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Multi-homing Deployment Considerations for Distributed-Denial-of-
Service Open Threat Signaling (DOTS)

Abstract

   This document discusses multi-homing considerations for Distributed-
   Denial-of-Service Open Threat Signaling (DOTS). The goal is to
   provide some guidance for DOTS clients/gateways when multihomed.

Status of This Memo

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1. Introduction

In many deployments, it may not be possible for a network to
determine the cause of a distributed Denial-of-Service (DoS) attack
[RFC4732]. Rather, the network may just realize that some resources
appear to be under attack. To help with such situations, the IETF
has specified the DDoS Open Threat Signaling (DOTS) architecture
[RFC8811], where a DOTS client can inform an upstream DOTS server
that its network is under a potential attack and that appropriate
mitigation actions are required. The DOTS protocols can be used to
coordinate real-time mitigation efforts which can evolve as the
attacks mutate, thereby reducing the impact of an attack and leading
to more efficient responsive actions. [RFC8903] identifies a set of
scenarios for DOTS; most of these scenarios involve a Customer
Premises Equipment (CPE).

The high-level base DOTS architecture is illustrated in Figure 1
([RFC8811]):

```
        +-----------+                +-------------+
        | Mitigator | ~~~~~~~~~ | DOTS Server |
        +-----------+                +-------------+
                                            |
                                            |
                                            |
        +----------------+            +-------------+
        | Attack Target | ~~~~~ | DOTS Client |
        +----------------+            +-------------+
```
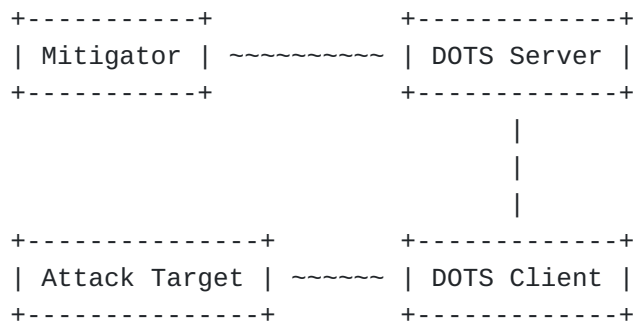
                  Figure 1: Basic DOTS Architecture

[RFC8811] specifies that the DOTS client may be provided with a list
of DOTS servers; each of these servers is associated with one or
more IP addresses. These addresses may or may not be of the same
address family. The DOTS client establishes one or more DOTS
sessions by connecting to the provided DOTS server(s) addresses
(e.g., by using [RFC8973]).

DOTS may be deployed within networks that are connected to one
single upstream provider. DOTS can also be enabled within networks
that are multi-homed. The reader may refer to [RFC3582] for an
overview of multi-homing goals and motivations. This document
discusses DOTS multi-homing considerations. Specifically, the
document aims to:

  1. Complete the base DOTS architecture with multi-homing
     specifics. Those specifics need to be taken into account
     because:

       *Sending a DOTS mitigation request to an arbitrary DOTS
        server will not necessarily help in mitigating a DDoS
        attack.

       *Blindly forking all DOTS mitigation requests among all
        available DOTS servers is suboptimal.

       *Sequentially contacting DOTS servers may increase the delay
        before a mitigation plan is enforced.

  2. Identify DOTS deployment schemes in a multi-homing context,
     where DOTS services can be offered by all or a subset of
     upstream providers.

  3. Provide guidelines and recommendations for placing DOTS
     requests in multi-homed networks, e.g.,:

       *Select the appropriate DOTS server(s).

       *Identify cases where anycast is not recommended for DOTS.
```

This document adopts the following methodology:

   *Identify and extract viable deployment candidates from [RFC8903].

   *Augment the description with multi-homing technicalities, e.g.,

      -One vs. multiple upstream network providers

      -One vs. multiple interconnect routers

      -Provider-Independent (PI) vs. Provider-Aggregatable (PA) IP
       addresses

   *Describe the recommended behavior of DOTS clients and gateways
    for each case.

Multi-homed DOTS agents are assumed to make use of the protocols
defined in [RFC9132] and [RFC8783]; no specific extension is
required to the base DOTS protocols for deploying DOTS in a multi-
homed context.

2.  Requirements Language

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.

3.  Terminology

This document makes use of the terms defined in [RFC8811] and
[RFC4116]. In particular:

Provider-Aggregatable (PA) addresses:  are globally-unique addresses
   assigned by a transit provider to a customer. The addresses are
   considered "aggregatable" because the set of routes corresponding
   to the PA addresses are usually covered by an aggregate route set
   corresponding to the address space operated by the transit
   provider, from which the assignment was made (Section 2 of
   [RFC4116]).

Provider-Independent (PI) addresses:  are globally-unique addresses
   which are not assigned by a transit provider, but are provided by
   some other organisation, usually a Regional Internet Registry
   (RIR) (Section 2 of [RFC4116]).

IP indifferently refers to IPv4 or IPv6.

## 4.  Multi-Homing Scenarios

This section describes some multi-homing scenarios that are relevant
to DOTS. In the following subsections, only the connections of
border routers are shown; internal network topologies are not
elaborated.

A multihomed network may enable DOTS for all or a subset of its
upstream interconnection links. In such a case, DOTS servers can be
explicitly configured or dynamically discovered by a DOTS client
using means such as those discussed in [RFC8973]. These DOTS servers
can be owned by the upstream provider, managed by a third-party
(e.g., mitigation service provider), or a combination thereof.

If a DOTS server is explicitly configured, it is assumed that an
interface is also provided to bind the DOTS service to an
interconnection link. If no interface is provided, this means that
the DOTS server can be reached via any active interface.

This section distinguishes between residential CPEs vs. enterprise
CPEs because PI addresses may be used for enterprises while this is
not the current practice for residential CPEs.

In the following subsections, all or a subset of interconnection
links are associated with DOTS servers.

### 4.1.  Multi-Homed Residential Single CPE

The scenario shown in Figure 2 is characterized as follows:

   *The home network is connected to the Internet using one single
    CPE.

   *The CPE is connected to multiple provisioning domains (i.e., both
    fixed and mobile networks). Provisioning domain (PvD) is
    explained in [RFC7556].

    In a typical deployment scenario, these provisioning domains are
    owned by the same provider (see Section 1 of [RFC8803]). Such a
    deployment is meant to seamlessly use both fixed and cellular
    networks for bonding, faster hand-overs, or better resiliency
    purposes.

   *Each of these provisioning domains assigns IP addresses/prefixes
    to the CPE and provides additional configuration information such
    as a list of DNS servers, DNS suffixes associated with the
    network, default gateway address, and DOTS server's name
    [RFC8973]. These addresses/prefixes are assumed to be Provider-
    Aggregatable (PA).

*Because of ingress filtering, packets forwarded by the CPE
 towards a given provisioning domain must be sent with a source IP
 address that was assigned by that domain [RFC8043].

```
        +-------+            +-------+
        |Fixed  |            |Mobile |
        |Network|            |Network|
        +---+---+            +---+---+
            |                    |    Service Providers
 ...........|....................|......................
        +---------++---------+     Home Network
                 ||
             +--++-+
             | CPE |
             +-----+
                   ... (Internal Network)
```

Figure 2: Typical Multi-homed Residential CPE

4.2. Multi-Homed Enterprise: Single CPE, Multiple Upstream ISPs

The scenario shown in Figure 3 is characterized as follows:

  *The enterprise network is connected to the Internet using a
   single router.

  *That router is connected to multiple provisioning domains (i.e.,
   managed by distinct administrative entities).

Unlike the previous scenario, two sub-cases can be considered for an
enterprise network with regards to assigned addresses:

  1. PI addresses/prefixes: The enterprise is the owner of the IP
     addresses/prefixes; the same address/prefix is then used when
     establishing communications over any of the provisioning
     domains.

  2. PA addresses/prefixes: Each of the provisioning domains assigns
     IP addresses/prefixes to the enterprise network.

```
        +------+              +------+
        | ISP1 |              | ISP2 |
        +---+--+              +--+---+
            |                    |     Service Providers
 ...........|....................|.....................
        +---------++---------+       Enterprise Network
                ||
             +--++-+
             | rtr |
             +-----+
                    ... (Internal Network)
```

Figure 3: Multi-homed Enterprise Network (Single CPE connected to
                       Multiple Networks)

4.3. Multi-homed Enterprise: Multiple CPEs, Multiple Upstream ISPs

   This scenario is similar to the one described in Section 4.2; the
   main difference is that dedicated routers are used to connect to
   each provisioning domain.

```
            +------+    +------+
            | ISP1 |    | ISP2 |
            +---+--+    +--+---+
                |          |     Service Providers
 .......................|..........|.....................
                |          |       Enterprise Network
            +---+--+    +--+---+
            | rtr1 |    | rtr2 |
            +------+    +------+
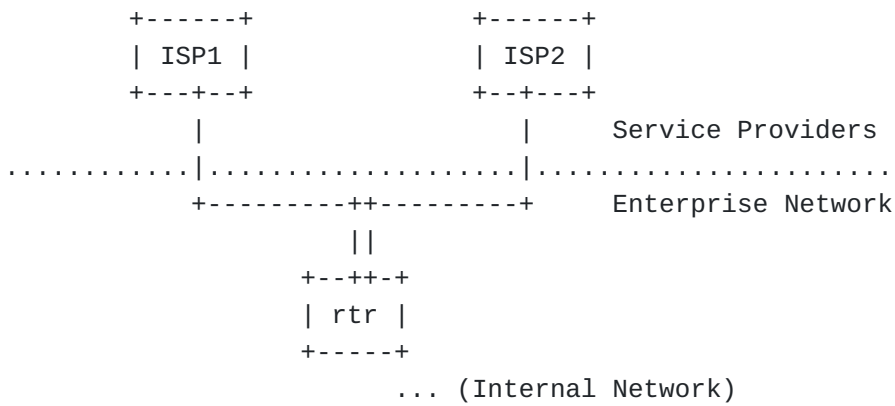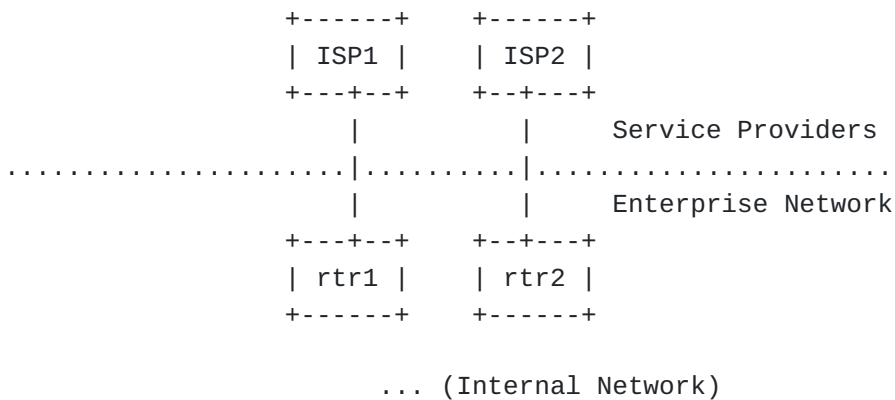
                    ... (Internal Network)
```

 Figure 4: Multi-homed Enterprise Network (Multiple CPEs, Multiple ISPs)

4.4. Multi-homed Enterprise with the Same ISP

   This scenario is a variant of Section 4.2 and Section 4.3 in which
   multi-homing is supported by the same ISP (i.e., same provisioning
   domain).

5. DOTS Multi-homing Deployment Considerations

   Table 1 provides some sample, non-exhaustive, deployment schemes to
   illustrate how DOTS agents may be deployed for each of the scenarios
   introduced in Section 4.
```

Scenario	DOTS client	DOTS gateway
Residential CPE	CPE	N/A
Single CPE, Multiple provisioning domains	Internal hosts or CPE	CPE
Multiple CPEs, Multiple provisioning domains	Internal hosts or all CPEs (rtr1 and rtr2)	CPEs (rtr1 and rtr2)
Multi-homed enterprise, Single provisioning domain	Internal hosts or all CPEs (rtr1 and rtr2)	CPEs (rtr1 and rtr2)

Table 1: Sample Deployment Cases

These deployment schemes are further discussed in the following subsections.

5.1. Residential CPE

Figure 5 depicts DOTS sessions that need to be established between a DOTS client (C) and two DOTS servers (S1, S2) within the context of the scenario described in Section 4.1.

For each provisioning domain, the DOTS client MUST resolve the DOTS server's name provided by a provisioning domain [RFC8973] using the DNS servers learned from the respective provisioning domain (or the DNS servers associated with the interface(s) for which a DOTS server was explicitly configured). IPv6-capable DOTS clients MUST use the source address selection algorithm defined in [RFC6724] to select the candidate source addresses to contact each of these DOTS servers. DOTS sessions MUST be established and MUST be maintained with each of the DOTS servers because the mitigation scope of each of these servers is restricted. The DOTS client SHOULD use the certificate provisioned by a provisioning domain to authenticate itself to the DOTS server(s) provided by the same provisioning domain.

When conveying a mitigation request to protect the attack target(s), the DOTS client MUST select an available DOTS server whose network has assigned the IP prefixes from which target prefixes/addresses are derived. This implies that if no appropriate DOTS server is found, the DOTS client MUST NOT send the mitigation request to any other available DOTS server.

For example, a mitigation request to protect target resources bound to a PA IP address/prefix cannot be satisfied by a provisioning domain other than the one that owns those addresses/prefixes. Consequently, if a CPE detects a DDoS attack that spreads over all its network attachments, it MUST contact all DOTS servers for mitigation purposes.

The DOTS client MUST be able to associate a DOTS server with each provisioning domain. For example, if the DOTS client is provisioned

with S1 using DHCP when attaching to a first network and with S2
using Protocol Configuration Option (PCO) [TS.24008] when attaching
to a second network, the DOTS client must record the interface from
which a DOTS server was provisioned. DOTS signaling session to a
given DOTS server must be established using the interface from which
the DOTS server was provisioned. If a DOTS server is explicitly
configured, DOTS signaling with that server must be established via
the interfaces that are indicated in the explicit configuration or
via any active interface if no interface is configured.

```
                                      +--+
                           ----------|S1|
                          /           +--+
                         /     DOTS Server Domain #1
                        /
              +---+/
              | C |
              +---+\
                    \
                     \
                      \           +--+
                       ----------|S2|
                                  +--+
                          DOTS Server Domain #2
```
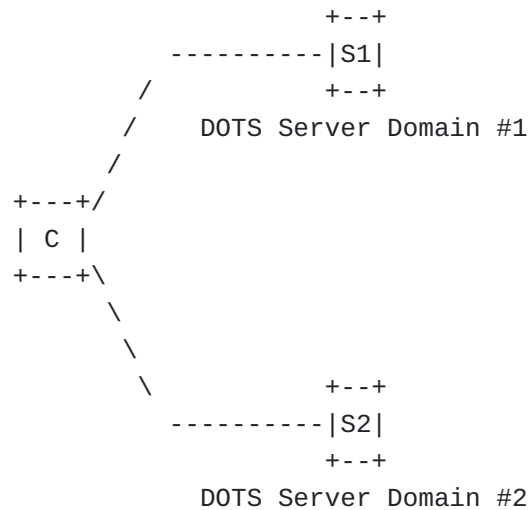
       Figure 5: DOTS Associations for a Multihomed Residential CPE

5.2. Multi-Homed Enterprise: Single CPE, Multiple Upstream ISPs

   Figure 6 illustrates a first set of DOTS associations that can be
   established with a DOTS gateway, which is enabled within the context
   of the scenario described in Section 4.2. This deployment is
   characterized as follows:

     *One of more DOTS clients are enabled in hosts located in the
      internal network.

     *A DOTS gateway is enabled to aggregate and then relay the
      requests towards upstream DOTS servers.

```
                                    +--+
                          ----------|S1|
        +---+               /       +--+
        | C1|----+    /       DOTS Server Domain #1
        +---+    |   /
    +---+      +-+-+/
    | C3|------| G |
    +---+      +-+-+\
        +---+    |   \
        | C2|----+    \
        +---+          \       +--+
                        ----------|S2|
                                  +--+
                      DOTS Server Domain #2
```
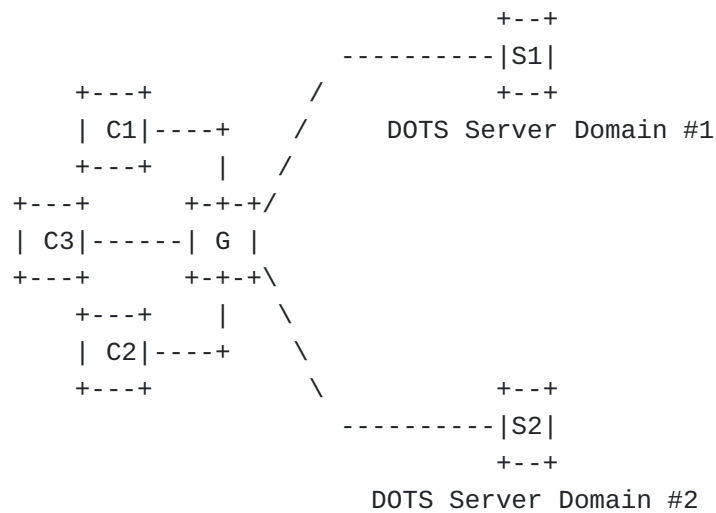
    Figure 6: Multiple DOTS Clients, Single DOTS Gateway, Multiple DOTS
                            Servers

When PA addresses/prefixes are in use, the same considerations
discussed in Section 5.1 need to be followed by the DOTS gateway to
contact its DOTS server(s). The DOTS gateways can be reachable from
DOTS clients by using an unicast address or an anycast address.

Nevertheless, when PI addresses/prefixes are assigned, the DOTS
gateway MUST send mitigation requests to all its DOTS servers.
Otherwise, the attack traffic may still be delivered via the ISP
which hasn't received the mitigation request.

An alternate deployment model is depicted in Figure 7. This
deployment assumes that:

  *One or more DOTS clients are enabled in hosts located in the
   internal network. These DOTS clients may use [RFC8973] to
   discover their DOTS server(s).

  *These DOTS clients communicate directly with upstream DOTS
   servers.
```

```
                  ..........
                  .  +--+  .
            +--------|C1|--------+
            |     .  +--+  .     |
            |     .        .     |
          +--+    .  +--+  .    +--+
          |S2|------|C3|------|S1|
          +--+    .  +--+  .    +--+
            |     .        .     |
            |     .  +--+  .     |
            +--------|C2|--------+
                  .  +--+  .
                  ..........
                  DOTS Client
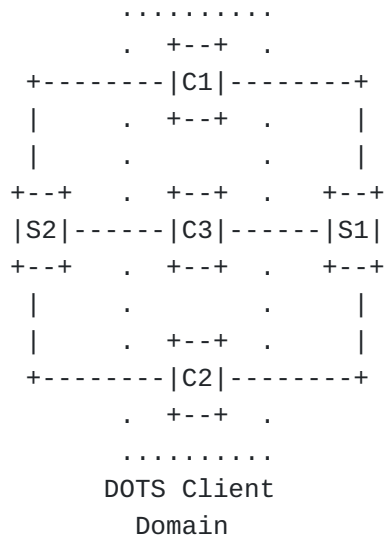                     Domain
```

Figure 7: Multiple DOTS Clients, Multiple DOTS Servers

If PI addresses/prefixes are in use, the DOTS client MUST send a
mitigation request to all the DOTS servers. The use of anycast
addresses to reach the DOTS servers is NOT RECOMMENDED. If anycast
addresses are used to reach multiple DOTS servers, the CPE may not
be able to select the appropriate provisioning domain to which the
mitigation request should be forwarded. As a consequence, the
request may not be forwarded to the appropriate DOTS server.

If PA addresses/prefixes are used, the same considerations discussed
in Section 5.1 need to be followed by the DOTS clients. Because DOTS
clients are not embedded in the CPE and multiple addreses/prefixes
may not be assigned to the DOTS client (typically in an IPv4
context), some issues may arise in how to steer traffic towards the
appropriate DOTS server by using the appropriate source IP address.
These complications discussed in [RFC4116] are not specific to DOTS.

Another deployment approach is to enable many DOTS clients; each of
them is responsible for handling communications with a specific DOTS
server (see Figure 8).

```
                  ..........
                  .  +--+  .
            +--------|C1|  .
            |     .  +--+  .
          +--+    .  +--+  .    +--+
          |S2|    .  |C2|------|S1|
          +--+    .  +--+  .    +--+
                  ..........
                  DOTS Client
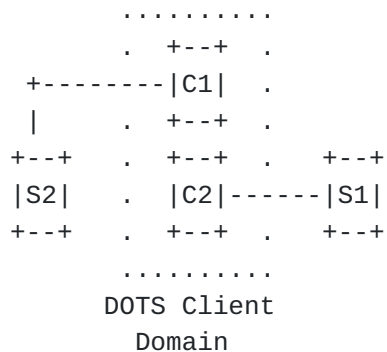                     Domain
```

Figure 8: Single Homed DOTS Clients

   For both deployments depicted in Figures 7 and 8, each DOTS client
   SHOULD be provided with policies (e.g., a prefix filter that will be
   against DDoS detection alarms) that will trigger DOTS communications
   with the DOTS servers. Such policies will help the DOTS client to
   select the appropriate destination DOTS server.

   The CPE MUST select the appropriate source IP address when
   forwarding DOTS messages received from an internal DOTS client.

5.3. Multi-Homed Enterprise: Multiple CPEs, Multiple Upstream ISPs

   The deployments depicted in Figures 7 and 8 also apply to the
   scenario described in Section 4.3. One specific problem for this
   scenario is to select the appropriate exit router when contacting a
   given DOTS server.

   An alternative deployment scheme is shown in Figure 9:

     *DOTS clients are enabled in hosts located in the internal
      network.

     *A DOTS gateway is enabled in each CPE (rtr1, rtr2).

     *Each of these DOTS gateways communicates with the DOTS server of
      the provisioning domain.

                                 +---+
                   +------------| C1|----+
                   | +---+ |
        +--+   +-+-+   +---+   +-+-+   +--+
        |S2|------|G2 |------| C3|------|G1 |------|S1|
        +--+   +-+-+   +---+   +-+-+   +--+
                   | +---+ |
                   +------------| C2|----+
                                 +---+

      Figure 9: Multiple DOTS Clients, Multiple DOTS Gateways, Multiple DOTS
                                    Servers

     When PI addresses/prefixes are used, DOTS clients MUST contact all
     the DOTS gateways to send a DOTS message. DOTS gateways will then
     relay the request to the DOTS servers. Note that anycast addresses
     cannot be used to establish DOTS sessions between DOTS clients and
     DOTS gateways because only one DOTS gateway will receive the
     mitigation request.

When PA addresses/prefixes are used, but no filter rules are provided to DOTS clients, the latter MUST contact all DOTS gateways simultaneously to send a DOTS message. Upon receipt of a request by a DOTS gateway, it MUST check whether the request is to be forwarded upstream (if the target IP prefix is managed by the upstream server) or rejected.

When PA addresses/prefixes are used, but specific filter rules are provided to DOTS clients using some means that are out of scope of this document, the clients MUST select the appropriate DOTS gateway to reach. The use of anycast addresses is NOT RECOMMENDED to reach DOTS gateways.

5.4. Multi-Homed Enterprise: Single ISP

The key difference of the scenario described in Section 4.4 compared to the other scenarios is that multi-homing is provided by the same ISP. Concretely, that ISP can decide to provision the enterprise network with:

   *The same DOTS server for all network attachments.

   *Distinct DOTS servers for each network attachment. These DOTS
    servers need to coordinate when a mitigation action is received
    from the enterprise network.

In both cases, DOTS agents enabled within the enterprise network MAY decide to select one or all network attachments to send DOTS mitigation requests.

6. Security Considerations

DOTS-related security considerations are discussed in Section 4 of [RFC8811].

DOTS clients should control the information that they share with peer DOTS servers. In particular, if a DOTS client maintains DOTS associations with specific DOTS servers per interconnection link, the DOTS client SHOULD NOT leak information specific to a given link to DOTS servers on different interconnection links that are not authorized to mitigate attacks for that given link. Whether this constraint is relaxed is deployment-specific and must be subject to explicit consent from the DOTS client domain administrator. How to seek for such consent is implementation- and deployment-specific.

7. IANA Considerations

This document does not require any action from IANA.

8. Acknowledgements

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