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The DHCPv4 Relay Agent Identifier Suboption  
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Abstract

This memo defines a new Relay Agent Identifier suboption for the Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol's (DHCP) Relay Agent Information option. The suboption carries a value that uniquely identifies the relay agent device. The value may be administratively-configured or may be generated by the relay agent. The suboption allows a DHCP relay agent to include the identifier in the DHCP messages it sends.

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## 1. Introduction

The Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol for IPv4 (DHCPv4) [[RFC2131](#)] provides IP addresses and configuration information for IPv4 clients. It includes a relay agent capability, in which network elements receive broadcast messages from clients and forward them to DHCP servers as unicast messages. In many network environments, relay agents add information to the DHCP messages before forwarding them, using the Relay Agent Information option [[RFC3046](#)]. Servers that recognize the relay information option echo it back in their replies.

This specification introduces a Relay Agent Identifier suboption for the Relay Information option. The Relay-Id suboption carries a sequence of octets that is intended to identify the relay agent uniquely within the administrative domain. The identifier may be administratively configured: in some networks it may be adequate to assign ASCII strings such as "switch1" and "switch2". Alternatively, the identifier may be generated by the relay agent itself, and we specify use of [[RFC3315](#)] DUIDs for this purpose.

## 2. Terminology

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

DHCPv4 terminology is defined in [[RFC2131](#)], and the DHCPv4 Relay Agent Information Option in [[RFC3046](#)]. DUID terminology is in [[RFC3315](#)].

## 3. Example Use-Cases

### 3.1. Industrial Ethernet



.  
+-----+  
.

Where:

SUBOPT\_RELAY\_ID [TBD]

length the number of octets in the suboption; the minimum length is two.

type a single octet describing the type of identifier that is present.

identifier the identifying data.

## [5.](#) Relay Identifier Types

For clarity, the suboption specified here includes a type octet that describes the data used in the identifier field. The type value zero is reserved and MUST NOT be used. Two type values are defined here: RELAY\_IDENTIFIER\_DUID and RELAY\_IDENTIFIER\_ASCII. RELAY\_IDENTIFIER\_DUID is used when the identifier field contains a DUID [[RFC3315](#)]. Administrators may want to assign human-friendly ASCII identifiers: RELAY\_IDENTIFIER\_ASCII is used when the identifier field contains an ASCII string.

## [6.](#) Generating a Relay Identifier

As described in [Section 1](#), in some situations it may be useful for network devices to generate identifiers themselves. Relay agents who send the Relay Agent Identifier suboption using identifiers that are not administratively-configured MUST be generated following the procedures in the DUID section of [[RFC3315](#)]. Relay agents who use generated identifiers SHOULD make the generated value visible to their administrators via their user-interface, through a log entry, or through some other mechanism.

## 7. Identifier Stability

If the relay identifier is to be meaningful it has to be stable. A relay agent SHOULD use a single identifier type and value consistently. The identifier used by a relay device SHOULD be committed to stable storage, unless the relay device can regenerate the value upon reboot.

Implementors should note that the identifier needs to be present in all DHCP message types where its value is being used by the DHCP server. The relay agent may not be able to add the Relay Agent Information option to all messages - such as RENEW messages sent as IP unicasts. In some deployments that might mean that the server has to be willing to continue to associate the relay-identifier it has last seen with a lease that is being RENEWed. Other deployments may prefer to use the Server Identifier Override suboption [RFC5107] to permit the relay device to insert the Information option into all relayed messages.

## 8. Security Considerations

Security issues with the Relay Agent Information option and its use by servers in address assignment are discussed in [RFC3046] and

[RFC4030]. Relay agents who send the Relay Agent Identifier suboption SHOULD use the Relay Agent Authentication suboption [RFC4030] to provide integrity protection.

## 9. IANA Considerations

We request that IANA assign a new suboption code from the registry of DHCP Agent Sub-Option Codes maintained in <http://www.iana.org/assignments/bootp-dhcp-parameters>.

Relay Agent Identifier Suboption [TBD]

We request that IANA establish a new registry of DHCP Relay Agent

Identifier Sub-Option Types, to be maintained in <http://www.iana.org/assignments/bootp-dhcp-parameters>. The Identifier Type is a single octet. The initial values assigned in this document are:

RELAY\_IDENTIFIER\_NULL 0  
RELAY\_IDENTIFIER\_DUID 1  
RELAY\_IDENTIFIER\_ASCII 2

Additional Identifier Type values will be allocated and assigned through IETF consensus, as defined in [[RFC2434](#)].

## [10.](#) References

### [10.1.](#) Normative References

- [RFC2131] Droms, R., "Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol", [RFC 2131](#), March 1997.
- [RFC2434] Narten, T. and H. Alvestrand, "Guidelines for Writing an IANA Considerations Section in RFCs", [BCP 26](#), [RFC 2434](#), October 1998.
- [RFC3046] Patrick, M., "DHCP Relay Agent Information Option", [RFC 3046](#), January 2001.
- [RFC3315] Droms, R., Bound, J., Volz, B., Lemon, T., Perkins, C., and M. Carney, "Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol for IPv6 (DHCPv6)", [RFC 3315](#), July 2003.
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- [RFC4030] Stapp, M. and T. Lemon, "The Authentication Suboption for the Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol (DHCP) Relay Agent Option", [RFC 4030](#), March 2005.

### [10.2.](#) Informative References

[RFC4388] Woundy, R. and K. Kinnear, "Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol (DHCP) Leasequery", [RFC 4388](#), February 2006.

[RFC5107] Johnson, R., Kumarasamy, J., Kinnear, K., and M. Stapp, "DHCP Server Identifier Override Suboption", [RFC 5107](#), February 2008.

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Kinnear, K., Volz, B., Russell, N., and M. Stapp, "Bulk DHCPv4 Lease Query ([draft-kinnear-dhc-dhcpv4-bulk-leasequery-\\*](#))", July 2008.

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