, the Partial IV parameter, the kid context parameter (length and value), and the kid parameter as follows:


```

  0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 <----- n bytes ----->
+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+
|0 0 0|h|k|  n  |      Partial IV (if any) ...
+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+

<- 1 byte -> <----- s bytes ----->
+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+
| s (if any) | kid context (if any) | kid (if any) ... |
+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+

```

Figure 10: Object-Security Value

- o The first byte of flag bits encodes the following set of flags and the length of the Partial IV parameter:
 - * The three least significant bits encode the Partial IV length n . If $n = 0$ then the Partial IV is not present in the compressed COSE object. The values $n = 6$ and $n = 7$ are reserved.
 - * The fourth least significant bit is the kid flag, k : it is set to 1 if the kid is present in the compressed COSE object.
 - * The fifth least significant bit is the kid context flag, h : it is set to 1 if the compressed COSE object contains a kid context (see [Section 5.1](#)).
 - * The sixth to eighth least significant bits are reserved for future use. These bits SHALL be set to zero when not in use. According to this specification, if any of these bits are set to 1 the message is considered to be malformed and decompression fails as specified in item 3 of [Section 8.2](#).
- o The following n bytes encode the value of the Partial IV, if the Partial IV is present ($n > 0$).
- o The following 1 byte encode the length of the kid context ([Section 5.1](#)) s , if the kid context flag is set ($h = 1$).
- o The following s bytes encode the kid context, if the kid context flag is set ($h = 1$).
- o The remaining bytes encode the value of the kid, if the kid is present ($k = 1$).

Note that the kid MUST be the last field of the object-security value, even in case reserved bits are used and additional fields are added to it.

The length of the Object-Security option thus depends on the presence and length of Partial IV, kid context, kid, as specified in this section, and on the presence and length of the other parameters, as defined in the separate documents.

6.2. Encoding of the OSCORE Payload

The payload of the OSCORE message SHALL encode the ciphertext of the COSE object.

6.3. Examples of Compressed COSE Objects

This section covers a list of OSCORE Header Compression examples for requests and responses. The examples assume the COSE_Encrypt0 object is set (which means the CoAP message and cryptographic material is known). Note that the full CoAP unprotected message, as well as the full security context, is not reported in the examples, but only the input necessary to the compression mechanism, i.e. the COSE_Encrypt0 object. The output is the compressed COSE object as defined in [Section 6](#), divided into two parts, since the object is transported in two CoAP fields: Object-Security option value and CoAP payload.

6.3.1. Examples: Requests

1. Request with ciphertext = 0xaea0155667924dff8a24e4cb35b9, kid = 0x25 and Partial IV = 0x05

Before compression (24 bytes):

```
[  
  h'',  
  { 4:h'25', 6:h'05' },  
  h'aea0155667924dff8a24e4cb35b9'  
]
```

After compression (17 bytes):

Flag byte: 0b00001001 = 0x09

Option Value: 09 05 25 (3 bytes)

Payload: ae a0 15 56 67 92 4d ff 8a 24 e4 cb 35 b9 (14 bytes)

2. Request with ciphertext = 0xaea0155667924dff8a24e4cb35b9, kid = empty string and Partial IV = 0x00

Before compression (23 bytes):


```
[  
  h'',  
  { 4:h'', 6:h'00' },  
  h'aea0155667924dff8a24e4cb35b9'  
]
```

After compression (16 bytes):

Flag byte: 0b00001001 = 0x09

Option Value: 09 00 (2 bytes)

Payload: ae a0 15 56 67 92 4d ff 8a 24 e4 cb 35 b9 (14 bytes)

3. Request with ciphertext = 0xaea0155667924dff8a24e4cb35b9, kid = empty string, Partial IV = 0x05, and kid context = 0x44616c656b

Before compression (30 bytes):

```
[  
  h'',  
  { 4:h'', 6:h'05', 8:h'44616c656b' },  
  h'aea0155667924dff8a24e4cb35b9'  
]
```

After compression (22 bytes):

Flag byte: 0b00011001 = 0x19

Option Value: 19 05 05 44 61 6c 65 6b (8 bytes)

Payload: ae a0 15 56 67 92 4d ff 8a 24 e4 cb 35 b9 (14 bytes)

6.3.2. Example: Response (without Observe)

1. Response not including an Observe option, with ciphertext = 0xaea0155667924dff8a24e4cb35b9

Before compression (18 bytes):

```
[  
  h'',  
  {},  
  h'aea0155667924dff8a24e4cb35b9'  
]
```

After compression (14 bytes):

Flag byte: 0b00000000 = 0x00

Option Value: (0 bytes)

Payload: ae a0 15 56 67 92 4d ff 8a 24 e4 cb 35 b9 (14 bytes)

6.3.3. Example: Response (with Observe)

1. Response including an Observe option, with ciphertext = 0xaea0155667924dff8a24e4cb35b9 and Partial IV = 0x07

Before compression (21 bytes):

```
[
  h'',
  { 6:h'07' },
  h'aea0155667924dff8a24e4cb35b9'
]
```

After compression (16 bytes):

Flag byte: 0b00000001 = 0x01

Option Value: 01 07 (2 bytes)

Payload: ae a0 15 56 67 92 4d ff 8a 24 e4 cb 35 b9 (14 bytes)

7. Sequence Numbers, Replay, Message Binding, and Freshness

7.1. Message Binding

In order to prevent response delay and mismatch attacks [[I-D.mattsson-core-coap-actuators](#)] from on-path attackers and compromised proxies, OSCORE binds responses to the requests by including the kid and Partial IV of the request in the AAD of the response. The server therefore needs to store the kid and Partial IV of the request until all responses have been sent.

7.2. AEAD Nonce Uniqueness

An AEAD nonce MUST NOT be used more than once per AEAD key. In order to assure unique nonces, each Sender Context contains a Sender Sequence Number used to protect requests, and - in case of Observe - responses. If messages are processed concurrently, the operation of reading and increasing the Sender Sequence Number MUST be atomic.

The maximum Sender Sequence Number is algorithm dependent (see [Section 11](#)), and SHALL be less than 2^{40} . If the Sender Sequence

Number exceeds the maximum, the endpoint MUST NOT process any more messages with the given Sender Context. The endpoint SHOULD acquire a new security context (and consequently inform the other endpoint) before this happens. The latter is out of scope of this document.

7.3. Freshness

For requests, OSCORE provides only the guarantee that the request is not older than the security context. For applications having stronger demands on request freshness (e.g., control of actuators), OSCORE needs to be augmented with mechanisms providing freshness, for example as specified in [[I-D.ietf-core-echo-request-tag](#)].

For responses, the message binding guarantees that a response is not older than its request. For responses without Observe, this gives strong absolute freshness. For responses with Observe, the absolute freshness gets weaker with time, and it is RECOMMENDED that the client regularly re-register the observation.

For requests, and responses with Observe, OSCORE also provides relative freshness in the sense that the received Partial IV allows a recipient to determine the relative order of responses.

7.4. Replay Protection

In order to protect from replay of requests, the server's Recipient Context includes a Replay Window. A server SHALL verify that a Partial IV received in the COSE object has not been received before. If this verification fails the server SHALL stop processing the message, and MAY optionally respond with a 4.01 Unauthorized error message. Also, the server MAY set an Outer Max-Age option with value zero. The diagnostic payload MAY contain the "Replay detected" string. The size and type of the Replay Window depends on the use case and the protocol with which the OSCORE message is transported. In case of reliable and ordered transport from endpoint to endpoint, e.g. TCP, the server MAY just store the last received Partial IV and require that newly received Partial IVs equals the last received Partial IV + 1. However, in case of mixed reliable and unreliable transports and where messages may be lost, such a replay mechanism may be too restrictive and the default replay window be more suitable (see [Section 3.2.2](#)).

Responses to non-Observe requests are protected against replay as they are cryptographically bound to the request.

In the case of Observe, a client receiving a notification SHALL verify that the Partial IV of a received notification is greater than the Notification Number bound to that Observe registration. If the

verification fails, the client SHALL stop processing the response. If the verification succeeds, the client SHALL overwrite the corresponding Notification Number with the received Partial IV.

If messages are processed concurrently, the Partial IV needs to be validated a second time after decryption and before updating the replay protection data. The operation of validating the Partial IV and updating the replay protection data MUST be atomic.

7.5. Losing Part of the Context State

To prevent reuse of the AEAD nonce with the same key, or from accepting replayed messages, an endpoint needs to handle the situation of losing rapidly changing parts of the context, such as the request Token, Sender Sequence Number, Replay Window, and Notification Numbers. These are typically stored in RAM and therefore lost in the case of an unplanned reboot.

After boot, an endpoint MAY reject to use pre-existing security contexts, and MAY establish a new security context with each endpoint it communicates with. However, establishing a fresh security context may have a non-negligible cost in terms of, e.g., power consumption.

After boot, an endpoint MAY use a partly persistently stored security context, but then the endpoint MUST NOT reuse a previous Sender Sequence Number and MUST NOT accept previously accepted messages. Some ways to achieve this are described in the following sections.

7.5.1. Sequence Number

To prevent reuse of Sender Sequence Numbers, an endpoint MAY perform the following procedure during normal operations:

- o Each time the Sender Sequence Number is evenly divisible by K , where K is a positive integer, store the Sender Sequence Number in persistent memory. After boot, the endpoint initiates the Sender Sequence Number to the value stored in persistent memory $+ K - 1$. Storing to persistent memory can be costly. The value K gives a trade-off between the number of storage operations and efficient use of Sender Sequence Numbers.

7.5.2. Replay Window

To prevent accepting replay of previously received requests, the server MAY perform the following procedure after boot:

- o For each stored security context, the first time after boot the server receives an OSCORE request, the server responds with the

Echo option [[I-D.ietf-core-echo-request-tag](#)] to get a request with verifiable freshness. The server MUST use its Partial IV when generating the AEAD nonce and MUST include the Partial IV in the response.

If the server using the Echo option can verify a second request as fresh, then the Partial IV of the second request is set as the lower limit of the replay window.

[7.5.3.](#) Replay Protection of Observe Notifications

To prevent accepting replay of previously received notification responses, the client MAY perform the following procedure after boot:

- o The client rejects notifications bound to the earlier registration, removes all Notification Numbers and re-registers using Observe.

[8.](#) Processing

This section describes the OSCORE message processing.

[8.1.](#) Protecting the Request

Given a CoAP request, the client SHALL perform the following steps to create an OSCORE request:

1. Retrieve the Sender Context associated with the target resource.
2. Compose the Additional Authenticated Data and the plaintext, as described in [Section 5.4](#) and [Section 5.3](#).
3. Compute the AEAD nonce from the Sender ID, Common IV, and Partial IV (Sender Sequence Number in network byte order) as described in [Section 5.2](#) and (in one atomic operation, see [Section 7.2](#)) increment the Sender Sequence Number by one.
4. Encrypt the COSE object using the Sender Key. Compress the COSE Object as specified in [Section 6](#).
5. Format the OSCORE message according to [Section 4](#). The Object-Security option is added (see [Section 4.1.2](#)).
6. Store the association Token - Security Context, in order to be able to find the Recipient Context from the Token in the response.

8.2. Verifying the Request

A server receiving a request containing the Object-Security option SHALL perform the following steps:

1. Process Outer Block options according to [RFC7959], until all blocks of the request have been received (see [Section 4.1.3.2](#)).
2. Discard the message Code and all non-special Inner option message fields (marked with 'x' in column E of Figure 5) present in the received message. For example, an If-Match Outer option is discarded, but an Uri-Host Outer option is not discarded.
3. Decompress the COSE Object ([Section 6](#)) and retrieve the Recipient Context associated with the Recipient ID in the 'kid' parameter. If either the decompression or the COSE message fails to decode, or the server fails to retrieve a Recipient Context with Recipient ID corresponding to the 'kid' parameter received, then the server SHALL stop processing the request. If:
 - * either the decompression or the COSE message fails to decode, the server MAY respond with a 4.02 Bad Option error message. The server MAY set an Outer Max-Age option with value zero. The diagnostic payload SHOULD contain the string "Failed to decode COSE".
 - * the server fails to retrieve a Recipient Context with Recipient ID corresponding to the 'kid' parameter received, the server MAY respond with a 4.01 Unauthorized error message. The server MAY set an Outer Max-Age option with value zero. The diagnostic payload SHOULD contain the string "Security context not found".
4. Verify the 'Partial IV' parameter using the Replay Window, as described in [Section 7.4](#).
5. Compose the Additional Authenticated Data, as described in [Section 5.4](#).
6. Compute the AEAD nonce from the Recipient ID, Common IV, and the 'Partial IV' parameter, received in the COSE Object.
7. Decrypt the COSE object using the Recipient Key, as per [RFC8152] [Section 5.3](#). (The decrypt operation includes the verification of the integrity.)

- * If decryption fails, the server MUST stop processing the request and MAY respond with a 4.00 Bad Request error message. The server MAY set an Outer Max-Age option with value zero. The diagnostic payload MAY contain the "Decryption failed" string.
 - * If decryption succeeds, update the Replay Window, as described in [Section 7](#).
8. For each decrypted option, check if the option is also present as an Outer option: if it is, discard the Outer. For example: the message contains a Max-Age Inner and a Max-Age Outer option. The Outer Max-Age is discarded.
 9. Add decrypted code, options and payload to the decrypted request. The Object-Security option is removed.
 10. The decrypted CoAP request is processed according to [\[RFC7252\]](#).

[8.3](#). Protecting the Response

If a CoAP response is generated in response to an OSCORE request, the server SHALL perform the following steps to create an OSCORE response. Note that CoAP error responses derived from CoAP processing (point 10. in [Section 8.2](#)) are protected, as well as successful CoAP responses, while the OSCORE errors (point 3, 4, and 7 in [Section 8.2](#)) do not follow the processing below, but are sent as simple CoAP responses, without OSCORE processing.

1. Retrieve the Sender Context in the Security Context used to verify the request.
2. Compose the Additional Authenticated Data and the plaintext, as described in [Section 5.4](#) and [Section 5.3](#).
3. Compute the AEAD nonce
 - * If Observe is used, compute the nonce from the Sender ID, Common IV, and Partial IV (Sender Sequence Number in network byte order). Then (in one atomic operation, see [Section 7.2](#)) increment the Sender Sequence Number by one.
 - * If Observe is not used, either the nonce from the request is used or a new Partial IV is used (see bullet on 'Partial IV' in [Section 5](#)).
4. Encrypt the COSE object using the Sender Key. Compress the COSE Object as specified in [Section 6](#). If the AEAD nonce was

constructed from a new Partial IV, this Partial IV MUST be included in the message. If the AEAD nonce from the request was used, the Partial IV MUST NOT be included in the message.

5. Format the OSCORE message according to [Section 4](#). The Object-Security option is added (see [Section 4.1.2](#)).

[8.4](#). Verifying the Response

A client receiving a response containing the Object-Security option SHALL perform the following steps:

1. Process Outer Block options according to [\[RFC7959\]](#), until all blocks of the OSCORE message have been received (see [Section 4.1.3.2](#)).
2. Discard the message Code and all non-special Class E options from the message. For example, ETag Outer option is discarded, Max-Age Outer option is not discarded.
3. Retrieve the Recipient Context associated with the Token. Decompress the COSE Object ([Section 6](#)). If either the decompression or the COSE message fails to decode, then go to 11.
4. For Observe notifications, verify the received 'Partial IV' parameter against the corresponding Notification Number as described in [Section 7.4](#). If the client receives a notification for which no Observe request was sent, then go to 11.
5. Compose the Additional Authenticated Data, as described in [Section 5.4](#).
6. Compute the AEAD nonce
 1. If the Observe option and the Partial IV are not present in the response, the nonce from the request is used.
 2. If the Observe option is present in the response, and the Partial IV is not present in the response, then go to 11.
 3. If the Partial IV is present in the response, compute the nonce from the Recipient ID, Common IV, and the 'Partial IV' parameter, received in the COSE Object.
7. Decrypt the COSE object using the Recipient Key, as per [\[RFC8152\] Section 5.3](#). (The decrypt operation includes the verification of the integrity.)

- * If decryption fails, then go to 11.
 - * If decryption succeeds and Observe is used, update the corresponding Notification Number, as described in [Section 7](#).
8. For each decrypted option, check if the option is also present as an Outer option: if it is, discard the Outer. For example: the message contains a Max-Age Inner and a Max-Age Outer option. The Outer Max-Age is discarded.
 9. Add decrypted code, options and payload to the decrypted request. The Object-Security option is removed.
 10. The decrypted CoAP response is processed according to [\[RFC7252\]](#).
 11. In case any of the previous erroneous conditions apply: the client SHALL stop processing the response.

An error condition occurring while processing a response in an observation does not cancel the observation. A client MUST NOT react to failure in step 7 by re-registering the observation immediately.

9. Web Linking

The use of OSCORE MAY be indicated by a target attribute "osc" in a web link [\[RFC8288\]](#) to a resource. This attribute is a hint indicating that the destination of that link is to be accessed using OSCORE. Note that this is simply a hint, it does not include any security context material or any other information required to run OSCORE.

A value MUST NOT be given for the "osc" attribute; any present value MUST be ignored by parsers. The "osc" attribute MUST NOT appear more than once in a given link-value; occurrences after the first MUST be ignored by parsers.

10. Proxy and HTTP Operations

[RFC 7252](#) defines operations for a CoAP-to-CoAP proxy (see [Section 5.7 of \[RFC7252\]](#)) and for proxying between CoAP and HTTP ([Section 10 of \[RFC7252\]](#)). A more detailed description of the HTTP-to-CoAP mapping is provided by [\[RFC8075\]](#). This section describes the operations of OSCORE-aware proxies.

10.1. CoAP-to-CoAP Forwarding Proxy

OSCORE is designed to work with legacy CoAP-to-CoAP forward proxies [RFC7252], but OSCORE-aware proxies MAY provide certain simplifications as specified in this section.

Security requirements for forwarding are presented in Section 2.2.1 of [I-D.hartke-core-e2e-security-reqs]. OSCORE complies with the extended security requirements also addressing Block-wise [RFC7959] and CoAP-mappable HTTP. In particular caching is disabled since the CoAP response is only applicable to the original CoAP request. An OSCORE-aware proxy SHALL NOT cache a response to a request with an Object-Security option. As a consequence, the search for cache hits and CoAP freshness/Max-Age processing can be omitted.

Proxy processing of the (Outer) Proxy-Uri option is as defined in [RFC7252].

Proxy processing of the (Outer) Block options is as defined in [RFC7959].

Proxy processing of the (Outer) Observe option is as defined in [RFC7641]. OSCORE-aware proxies MAY look at the Partial IV value instead of the Outer Observe option.

10.2. HTTP Processing

In order to use OSCORE over HTTP hops, a node needs to be able to map HTTP messages to CoAP messages (see [RFC8075]), and to apply OSCORE to CoAP messages (as defined in this document).

For this purpose, this specification defines a new HTTP header field named CoAP-Object-Security, see Section 12.4. The CoAP-Object-Security header field is only used in POST requests and 200 (OK) responses, i.e. essentially using HTTP as a transport of an encrypted CoAP mappable message contained in the payload.

The header field is neither appropriate to list in the Connection header field (see Section 6.1 of [RFC7230]), nor in a Vary response header field (see Section 7.1.4 of [RFC7231]), nor allowed in trailers (see Section 4.1 of [RFC7230]).

[Ed. Note: Reconsider use of Vary]

Intermediaries cannot insert, delete, or modify the field's value without being detected. The header field is not preserved across redirects.

[Ed. Note: Reconsider support for redirects]

Using the Augmented Backus-Naur Form (ABNF) notation of [\[RFC5234\]](#), including the following core ABNF syntax rules defined by that specification: ALPHA (letters) and DIGIT (decimal digits), the CoAP-Object-Security header field is as follows.

base64-char = ALPHA / DIGIT / "_" / "-"

CoAP-Object-Security = 2*base64-char

A sending endpoint uses [\[RFC8075\]](#) to translate an HTTP message into a CoAP message. It then protects the message with OSCORE processing, and adds the Object-Security option (as defined in this document). Then, the endpoint maps the resulting CoAP message to an HTTP message that includes the HTTP header field CoAP-Object-Security, whose value is:

- o "" if the CoAP Object-Security option is empty, or
- o the value of the CoAP Object-Security option ([Section 6.1](#)) in base64url encoding ([Section 5 of \[RFC4648\]](#)) without padding (see [\[RFC7515\] Appendix C](#) for implementation notes for this encoding).

Note that the value of the HTTP body is the CoAP payload, i.e. the OSCORE payload ([Section 6.2](#)).

The HTTP header field Content-Type is set to 'application/oscore' (see [Section 12.5](#)).

The resulting message is an OSCORE message that uses HTTP.

A receiving endpoint uses [\[RFC8075\]](#) to translate an HTTP message into a CoAP message, with the following addition. The HTTP message includes the CoAP-Object-Security header field, which is mapped to the CoAP Object-Security option in the following way. The CoAP Object-Security option value is:

- o empty if the value of the HTTP CoAP-Object-Security header field is a single zero byte (0x00) represented by AA
- o the value of the HTTP CoAP-Object-Security header field decoded from base64url ([Section 5 of \[RFC4648\]](#)) without padding (see [\[RFC7515\] Appendix C](#) for implementation notes for this decoding).

Note that the value of the CoAP payload is the HTTP body, i.e. the OSCORE payload ([Section 6.2](#)).

The resulting message is an OSCORE message that uses CoAP.

The endpoint can then verify the message according to the OSCORE processing and get a verified CoAP message. It can then translate the verified CoAP message into a verified HTTP message.

10.3. HTTP-to-CoAP Translation Proxy

[Section 10.2 of \[RFC7252\]](#) and [\[RFC8075\]](#) specify the behavior of an HTTP-to-CoAP proxy. As requested in [Section 1 of \[RFC8075\]](#), this section describes the HTTP mapping for the OSCORE protocol extension of CoAP.

The presence of the Object-Security option, both in requests and responses, is expressed in an HTTP header field named CoAP-Object-Security in the mapped request or response. The value of the field is:

- o AA if the CoAP Object-Security option is empty, or
- o the value of the CoAP Object-Security option ([Section 6.1](#)) in base64url encoding ([Section 5 of \[RFC4648\]](#)) without padding (see [\[RFC7515\] Appendix C](#) for implementation notes for this encoding).

The header field Content-Type 'application/oscore' (see [Section 12.5](#)) is used for OSCORE messages transported in HTTP. The CoAP Content-Format option is omitted for OSCORE messages transported in CoAP.

The value of the body is the OSCORE payload ([Section 6.2](#)).

Example:

Mapping and notation here is based on "Simple Form" ([Section 5.4.1.1 of \[RFC8075\]](#)).

[HTTP request -- Before client object security processing]

```
GET http://proxy.url/hc/?target\_uri=coap://server.url/orders
    HTTP/1.1
```

[HTTP request -- HTTP Client to Proxy]

```
POST http://proxy.url/hc/?target\_uri=coap://server.url/ HTTP/1.1
Content-Type: application/oscore
CoAP-Object-Security: CSU
Body: 09 07 01 13 61 f7 0f d2 97 b1 [binary]
```


[CoAP request -- Proxy to CoAP Server]

```
POST coap://server.url/
Object-Security: 09 25
Payload: 09 07 01 13 61 f7 0f d2 97 b1 [binary]
```

[CoAP request -- After server object security processing]

```
GET coap://server.url/orders
```

[CoAP response -- Before server object security processing]

```
2.05 Content
Content-Format: 0
Payload: Exterminate! Exterminate!
```

[CoAP response -- CoAP Server to Proxy]

```
2.04 Changed
Object-Security: [empty]
Payload: 00 31 d1 fc f6 70 fb 0c 1d d5 ... [binary]
```

[HTTP response -- Proxy to HTTP Client]

```
HTTP/1.1 200 OK
Content-Type: application/oscore
CoAP-Object-Security: ""
Body: 00 31 d1 fc f6 70 fb 0c 1d d5 ... [binary]
```

[HTTP response -- After client object security processing]

```
HTTP/1.1 200 OK
Content-Type: text/plain
Body: Exterminate! Exterminate!
```

Note that the HTTP Status Code 200 in the next-to-last message is the mapping of CoAP Code 2.04 (Changed), whereas the HTTP Status Code 200 in the last message is the mapping of the CoAP Code 2.05 (Content), which was encrypted within the compressed COSE object carried in the Body of the HTTP response.

10.4. CoAP-to-HTTP Translation Proxy

[Section 10.1 of \[RFC7252\]](#) describes the behavior of a CoAP-to-HTTP proxy. [RFC 8075](#) [\[RFC8075\]](#) does not cover this direction in any more detail and so an example instantiation of [Section 10.1 of \[RFC7252\]](#) is used below.

Example:

[CoAP request -- Before client object security processing]

```
GET coap://proxy.url/  
Proxy-Uri=http://server.url/orders
```

[CoAP request -- CoAP Client to Proxy]

```
POST coap://proxy.url/  
Proxy-Uri=http://server.url/  
Object-Security: 09 25  
Payload: 09 07 01 13 61 f7 0f d2 97 b1 [binary]
```

[HTTP request -- Proxy to HTTP Server]

```
POST http://server.url/ HTTP/1.1  
Content-Type: application/oscore  
CoAP-Object-Security: CSU  
Body: 09 07 01 13 61 f7 0f d2 97 b1 [binary]
```

[HTTP request -- After server object security processing]

```
GET http://server.url/orders HTTP/1.1
```

[HTTP response -- Before server object security processing]

```
HTTP/1.1 200 OK  
Content-Type: text/plain  
Body: Exterminate! Exterminate!
```

[HTTP response -- HTTP Server to Proxy]

```
HTTP/1.1 200 OK  
Content-Type: application/oscore  
CoAP-Object-Security: ""  
Body: 00 31 d1 fc f6 70 fb 0c 1d d5 ... [binary]
```

[CoAP response - Proxy to CoAP Client]

```
2.04 Changed  
Object-Security: [empty]  
Payload: 00 31 d1 fc f6 70 fb 0c 1d d5 ... [binary]
```


[CoAP response -- After client object security processing]

2.05 Content

Content-Format: 0

Payload: Exterminate! Exterminate!

Note that the HTTP Code 2.04 (Changed) in the next-to-last message is the mapping of HTTP Status Code 200, whereas the CoAP Code 2.05 (Content) in the last message is the value that was encrypted within the compressed COSE object carried in the Body of the HTTP response.

11. Security Considerations

11.1. End-to-end protection

In scenarios with intermediary nodes such as proxies or gateways, transport layer security such as (D)TLS only protects data hop-by-hop. As a consequence, the intermediary nodes can read and modify information. The trust model where all intermediary nodes are considered trustworthy is problematic, not only from a privacy perspective, but also from a security perspective, as the intermediaries are free to delete resources on sensors and falsify commands to actuators (such as "unlock door", "start fire alarm", "raise bridge"). Even in the rare cases where all the owners of the intermediary nodes are fully trusted, attacks and data breaches make such an architecture brittle.

(D)TLS protects hop-by-hop the entire message. OSCORE protects end-to-end all information that is not required for proxy operations (see [Section 4](#)). (D)TLS and OSCORE can be combined, thereby enabling end-to-end security of the message payload, in combination with hop-by-hop protection of the entire message, during transport between endpoint and intermediary node. The CoAP messaging layer, including header fields such as Type and Message ID, as well as CoAP message fields Token and Token Length may be changed by a proxy and thus cannot be protected end-to-end. Error messages occurring during CoAP processing are protected end-to-end. Error messages occurring during OSCORE processing are not always possible to protect, e.g. if the receiving endpoint cannot locate the right security context. It may still be favorable to send an unprotected error message, e.g. to prevent extensive retransmissions, so unprotected error messages are allowed as specified. Similar to error messages, signaling messages are not always possible to protect as they may be intended for an intermediary. Hop-by-hop protection of signaling messages can be achieved with (D)TLS. Applications using unprotected error and signaling messages need to consider the threat that these messages may be spoofed.

11.2. Security Context Establishment

The use of COSE to protect messages as specified in this document requires an established security context. The method to establish the security context described in [Section 3.2](#) is based on a common keying material in client and server, which may be obtained, e.g., by using the ACE framework [[I-D.ietf-ace-oauth-authz](#)]. An OSCORE profile of ACE is described in [[I-D.ietf-ace-oscore-profile](#)]. The key establishment procedure need to ensure same key is not installed twice, even in error situations.

11.3. Replay Protection

Most AEAD algorithms require a unique nonce for each message, for which the sender sequence numbers in the COSE message field 'Partial IV' is used. If the recipient accepts any sequence number larger than the one previously received, then the problem of sequence number synchronization is avoided. With reliable transport, it may be defined that only messages with sequence number which are equal to previous sequence number + 1 are accepted. The alternatives to sequence numbers have their issues: very constrained devices may not be able to support accurate time, or to generate and store large numbers of random nonces. The requirement to change key at counter wrap is a complication, but it also forces the user of this specification to think about implementing key renewal.

11.4. Cryptographic Considerations

The maximum sender sequence number is dependent on the AEAD algorithm. The maximum sender sequence number is $2^{40} - 1$, or any algorithm specific lower limit, after which a new security context must be generated. The mechanism to build the nonce ([Section 5.2](#)) assumes that the nonce is at least 56 bits, and the Partial IV is at most 40 bits. The mandatory-to-implement AEAD algorithm AES-CCM-16-64-128 is selected for compatibility with CCM*.

The security level of a system with m Masters Keys of length k used together with Master Salts with entropy n is $k + n - \log_2(m)$. Similarly, the security level of a system with m AEAD keys of length k used together with AEAD nonces of length n is $k + n - \log_2(m)$. Security level here means that an attacker can recover one of the m keys with complexity $2^{(k + n)} / m$. Protection against such attacks can be provided by increasing the size of the keys or the entropy of the Master Salt. The complexity of recovering a specific key is still 2^k (assuming the Master Salt/AEAD nonce is public) (see [MF00] for a overview). The Master Secret, Sender Key, and Recipient Key must be secret, the rest of the parameters may be public. The Master Secret must be uniformly random.

11.5. Message Segmentation

The Inner Block options enable the sender to split large messages into OSCORE-protected blocks such that the receiving endpoint can verify blocks before having received the complete message. The Outer Block options allow for arbitrary proxy fragmentation operations that cannot be verified by the endpoints, but can by policy be restricted in size since the Inner Block options allow for secure fragmentation of very large messages. A maximum message size (above which the sending endpoint fragments the message and the receiving endpoint discards the message, if complying to the policy) may be obtained as part of normal resource discovery.

11.6. Privacy Considerations

Privacy threats executed through intermediary nodes are considerably reduced by means of OSCORE. End-to-end integrity protection and encryption of the message payload and all options that are not used for proxy operations, provide mitigation against attacks on sensor and actuator communication, which may have a direct impact on the personal sphere.

The unprotected options (Figure 5) may reveal privacy sensitive information. In particular Uri-Host SHOULD NOT contain privacy sensitive information. CoAP headers sent in plaintext allow, for example, matching of CON and ACK (CoAP Message Identifier), matching of request and responses (Token) and traffic analysis. OSCORE does not provide protection for HTTP header fields which are not CoAP-mappable.

Unprotected error messages reveal information about the security state in the communication between the endpoints. Unprotected signalling messages reveal information about the reliable transport used on a leg of the path. Using the mechanisms described in [Section 7.5](#) may reveal when a device goes through a reboot. This can be mitigated by the device storing the precise state of sender sequence number and replay window on a clean shutdown.

The length of message fields can reveal information about the message. Applications may use a padding scheme to protect against traffic analysis.

12. IANA Considerations

Note to RFC Editor: Please replace all occurrences of "[[this document]]" with the RFC number of this specification.

Note to IANA: Please note all occurrences of "TBD" in this specification should be assigned the same number.

12.1. COSE Header Parameters Registry

The 'kid context' parameter is added to the "COSE Header Parameters Registry":

- o Name: kid context
- o Label: TBD1 (Integer value between 1 and 255)
- o Value Type: bstr
- o Value Registry:
- o Description: kid context
- o Reference: [Section 5.1](#) of this document

12.2. CoAP Option Numbers Registry

The Object-Security option is added to the CoAP Option Numbers registry:

Number	Name	Reference
TBD	Object-Security	[[this document]]

12.3. CoAP Signaling Option Numbers Registry

The Object-Security option is added to the CoAP Signaling Option Numbers registry:

Applies to	Number	Name	Reference
7.xx (any)	TBD	Object-Security	[[this document]]

12.4. Header Field Registrations

The HTTP header field CoAP-Object-Security is added to the Message Headers registry:

+-----+-----+-----+-----+			
Header Field Name	Protocol	Status	Reference
+-----+-----+-----+-----+			
CoAP-Object-Security	http	standard	[[this document]]
+-----+-----+-----+-----+			

12.5. Media Type Registrations

This section registers the 'application/oscore' media type in the "Media Types" registry.

These media types are used to indicate that the content is an OSCORE message.

Type name: application

Subtype name: oscore

Required parameters: N/A

Optional parameters: N/A

Encoding considerations: binary

Security considerations: See the Security Considerations section of [[This document]].

Interoperability considerations: N/A

Published specification: [[This document]]

Applications that use this media type: IoT applications sending security content over HTTP(S) transports.

Fragment identifier considerations: N/A

Additional information:

- * Deprecated alias names for this type: N/A

- * Magic number(s): N/A

- * File extension(s): N/A

- * Macintosh file type code(s): N/A

Person & email address to contact for further information:
iesg@ietf.org

Intended usage: COMMON

Restrictions on usage: N/A

Author: Goeran Selander, goran.selander@ericsson.com

Change Controller: IESG

Provisional registration? No

12.6. CoAP Content-Formats Registry

TODO

13. References

13.1. Normative References

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[Appendix A](#). Scenario Examples

This section gives examples of OSCORE, targeting scenarios in Section 2.2.1.1 of [\[I-D.hartke-core-e2e-security-reqs\]](#). The message exchanges are made, based on the assumption that there is a security context established between client and server. For simplicity, these examples only indicate the content of the messages without going into detail of the (compressed) COSE message format.

[A.1](#). Secure Access to Sensor

This example illustrates a client requesting the alarm status from a server.

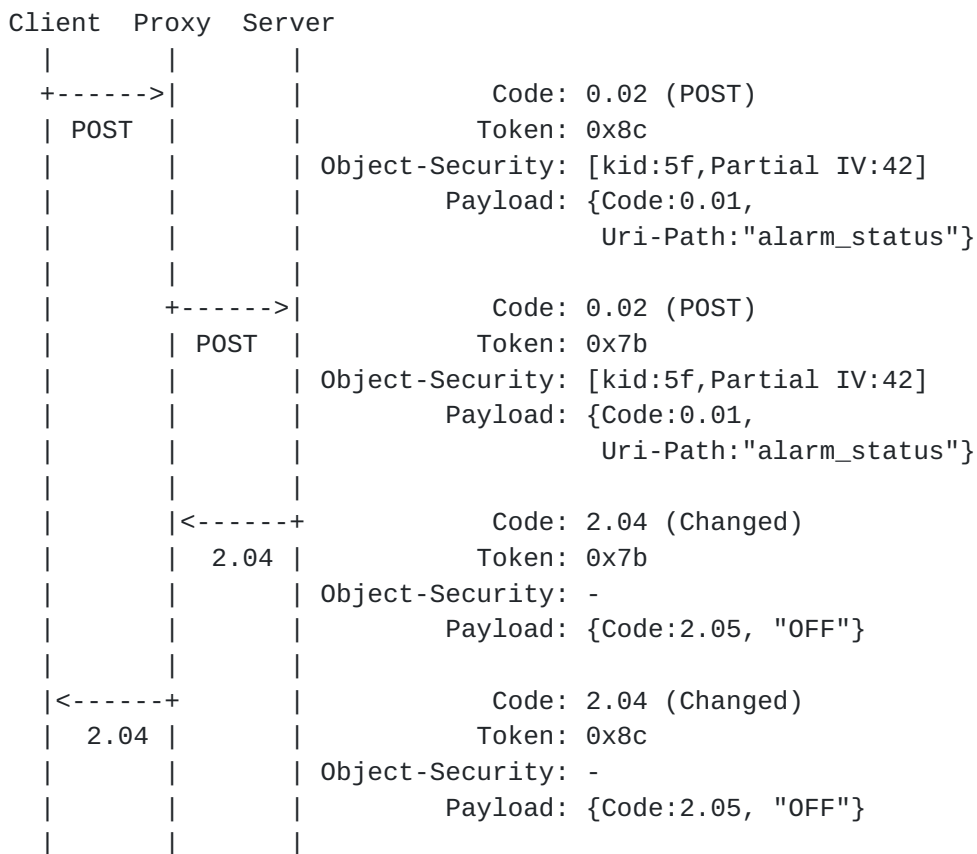


Figure 11: Secure Access to Sensor. Square brackets [...] indicate content of compressed COSE object. Curly brackets { ... } indicate encrypted data.

The request/response Codes are encrypted by OSCORE and only dummy Codes (POST/Changed) are visible in the header of the OSCORE message. The option Uri-Path ("alarm_status") and payload ("OFF") are encrypted.

The COSE header of the request contains an identifier (5f), indicating which security context was used to protect the message and a Partial IV (42).

The server verifies the request as specified in [Section 8.2](#). The client verifies the response as specified in [Section 8.4](#).

A.2. Secure Subscribe to Sensor

This example illustrates a client requesting subscription to a blood sugar measurement resource (GET /glucose), first receiving the value 220 mg/dl and then a second value 180 mg/dl.

Client	Proxy	Server
--------	-------	--------

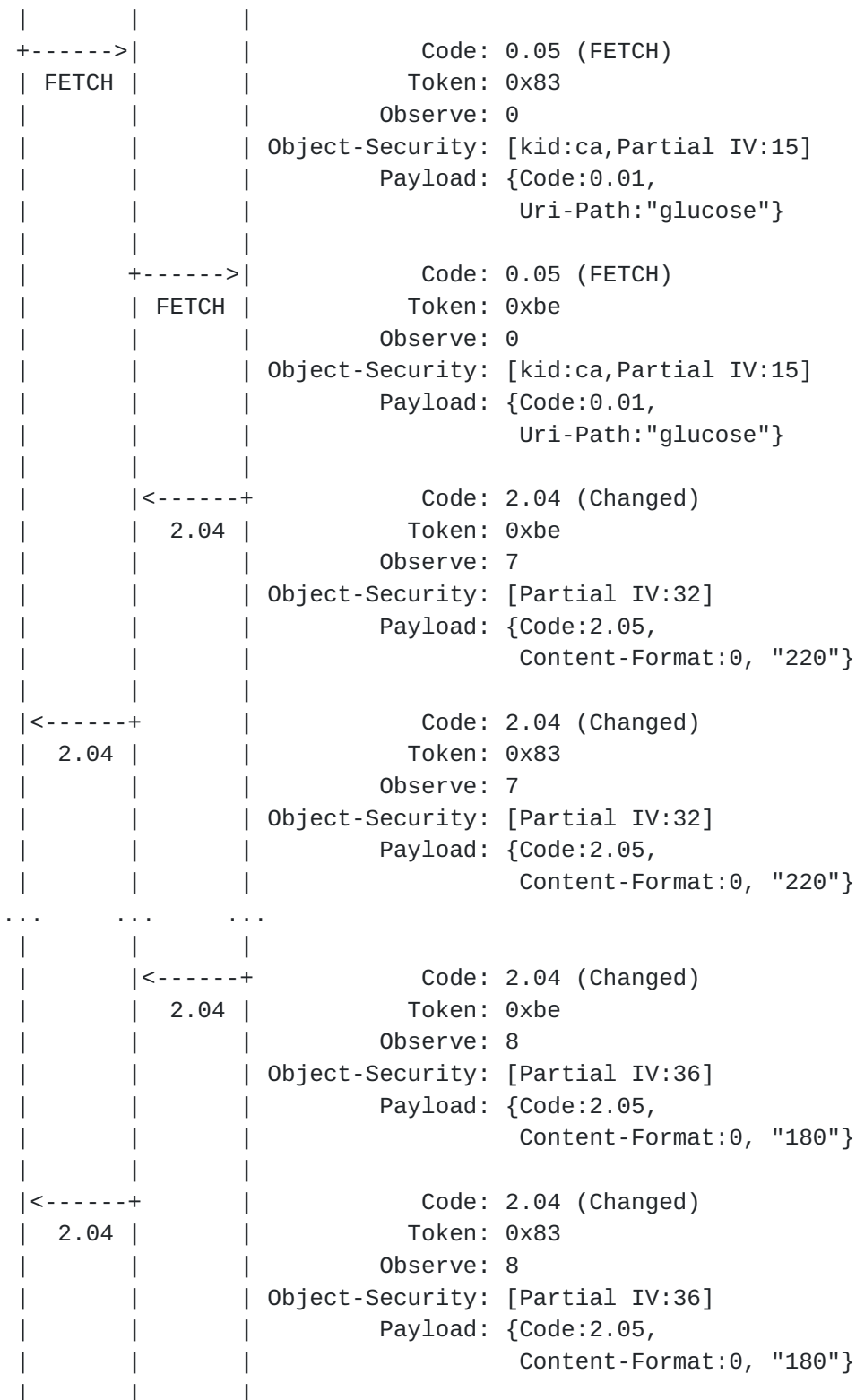


Figure 12: Secure Subscribe to Sensor. Square brackets [...] indicate content of compressed COSE object header. Curly brackets { ... } indicate encrypted data.

The request/response Codes are encrypted by OSCORE and only dummy Codes (FETCH/Changed) are visible in the header of the OSCORE message. The options Content-Format (0) and the payload ("220" and "180"), are encrypted.

The COSE header of the request contains an identifier (ca), indicating the security context used to protect the message and a Partial IV (15). The COSE headers of the responses contains Partial IVs (32 and 36).

The server verifies that the Partial IV has not been received before. The client verifies that the responses are bound to the request and that the Partial IVs are greater than any Partial IV previously received in a response bound to the request.

[Appendix B](#). Deployment examples

OSCORE may be deployed in a variety of settings, a few examples are given in this section.

[B.1](#). Master Secret Used Once

For settings where the Master Secret is only used during deployment, the uniqueness of AEAD nonce may be assured by persistent storage of the security context as described in this specification (see [Section 7.5](#)). For many IoT deployments, a 128 bit uniformly random Master Key is sufficient for encrypting all data exchanged with the IoT device throughout its lifetime.

[B.2](#). Master Secret Used Multiple Times

In cases where the Master Secret needs to be used to derive multiple security contexts, e.g. due to recommissioning or where the security context is not persistently stored, a stochastically unique Master Salt prevents the reuse of AEAD nonce and key. The Master Salt may be transported between client and server in the kid context parameter (see [Section 5.1](#)) of the request.

In this section we give an example of a procedure which may be implemented in client and server to establish the OSCORE security context based on pre-established input parameters (see [Section 3.2](#)) except for the Master Salt which is transported in kid context.

1. In order to establish a security context with a server for the first time, or a new security context replacing an old security context, the client generates a (pseudo-)random uniformly distributed 64-bit Master Salt and derives the security context as specified in [Section 3.2](#). The client protects a request with

the new Sender Context and sends the message with kid context set to the Master Salt.

2. The server, receiving an OSCORE request with a non-empty kid context derives the new security context using the received kid context as Master Salt. The server processes the request as specified in this document using the new Recipient Context. If the processing of the request completes without error, the server responds with an Echo option as specified in [\[I-D.ietf-core-echo-request-tag\]](#). The response is protected with the new Sender Context.
3. The client, receiving a response with an Echo option to a request which used a new security context, verifies the response using the new Recipient Context, and if valid repeats the request with the Echo option (see [\[I-D.ietf-core-echo-request-tag\]](#)) using the new Sender Context. Subsequent message exchanges (unless superseded) are processed using the new security context without including the Master Salt in the kid context.
4. The server, receiving a request with a kid context and a valid Echo option (see [\[I-D.ietf-core-echo-request-tag\]](#)), repeats the processing described in step 2. If it completes without error, then the new security context is established, and the request is valid. If the server already had an old security context with this client that is now replaced by the new security context.

If the server receives a request without kid context from a client with which no security context is established, then the server responds with a 4.01 Unauthorized error message with diagnostic payload containing the string "Security context not found". This could be the result of the server having lost its security context or that a new security context has not been successfully established, which may be a trigger for the client to run this procedure.

[B.3.](#) Client Aliveness

The use of a single OSCORE request and response enables the client to verify that the server's identity and aliveness through actual communications. While a verified OSCORE request enables the server to verify the identity of the entity who generated the message, it does not verify that the client is currently involved in the communication, since the message may be a delayed delivery of a previously generated request which now reaches the server. To verify the aliveness of the client the server may initiate an OSCORE protected message exchange with the client, e.g. by switching the roles of client and server as described in [Section 3.1](#), or by using

the Echo option in the response to a request from the client [[I-D.ietf-core-echo-request-tag](#)].

[Appendix C](#). Test Vectors

This appendix includes the test vectors for different examples of CoAP messages using OSCORE.

[C.1](#). Test Vector 1: Key Derivation with Master Salt

Given a set of inputs, OSCORE defines how to set up the Security Context in both the client and the server. The default values are used for AEAD Algorithm and KDF.

[C.1.1](#). Client

Inputs:

- o Master Secret: 0x0102030405060708090a0b0c0d0e0f10 (16 bytes)
- o Master Salt: 0x9e7ca92223786340 (8 bytes)
- o Sender ID: 0x (0 byte)
- o Recipient ID: 0x01 (1 byte)

From the previous parameters,

- o info (for Sender Key): 0x84400A634b657910 (8 bytes)
- o info (for Recipient Key): 0x8441010A634b657910 (9 bytes)
- o info (for Common IV): 0x84400a6249560d (7 bytes)

Outputs:

- o Sender Key: 0x7230aab3b549d94c9224aacc744e93ab (16 bytes)
- o Recipient Key: 0xe534a26a64aa3982e988e31f1e401e65 (16 bytes)
- o Common IV: 0x01727733ab49ead385b18f7d91 (13 bytes)

[C.1.2](#). Server

Inputs:

- o Master Secret: 0x0102030405060708090a0b0c0d0e0f10 (16 bytes)

- o Master Salt: 0x9e7ca92223786340 (64 bytes)
- o Sender ID: 0x01 (1 byte)
- o Recipient ID: 0x (0 byte)

From the previous parameters,

- o info (for Sender Key): 0x8441010A634b657910 (9 bytes)
- o info (for Recipient Key): 0x84400A634b657910 (8 bytes)
- o info (for Common IV): 0x84400a6249560d (7 bytes)

Outputs:

- o Sender Key: 0xe534a26a64aa3982e988e31f1e401e65 (16 bytes)
- o Recipient Key: 0x7230aab3b549d94c9224aacc744e93ab (16 bytes)
- o Common IV: 0x01727733ab49ead385b18f7d91 (13 bytes)

C.2. Test Vector 2: Key Derivation without Master Salt

Given a set of inputs, OSCORE defines how to set up the Security Context in both the client and the server. The default values are used for AEAD Algorithm, KDF, and Master Salt.

C.2.1. Client

Inputs:

- o Master Secret: 0x0102030405060708090a0b0c0d0e0f10 (16 bytes)
- o Sender ID: 0x00 (1 byte)
- o Recipient ID: 0x01 (1 byte)

From the previous parameters,

- o info (for Sender Key): 0x8441000A634b657910 (9 bytes)
- o info (for Recipient Key): 0x8441010A634b657910 (9 bytes)
- o info (for Common IV): 0x84400a6249560d (7 bytes)

Outputs:

- o Sender Key: 0xf8f3b887436285ed5a66f6026ac2cdc1 (16 bytes)
- o Recipient Key: 0xd904cb101f7341c3f4c56c300fa69941 (16 bytes)
- o Common IV: 0xd1a1949aa253278f34c528d2cc (13 bytes)

C.2.2. Server

Inputs:

- o Master Secret: 0x0102030405060708090a0b0c0d0e0f10 (16 bytes)
- o Sender ID: 0x01 (1 byte)
- o Recipient ID: 0x00 (1 byte)

From the previous parameters,

- o info (for Sender Key): 0x8441010A634b657910 (9 bytes)
- o info (for Recipient Key): 0x8441000A634b657910 (9 bytes)
- o info (for Common IV): 0x84400a6249560d (7 bytes)

Outputs:

- o Sender Key: 0xd904cb101f7341c3f4c56c300fa69941 (16 bytes)
- o Recipient Key: 0xf8f3b887436285ed5a66f6026ac2cdc1 (16 bytes)
- o Common IV: 0xd1a1949aa253278f34c528d2cc (13 bytes)

C.3. Test Vector 3: OSCORE Request, Client

This section contains a test vector for a OSCORE protected CoAP GET request using the security context derived in [Appendix C.1](#). The unprotected request only contains the Uri-Path option.

Unprotected CoAP request:

0x440149c60000f2a7396c6f63616c686f737483747631 (22 bytes)

Common Context:

- o AEAD Algorithm: 10 (AES-CCM-16-64-128)
- o Key Derivation Function: HKDF SHA-256
- o Common IV: 0xd1a1949aa253278f34c528d2cc (13 bytes)

Sender Context:

- o Sender ID: 0x00 (1 byte)
- o Sender Key: 0xf8f3b887436285ed5a66f6026ac2cdc1 (16 bytes)
- o Sender Sequence Number: 20

The following COSE and cryptographic parameters are derived:

- o Partial IV: 0x14 (1 byte)
- o kid: 0x00 (1 byte)
- o external_aad: 0x8501810a4100411440 (9 bytes)
- o AAD: 0x8368456e63727970743040498501810a4100411440 (21 bytes)
- o plaintext: 0x01b3747631 (5 bytes)
- o encryption key: 0xf8f3b887436285ed5a66f6026ac2cdc1 (16 bytes)
- o nonce: 0xd0a1949aa253278f34c528d2d8 (13 bytes)

From the previous parameter, the following is derived:

- o Object-Security value: 0x091400 (3 bytes)
- o ciphertext: 0x55b3710d47c611cd3924838a44 (13 bytes)

From there:

- o Protected CoAP request (OSCORE message): 0x44026dd30000acc5396c6f63616c686f7374d305091400ff55b3710d47c611cd3924838a44 (37 bytes)

C.4. Test Vector 4: OSCORE Request, Client

This section contains a test vector for a OSCORE protected CoAP GET request using the security context derived in [Appendix C.2](#). The unprotected request only contains the Uri-Path option.

Unprotected CoAP request:

0x440149c60000f2a7396c6f63616c686f737483747631 (22 bytes)

Common Context:

- o AEAD Algorithm: 10 (AES-CCM-16-64-128)

- o Key Derivation Function: HKDF SHA-256
- o Common IV: 0x01727733ab49ead385b18f7d91 (13 bytes)

Sender Context:

- o Sender ID: 0x (0 bytes)
- o Sender Key: 0x7230aab3b549d94c9224aacc744e93ab (16 bytes)
- o Sender Sequence Number: 20

The following COSE and cryptographic parameters are derived:

- o Partial IV: 0x14 (1 byte)
- o kid: 0x (0 byte)
- o external_aad: 0x8501810a40411440 (8 bytes)
- o AAD: 0x8368456e63727970743040488501810a40411440 (20 bytes)
- o plaintext: 0x01b3747631 (5 bytes)
- o encryption key: 0x7230aab3b549d94c9224aacc744e93ab (16 bytes)
- o nonce: 0x01727733ab49ead385b18f7d85 (13 bytes)

From the previous parameter, the following is derived:

- o Object-Security value: 0x0914 (2 bytes)
- o ciphertext: 0x6be921aad448260ff1be1f594 (13 bytes)

From there:

- o Protected CoAP request (OSCORE message): 0x44023bfc000066ef396c6f63616c686f7374d2050914ff6be921aad448260ff1be1f594 (36 bytes)

[C.5.](#) Test Vector 5: OSCORE Response, Server

This section contains a test vector for a OSCORE protected 2.05 Content response to the request in [Appendix C.3](#). The unprotected response has payload "Hello World!" and no options. The protected response does not contain a kid nor a Partial IV.

Unprotected CoAP response:

0x644549c60000f2a7ff48656c6c6f20576f726c6421 (21 bytes)

Common Context:

- o AEAD Algorithm: 10 (AES-CCM-16-64-128)
- o Key Derivation Function: HKDF SHA-256
- o Common IV: 0xd1a1949aa253278f34c528d2cc (13 bytes)

Sender Context:

- o Sender ID: 0x01 (1 byte)
- o Sender Key: 0xd904cb101f7341c3f4c56c300fa69941 (16 bytes)
- o Sender Sequence Number: 0

The following COSE and cryptographic parameters are derived:

- o external_aad: 0x8501810a4100411440 (9 bytes)
- o AAD: 0x8368456e63727970743040498501810a4100411440 (21 bytes)
- o plaintext: 0x45ff48656c6c6f20576f726c6421 (14 bytes)
- o encryption key: 0xd904cb101f7341c3f4c56c300fa69941 (16 bytes)
- o nonce: 0xd0a1949aa253278f34c528d2d8 (13 bytes)

From the previous parameter, the following is derived:

- o Object-Security value: 0x (0 bytes)
- o ciphertext: e4e8c28c41c8f31ca56eec24f6c71d94eachcdffdc6d (22 bytes)

From there:

- o Protected CoAP response (OSCORE message): 0x64446dd30000acc5d008ffe4e8c28c41c8f31ca56eec24f6c71d94eachcdffdc6d (33 bytes)

C.6. Test Vector 6: OSCORE Response with Partial IV, Server

This section contains a test vector for a OSCORE protected 2.05 Content response to the request in [Appendix C.3](#). The unprotected response has payload "Hello World!" and no options. The protected response does not contain a kid, but contains a Partial IV.

Unprotected CoAP response:

0x644549c60000f2a7ff48656c6c6f20576f726c6421 (21 bytes)

Common Context:

- o AEAD Algorithm: 10 (AES-CCM-16-64-128)
- o Key Derivation Function: HKDF SHA-256
- o Common IV: 0xd1a1949aa253278f34c528d2cc (13 bytes)

Sender Context:

- o Sender ID: 0x01 (1 byte)
- o Sender Key: 0xd904cb101f7341c3f4c56c300fa69941 (16 bytes)
- o Sender Sequence Number: 0

The following COSE and cryptographic parameters are derived:

- o Partial IV: 0x00 (1 byte)
- o external_aad: 0x8501810a4100411440 (9 bytes)
- o AAD: 0x8368456e63727970743040498501810a4100411440 (21 bytes)
- o plaintext: 0x45ff48656c6c6f20576f726c6421 (14 bytes)
- o encryption key: 0xd904cb101f7341c3f4c56c300fa69941 (16 bytes)
- o nonce: 0xd0a1949aa253278e34c528d2cc (13 bytes)

From the previous parameter, the following is derived:

- o Object-Security value: 0x0100 (2 bytes)
- o ciphertext: 0xa7e3ca27f221f453c0ba68c350bf652ea096b328a1bf (22 bytes)

From there:

- o Protected CoAP response (OSCORE message): 0x64442b130000b29ed2080100ffa7e3ca27f221f453c0ba68c350bf652ea096b328a1bf (35 bytes)

[Appendix D](#). Overview of Security Properties

[D.1](#). Supporting Proxy Operations

CoAP is designed to work with intermediaries reading and/or changing CoAP message fields and performing supporting operations in constrained environments, e.g. forwarding and cross-protocol translations.

Securing CoAP on transport layer protects the entire message between the endpoints in which case CoAP proxy operations are not possible. In order to enable proxy operations, security on transport layer needs to be terminated at the proxy in which case the CoAP message in its entirety is unprotected in the proxy.

Requirements for CoAP end-to-end security are specified in [[I-D.hartke-core-e2e-security-reqs](#)]. The client and server are assumed to trust each other, but proxies and gateways are only trusted to perform its intended operations. Forwarding is specified in Section 2.2.1 of [[I-D.hartke-core-e2e-security-reqs](#)]. HTTP-CoAP translation is specified in [[RFC8075](#)]. Intermediaries translating between different transport layers are intended to perform just that.

By working at the CoAP layer, OSCORE enables different CoAP message fields to be protected differently, which allows message fields required for proxy operations to be available to the proxy while message fields intended for the other endpoint remain protected. In the remainder of this section we analyze how OSCORE protects the protected message fields and the consequences of message fields intended for proxy operation being unprotected.

[D.2](#). Protected Message Fields

Protected message fields are included in the Plaintext ([Section 5.3](#)) and the Additional Authenticated Data ([Section 5.4](#)) of the COSE_Encrypt0 object using an AEAD algorithm.

OSCORE depends on a pre-established strong Master Secret which can be used to derive keys, and a construction for making (key, nonce) pairs unique ([Appendix D.3](#)). Assuming this is true, and the keys are used for no more data than indicated in [Section 7.2](#), OSCORE should provide the following guarantees:

- o Confidentiality: An attacker should not be able to determine the plaintext contents of a given OSCORE message or determine that different plaintexts are related ([Section 5.3](#)).

- o Integrity: An attacker should not be able to craft a new OSCORE message with protected message fields different from an existing OSCORE message which will be accepted by the receiver.
- o Request-response binding: An attacker should not be able to make a client match a response to the wrong request.
- o Non-replayability: An attacker should not be able to cause the receiver to accept a message which it has already accepted.

Informally, OSCORE provides these properties by AEAD-protecting the plaintext with a strong key and uniqueness of (key, nonce) pairs. AEAD encryption [[RFC5116](#)] provides confidentiality and integrity for the data. Response-request binding is provided by including the kid and Partial IV of the request in the AAD of the response. Non-replayability of requests and notifications is provided by using unique (key, nonce) pairs and a replay protection mechanism (application dependent, see [Section 7.4](#)).

OSCORE is susceptible to a variety of traffic analysis attacks based on observing the length and timing of encrypted packets. OSCORE does not provide any specific defenses against this form of attack but the application may use a padding mechanism to prevent an attacker from directly determine the length of the padding. However, information about padding may still be revealed by side-channel attacks observing differences in timing.

[D.3.](#) Uniqueness of (key, nonce)

In this section we show (key, nonce) pairs are not reused in the encryption of OSCORE messages.

Fix a Security Context complying with the requirements [Section 3.3](#)) and an endpoint. Endpoints may alternate between Client and Server roles, but each endpoint encrypts with the Sender Key of its Sender Context. Sender Keys are (stochastically) unique since they are derived with HKDF from unique Sender IDs, so messages encrypted by different endpoints use different keys. It remains to prove that the nonces used by the fixed endpoint are unique.

Since the Common IV is fixed, the nonces are determined by a Partial IV (PIV) and the Sender ID of the endpoint generating that Partial IV (ID_PIV), and are unique for different (ID_PIV, PIV) pairs ([Section 5.2](#)).

For requests and notifications (GET Observe responses):

- o ID_PIV = Sender ID of the encrypting endpoint

- o PIV = current Partial IV of the encrypting endpoint

Since the encrypting endpoint steps the Partial IV for each use, the nonces used in requests and notifications are all unique as long as the number of encrypted messages are kept within the required range ([Section 7.2](#)).

For responses to requests:

- o ID_PIV = Sender ID of the endpoint generating the request
- o PIV = Partial IV of the request

Since the request has been verified using the Recipient Context, ID_PIV is the Sender ID of another endpoint and is thus different from the Sender ID of the encrypting endpoint. Therefore the nonces used in responses are different compared to nonces in requests and notifications. Since the Partial IV of the request is verified for replay ([Section 7.4](#)), PIV is unique for responses and so are nonces used in responses.

Note that the argument does not depend on if the nonce in the first response to GET Observe is generated as a notification or as a response to a request. In the former case the Partial IV of the encrypting endpoint is stepped. In the latter case, the nonce is in the the requesting endpoint's subset of nonces and would otherwise not be used by the encrypting endpoint.

The argumentation also holds for group communication as specified in [[RFC7390](#)] although Observe is not used for that setting (see [[I-D.ietf-core-oscore-groupcomm](#)]).

[D.4.](#) Unprotected Message Fields

This section lists and discusses issues with unprotected CoAP message fields.

[D.4.1.](#) CoAP Header Fields

- o Version

The CoAP version will be in plaintext. A change of this parameter is potentially a denial of service attack. Currently there is only one CoAP version defined. Future versions of CoAP need to analyse attacks to OSCORE protected messages due to an adversary changing the CoAP version.

- o Token/Token Length

The Token field is a client-local identifier for differentiating between concurrent requests. Change of Token is a denial of service attack, since the client may not be able to identify the request or verify integrity of the response, which depends on the request.

- o Type/Message ID

These fields reveal information about the UDP transport binding. CoAP proxies are allowed to change Type and Message ID. These message fields are not present in CoAP over TCP, and does not impact the request/response message. A change of these fields is a denial of service attack similar to changing UDP header fields.

- o Length

This field reveal information about the TCP transport binding. These message fields are not present in CoAP over UDP, and does not impact the request/response message. A change of Length is a denial of service attack similar to changing TCP header fields.

D.4.2. CoAP Options

- o Max-Age

The Outer Max-Age is used to avoid unnecessary caching of OSCORE error responses. Changing this value is a potential denial of service attack.

- o Proxy-Uri/Proxy-Scheme/Uri-Host/Uri-Port

With OSCORE, the Proxy-Uri option does not contain the Uri-Path/Uri-Query parts of the URI. Proxy-Uri/Proxy-Scheme/Uri-Host/Uri-Port cannot be integrity protected since they are allowed to be changed by a forward proxy.

- o Observe

The Outer Observe option is intended for an OSCORE-unaware proxy to support forwarding of Observe messages. Changing this option may lead to notifications not being forwarded.

- o Block1/Block2/Size1/Size2

The Outer Block options enables fragmentation of OSCORE messages in addition to segmentation performed by the Inner Block options. Manipulating these options is a potential denial of service attack, e.g. injection of alleged Block fragments up to the MAX_UNFRAGMENTED_SIZE, at which the message will be dropped.

- o No-Response

The Outer No-Response option is used to support proxy functionality, specifically to avoid error transmissions from proxies to clients, and to avoid bandwidth reduction to servers by proxies applying congestion control when not receiving responses. Changing this option is a potential denial of service attack.

- o Object-Security

The Object-Security option contains information about the compressed COSE header. A change of this field may result in not being able to verify the OSCORE message.

[Appendix E](#). CDDL Summary

Data structure definitions in the present specification employ the CDDL language for conciseness and precision. CDDL is defined in [[I-D.ietf-cbor-cddl](#)], which at the time of writing this appendix is in the process of completion. As the document is not yet available for a normative reference, the present appendix defines the small subset of CDDL that is being used in the present specification.

Within the subset being used here, a CDDL rule is of the form "name = type", where "name" is the name given to the "type". A "type" can be one of:

- o a reference to another named type, by giving its name. The predefined named types used in the present specification are: "uint", an unsigned integer (as represented in CBOR by major type 0); "int", an unsigned or negative integer (as represented in CBOR by major type 0 or 1); "bstr", a byte string (as represented in CBOR by major type 2); "tstr", a text string (as represented in CBOR by major type 3);
- o a choice between two types, by giving both types separated by a "/";
- o an array type (as represented in CBOR by major type 4), where the sequence of elements of the array is described by giving a sequence of entries separated by commas ",", and this sequence is enclosed by square brackets "[" and "]". Arrays described by an array description contain elements that correspond one-to-one to the sequence of entries given. Each entry of an array description is of the form "name : type", where "name" is the name given to the entry and "type" is the type of the array element corresponding to this entry.

Acknowledgments

The following individuals provided input to this document: Christian Amsuess, Tobias Andersson, Carsten Bormann, Joakim Brorsson, Esko Dijk, Thomas Fossati, Martin Gunnarsson, Klaus Hartke, Jim Schaad, Peter van der Stok, Dave Thaler, Marco Tiloca, and Malisa Vucinic.

Ludwig Seitz and Goeran Selander worked on this document as part of the CelticPlus project CyberWI, with funding from Vinnova.

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