

Next Steps in Signaling
Schulzrinne
Internet-Draft
U.

Intended status: Standards Track
Hancock
Expires: October 4, 2007
RMR

2007

H.

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Siemens/

April 2,

**GIST: General Internet Signalling Transport
draft-ietf-nsis-ntlp-13**

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Abstract

This document specifies protocol stacks for the routing and transport of per-flow signalling messages along the path taken by that flow through the network. The design uses existing transport and security protocols under a common messaging layer, the General Internet Signalling Transport (GIST), which provides a common service for diverse signalling applications. GIST does not handle signalling application state itself, but manages its own internal state and the configuration of the underlying transport and security protocols to enable the transfer of messages in both directions along the flow path. The combination of GIST and the lower layer transport and security protocols provides a solution for the base protocol component of the "Next Steps in Signalling" framework.

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1. Introduction

Signalling involves the manipulation of state held in network elements. 'Manipulation' could mean setting up, modifying and tearing down state; or it could simply mean the monitoring of state which is managed by other mechanisms.

This specification concentrates mainly on path-coupled signalling, controlling resources on network elements which are located on the path taken by a particular data flow, possibly including but not limited to the flow endpoints. Indeed, there are almost always more than two participants in a path-coupled signalling session, although there is no need for every node on the path to participate. Path-coupled signalling thus excludes end-to-end higher-layer application signalling. In the context of path-coupled signalling, examples of state management include network resource reservation, firewall configuration, and state used in active networking; examples of state

monitoring are the discovery of instantaneous path properties, such as available bandwidth or cumulative queuing delay. Each of these different uses of signalling is referred to as a signalling application. GIST path-coupled signalling does not directly support multicast flows but could be extended to do so, especially in environments where the multicast replication points can be made

GIST- capable. GIST can also be extended to cover other types of signalling pattern, not related to any end-to-end flow in the network, in which case the distinction between GIST and end-to-end higher-layer signalling will be drawn differently or not at all.

Every signalling application requires a set of state management rules, as well as protocol support to exchange messages along the data path. Several aspects of this protocol support are common to all or a large number of signalling applications, and hence can be developed as a common protocol. The NSIS framework given in [30] provides a rationale for a function split between the common and application specific protocols, and gives outline requirements for the former, the 'NSIS Transport Layer Protocol' (NTLP). The application specific protocols are referred to as 'NSIS Signalling Layer Protocols' (NSLPs), and are defined in separate documents.

The NSIS framework [30], and the accompanying threats document [31], provide important background information to this specification, including information on how GIST is expected to be used in various network types and what role it is expected to perform.

This specification provides a concrete solution for the NTLP. It is based on the use of existing transport and security protocols under

a common messaging layer, the General Internet Signalling Transport (GIST). GIST does not handle signalling application state itself;

in

that crucial respect, it differs from application signalling

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protocols such as SIP, RTSP, and the control component of FTP. Instead, GIST manages its own internal state and the configuration of the underlying transport and security protocols to ensure the transfer of signalling messages on behalf of signalling applications in both directions along the flow path.

The structure of this specification is as follows. [Section 2](#) defines terminology, and [Section 3](#) gives an informal overview of the protocol design principles and operation. The normative specification is contained mainly in [Section 4](#) to [Section 8](#). [Section 4](#) describes the message sequences and [Section 5](#) their format and contents. Note that the detailed bit formats are given in [Appendix A](#). The protocol operation is captured in the form of state machine language in [Section 6](#). [Section 7](#) describes some more advanced protocol features and security considerations are contained in [Section 8](#). In addition, [Appendix B](#) describes an abstract API for the service which GIST provides to signalling applications, and [Appendix D](#) provides an example message flow. Parts of the GIST design depend on the use of packets with IP options to probe the network, which leads to migration issues in networks with non-GIST nodes, especially in the case of IPv4, and these are discussed in [Appendix C](#).

Because of the layered structure of the NSIS protocol suite, protocol extensions to cover a new signalling requirement could be carried out either within GIST, or within the signalling application layer, or both. General guidelines on how to extend different layers of the protocol suite, and in particular when and how it is appropriate to extend GIST, are contained in a separate document, [\[14\]](#). In this document, [Section 9](#) gives the formal IANA considerations for the registries already defined by the GIST specification.

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[Flow] Sender: The node in the network which is the source of the packets in a flow. A sender could be a host, or a router if for example the flow is actually an aggregate.

[Flow] Receiver: The node in the network which is the sink for the packets in a flow.

Downstream: In the same direction as the data flow.

Upstream: In the opposite direction to the data flow.

GIST Node: Any node along the data path supporting GIST, regardless of what signalling applications it supports.

[Adjacent] Peer: The next node along the signalling path, in the upstream or downstream direction, with which a GIST node explicitly interacts.

Querying Node: The GIST node that initiates the handshake process to discover the adjacent peer.

Responding Node: The GIST node that responds to the handshake, becoming the adjacent peer to the Querying node.

Datagram Mode (D-mode): A mode of sending GIST messages between nodes without using any transport layer state or security protection. Datagram mode uses UDP encapsulation, with source and destination IP addresses derived either from the flow definition or previously discovered adjacency information.

Connection Mode (C-mode): A mode of sending GIST messages directly between nodes using point-to-point messaging associations (see below). Connection mode allows the re-use of existing transport and security protocols where such functionality is required.

Messaging Association (MA): A single connection between two explicitly identified GIST adjacent peers, i.e. between a given signalling source and destination address. A messaging association may use a specific transport protocol and known ports. If security protection is required, it may use a specific network layer security association, or use a transport layer security association internally. A messaging association is bidirectional: signalling messages can be sent over it in either direction, referring to flows of either direction.

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[Message] Routing: Message routing describes the process of determining which is the next GIST peer along the signalling path.

For signalling along a flow path, the message routing carried out by GIST is built on top of normal IP routing. In this document, the term 'routing' generally refers to GIST message routing unless otherwise qualified.

Message Routing Method (MRM): There can be different algorithms for discovering the route that signalling messages should take. These are referred to as message routing methods, and GIST supports alternatives within a common protocol framework. See [Section 3.3](#).

Message Routing Information (MRI): The set of data item values which is used to route a signalling message according to a particular MRM; for example, for routing along a flow path, the MRI includes flow source and destination addresses, protocol and port numbers. See [Section 3.3](#).

Router Alert Option (RAO): An option that can be included in IP v4 and v6 headers to assist in the packet interception process; see [\[3\]](#) and [\[8\]](#).

Transfer Attributes: A description of the requirements which a signalling application has for the delivery of a particular message; for example, whether the message should be delivered reliably. See [Section 4.1.2](#).

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3. Design Overview

3.1. Overall Design Approach

The generic requirements identified in the NSIS framework [[30](#)] for transport of signalling messages are essentially two-fold:

Routing: Determine how to reach the adjacent signalling node along each direction of the data path (the GIST peer), and if necessary explicitly establish addressing and identity information about that peer;

Transport: Deliver the signalling information to that peer.

To meet the routing requirement, one possibility is for the node to use local routing state information to determine the identity of the GIST peer explicitly. GIST defines a three-way handshake which probes the network to set up the necessary routing state between adjacent peers, during which signalling applications can also exchange data. Once the routing decision has been made, the node has

to select a mechanism for transport of the message to the peer.

GIST

divides the transport problems into two categories, the easy and the difficult. It handles the easy cases internally, and uses well-understood transport protocols for the harder cases. Here, with details discussed later, "easy" messages are those that are sized well below the lowest maximum transmission unit (MTU) along a path, are infrequent enough not to cause concerns about congestion and

flow

control, and do not need security protection or guaranteed delivery.

In [[30](#)] all of these routing and transport requirements are assigned to a single notional protocol, the NSIS Transport Layer Protocol (NTLP). The strategy of splitting the transport problem leads to a layered structure for the NTLP, of a specialised GIST messaging layer

running over standard transport and security protocols. The basic concept is shown in Figure 2. Note that not every combination of transport and security protocols implied by the figure is actually possible for use in GIST; the actual combinations allowed by this specification are defined in [Section 5.7](#). The figure also shows

GIST

offering its services to upper layers at an abstract interface, the GIST API, further discussed in [Section 4.1](#).

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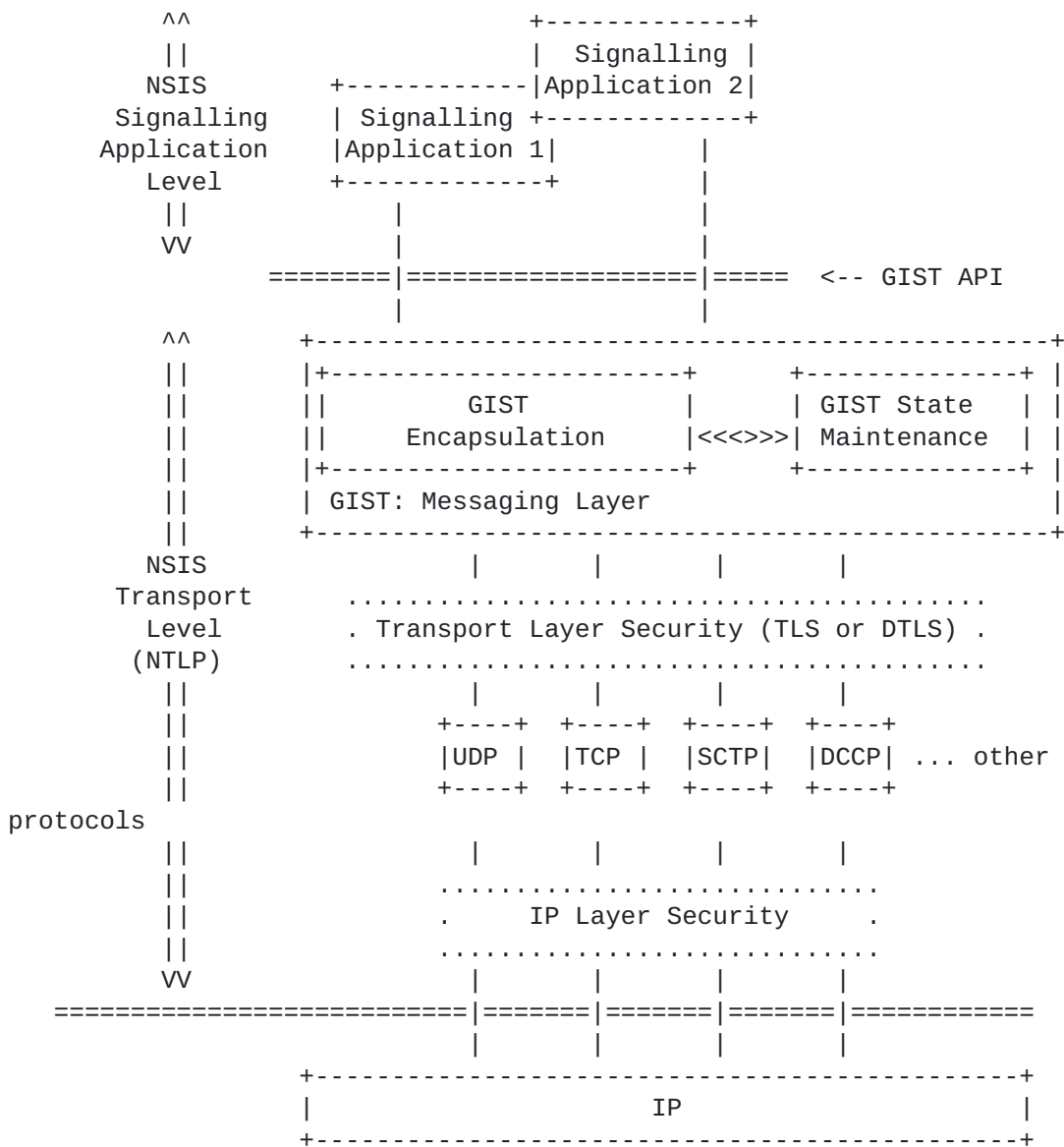


Figure 2: Protocol Stack Architecture for Signalling Transport

3.2. Modes and Messaging Associations

Internally, GIST has two modes of operation:

Datagram mode (D-mode): used for small, infrequent messages with modest delay constraints and no security requirements. A special case of D-mode called Query-mode (Q-mode) is used when no routing state exists.

Connection mode (C-mode): used for larger messages or where fast state setup in the face of packet loss is desirable, or where channel security is required.

D-mode uses UDP, as a suitable NAT-friendly encapsulation which does not require per-message shared state to be maintained between the peers. Long-term evolution of GIST is assumed to preserve the simplicity of the current D-mode design. Extensions to the security or transport capabilities of D-mode can be provided equivalently by selecting a different protocol stack under the GIST messaging layer, which would then become another option within the overall C-mode framework. This includes both the case of using existing protocols, and specific development of a message exchange and payload encapsulation to support GIST requirements. Alternatively, if any necessary parameters (e.g. a shared secret for use in integrity or confidentiality protection) can be negotiated out-of-band, then the additional functions can be added directly to D-mode by adding an optional object to the message (see [Appendix A.2.1](#)). Note that downgrade attacks on such approach would need to be prevented by policy at the destination node, similar to the situation discussed in [Section 8.6](#).

C-mode can in principle use any stream or message-oriented transport protocol; this specification defines TCP as the initial choice. It can in principle employ specific network layer security associations, or an internal transport layer security association; this specification defines TLS as the initial choice. When GIST messages are carried in C-mode, they are treated just like any other traffic by intermediate routers between the GIST peers. Indeed, it would be impossible for intermediate routers to carry out any processing on the messages without terminating the transport and security protocols used.

It is possible to mix these two modes along a path. This allows, for example, the use of D-mode at the edges of the network and C-mode in the core of the network. Such combinations may make operation more efficient for mobile endpoints, while allowing multiplexing of signalling messages across shared security associations and transport connections between core routers. The setup for these protocols imposes an initialisation cost for the use of C-mode, but in the long term this cost can be shared over all signalling sessions between peers; once the transport layer state exists, retransmission algorithms can operate much more aggressively than would be possible in a pure D-mode design.

It must be understood that the routing and transport decisions made

by GIST are not independent. If the message transfer has requirements that require C-mode, for example if the message is so

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large that fragmentation is required, this can only be used between explicitly identified nodes. In such cases, GIST carries out the three-way handshake initially in D-mode to identify the peer and then sets up the necessary connections if they do not already exist. It must also be understood that the signalling application does not make the D-mode/C-mode selection directly; rather, this decision is made by GIST on the basis of the message characteristics and the transfer attributes stated by the application. The distinction is not visible at the GIST service interface.

In general, the state associated with C-mode messaging to a particular peer (signalling destination address, protocol and port numbers, internal protocol configuration and state information) is referred to as a messaging association (MA). MAs are totally internal to GIST (they are not visible to signalling applications). Although GIST may be using an MA to deliver messages about a particular flow, there is no direct correspondence between them: the GIST message routing algorithms consider each message in turn and select an appropriate MA to transport it. There may be any number of MAs between two GIST peers although the usual case is zero or one, and they are set up and torn down by management actions within GIST itself.

3.3. Message Routing Methods

The baseline message routing functionality in GIST is that signalling messages follow a route defined by an existing flow in the network, visiting a subset of the nodes through which it passes. This is the appropriate behaviour for application scenarios where the purpose of the signalling is to manipulate resources for that flow. However, there are scenarios for which other behaviours are applicable. Two examples are:

Predictive Routing: Here, the intent is to signal along a path that the data flow may follow in the future. Possible cases are pre-installation of state on the backup path that would be used in the event of a link failure, and predictive installation of state on the path that will be used after a mobile node handover.

NAT Address Reservations: This applies to the case where a node behind a NAT wishes to reserve an address at which it can be reached by a sender on the other side. This requires a message to be sent outbound from what will be the flow receiver although no reverse routing state for the flow yet exists.

Most of the details of GIST operation are independent of which is being used. Therefore, the GIST design encapsulates the routing-dependent details as a message routing method (MRM), and allows

multiple MRMs to be defined. This specification defines the path-coupled MRM, corresponding to the baseline functionality described above, and a second MRM for the NAT Address Reservation case. The detailed specifications are given in [Section 5.8](#).

The content of a MRM definition is as follows, using the path-coupled

MRM as an example:

- o The format of the information that describes the path that the signalling should take, the Message Routing Information (MRI). For the path-coupled MRM, this is just the Flow Identifier (see [Section 5.8.1.1](#)) and some additional control information. Specifically, the MRI always includes a flag to distinguish between the two directions that signalling messages can take, denoted 'upstream' and 'downstream'.
 - o A specification of the IP-level encapsulation of the messages which probe the network to discover the adjacent peers. A downstream encapsulation must be defined; an upstream encapsulation is optional. For the path-coupled MRM, this information is given in [Section 5.8.1.2](#) and [Section 5.8.1.3](#). Current MRMs rely on the interception of probe messages in the data plane, but other mechanisms are also possible within the overall GIST design and would be appropriate for other types of signalling pattern.
 - o A specification of what validation checks GIST should apply to the probe messages, for example to protect against IP address spoofing attacks. The checks may be dependent on the direction (upstream or downstream) of the message. For the path-coupled MRM, the downstream validity check is basically a form of ingress filtering, also discussed in [Section 5.8.1.2](#).
 - o The mechanism(s) available for route change detection, i.e. any change in the neighbour relationships that the MRM discovers.
- The default case for any MRM is soft-state refresh, but additional supporting techniques may be possible; see [Section 7.1.2](#).

In addition, it should be noted that NAT traversal may require translation of fields in the MRI object carried in GIST messages (see [Section 7.2.2](#)). The generic MRI format includes a flag that must be given as part of the MRM definition, to indicate if some kind of translation is necessary. Development of a new MRM therefore includes updates to the GIST specification, and may include updates to specifications of NAT behaviour. These updates may be done in separate documents as is the case for NAT traversal for the MRMs of the base GIST specification, as described in [Section 7.2.3](#) and [42].

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The MRI is passed explicitly between signalling applications and GIST; therefore, signalling application specifications must define which MRMs they require. Signalling applications may use fields in the MRI in their packet classifiers; if they use additional information for packet classification, this would be carried at the NSLP level and so would be invisible to GIST. Any node hosting a particular signalling application needs to use a GIST implementation that supports the corresponding MRMs. The GIST processing rules allow nodes not hosting the signalling application to ignore messages for it at the GIST level, so it does not matter if these nodes support the MRM or not.

3.4. GIST Messages

GIST has six message types: Query, Response, Confirm, Data, Error, and MA-Hello. Apart from the invocation of the messaging association protocols used by C-mode, all GIST communication consists of these messages. In addition, all signalling application data is carried as additional payloads in these messages, alongside the GIST information.

The Query, Response and Confirm messages implement the handshake that GIST uses to set up routing state and messaging associations. The handshake is initiated from the Querying node towards the Responding node. The first message is the Query, which is encapsulated in a special way depending on the message routing method, in order to probe the network infrastructure so that the correct peer will intercept it and become the Responding node. A Query always triggers a Response in the reverse direction as the second message of the handshake. As part of the defence against denial of service attacks, the Responding node can delay state installation until a return routability check, and require the Querying node to complete the handshake with the Confirm message. All of these three messages can optionally carry signalling application data. The handshake is fully described in [Section 4.4.1](#).

The Data message is used purely to encapsulate and deliver signalling application data. Usually it is sent using pre-established routing state. However, if there are no security or transport requirements and no need for persistent reverse routing state, it can also be sent in the same way as the Query. Finally, Error messages are used to indicate error conditions at the GIST level, and the MA-Hello message

can be used as a diagnostic and keepalive for the messaging association protocols.

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3.5. GIST Peering Relationships

Peering is the process whereby two GIST nodes create message routing state which point to each other.

A peering relationship can only be created by a GIST handshake. Nodes become peers when one issues a Query and gets a Response from another. Issuing the initial Query is a result of an NSLP request

on that node, and the Query itself is formatted according to the rules of the message routing method. For current MRMs, the identity of the

Responding node is not known explicitly at the time the Query is sent; instead, the message is examined by nodes along the path until one decides to send a Response, thereby becoming the peer. If the node hosts the NSLP, local GIST and signalling application policy determine whether to peer; the details are given in [Section 4.3.2](#). Nodes not hosting the NSLP forward the Query transparently ([Section 4.3.4](#)).

An existing peering relationship can only be changed by a new GIST handshake; in other words, it can only change when routing state is refreshed. On a refresh, if any of the factors in the original peering process have changed, the peering relationship can also change. As well as network level rerouting, changes could include modifications in NSIS signalling functions deployed at a node, or alterations to signalling application policy. A change could cause an existing node to drop out of the signalling path, or a new node

to become part of it. All these possibilities are handled as rerouting events by GIST; further details of the process are described in [Section 7.1](#).

3.6. Effect on Internet Transparency

GIST relies on routers inside the network to intercept and process packets which would normally be transmitted end-to-end. This processing may be non-transparent: messages may be forwarded with modifications, or not forwarded at all. This interception applies only to the encapsulation used for messages which initially probe

the network, for example along a flow path; all other GIST messages are handled only by the nodes to which they are directly addressed, i.e. as normal Internet traffic.

Because this interception potentially breaks Internet transparency for packets which are nothing to do with GIST, the encapsulation used

by GIST in this case (called Query-mode or Q-mode) has several features to avoid accidental collisions with other traffic:

- o Q-mode messages are always sent as UDP traffic, and to a specific

well-known port allocated by IANA.

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- o All GIST messages sent as UDP have a magic number as the first 32-bit word of the datagram payload.

Even if a node intercepts a packet as potentially a GIST message, unless it passes both these checks it will be ignored at the GIST level and forwarded transparently. Further discussion of the reception process is in [Section 4.3.1](#) and the encapsulation in [Section 5.3](#).

3.7. Signalling Sessions

GIST requires signalling applications to associate each of their messages with a signalling session. Informally, given an application

layer exchange of information for which some network control state information is to be manipulated or monitored, the corresponding signalling messages should be associated with the same session. Signalling applications provide the session identifier (SID)

whenever

they wish to send a message, and GIST reports the SID when a message is received; on messages forwarded at the GIST level, the SID is preserved unchanged. Usually, NSLPs will preserve the SID value along the entire signalling path, but this is not enforced by or

even

visible to GIST, which only sees the scope of the SID as the single hop between adjacent NSLP peers.

Most GIST processing and state information is related to the flow (defined by the MRI, see above) and signalling application (given by the NSLP identifier, see below). There are several possible relationships between flows and sessions, for example:

- o The simplest case is that all signalling messages for the same flow have the same SID.
- o Messages for more than one flow may use the same SID, for example because one flow is replacing another in a mobility or multihoming scenario.
- o A single flow may have messages for different SIDs, for example from independently operating signalling applications.

Because of this range of options, GIST does not perform any validation on how signalling applications map between flows and sessions, nor does it perform any direct validation on the

properties

of the SID itself, such as any enforcement of uniqueness. GIST only defines the syntax of the SID as an opaque 128-bit identifier.

The SID assignment has the following impact on GIST processing:

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- o Messages with the same SID that are to be delivered reliably between the same GIST peers are delivered in order.
- o All other messages are handled independently.
- o GIST identifies routing state (upstream and downstream peer) by the triplet (MRI, NSLP, SID).

Strictly speaking, the routing state should not depend on the SID. However, if the routing state is keyed only by (MRI, NSLP), there is a trivial denial of service attack (see [Section 8.3](#)) where a malicious off-path node asserts that it is the peer for a particular flow. Such an attack would not redirect the traffic but would reroute the signalling. Instead, the routing state is also segregated between different SIDs, which means that the attacking node can only disrupt a signalling session if it can guess the corresponding SID. Normative rules on the selection of SIDs are given in [Section 4.1.3](#).

3.8. Signalling Applications and NSLPIDs

The functionality for signalling applications is supported by NSIS signalling layer protocols (NSLPs). Each NSLP is identified by a 16 bit NSLP identifier (NSLPID), assigned by IANA ([Section 9](#)). A single signalling application, such as resource reservation, may define a family of NSLPs to implement its functionality, for example to carry out signalling operations at different levels in a hierarchy (cf. [23]). However, the interactions between the different NSLPs (for example, to relate aggregation levels or aggregation region boundaries in the resource management case) are handled at the signalling application level; the NSLPID is the only information visible to GIST about the signalling application being used.

3.9. GIST Security Services

GIST has two distinct security goals:

- o to protect GIST state from corruption, and to protect the nodes on which it runs from resource exhaustion attacks; and
- o to provide secure transport for NSLP messages to the signalling applications.

The protocol mechanisms to achieve the first goal are mainly internal to GIST. They include a cookie exchange and return routability check to protect the handshake which sets up routing state, and a random SID is also used to prevent off-path session hijacking by SID guessing. Further details are given in [Section 4.1.3](#) and

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[Section 4.4.1](#), and the overall security aspects are discussed in [Section 8](#).

A second level of protection is provided by the use of a channel security protocol in messaging associations (i.e. within C-mode). This mechanism serves two purposes: to protect against on-path attacks on GIST, and to provide a secure channel for NSLP messages. For the mechanism to be effective, it must be able to provide the following functions:

- o mutual authentication of the GIST peer nodes;
- o ability to verify the authenticated identity against a database of nodes authorised to take part in GIST signalling;
- o confidentiality and integrity protection for NSLP data, and provision of the authenticated identities used to the signalling application.

The authorised peer database is described in more detail in [Section 4.4.2](#), including the types of entries that it can contain and

the authorisation checking algorithm that is used. The only channel security protocol defined by this specification is a basic use of TLS, and [Section 5.7.3](#) defines the TLS-specific aspects of how these functions (for example, authentication and identity comparison) are integrated with the rest of GIST operation. At a high level, there are several alternative protocols with similar functionality, and

the handshake ([Section 4.4.1](#)) provides a mechanism within GIST to select between them. However, they differ in their identity schemes and authentication methods and dependencies on infrastructure support

for the authentication process, and any GIST extension to incorporate them would need to define the details of the corresponding interactions with GIST operation.

[3.10](#). Example of Operation

This section presents an example of GIST usage in a relatively simple (in particular, NAT-free) signalling scenario, to illustrate its main features.

Consider the case of an RSVP-like signalling application which makes receiver-based resource reservations for a single unicast flow. In general, signalling can take place along the entire end-to-end path (between flow source and destination), but the role of GIST is only to transfer signalling messages over a single segment of the path, between neighbouring resource-capable nodes. Basic GIST operation

is

the same, whether it involves the endpoints or only interior nodes:
in either case, GIST is triggered by a request from a local

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signalling application. The example here describes how GIST transfers messages between two adjacent peers along the path, GN1 and GN2 (see Figure 1 in [Section 2](#)). We take up the story at the point where a message is being processed above the GIST layer by the signalling application in GN1.

1. The signalling application in GN1 determines that this message is a simple description of resources that would be appropriate for the flow. It determines that it has no special security or transport requirements for the message, but simply that it should be transferred to the next downstream signalling application peer on the path that the flow will take.
2. The message payload is passed to the GIST layer in GN1, along with a definition of the flow and description of the message transfer attributes (in this case, requesting no reliable transmission or channel security protection). GIST determines that this particular message does not require fragmentation and that it has no knowledge of the next peer for this flow and signalling application; however, it also determines that this application is likely to require secured upstream and downstream transport of large messages in the future. This determination is a function of node-local policy interactions between GIST and the signalling application.
3. GN1 therefore constructs a GIST Query carrying the NSLP payload, and additional payloads at the GIST level which will be used to initiate a messaging association. The Query is encapsulated in a UDP datagram and injected into the network. At the IP level, the destination address is the flow receiver, and an IP Router Alert Option (RAO) is also included.
4. The Query passes through the network towards the flow receiver, and is seen by each router in turn. GIST-unaware routers will not recognise the RAO value and will forward the message unchanged; GIST-aware routers which do not support the NSLP in question will also forward the message basically unchanged, although they may need to process more of the message to decide this.
5. The message is intercepted at GN2. The GIST layer identifies the message as relevant to a local signalling application, and passes

peer
down

the NSLP payload and flow description upwards to it. This signalling application in GN2 indicates to GIST that it will with GN1 and so GIST should proceed to set up any routing state. In addition, the signalling application continues to process the message as in GN1 (compare step 1), passing the message back to GIST so that it is sent further downstream, and this will

eventually result in the message reaching the flow receiver. GIST itself operates hop-by-hop, and the signalling application joins these hops together to manage the end-to-end signalling operations.

6. In parallel, the GIST instance in GN2 now knows that it should maintain routing state and a messaging association for future signalling with GN1. This is recognised because the message is

a

Query, and because the local signalling application has indicated

that it will peer with GN1. There are two possible cases for sending back the necessary GIST Response:

its

- 6.A - Association Exists: GN1 and GN2 already have an appropriate MA. GN2 simply records the identity of GN1 as

upstream peer for that flow and NSLP, and sends a Response back to GN1 over the MA identifying itself as the peer for this flow.

- 6.B - No Association: GN2 sends the Response in D-mode directly to GN1, identifying itself and agreeing to the messaging association setup. The protocol exchanges needed to complete this will proceed in parallel with the following stages.

In each case, the result is that GN1 and GN2 are now in a peering relationship for the flow.

7. Eventually, another NSLP message works its way upstream from the receiver to GN2. This message contains a description of the actual resources requested, along with authorisation and other security information. The signalling application in GN2 passes this payload to the GIST level, along with the flow definition and transfer attributes; in this case, it could request reliable transmission and use of a secure channel for integrity protection. (Other combinations of attributes are possible).
8. The GIST layer in GN2 identifies the upstream peer for this flow and NSLP as GN1, and determines that it has an MA with the appropriate properties. The message is queued on the MA for transmission; this may incur some delay if the procedures begun in step 6.B have not yet completed.

Further messages can be passed in each direction in the same way. The GIST layer in each node can in parallel carry out maintenance operations such as route change detection (see [Section 7.1](#)).

It should be understood that several of these details of GIST operations can be varied, either by local policy or according to signalling application requirements. The authoritative details are

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contained in the remainder of this document.

4. GIST Processing Overview

This section defines the basic structure and operation of GIST. [Section 4.1](#) describes the way in which GIST interacts with local signalling applications in the form of an abstract service interface.

[Section 4.2](#) describes the per-flow and per-peer state that GIST maintains for the purpose of transferring messages. [Section 4.3](#) describes how messages are processed in the case where any necessary messaging associations and routing state already exist; this includes

the simple scenario of pure D-mode operation, where no messaging associations are necessary. Finally, [Section 4.4](#) describes how routing state and messaging associations are created and managed.

4.1. GIST Service Interface

This section describes the interaction between GIST and signalling applications in terms of an abstract service interface, including a definition of the attributes of the message transfer that GIST can offer. The service interface presented here is non-normative and does not constrain actual implementations of any interface between GIST and signalling applications; the interface is provided to aid understanding of how GIST can be used. However, requirements on SID selection and internal GIST behaviour to support message transfer semantics (such as in-order delivery) are stated normatively here.

The same service interface is presented at every GIST node; however, applications may invoke it differently at different nodes, depending for example on local policy. In addition, the service interface is defined independently of any specific transport protocol, or even the

distinction between D-mode and C-mode. The initial version of this specification defines how to support the service interface using a C-mode based on TCP; if additional protocol support is added, this will support the same interface and so the change will be invisible to applications, except as a possible performance improvement. A more detailed description of this service interface is given in [Appendix B](#).

4.1.1. Message Handling

Fundamentally, GIST provides a simple message-by-message transfer service for use by signalling applications: individual messages are sent, and individual messages are received. At the service interface, the NSLP payload, which is opaque to GIST, is accompanied by control information expressing the application's requirements about how the message should be routed, and the application also provides the session identifier (SID), see [Section 4.1.3](#).

Additional

message transfer attributes control the specific transport and security properties that the signalling application desires.

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The distinction between GIST D- and C-mode is not visible at the service interface. In addition, the functionality to handle fragmentation and reassembly, bundling together of small messages for efficiency, and congestion control are not visible at the service interface; GIST will take whatever action is necessary based on the properties of the messages and local node state.

A signalling application is free to choose the rate at which it processes inbound messages; an implementation MAY allow the application to block accepting messages from GIST. In these circumstances, GIST MAY discard unreliably delivered messages, but for reliable messages MUST propagate flow-control condition back to the sender. Therefore, applications must be aware that they may in turn be blocked from sending outbound messages themselves.

4.1.2. Message Transfer Attributes

Message transfer attributes are used to define certain performance and security-related aspects of message processing. The attributes available are as follows:

Reliability: This attribute may be 'true' or 'false'. When 'true', messages MUST be delivered to the signalling application in the peer exactly once or not at all; for messages with the same SID, the delivery MUST be in order. If there is a chance that the message was not delivered, an error MUST be indicated to the local signalling application identifying the routing information for the message in question. GIST implements reliability by using an appropriate transport protocol within a messaging association, so mechanisms for the detection of message loss depend on the protocol in question; for the current specification, the case of TCP is considered in [Section 5.7.2](#). When 'false', a message may be delivered, once, several times or not at all, with no error indications in any case.

Security: This attribute defines the set of security properties that the signalling application requires for the message, including the type of protection required, and what authenticated identities should be used for the signalling source and destination. This information maps onto the corresponding properties of the security associations established between the peers in C-mode. Keying material for the security associations is established by the authentication mechanisms within the messaging association protocols themselves; see [Section 8.2](#). The attribute can be specified explicitly by the signalling application, or reported by

GIST to the signalling application. The latter can take place either on receiving a message, or just before sending a message but after configuring or selecting the messaging association to be

used for it.

This attribute can also be used to convey information about any address validation carried out by GIST, such as whether a return routability check has been carried out. Further details are discussed in [Appendix B](#).

Local Processing: An NSLP may provide hints to GIST to enable more efficient or appropriate processing. For example, the NSLP may select a priority from a range of locally defined values to influence the sequence in which messages leave a node. Any priority mechanism **MUST** respect the ordering requirements for reliable messages within a session, and priority values are not carried in the protocol or available at the signalling peer or intermediate nodes. An NSLP may also indicate that upstream path routing state will not be needed for this flow, to inhibit the node requesting its downstream peer to create it; conversely, even if routing state exists, the NSLP may request that it is not used, which will lead to data being sent Q-mode encapsulated instead.

4.1.3. SID Selection

The fact that SIDs index routing state (see [Section 4.2.1](#) below) means that there are requirements for how they are selected. Specifically, signalling applications **MUST** choose SIDs so that they are cryptographically random, and **SHOULD NOT** use several SIDs for the same flow, to avoid additional load from routing state maintenance. Guidance on secure randomness generation can be found in [[32](#)].

4.2. GIST State

4.2.1. Message Routing State

For each flow, the GIST layer can maintain message routing state to manage the processing of outgoing messages. This state is conceptually organised into a table with the following structure. Each row in the table corresponds to a unique combination of the following three items:

Message Routing Information (MRI): This defines the method to be used to route the message, the direction in which to send the message, and any associated addressing information; see [Section 3.3](#).

Session Identification (SID): The signalling session with which this message should be associated; see [Section 3.7](#).

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NSLP Identification (NSLPID): This is an IANA-assigned identifier associated with the NSLP which is generating messages for this flow; see [Section 3.8](#). The inclusion of this identifier allows the routing state to be different for different NSLPs.

The information associated with a given {MRI,SID,NSLPID} triplet consists of the routing state to reach the peer in the direction given by the MRI. For any flow there will usually be two entries in the table, one each for the upstream and downstream MRI. The routing state includes information about the peer identity (see [Section 4.4.3](#)), and a UDP port number for D-mode, or a reference to one or more MAs for C-mode. Entries in the routing state table are created by the GIST handshake, which is described in more detail in [Section 4.4](#).

It is also possible for the state information for either direction to be empty. There are several possible cases:

- o The signalling application has indicated that no messages will actually be sent in that direction.
- o The node is the endpoint of the signalling path, for example because it is acting as a proxy, or because it has determined that there are no further signalling nodes in that direction.
- o The node is using other techniques to send the message. For example, it can send it in Q-mode and rely on the peer to intercept it.

In addition, if the node is a flow endpoint, GIST will refuse to create routing state for the direction beyond the end of the flow (see [Section 4.3.3](#)). Each entry in the routing state table has an associated validity timer indicating for how long it can be considered accurate. When this timer expires, the entry MUST be purged if it has not been refreshed. Installation and maintenance of routing state is described in more detail in [Section 4.4](#).

4.2.2. Peer-Peer Messaging Association State

The per-flow message routing state is not the only state stored by GIST. There is also the state required to manage the MAs. Since these are not per-flow, they are stored separately from the routing state, including the following per-MA information:

- o a queue of messages pending transmission while an MA is being established;

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- o the time since the peer re-stated its desire to keep the MA open (see [Section 4.4.5](#)).

In addition, per-MA state is held in the messaging association protocols themselves. However, the details of this state are not directly visible to GIST, and they do not affect the rest of the protocol description.

4.3. Basic GIST Message Processing

This section describes how signalling application messages are processed in the case where any necessary messaging associations and routing state are already in place. The description is divided into several parts. Firstly, message reception, local processing and message transmission are described for the case where the node hosts the NSLPID identified in the message. Secondly, the case where the message is handled directly in the IP or GIST layer (because there is no matching signalling application on the node) is given. An overview is given in Figure 3. This section concentrates on the GIST level processing, with full details of IP and transport layer encapsulation in [Section 5.3](#) and [Section 5.4](#).

Reception in D-mode depends on the message type.

Normal encapsulation: Normal messages arrive UDP-encapsulated and addressed directly to the receiving signalling node, at an address and port learned previously. Each datagram contains a single message which is passed to the GIST layer for further processing, just as in the C-mode case.

Q-mode encapsulation: Where GIST is sending messages to be intercepted by the appropriate peer rather than directly addressed to it (in particular, Query messages), these are UDP encapsulated, and MAY include an IP router alert option (RAO) if required by the MRM. Each signalling node can therefore see every such message, but unless the message exactly matches the Q-mode encapsulation rules ([Section 5.3.2](#)) it MUST be forwarded transparently at the IP level. If it does match, the GIST MUST check the NSLPID in the common header. The case where the NSLPID does not match a local signalling application at all is considered below in [Section 4.3.4](#); otherwise, the message MUST be passed up to the GIST layer for further processing.

Several different RAO values may be used by the NSIS protocol suite. GIST itself does not allocate any RAO values (for either IPv4 or IPv6); an assignment is made for each NSLP using MRMs that use the RAO in the Q-mode encapsulation. The assignment rationale is discussed in [\[14\]](#). The RAO value assigned for an NSLPID may be different for IPv4 and IPv6. Note the different significance between the RAO and the NSLPID values: the meaning of a message (which signalling application it refers to, whether it should be processed at a node) is determined only from the NSLPID; the role of the RAO value is simply to allow nodes to pre-filter which IP datagrams are analysed to see if they might be Q-mode GIST messages.

For all assignments associated with NSIS, the RAO specific processing is the same and is as defined by this specification, here and in [Section 4.3.4](#) and [Section 5.3.2](#).

Immediately after reception, the GIST hop count is checked. Any message with a GIST hop count of zero MUST be rejected with a "Hop Limit Exceeded" error message (Appendix A.4.4.2). Otherwise, the GIST hop count MUST be decremented by one.

[4.3.2](#). Local Processing and Validation

Once a message has been received, it is processed locally within the

GIST layer. Further processing depends on the message type and payloads carried; most of the GIST payloads are associated with internal state maintenance, and details are covered in [Section 4.4](#).

This section concentrates on the interaction with the signalling application, in particular the decision to peer and how data is delivered to the NSLP.

In the case of a Query, there is an interaction with the signalling application to determine which of two courses to follow. The first option (peering) MUST be chosen if the node is the final destination of the Query message, or if the GIST hop count has reached zero.

1. The receiving signalling application wishes to become a signalling peer with the Querying node. GIST MUST continue with the handshake process to set up message routing state, as described in [Section 4.4.1](#). The application MAY provide an NSLP payload for the same NSLPID, which GIST will transfer in the Response.
2. The signalling application does not wish to set up state with the Querying node and become its peer. This includes the case where a node wishes to avoid taking part in the signalling for overload protection reasons. GIST MUST propagate the Query, similar to the case described in [Section 4.3.4](#). No message is sent back to the Querying node. The application MAY provide an updated NSLP payload for the same NSLPID, which will be used in the Query forwarded by GIST. Note that if the node which finally processes the Query returns an Error message, this will be sent directly back to the originating node, bypassing any forwarders. For these diagnostics to be meaningful, any GIST node forwarding a Query MUST NOT modify it except in the NSLP payload; in particular, it MUST NOT modify any GIST payloads or their order. An implementation MAY choose to achieve this by retaining the original message, rather than reconstructing it from some parsed internal representation.

This interaction with the signalling application, including the generation or update of an NSLP payload, SHOULD take place synchronously as part of the Query processing. In terms of the GIST service interface, this can be implemented by providing appropriate return values for the primitive that is triggered when such a message is received; see [Appendix B.2](#) for further discussion.

For all GIST message types other than Queries, if the message includes an NSLP payload, this MUST be delivered locally to the signalling application identified by the NSLPID. The format of the payload is not constrained by GIST, and the content is not interpreted. Delivery is subject to the following validation checks which MUST be applied in the sequence given:

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1. if the message was explicitly routed (see [Section 7.1.5](#)) or is a Data message delivered without routing state (see [Section 5.3.2](#)), the payload is delivered but flagged to the receiving NSLP to indicate that routing state was not validated;
2. else, if the message arrived on an association which is not associated with the MRI/NSLPID/SID combination given in the message, the message MUST be rejected with an "Incorrectly Delivered Message" error message (Appendix A.4.4.4);
3. else, if there is no routing state for this MRI/SID/NSLPID the message MUST either be dropped or be rejected with a error message (see [Section 4.4.6](#) for further details);
4. else, the payload is delivered as normal.

4.3.3. Message Transmission

Signalling applications can generate their messages for transmission,

either asynchronously, or in reply to an input message, and GIST can also generate messages autonomously. GIST MUST verify that it is not

the direct destination of an outgoing message, and MUST reject such messages with an error indication to the signalling application.

Signalling applications may specify a value to be used for the GIST hop count; otherwise, GIST selects a value itself. GIST MUST reject messages for which the signalling application has specified a value of zero. Although the GIST hop count is only intended to control message looping at the GIST level, the GIST API (Appendix B) provides

the incoming hop count to the NSLPs, which can preserve it on outgoing messages as they are forwarded further along the path.

This

provides a lightweight loop-control mechanism for NSLPs which do not define anything more sophisticated. Note that the count will be decremented on forwarding through every GIST-aware node. Initial values for the GIST hop count are an implementation matter; one suitable approach is to use the same algorithm as for IP TTL setting [1].

When a message is available for transmission, GIST uses internal policy and the stored routing state to determine how to handle it. The following processing applies equally to locally generated messages and messages forwarded from within the GIST or signalling application levels. However, see [Section 5.6](#) for special rules applying to the transmission of error messages by GIST.

The main decision is whether the message must be sent in C-mode or D-mode. Reasons for using C-mode are:

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- o message transfer attributes: for example, the signalling application has requested channel-secured delivery, or reliable delivery.
- o message size: a message whose size (including the GIST header, GIST objects and any NSLP payload, and an allowance for the IP and transport layer encapsulation required by D-mode) exceeds a fragmentation-related threshold MUST be sent over C-mode, using a messaging association that supports fragmentation and reassembly internally. The allowance for IP and transport layer encapsulation is 64 bytes. The message size MUST NOT exceed the least of the following three quantities: the Path MTU to the next peer (if known), the first-hop MTU, and 576 bytes. The same limit applies to IPv4 and IPv6.
- o congestion control: D-mode SHOULD NOT be used for signalling where it is possible to set up routing state and use C-mode, unless the network can be engineered to guarantee capacity for D-mode traffic within the rate control limits imposed by GIST (see [Section 5.3.3](#)).

In principle, as well as determining that some messaging association must be used, GIST MAY select between a set of alternatives, e.g. for load sharing or because different messaging associations provide different transport or security attributes. For the case of reliable delivery, GIST MUST NOT distribute messages for the same session over multiple messaging associations in parallel, but MUST use a single association at any given time. The case of moving over to a new association is covered in [Section 4.4.5](#).

If the use of a messaging association (i.e. C-mode) is selected, the message is queued on the association found from the routing state table, and further output processing is carried out according to the details of the protocol stacks used. If no appropriate association exists, the message is queued while one is created (see [Section 4.4.1](#)), which will trigger the exchange of additional GIST messages. If no association can be created, this is an error condition, and should be indicated back to the local signalling application.

If a messaging association is not required, the message is sent in D-mode. The processing in this case depends on the message type and whether routing state exists or not.

- o If the message is not a Query, and routing state exists, it is sent with the normal D-mode encapsulation directly to the address from the routing state table.

- o If the message is a Query, then it is sent in Q-mode as defined in ([Section 5.3.2](#)); the details depend on the message routing method.
- o If no routing state exists, GIST can attempt to use Q-mode as in the Query case: either sending a Data message with the Q-mode encapsulation, or using the event as a trigger for routing state setup (see [Section 4.4](#)). If this is not possible, e.g. because the encapsulation for the MRM is only defined for one message direction, then this is an error condition which is reported back to the local signalling application.

4.3.4. Nodes not Hosting the NSLP

A node may receive messages where it has no signalling application corresponding to the message NSLPID. There are several possible cases depending mainly on the encapsulation:

1. A message contains an RAO value which is relevant to NSIS, but it does not exactly match the Q-mode encapsulation rules of [Section 5.3.2](#). The message MUST be transparently forwarded at the IP layer.
2. A Q-mode encapsulated message contains an RAO value which is relevant to NSIS but not to the specific node, but the IP layer is unable to recognise whether it needs to be passed to GIST for further processing or whether the packet should be forwarded just like a normal IP datagram.
3. A Q-mode encapsulated message contains an RAO value which is relevant to the node, but the specific signalling application for the NSLPID in the message is not processed there.
4. A directly addressed message (in D-mode or C-mode) is delivered to a node for which there is no corresponding signalling application. With the current specification, this should not happen in normal operation. While future versions might find a use for such a feature, currently this MUST cause an "Unknown NSLPID" error message, [Appendix A.4.4.6](#).
5. A Q-mode encapsulated message arrives at the end-system which does not handle the signalling application. This is possible in normal operation, and MUST be indicated to the sender with an "Endpoint Found" informational message ([Appendix A.4.4.7](#)). The end-system includes the MRI and SID from the original message in the error message without interpreting them.
6. The node is GIST-aware NAT. See [Section 7.2](#).

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In cases (2) and (3), the role of GIST is to forward the message essentially as though it were a normal IP datagram, and it will not become a peer to the node sending the message. Forwarding with modified NSLP payloads is covered above in [Section 4.3.2](#). However,

a

GIST implementation MUST ensure that the IP-layer TTL field and GIST hop count are managed correctly to prevent message looping, and this should be done consistently independently of whether the processing takes place on the fast path or in GIST-specific code. The rules

are

that in cases (2) and (3), the IP-layer TTL MUST be decremented just as if the message was a normal IP forwarded packet; in case (3) the GIST hop count MUST be decremented as in the case of normal input processing, which also applies to cases (4) and (5).

A GIST node processing Q-mode encapsulated messages in this way SHOULD make the routing decision based on the full contents of the MRI and not only the IP destination address. It MAY also apply a restricted set of sanity checks and under certain conditions return an error message rather than forward the message. These conditions are:

1. The message is so large that it would be fragmented on downstream links, for example because the downstream MTU is abnormally small (less than 512 bytes). The error "Message Too Large" (Appendix A.4.4.8) SHOULD be returned to the sender, which SHOULD begin messaging association setup.
2. The GIST hop count has reached zero. The error "Hop Limit Exceeded" (Appendix A.4.4.2) SHOULD be returned to the sender, which MAY retry with a larger initial hop count.
3. The MRI represents a flow definition which is too general to be forwarded along a unique path (e.g. the destination address prefix is too short). The error "MRI Validation Failure" (Appendix A.4.4.12) with subcode 0 ("MRI Too Wild") SHOULD be returned to the sender, which MAY retry with restricted MRIs, possibly starting additional signalling sessions to do so. If the GIST node does not understand the MRM in question it MUST NOT apply this check, instead forwarding the message transparently.

In the first two cases, only the common header of the GIST message is examined; in the third case, the MRI is also examined. The rest of the message MUST NOT be inspected in any case. Similar to the case of [Section 4.3.2](#), the GIST payloads MUST NOT be modified or re-ordered; an implementation MAY choose to achieve this by retaining the original message, rather than reconstructing it from some parsed

internal representation.

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4.4. Routing State and Messaging Association Maintenance

The main responsibility of GIST is to manage the routing state and messaging associations which are used in the message processing described above. Routing state is installed and refreshed by GIST handshake messages. Messaging associations are set up by the normal procedures of the transport and security protocols that comprise them, using peer IP addresses from the routing state. Once a messaging association has been created, its refresh and expiration can be managed independently from the routing state.

There are two different cases for state installation and refresh:

1. Where routing state is being discovered or a new association is to be established; and
2. Where a suitable association already exists, including the case where routing state for the flow is being refreshed.

These cases are now considered in turn, followed by the case of background general management procedures.

4.4.1. Routing State and Messaging Association Creation

The complete sequence of possible messages for GIST state setup between adjacent peers is shown in Figure 4 and described in detail in the following text. The figure informally summarises the contents

of each message, including optional elements in square brackets. An example is given in [Appendix D](#).

The initial message in any routing state maintenance operation is a Query, sent from the querying node and intercepted at the responding node. This message has addressing and other identifiers appropriate for the flow and signalling application that state maintenance is being done for, addressing information about the node that generated the Query itself, and it MAY contain an NSLP payload. It also includes a Query Cookie, and optionally capability information about messaging association protocol stacks. The role of the cookies in this and subsequent messages is to protect against certain denial of service attacks and to correlate the various events in the message sequence (see [Section 8.5](#) for further details).

Provided that the signalling application has indicated that message routing state should be set up (see [Section 4.3.2](#)), reception of a Query MUST elicit a Response. This is a normally encapsulated D-mode

message with additional payloads. It contains network layer information about the responding node, echoes the Query Cookie, and MAY contain an NSLP payload, possibly a reply to the NSLP payload in

the initial message. In case a messaging association was requested, it MUST also contain a Responder Cookie and its own capability information about messaging association protocol stacks. Even if a messaging association is not requested, the Response MAY still include a Responder Cookie if the node's routing state setup policy requires it (see below).



Figure 4: Message Sequence at State Setup

Setup of a new messaging association begins when peer addressing information is available and a new messaging association is actually needed. Any setup MUST take place immediately after the specific Query/Response exchange, because the addressing information used may have a limited lifetime, either because it depends on limited lifetime NAT bindings or because it refers to agile destination ports

for the transport protocols. The Stack-Proposal and Stack-Configuration-Data objects carried in the exchange carry capability information about what messaging association protocols can be used, and the processing of these objects is described in more detail in [Section 5.7](#). With the protocol options currently defined, setup of the messaging association always starts from the Querying node, although more flexible configurations are possible within the overall

GIST design. If the messaging association includes a channel security protocol, each GIST node MUST verify the authenticated identity of the peer against its authorised peer database, and if there is no match the messaging association MUST be torn down. The database and authorisation check are described in more detail in [Section 4.4.2](#) below. Note that the verification can depend on what the MA is to be used for (e.g. for which flow), so this step may not be possible immediately after authentication has completed but some time later.

Finally, after any necessary messaging association setup has completed, a Confirm MUST be sent if the Response requested it.

Once

the Confirm has been sent, the Querying node assumes that routing state has been installed at the responder, and can send normal Data messages for the flow in question; recovery from a lost Confirm is discussed in [Section 5.3.3](#). If a messaging association is being used, the Confirm MUST be sent over it before any other messages for the same flow, and it echoes the Responder Cookie and Stack-Proposal from the Response. The former is used to allow the receiver to validate the contents of the message (see [Section 8.5](#)), and the latter is to prevent certain bidding-down attacks on messaging association security (see [Section 8.6](#)). This first Confirm on a new association MUST also contain a Stack-Configuration-Data object carrying an MA-Hold-Time value, which supersedes the value given in the original Query. The association can be used in the upstream direction for the MRI and NSLPID carried in the Confirm, after the Confirm has been received.

The querying node MUST install the responder address, derived from the R-Node Network Layer info, as routing state information after verifying the Query Cookie in the Response. The responding node MAY install the querying address as peer state information at two points in time:

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Case 1: after the receipt of the initial Query, or

Case 2: after a Confirm containing the Responder Cookie.

The responding node SHOULD derive the peer address from the Q-Node Network Layer Info if this was decoded successfully. Otherwise, it MAY be derived from the IP source address of the message if the common header flags this as being the signalling source address.

The

precise constraints on when state information is installed are a matter of security policy considerations on prevention of denial-of-service attacks and state poisoning attacks, which are discussed further in [Section 8](#). Because the responding node MAY choose to delay state installation as in case (2), the Confirm must contain sufficient information to allow it to be processed in the same way

as

the original Query. This places some special requirements on NAT traversal and cookie functionality, which are discussed in [Section 7.2](#) and [Section 8](#) respectively.

4.4.2. GIST Peer Authorisation

When two GIST nodes authenticate using a messaging association, both ends have to decide whether to accept the creation of the MA and whether to trust the information sent over it. This can be seen as an authorisation decision:

- o Authorised peers are trusted to install correct routing state about themselves and not, for example, to claim that they are on-path for a flow when they are not.
- o Authorised peers are trusted to obey transport and application level flow control rules, and not to attempt to create overload situations.
- o Authorised peers are trusted not to send erroneous or malicious error messages, for example asserting that routing state has been lost when it has not.

This specification models the decision as verification by the authorising node of the peer's identity against a local list of peers, the authorised peer database (APD). The APD is an abstract construct, similar to the security policy database of IPsec [37]. Implementations MAY provide the associated functionality in any way they choose. This section defines only the requirements for APD administration and the consequences of successfully validating a peer's identity against it.

The APD consists of a list of entries. Each entry includes an identity, the namespace from which the identity comes (e.g. DNS

domains), the scope within which the entry is applicable, and whether authorisation is allowed or denied. The following are example scopes:

Peer Address Ownership: The scope is the IP address at which the peer for this MRI should be; the APD entry denotes the identity as the owner of address. If the authorising node can determine this address from local information (such as its own routing tables), matching this entry shows that the peer is the correct on-path node and so should be authorised. The determination is simple if the peer is one IP hop downstream, since the IP address can be derived from the router's forwarding tables. If the peer is more than one hop away or is upstream, the determination is harder but may still be possible in some circumstances. The authorising node may be able to determine a (small) set of possible peer addresses, and accept that any of these could be the correct peer.

End-System Subnet: The scope is an address range within which the MRI source or destination lie; the APD entry denotes the identity as potentially being on-path between the authorising node and that address range. There may be different source and destination scopes, to account for asymmetric routing.

The same identity may appear in multiple entries, and the order of entries in the APD is significant. When a messaging association is authenticated and associated with an MRI, the authorising node scans the APD to find the first entry where the identity matches that presented by the peer, and where the scope information matches the circumstances for which the MA is being set up. The identity matching process itself depends on the messaging association protocol

that carries out the authentication, and details for TLS are given in

[Section 5.7.3](#). Whenever the full set of possible peers for a specific scope is known, deny entries SHOULD be added for the wildcard identity to reject signalling associations from unknown nodes. The ability of the authorising node to reject inappropriate MAs depends directly on the granularity of the APD and the precision of the scope matching process.

If authorisation is allowed, the MA can be used as normal; otherwise it MUST be torn down without further GIST exchanges, and any routing state associated with the MA MUST also be deleted. An error condition MAY be logged locally. When an APD entry is modified or deleted, the node MUST re-validate existing MAs and the routing state table against the revised contents of the APD. This may result in

MAs being torn down or routing state entries being deleted. These changes SHOULD be indicated to local signalling applications via the NetworkNotification API call (Appendix B.4).

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This specification does not define how the APD is populated. As a minimum, an implementation MUST provide an administrative interface through which entries can be added, modified, or deleted. More sophisticated mechanisms are possible in some scenarios. For example, the fact that a node is legitimately associated with a specific IP address could be established by direct embedding of the IP address as a particular identity type in a certificate, or by a mapping that address to another identifier type via an additional database lookup (such as relating IP addresses in in-addr.arpa to domain names). An enterprise network operator could generate a list of all the identities of its border nodes as authorised to be on the signalling path to external destinations, and this could be distributed to all hosts inside the network. Regardless of the technique, it MUST be ensured that the source data justify the authorisation decisions listed at the start of this section, and that the security of the chain of operations on which the APD entry depends cannot be compromised.

4.4.3. Messaging Association Multiplexing

It is a design goal of GIST that, as far as possible, a single messaging association should be used for multiple flows and sessions between two peers, rather than setting up a new MA for each. This re-use of existing MAs is referred to as messaging association multiplexing. Multiplexing ensures that the MA cost scales only with the number of peers, and avoids the latency of new MA setup where possible.

However, multiplexing requires the identification of an existing MA which matches the same routing state and desired properties that would be the result of a full handshake in D-mode, and this identification must be done as reliably and securely as continuing with the full procedure. Note that this requirement is complicated by the fact that NATs may remap the node addresses in D-mode messages, and also interacts with the fact that some nodes may peer over multiple interfaces (and thus with different addresses).

MA multiplexing is controlled by the Network-Layer-Information (NLI) object, which is carried in Query, Response and Confirm messages. The NLI object includes:

Peer-Identity: For a given node, this is an interface independent value with opaque syntax. It MUST be chosen so as to have a high probability of uniqueness across the set of all potential peers, and SHOULD be stable at least until the next node restart. Note that there is no cryptographic protection of this identity; attempting to provide this would essentially duplicate the functionality in the messaging association security protocols.

For routers, the Router-ID [2], which is one of the router's IP addresses, MAY be used as one possible value for the Peer-Identity. In scenarios with nested NATs, the Router-ID alone may not satisfy the uniqueness requirements, in which case it MAY be extended with additional tokens, either chosen randomly or administratively coordinated.

Interface-Address: This is an IP address through which the signalling node can be reached. There may be several choices available for the Interface-Address, and further discussion of this is contained in [Section 5.2.2](#).

A messaging association is associated with the NLI object that was provided by the peer in the Query/Response/Confirm at the time the association was first set up. There may be more than one MA for a given NLI object, for example with different security or transport properties.

MA multiplexing is achieved by matching the NLI provided in a new GIST message with one associated with an existing MA. The message can be either a Query or Response, although the former is more likely:

- o If there is a perfect match to the NLI of an existing association, that association SHOULD be re-used, provided it meets the criteria on security and transport properties given at the end of [Section 5.7.1](#). This is indicated by sending the remaining messages in the handshake over that association. This will lead to multiplexing on an association to the wrong node if signalling nodes have colliding Peer-Identities and one is reachable at the same Interface-Address as another. This could be caused by an on-path attacker; on-path attacks are discussed further in [Section 8.7](#). When multiplexing is done, and the original MA authorisation was MRI-dependent, the verification steps of [Section 4.4.2](#) MUST be repeated for the new flow.
- o In all other cases, the full handshake MUST be executed in D-mode as usual. There are in fact four possibilities:
 1. Nothing matches: this is clearly a new peer.
 2. Only the Peer-Identity matches: this may be either a new interface on an existing peer, or a changed address mapping behind a NAT. These should be rare events, so the expense of a new association setup is acceptable. Another possibility is one node using another node's Peer-Identity, for example as some kind of attack. Because the Peer-Identity is used only for this multiplexing process, the only consequence this has

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is to require a new association setup, and this is considered in [Section 8.4](#).

3. Only the Interface-Address matches: this is probably a new peer behind the same NAT as an existing one. A new association setup is required.
4. The full NLI object matches: this is a degenerate case, where one node recognises an existing peer, but wishes to allow the option to set up a new association in any case, for example

to

create an association with different properties.

4.4.4. Routing State Maintenance

Each item of routing state expires after a lifetime which is negotiated during the Query/Response/Confirm handshake. The Network Layer Info (NLI) object in the Query contains a proposal for the lifetime value, and the NLI in the Response contains the value the Responding node requires. A default timer value of 30 seconds is RECOMMENDED. Nodes which can exploit alternative, more powerful, route change detection methods such as those described in [Section 7.1.2](#) MAY choose to use much longer times. Nodes MAY use shorter times to provide more rapid change detection. If the number of active routing state items corresponds to a rate of Queries that will stress the rate limits applied to D-mode traffic ([Section 5.3.3](#)), nodes MUST increase the timer for new items and on the refresh of existing ones. A suitable value is twice the number of items divided by the rate limit in messages per second, which leaves a factor of two headroom for new routing state creation and Query retransmissions.

The Querying node MUST ensure that a Query is received before this timer expires, if it believes that the signalling session is still active; otherwise, the Responding node MAY delete the state.

Receipt

of the message at the Responding node will refresh peer addressing state for one direction, and receipt of a Response at the querying node will refresh it for the other. There is no mechanism at the GIST level for explicit teardown of routing state. However, GIST MUST NOT refresh routing state if a signalling session is known to

be

inactive, either because upstream state has expired, or because the signalling application has indicated via the GIST API (Appendix B.5) that the state is no longer required, because this would prevent correct state repair in the case of network rerouting at the IP layer.

This specification defines precisely only the time at which routing state expires; it does not define when refresh handshakes should be initiated. Implementations MUST select timer settings which take at

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least the following into account:

- o The transmission latency between source and destination;
- o The need for retransmissions of Query messages;
- o The need to avoid network synchronisation of control traffic (cf. [40]).

In most cases, a reasonable policy is to initiate the routing state refresh when between 1/2 and 3/4 of the validity time has elapsed since the last successful refresh. The actual moment MUST be chosen randomly within this interval to avoid synchronisation effects.

4.4.5. Messaging Association Maintenance

Unneeded MAs are torn down by GIST, using the teardown mechanisms of the underlying transport or security protocols if available, for example by simply closing a TCP connection. The teardown can be initiated by either end. Whether an MA is needed is a combination of two factors:

- o local policy, which could take into account the cost of keeping the messaging association open, the level of past activity on the association, and the likelihood of future activity, e.g. if there is routing state still in place which might generate messages to use it.
- o whether the peer still wants the MA to remain in place. During MA setup, as part of the Stack-Configuration-Data, each node advertises its own MA-Hold-Time, which is the time for which it will retain an MA which is not carrying signalling traffic. A node MUST NOT tear down an MA if it has received traffic from its peer over that period. A peer which has generated no traffic but still wants the MA retained can use a special null message (MA-Hello) to indicate the fact. A default value for MA-Hold-Time of 30 seconds is RECOMMENDED. Nodes MAY use shorter times to achieve more rapid peer failure detection, but need to take into account the load on the network created by the MA-Hello messages. Nodes MAY use longer times, but need to take into account the cost of retaining idle MAs for extended periods. Nodes MAY take signalling application behaviour (e.g. NSLP refresh times) into account in choosing an appropriate value.

Because the Responding node can choose not to create state until a Confirm, an abbreviated Stack-Configuration-Data object containing just this information MUST be repeated by the Querying node in

the
first Confirm sent on a new MA. If the object is missing in the

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Confirm, an "Object Type Error" message (Appendix A.4.4.9) with subcode 2 ("Missing Object") MUST be returned.

Messaging associations can always be set up on demand, and messaging association status is not made directly visible outside the GIST layer. Therefore, even if GIST tears down and later re-establishes

a

messaging association, signalling applications cannot distinguish this from the case where the MA is kept permanently open. To maintain the transport semantics described in [Section 4.1](#), GIST MUST close transport connections carrying reliable messages gracefully or report an error condition, and MUST NOT open a new association to be used for given session and peer while messages on a previous association could still be outstanding. GIST MAY use an MA-Hello request/reply exchange on an existing association to verify that messages sent on it have reached the peer. GIST MAY use the same technique to test the liveness of the underlying MA protocols themselves at arbitrary times.

This specification defines precisely only the time at which messaging

associations expires; it does not define when keepalives should be initiated. Implementations MUST select timer settings which take at least the following into account:

- o The transmission latency between source and destination;
- o The need for retransmissions within the messaging association protocols;
- o The need to avoid network synchronisation of control traffic (cf. [\[40\]](#)).

In most cases, a reasonable policy is to initiate the MA refresh when

between 1/2 and 3/4 of the validity time has elapsed since the last successful refresh. The actual moment MUST be chosen randomly

within

this interval to avoid synchronisation effects.

[4.4.6](#). Routing State Failures

A GIST node can receive a message from a GIST peer, which can only be

correctly processed in the context of some routing state, but where no corresponding routing state exists. Cases where this can arise include:

- o Where the message is random traffic from an attacker, or backscatter (replies to such traffic).
- o Where routing state has been correctly installed but the peer has

since lost it, for example because of aggressive timeout settings

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at the peer, or because the node has crashed and restarted.

- o Where the routing state has never been correctly installed in the first place, but the sending node does not know this. This can happen if the Confirm message of the handshake is lost.

It is important for GIST to recover from such situations promptly where they represent genuine errors (node restarts, or lost messages which would not otherwise be retransmitted). Note that only Response, Confirm, Error and Data messages ever require routing state

to exist, and these are considered in turn:

Response: A Response can be received at a node which never sent (or has forgotten) the corresponding Query. If the node wants routing

state to exist, it will initiate it itself; a diagnostic error would not allow the sender of the Response to take any corrective action, and the diagnostic could itself be a form of backscatter. Therefore, an error message MUST NOT be generated, but the condition MAY be logged locally.

Confirm: For a Responding node which implements delayed state installation, this is normal behaviour, and routing state will be created provided the Confirm is validated. Otherwise, this is a case of a non-existent or forgotten Response, and the node may not

have sufficient information in the Confirm to create the correct state. The requirement is to notify the Querying node so that it can recover the routing state.

Data: This arises when a node receives Data where routing state is required, but either it does not exist at all, or it has not been finalised (no Confirm message). To avoid Data being black-holed, a notification must be sent to the peer.

Error: Some error messages can only be interpreted in the context of

routing state. However, the only error messages which require a reply within the protocol are routing state error messages themselves. Therefore, this case should be treated the same as a Response: an error message MUST NOT be generated, but the condition MAY be logged locally.

For the case of Confirm or Data messages, if the state is required but does not exist, the node MUST reject the incoming message with a "No Routing State" error message (Appendix A.4.4.5). There are then three cases at the receiver of the error message:

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No routing state: The condition MAY be logged but a reply MUST NOT be sent (see above).

Querying node: The node MUST restart the GIST handshake from the beginning, with a new Query.

Responding node: The node MUST delete its own routing state and SHOULD report an error condition to the local signalling application.

The rules at the Querying or Responding node make GIST open to disruption by randomly injected error messages, similar to blind reset attacks on TCP (cf. [\[44\]](#)), although because routing state matching includes the SID this is mainly limited to on-path attackers. If a GIST node detects a significant rate of such attacks, it MAY adopt a policy of using secured messaging associations to communicate for the affected MRIs, and only accepting "No Routing State" error messages over such associations.

5. Message Formats and Transport

5.1. GIST Messages

All GIST messages begin with a common header, followed by a sequence of type-length-value (TLV) objects. This subsection describes the various GIST messages and their contents at a high level in ABNF [12]; a more detailed description of the header and each object is given in [Section 5.2](#). Note that the NAT traversal mechanism for

GIST

involves the insertion of an additional NAT-Traversal-Object in Query, Response, and some Data and Error messages; the rules for this

are given in [Section 7.2](#).

GIST-Message: The primary messages are either one of the stages in the three-way handshake, or a simple message carrying NSLP data. Additional types are defined for errors and keeping messaging associations alive.

GIST-Message = Query / Response / Confirm /
Data / Error / MA-Hello

The common header includes a version number, message type and size, and NSLPID. It also carries a hop count to prevent infinite message looping and various control flags, including one (the R flag) to indicate if a reply of some sort is requested. The objects following

the common header MUST be carried in a fixed order, depending on message type. Messages with missing, duplicate or invalid objects for the message type MUST be rejected with an "Object Type Error" message with the appropriate subcode (Appendix A.4.4.9).

Query: A Query MUST be sent in D-mode using the special Q-mode encapsulation. In addition to the common header, it contains certain

mandatory control objects, and MAY contain a signalling application payload. A stack proposal and configuration data MUST be included if

the message exchange relates to setup of a messaging association. The R flag MUST always be set (R=1) in a Query, since this message always elicits a Response.

Query = Common-Header
[NAT-Traversal-Object]
Message-Routing-Information
Session-Identification
Network-Layer-Information
Query-Cookie
[Stack-Proposal Stack-Configuration-Data]
[NSLP-Data]

Response: A Response MAY be sent in D-mode, or MAY be sent in C-mode if an existing messaging association is being re-used. It MUST echo

the MRI SID and Query-Cookie of the Query, and carries its own

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Network-Layer-Information. If the message exchange relates to setup of a new messaging association, which MUST be carried out in D-mode, a Responder cookie MUST be included, as well as the Responder's own stack proposal and configuration data. The R flag MUST be set (R=1) if a Responder cookie is present but otherwise is optional; if the R flag is set, a Confirm MUST be sent as a reply. Note that the direction of this MRI will be inverted compared to that in the

Query,

that is, an upstream MRI becomes downstream and vice versa (see [Section 3.3](#)).

```
Response = Common-Header
           [ NAT-Traversal-Object ]
           Message-Routing-Information
           Session-Identification
           Network-Layer-Information
           Query-Cookie
           [ Responder-Cookie
             [ Stack-Proposal Stack-Configuration-Data ] ]
           [ NSLP-Data ]
```

Confirm: A Confirm MUST be sent in C-mode if a messaging association is being used for this routing state, and MUST be sent before other messages for this routing state. If no messaging association is being used, the Confirm MUST be sent in D-mode. The Confirm MUST echo the MRI (with inverted direction), SID, and Responder-Cookie if the Response carried one. In C-mode, the Confirm MUST also echo the Stack-Proposal from the Response so it can be verified that this has not been tampered with. The first Confirm on a new association MUST also repeat the Stack-Configuration-Data from the original Query in an abbreviated form, just containing the MA-Hold-Time.

```
Confirm = Common-Header
          Message-Routing-Information
          Session-Identification
          Network-Layer-Information
          [ Responder-Cookie
            [ Stack-Proposal
              [ Stack-Configuration-Data ] ] ]
          [ NSLP-Data ]
```

Data: The Data message is used to transport NSLP data without modifying GIST state. It contains no control objects, but only the MRI and SID associated with the NSLP data being transferred. Network-Layer-Information (NLI) MUST be carried in the D-mode case, but MUST NOT be included otherwise.


```
Data = Common-Header
      [ NAT-Traversal-Object ]
      Message-Routing-Information
      Session-Identification
      [ Network-Layer-Information ]
      NSLP-Data
```

Error: An Error message reports a problem determined at the GIST level. (Errors generated by signalling applications are reported in NSLP-Data payloads and are not treated specially by GIST.) The message includes a Network-Layer-Information object for the originator of the error message if it is being sent in D-mode; all other information related to the error is carried in a GIST-Error-Data object.

```
Error = Common-Header
      [ NAT-Traversal-Object ]
      [ Network-Layer-Information ]
      GIST-Error-Data
```

MA-Hello: This message MUST be sent only in C-mode. It contains the common header, with a NSLPID of zero, and a message identifier, the Hello-ID. It always indicates that a node wishes to keep a messaging

association open, and if sent with R=0 and null Hello-ID this is its only function. A node MAY also invoke a diagnostic request/reply exchange by setting R=1 and providing a non-zero Hello-ID; if this case, the peer MUST send another MA-Hello back along the messaging association echoing the same Hello-ID and with R=0. Use of this diagnostic is entirely at the discretion of the initiating node.

```
MA-Hello = Common-Header
          Hello-ID
```

5.2. Information Elements

This section describes the content of the various objects that can be

present in each GIST message, both the common header, and the individual TLVs. The bit formats are provided in [Appendix A](#).

5.2.1. The Common Header

Each message begins with a fixed format common header, which contains

the following information:

Version: The version number of the GIST protocol. This specification defines GIST version 1.

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GIST hop count: A hop count to prevent a message from looping indefinitely.

Length: The number of 32 bit words in the message following the common header.

Upper layer identifier (NSLPID): This gives the specific NSLP that this message is used for.

Message type: The message type (Query, Response, etc.)

Source addressing mode: If set (S=1), this indicates that the IP source address of the message is the same as the IP address of the signalling peer, so replies to this message can be sent safely to this address. S is always set in C-mode. It is cleared (S=0) if the IP source address was derived from the message routing information in the payload and this is different from the signalling source address.

Response requested: A flag which if set (R=1) indicates that a GIST message should be sent in reply to this message. The appropriate message type for the reply depends on the type of the initial message.

Explicit routing: A flag which if set (E=1) indicates that the message was explicitly routed (see [Section 7.1.5](#)).

Note that in D-mode [Section 5.3](#), there is a 32-bit magic number before the header. However, this is regarded as part of the encapsulation rather than part of the message itself.

5.2.2. TLV Objects

All data following the common header is encoded as a sequence of type-length-value objects. Currently, each object can occur at most once; the set of required and permitted objects is determined by the message type and encapsulation (D-mode or C-mode).

Message-Routing-Information (MRI): Information sufficient to define how the signalling message should be routed through the network.

Message-Routing-Information = message-routing-method
method-specific-information

The format of the method-specific-information depends on the message-routing-method requested by the signalling application. Note that it always includes a flag defining the direction as either 'upstream' or 'downstream' (see [Section 3.3](#)). It is

provided by the NSLP in the message sender and used by GIST to select the message routing.

Session-Identification (SID): The GIST session identifier is a 128 bit, cryptographically random identifier chosen by the node which originates the signalling exchange. See [Section 3.7](#).

Network-Layer-Information (NLI): This object carries information about the network layer attributes of the node sending the message, including data related to the management of routing state. This includes a peer identity and IP address for the sending node. It also includes IP-TTL information to allow the

IP

hop count between GIST peers to be measured and reported, and a validity time (RS-validity-time) for the routing state.

```
Network-Layer-Information = peer-identity
                           interface-address
                           RS-validity-time
                           IP-TTL
```

The use of the RS-validity-time field is described in [Section 4.4.4](#). The peer-identity and interface-address are used for matching existing associations, as discussed in [Section 4.4.3](#).

The interface-address must be routable, i.e. it MUST be usable as a destination IP address for packets to be sent back to the node generating the signalling message, whether in D-mode or C-mode. If this object is carried in a message with the source addressing mode flag S=1, the interface-address MUST match the source

address

used in the IP encapsulation, to assist in legacy NAT detection ([Section 7.2.1](#)). If this object is carried in a Query or

Confirm,

the interface-address MUST specifically be set to an address

bound

to the interface associated with the MRI, to allow its use in route change handling as discussed in [Section 7.1](#). A suitable choice is the interface that is carrying the outbound flow. A node may have several choices for which of its addresses to use

as

the interface-address. For example, there may be a choice of IP versions, or addresses of limited scope (e.g. link-local), or addresses bound to different interfaces in the case of a router

or

multi-homed host. However, some of these interface addresses may not be usable by the peer. A node MUST follow a policy of using

a

global address of the same IP version as in the MRI, unless it

can

establish that an alternative address would also be usable.

The setting and interpretation of the IP-TTL field depends on the message direction (upstream/downstream as determined from the MRI as described above) and encapsulation.

- * If the message is sent downstream, if the TTL that will be set in the IP header for the message can be determined, the IP-TTL value MUST be set to this value, or else set to 0.
- * On receiving a downstream message in D-mode, a non-zero IP-TTL is compared to the TTL in the IP header, and the difference is stored as the IP-hop-count-to-peer for the upstream peer in the routing state table for that flow. Otherwise, the field is ignored.
- * If the message is sent upstream, the IP-TTL MUST be set to the value of the IP-hop-count-to-peer stored in the routing state table, or 0 if there is no value yet stored.
- * On receiving an upstream message, the IP-TTL is stored as the IP-hop-count-to-peer for the downstream peer.

In all cases, the IP-TTL value reported to signalling applications is the one stored with the routing state for that flow, after it has been updated if necessary from processing the message in question.

Stack-Proposal: This field contains information about which combinations of transport and security protocols are available for use in messaging associations, and is also discussed further in [Section 5.7](#).

Stack-Proposal = 1*stack-profile

stack-profile = 1*protocol-layer

Each protocol-layer field identifies a protocol with a unique tag; any additional data, such as higher-layer addressing or other options data associated with the protocol, will be carried in a MA-protocol-options field in the Stack-Configuration-Data TLV (see below).

Stack-Configuration-Data (SCD): This object carries information about the overall configuration of a messaging association.

Stack-Configuration-Data = MA-Hold-Time
 0*MA-protocol-options

The MA-Hold-Time field indicates how long a node will hold open an inactive association; see [Section 4.4.5](#) for more discussion. The MA-protocol-options fields give the configuration of the

protocols

(e.g. TCP, TLS) to be used for new messaging associations, and they are described in more detail in [Section 5.7](#).

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Query-Cookie/Responder-Cookie: A Query-Cookie is contained in a Query and MUST be echoed in a Response; a Responder-Cookie MAY be sent in a Response, and if present MUST be echoed in the following

Confirm. Cookies are variable length bit strings, chosen by the cookie generator. See [Section 8.5](#) for further details on requirements and mechanisms for cookie generation.

Hello-ID: The Hello-ID is a 32-bit quantity that is used to correlate messages in an MA-Hello request/reply exchange. A non-zero value MUST be used in a request (messages sent with R=1) and the same value must be returned in the reply (which has R=0).

The value zero MUST be used for all other messages; if a message is received with R=1 and Hello-ID=0, an "Object Value Error" message (Appendix A.4.4.10) with subcode 1 ("Value Not Supported") MUST

be returned and the message dropped. Nodes MAY use any algorithm to generate the Hello-ID; a suitable approach is a local sequence number with a random starting point.

NSLP-Data: The NSLP payload to be delivered to the signalling application. GIST does not interpret the payload content.

GIST-Error-Data: This contains all the information to report the cause and context of an error.

```
GIST-Error-Data = error-class error-code error-subcode
                  common-error-header
                  [ Message-Routing-Information-content ]
                  [ Session-Identification-content ]
                  0*additional-information
                  [ comment ]
```

The error-class indicates the severity level, and the error-code and error-subcode identify the specific error itself. A full

list of GIST errors and their severity levels is given in [Appendix A.](#)

4. The common-error-header carries the Common-Header from the original message, and contents of the Message-Routing-Information (MRI) and Session-Identification (SID) objects are also included if they were successfully decoded. For some errors, additional information fields can be included, and these fields themselves have a simple TLV format. Finally, an optional free-text comment may be added.

5.3. D-mode Transport

This section describes the various encapsulation options for D-mode messages. Although there are several possibilities, depending on message type, MRM, and local policy, the general design principle is

that the sole purpose of the encapsulation is to ensure that the

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message is delivered to or intercepted at the correct peer. Beyond that, minimal significance is attached to the type of encapsulation or the values of addresses or ports used for it. This allows new options to be developed in the future to handle particular deployment requirements without modifying the overall protocol specification.

5.3.1. Normal Encapsulation

Normal encapsulation MUST be used for all D-mode messages where the signalling peer is already known from previous signalling. This includes Response and Confirm messages, and Data messages except if these are being sent without using local routing state. Normal encapsulation is simple: the message is carried in a single UDP datagram. UDP checksums MUST be enabled. The payload MUST always begin with a 32 bit magic number with value 0x4e04 bda5 in network byte order; this is followed by the GIST common header and the complete set of payloads. If the magic number is not present, the message MUST be rejected with a "Common Header Parse Error" message (Appendix A.4.4.1) with subcode 5 ("Missing Magic Number").

The message is IP addressed directly to the adjacent peer as given by the routing state table. Where the message is a direct reply to a Query and no routing state exists, the destination address is derived from the input message using the same rules as in [Section 4.4.1](#).

The UDP port numbering MUST be compatible with that used on Query messages (see below), that is, the same for messages in the same direction and with source and destination port numbers swapped for messages in the opposite direction. Normally encapsulated messages MUST be sent with source addressing mode flag S=1 unless the message is a reply to a message which is known to have passed through a NAT, and the receiver MUST check the IP source address with the interface-address given in the NLI as part of legacy NAT detection. Both these aspects of message processing are discussed further in [Section 7.2.1](#).

5.3.2. Q-mode Encapsulation

Q-mode encapsulation MUST be used for messages where no routing state is available or where the routing state is being refreshed, in particular for Query messages. Q-mode encapsulation is similar to normal encapsulation, with changes in IP address selection, IP options, and a defined method for selecting UDP ports.

5.3.2.1. Encapsulation and Interception in IPv4

In general, the IP addresses are derived from information in the MRI;
the exact rules depend on the MRM. For the case of messages with source addressing mode flag S=1, the receiver MUST check the IP source address with the interface-address given in the NLI as part of

legacy NAT detection, see [Section 7.2.1](#).

Current MRMs define the use of a Router Alert Option [3] to assist the peer in intercepting the message depending on the NSLPID. If the

MRM defines the use of RAO, the sender MUST include it by default. However, a node MAY make the initial interception decision based purely on IP-Protocol number transport header analysis (see below). Implementations MAY provide an option to disable the setting of RAO on Q-mode packets on a per-destination prefix basis; however, the option MUST be disabled by default and MUST only be enabled when it has been separately verified that the the next GIST node along the path to the destination is capable of intercepting packets without RAO. The purpose of this option is to allow operation across networks which do not properly support RAO; further details are discussed in [Appendix C](#).

It is possible that fragmented datagrams including an RAO will not be

correctly handled in the network; furthermore, some of the checks that a datagram is a Q-mode packet depend on data beyond the IP header. Therefore the sender MUST set the Don't Fragment (DF) bit in

the IPv4 header. Note that all MRMs require S=1 for at least some retransmissions, so ICMP errors related to fragmentation will be seen at the Querying node.

The upper layer protocol, identified by the IP-Protocol field in the IP header, MUST be UDP.

[5.3.2.2](#). Encapsulation and Interception in IPv6

As for IPv4, the IP addresses are derived from information in the MRI; the exact rules depend on the MRM. For the case of messages with source addressing mode flag S=1, the receiver MUST check the IP source address with the interface-address given in the NLI as part of legacy NAT detection, see [Section 7.2.1](#).

For all current MRMs, the IP header is given a Router Alert Option [8] to assist the peer in intercepting the message depending on the NSLPID. If the MRM defines the use of RAO, the sender MUST include it without exception. It is RECOMMENDED that a node bases its initial interception decision purely on the presence of a hop-by-hop option header containing the RAO, which will be at the start of the header chain.

The upper layer protocol MUST be UDP without intervening encapsulation layers. Following the hop-by-hop option header, the IP header MUST NOT include any extension headers other than routing

options or destination options, and for the last extension header MUST have a next-header field of UDP.

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5.3.2.3. Upper Layer Encapsulation and Overall Interception Requirements

For both IP versions, the above rules require that the upper layer protocol identified by the IP header MUST be UDP. Other packets

MUST

NOT be identified as GIST Q-mode packets; this includes IP-in-IP tunnelled packets, other tunnelled packets (tunnel mode AH/ESP), or packets which have undergone some additional transport layer processing (transport mode AH/ESP). If IP output processing at the originating node or an intermediate router causes such additional encapsulations to be added to a GIST Q-mode packet, this packet will not be identified as GIST until the encapsulation is terminated. If the node wishes to signal for data over the network region where the encapsulation applies, it MUST generate additional signalling with

an

MRI matching the encapsulated traffic, and the outbound GIST Q-mode messages for it MUST bypass the encapsulation processing.

Therefore, the final stage of the interception process and the final part of encapsulation is at the UDP level. The source UDP port is selected by the message sender as the port at which it is prepared

to

receive UDP messages in reply, and the sender MUST use the destination UDP port allocated for GIST by IANA (see [Section 9](#)). Note that for some MRMs, GIST nodes anywhere along the path can generate GIST packets with source addresses that spoof the source address of the data flow. Therefore, destinations cannot

distinguish

these packets from genuine end-to-end data purely on address analysis. Instead, it must be possible to distinguish such GIST packets by port analysis; furthermore, the mechanism to do so must remain valid even if the destination is GIST-unaware. GIST solves this problem by using a fixed destination UDP port from the "well known" space for the Q-mode encapsulation. This port should never

be

allocated on a GIST-unaware host, and therefore Q-mode encapsulated messages should always be rejected with an ICMP error.

Within the network, there may be packets using the GIST UDP port but which are not in fact GIST traffic. Q-mode packets carry the same magic number as other D-mode packets (see [Section 5.3.1](#)). A Q-mode packets intercepted within the network which does not match both the UDP destination port and the magic number MUST be forwarded transparently at the IP layer, regardless of any RAO value they contain. Regardless of the IP level encapsulation, if either the destination port is not the GIST port, or the payload start does not match the magic number, the packet MUST NOT be identified as a GIST Q-mode packet and MUST be processed as a normal IP datagram. If a Q-mode packet is received at an end system (i.e. the at the destination address of the IP datagram), if it does not start with the correct magic number it MUST be rejected as in the D-mode case.

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5.3.2.4. IP Option Processing

For both IPv4 and IPv6, for Q-mode packets with IP options allowed by the above requirements, IP options processing is intended to be carried out independently of GIST processing. Note that for the options allowed by the above rules, the options semantics are independent of the payload: UDP payload modifications are not prevented by the options and do not affect the options content, and conversely the presence of the options does not affect the UDP payload.

On packets originated by GIST, IP options MAY be added according to node-local policies on outgoing IP data. On packets forwarded by GIST without NSLP processing, IP options MUST be processed as for a normally forwarded IP packet. On packets locally delivered to the NSLP, the IP options MAY be passed to the NSLP and equivalent options used on subsequently generated outgoing Q-mode packets. In this case, routing related options on SHOULD be processed identically as they would be for a normally forwarded IP packet.

5.3.3. Retransmission and Rate Control

D-mode uses UDP, and hence has no automatic reliability or congestion control capabilities. Signalling applications requiring reliability should be serviced using C-mode, which should also carry the bulk of signalling traffic. However, some form of messaging reliability is required for the GIST control messages themselves, as is rate control to handle retransmissions and also bursts of unreliable signalling or state setup requests from the signalling applications.

Query messages which do not receive Responses MAY be retransmitted; retransmissions MUST use a binary exponential backoff. The initial timer value is T1, which the backoff process can increase up to a maximum value of T2 seconds. The default value for T1 is 500 ms.

T1 is an estimate of the round-trip time between the querying and responding nodes. Nodes MAY use smaller values of T1 if it is known that the Query should be answered within the local network. T1 MAY be chosen larger, and this is RECOMMENDED if it is known in advance (such as on high latency access links) that the round-trip time is larger. The default value of T2 is 64*T1. Note that Queries may go unanswered either because of message loss (in either direction), or because there is no reachable GIST peer. Therefore, implementations MAY trade off reliability (large T2) against promptness of error feedback to applications (small T2). If the NSLP has indicated a timeout on the validity of this payload (see [Appendix B.1](#)), T2 MUST be chosen so that the process terminates within this timeout.

Retransmitted Queries MUST use different Query-Cookie values. If the Query carries NSLP data, it may be delivered multiple times to the

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signalling application. These rules apply equally to the message that first creates routing state, and those that refresh it. In all cases, Responses MUST be sent promptly to avoid spurious retransmissions. Nodes generating any type of retransmission MUST be prepared to receive and match a reply to any of them, not just the one most recently sent. Although a node SHOULD terminate its retransmission process when any reply is received, it MUST continue to process further replies as normal.

This algorithm is sufficient to handle lost Queries and Responses. The case of a lost Confirm is more subtle. The Responding node MAY run a retransmission timer to resend the Response until a Confirm is received. The problem of an amplification attack stimulated by a malicious Query is handled by requiring the cookie mechanism to enable the node receiving the Response to discard it efficiently if it does not match a previously sent Query. This approach is only appropriate if the Responding node is prepared to store per-flow state after receiving a single (Query) message, which includes the case where the node has queued NSLP data. If the Responding node has delayed state installation, the error condition will only be detected when a Data message arrives. This is handled as a routing state error (see [Section 4.4.6](#)) which causes the Querying node to restart the handshake.

The basic rate-control requirements for D-mode traffic are deliberately minimal. A single rate limiter applies to all traffic, for all interfaces and message types. It applies to retransmissions as well as new messages, although an implementation MAY choose to prioritise one over the other. Rate-control applies only to locally generated D-mode messages, not to messages which are being forwarded.

When the rate limiter is in effect, D-mode messages MUST be queued until transmission is re-enabled, or they MAY be dropped with an error condition indicated back to local signalling applications. In either case, the effect of this will be to reduce the rate at which new transactions can be initiated by signalling applications, thereby reducing the load on the network.

The rate limiting mechanism is implementation-defined, but it is RECOMMENDED that a token bucket limiter as described in [\[34\]](#) be used.

The token bucket MUST be sized to ensure that a node cannot saturate the network with D-mode traffic, for example when re-probing the network for multiple flows after a route change. A suitable approach is to restrict the token bucket parameters so that the mean output rate is a small fraction, such as 5%, of the node's lowest-speed interface. Note that, according to the rules of [Section 4.3.3](#), in

general D-mode SHOULD only be used for Queries and Responses rather than normal signalling traffic.

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5.4. C-mode Transport

It is a requirement of the NTLP defined in [30] that it should be able to support bundling of small messages, fragmentation of large messages, and message boundary delineation. TCP provides both bundling and fragmentation, but not message boundaries. However, the length information in the GIST common header allows the message boundary to be discovered during parsing. The bundling together of small messages can either be done within the transport protocol or can be carried out by GIST during message construction. Either way, two approaches can be distinguished:

1. As messages arrive for transmission they are gathered into a bundle until a size limit is reached or a timeout expires (cf. the Nagle algorithm of TCP). This provides maximal efficiency at the cost of some latency.
2. Messages awaiting transmission are gathered together while the node is not allowed to send them, for example because it is congestion controlled.

The second type of bundling is always appropriate. For GIST, the first type MUST NOT be used for trigger messages (i.e. messages that update GIST or signalling application state), but may be appropriate for refresh messages (i.e. messages that just extend timers). These distinctions are known only to the signalling applications, but MAY be indicated (as an implementation issue) by setting the priority transfer attribute ([Section 4.1.2](#)).

It can be seen that all of these transport protocol options can be supported by the basic GIST message format already presented. The GIST message, consisting of common header and TLVs, is carried directly in the transport protocol, possibly incorporating transport layer security protection. Further messages can be carried in a continuous stream. This specification defines only the use of TCP, but other possibilities could be included without additional work on message formatting.

5.5. Message Type/Encapsulation Relationships

GIST has four primary message types (Query, Response, Confirm, and Data) and three possible encapsulation methods (normal D-mode, Q-mode, and C-mode). The possible combinations of message type and encapsulation are given in the table below. In some cases there are several possible choices, depending on the existence of routing state or messaging associations. The rules governing GIST policy, including whether or not to create such state to handle a message, are described normatively in the other sections of this

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specification. If a message arrives with an invalid encapsulation (e.g. a Query arrives over a messaging association), this MUST be rejected with an "Incorrect Encapsulation" error message (Appendix A.4.4.3). However, it should be noted that the processing of the message at the receiver is not otherwise affected by the encapsulation method used, except that that the decapsulation

process

may provide additional information, such as translated addresses or IP hop count to be used in the subsequent message processing.

Message	Normal D-mode	Query D-mode (Q-mode)	C-mode
Query	Never	Always	Never
Response	Unless a messaging association is being re-used	Never	If a messaging association is being re-used
Confirm	Only if no messaging association has been set up or is being re-used	Never	If a messaging association has been set up or is being re-used
Data	If routing state exists for the flow	If no routing state exists and the MRI can be used to	If a messaging association exists

	but no	derive the Q-mode
	messaging	encapsulation
	association	

5.6. Error Message Processing

Special rules apply to the encapsulation and transmission of error messages.

GIST only generates error messages in reaction to incoming messages. Error messages MUST NOT be generated in reaction to incoming error messages. The routing and encapsulation of the error message is derived from that of the message that caused the error; in particular, local routing state is not consulted. Routing state and messaging association state MUST NOT be created to handle the error, and error messages MUST NOT be retransmitted explicitly by GIST, although they are subject to the same rate control as other messages.

- o If the incoming message was received in D-mode, the error MUST be sent in D-mode using the normal encapsulation, using the addressing information from the NLI object in the incoming message. If the NLI could not be determined, the error MUST be sent to the IP source of the incoming message if the S flag was set in it. The NLI object in the Error message reports information about the originator of the error.
- o If the incoming message was received over a messaging association, the error MUST be sent back over the same messaging association.

The NSLPID in the common header of the Error message has the value zero. If for any reason the message cannot be sent, for example, because it is too large to send in D-mode, an error SHOULD be logged locally.

5.7. Messaging Association Setup

5.7.1. Overview

A key attribute of GIST is that it is flexible in its ability to use existing transport and security protocols. Different transport protocols may have performance attributes appropriate to different environments; different security protocols may fit appropriately with different authentication infrastructures. Even given an initial default mandatory protocol set for GIST, the need to support new protocols in the future cannot be ruled out, and secure feature negotiation cannot be added to an existing protocol in a backwards-compatible way. Therefore, some sort of capability discovery is required.

Capability discovery is carried out in Query and Response messages, using Stack-Proposal and Stack-Configuration-Data objects. If a new messaging association is required it is then set up, followed by a Confirm. Messaging association multiplexing is achieved by short-circuiting this exchange by sending the Response or Confirm messages on an existing association ([Section 4.4.3](#)); whether to do this is a matter of local policy. The end result of this process is a messaging association which is a stack of protocols. If multiple associations exist, it is a matter of local policy how to distribute messages over them, subject to respecting the transfer attributes requested for each message.

Every possible protocol for a messaging association has the following attributes:

- o MA-Protocol-ID, a 1-byte IANA assigned value (see [Section 9](#)).

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- o A specification of the (non-negotiable) policies about how the protocol should be used; for example, in which direction a connection should be opened.
- o [Depending on the specific protocol:] Formats for an MA-protocol-options field to carry the protocol addressing and other configuration information in the Stack-Configuration-Data object. The format may differ depending on whether the field is present

in

the Query or Response. Some protocols do not require the definition of such additional data, in which case no

corresponding

MA-protocol-options field will occur in the SCD object.

A Stack-Proposal object is simply a list of profiles; each profile is

a sequence of MA-Protocol-IDs. A profile lists the protocols in

'top

to bottom' order (e.g. TLS over TCP). A Stack-Proposal is

generally

accompanied by a Stack-Configuration-Data object which carries an

MA-

protocol-options field for any protocol listed in the Stack-Proposal which needs it. An MA-protocol-options field may apply globally, to all instances of the protocol in the Stack-Proposal; or it can be tagged as applying to a specific instance. The latter approach can be used to carry different port numbers for TCP depending on whether it is to be used with or without TLS. An MA-protocol-options field may also be flagged as not usable; for example, a NAT which could

not

handle SCTP would set this in an MA-protocol-options field about SCTP. A protocol flagged this way MUST NOT be used for a messaging association. If the Stack-Proposal and Stack-Configuration-Data are both present but not consistent, for example, if they refer to different protocols, or an MA-protocol-options field refers to a

non-

existent profile, an "Object Value Error" message (Appendix A.

4.4.10)

with subcode 5 ("Stack-Proposal - Stack-Configuration-Data

Mismatch")

MUST be returned and the message dropped.

A node generating a Stack-Configuration-Data object MUST honour the implied protocol configurations for the period during which a messaging association might be set up; in particular, it MUST be immediately prepared to accept incoming datagrams or connections at the protocol/port combinations advertised. This MAY require the creation of listening endpoints for the transport and security protocols in question, or a node MAY keep a pool of such endpoints open for extended periods. However, the received object contents MUST be retained only for the duration of the Query/Response

exchange

and to allow any necessary association setup to complete. They may become invalid because of expired bindings at intermediate NATs, or because the advertising node is using agile ports. Once the setup is complete, or if it is not necessary, or fails for some reason, the object contents MUST be discarded. A default time of 30 seconds to keep the contents is RECOMMENDED.

A Query requesting association setup always contains a Stack-Proposal and Stack-Configuration-Data object. The Stack-Proposal MUST only include protocol configurations that are suitable for the transfer attributes of the messages that the Querying node wishes use the messaging association for. For example, it should not simply include all configurations that the Querying node is capable of supporting.

The Response always contains a Stack-Proposal and Stack-Configuration-Data object, unless multiplexing (where the Responder decides to use an existing association) occurs. For such a Response, the security protocols listed in the Stack-Proposal MUST NOT depend on the Query. A node MAY make different proposals depending on the combination of interface and NSLPID. If multiplexing does occur, which is indicated by sending the Response over an existing messaging association, the following rules apply:

- o The re-used messaging association MUST NOT have weaker security properties than all of the options that would have been offered in the full Response that would have been sent without re-use.
- o The re-used messaging association MUST have equivalent or better transport and security characteristics as at least one of the protocol configurations that was offered in the Query.

Once the messaging association is set up, the Querying node repeats the responder's Stack-Proposal over it in the Confirm. The responding node MUST verify that this has not been changed as part of bidding-down attack prevention. If a difference is detected, the responding node MUST terminate the messaging association and SHOULD log an error condition locally. See [Section 8.6](#) for further discussion.

5.7.2. Protocol Definition: Forwards-TCP

This MA-Protocol-ID denotes a basic use of TCP between peers. Support for this protocol is REQUIRED. If this protocol is offered, MA-protocol-options data MUST also be carried in the SCD object. The MA-protocol-options field formats are:

- o in a Query: no information apart from the field header.
- o in a Response: 2 byte port number at which the connection will be accepted, followed by 2 pad bytes.

The connection is opened in the forwards direction, from the

Querying

node towards the responder. The Querying node MAY use any source address and source port. The destination information MUST be derived from information in the Response: the address from the interface-

address from the Network-Layer-Information object and the port from the SCD object as described above.

Associations using Forwards-TCP can carry messages with the transfer attribute Reliable=True. If an error occurs on the TCP connection such as a reset, as can be detected for example by a socket exception condition, GIST MUST report this to NSLPs as discussed in [Section 4.1.2](#).

5.7.3. Protocol Definition: Transport Layer Security

This MA-Protocol-ID denotes a basic use of transport layer channel security, initially in conjunction with TCP. Support for this protocol in conjunction with TCP is REQUIRED; associations using it can carry messages with transfer attributes requesting confidentiality or integrity protection. The specific TLS version will be negotiated within the TLS layer itself, but implementations MUST NOT negotiate to protocol versions prior to TLS1.0 [\[16\]](#) and

MUST

use the highest protocol version supported by both peers. Implementation of TLS1.1 [\[13\]](#) is RECOMMENDED. GIST nodes supporting TLS1.0 or TLS1.1 MUST- be able to negotiate the TLS ciphersuite TLS_RSA_WITH_3DES_EDE_CBC_SHA and SHOULD+ be able to negotiate the TLS ciphersuite TLS_RSA_WITH_AES_128_CBC_SHA. They MAY negotiate

any

mutually acceptable ciphersuite that provides authentication, integrity, and confidentiality.

The default mode of TLS authentication, which applies in particular to the above ciphersuites, uses a client/server X.509 certificate exchange. The Querying node acts as a TLS client, and the

Responding

node acts as a TLS server. Where one of the above ciphersuites is negotiated, the GIST node acting as a server MUST provide a certificate, and MUST request one from the GIST node acting as a TLS client. This allows either server-only or mutual authentication, depending on the certificates available to the client and the policy applied at the server.

GIST nodes MAY negotiate other TLS ciphersuites. In some cases, the negotiation of alternative ciphersuites is used to trigger alternative authentication procedures, such as the use of pre-shared keys [\[33\]](#). The use of other authentication procedures may require additional specification work to define how they can be used as part of TLS within the GIST framework, and may or may not require the definition of additional MA-Protocol-IDs.

No MA-protocol-options field is required for this TLS protocol definition. The configuration information for the transport protocol over which TLS is running (e.g. TCP port number) is provided by the

MA-protocol-options for that protocol.

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5.7.3.1. Identity Checking in TLS

After TLS authentication, a node MUST check the identity presented by the peer in order to avoid man-in-the-middle attacks, and verify that the peer is authorised to take part in signalling at the GIST layer. The authorisation check is carried out by comparing the presented identity with each APD entry in turn, as discussed in [Section 4.4.2](#). This section defines the identity comparison algorithm for a single APD entry.

For TLS authentication with X.509 certificates, an identity from the DNS namespace MUST be checked against each subjectAltName extension of type dNSName present in the certificate. If no such extension is present, then the identity MUST be compared to the (most specific) Common Name in the Subject field of the certificate. When matching DNS names against dNSName or Common Name fields, matching is case-insensitive. Also, a "*" wildcard character MAY be used as the left-most name component in the certificate or identity in the APD. For example, *.example.com in the APD would match certificates for a.example.com, foo.example.com, *.example.com, etc., but would not match example.com. Similarly, a certificate for *.example.com would be valid for APD identities of a.example.com, foo.example.com, *.example.com, etc., but not example.com.

Additionally, a node MUST verify the binding between the identity of the peer to which it connects and the public key presented by that peer. Nodes SHOULD implement the algorithm in Section 6 of [\[10\]](#) for general certificate validation, but MAY supplement that algorithm with other validation methods that achieve equivalent levels of verification (such as comparing the server certificate against a local store of already-verified certificates and identity bindings).

For TLS authentication with pre-shared keys, the identity in the psk_identity_hint (for the server identity, i.e. the Responding node) or psk_identity (for the client identity, i.e. the Querying node) MUST be compared to the identities in the APD.

5.8. Specific Message Routing Methods

Each message routing method (see [Section 3.3](#)) requires the definition of the format of the message routing information (MRI) and Q-mode encapsulation rules. These are given in the following subsections for the MRMs currently defined. A GIST implementation on a node MUST support whatever MRMs are required by the NSLPs on that node; GIST implementations SHOULD provide support for both the MRMs defined here, in order to minimise deployment barriers for new signalling

applications that need them.

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5.8.1. The Path-Coupled MRM

5.8.1.1. Message Routing Information

For the path-coupled MRM, this is conceptually the Flow Identifier as in the NSIS Framework [30]. Minimally, this could just be the flow destination address; however, to account for policy based forwarding and other issues a more complete set of header fields SHOULD be specified if possible (see [Section 4.3.4](#) and [Section 7.2](#) for further discussion).

```
MRI = network-layer-version
      source-address prefix-length
      destination-address prefix-length
      IP-protocol
      diffserv-codepoint
      [ flow-label ]
      [ ipsec-SPI / L4-ports]
```

Additional control information defines whether the flow-label, IPsec Security Parameters Index (SPI), and port information are present, and whether the IP-protocol and diffserv-codepoint fields should be interpreted as significant. The source and destination addresses MUST be real node addresses, but prefix lengths other than 32/128 (for IPv4/6) MAY be used to implement address wildcarding, allowing the MRI to refer to traffic to or from a wider address range.

The MRI format allows a potentially very large number of different flag and field combinations. A GIST implementation that cannot interpret the MRI in a message MUST return an "Object Value Error" message (Appendix A.4.4.10) with subcodes 1 ("Value Not Supported") or 2 ("Invalid Flag-Field Combination") and drop the message.

5.8.1.2. Downstream Q-mode Encapsulation

Where the signalling message is travelling in the same ('downstream') direction as the flow defined by the MRI, the IP addressing for Q-mode encapsulated messages is as follows. Support for this encapsulation is REQUIRED.

- o The destination IP address MUST be the flow destination address as given in the MRI of the message payload.
- o By default, the source address is the flow source address, again from the MRI; therefore, the source addressing mode flag in the common header S=0. This provides the best likelihood that the message will be correctly routed through any region performing per-packet policy-based forwarding or load balancing which takes

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the source address into account. However, there may be circumstances where the use of the signalling source address (S=1) is preferable, such as:

- * In order to receive ICMP error messages about the signalling message, such as unreachable port or address. If these are delivered to the flow source rather than the signalling source, it will be very difficult for the querying node to detect that it is the last GIST node on the path. Another case is where there is an abnormally low MTU along the path, in which case the querying node needs to see the ICMP error (recall that Q-mode packets are sent with DF set).
- * In order to receive GIST Error messages where the error message sender could not interpret the NLI in the original message.
- * In order to attempt to run GIST through an unmodified NAT, which will only process and translate IP addresses in the IP header (see [Section 7.2.1](#)).

Because of these considerations, use of the signalling source address is allowed as an option, with use based on local policy. A node SHOULD use the flow source address for initial Query messages, but SHOULD transition to the signalling source address for some retransmissions or as a matter of static configuration, for example if a NAT is known to be in the path out of a certain interface. The S-flag in the common header tells the message receiver which option was used.

A router alert option is also included in the IP header. The option value depends on the NSLP being signalled for. In addition, it is essential that the Query mimics the actual data flow as closely as possible, since this is the basis of how the signalling message is attached to the data path. To this end, GIST SHOULD set the DiffServ codepoint and (for IPv6) flow label to match the values in the MRI.

A GIST implementation SHOULD apply validation checks to the MRI, to reject Query messages that are being injected by nodes with no legitimate interest in the flow being signalled for. In general, if the GIST node can detect that no flow could arrive over the same interface as the Query, it MUST be rejected with an appropriate error message. Such checks apply only to messages with the Q-mode encapsulation, since only those messages are required to track the flow path. The main checks are that the IP version should match the version(s) used on that interface, and that the full range of source addresses (the source-address masked with its prefix-length) would pass ingress filtering checks. For these cases, the error message

is

"MRI Validation Failure" (Appendix A.4.4.12) with subcodes 1 or 2

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("IP Version Mismatch" or "Ingress Filter Failure") respectively.

5.8.1.3. Upstream Q-mode Encapsulation

In some deployment scenarios it is desirable to set up routing state in the upstream direction, (i.e. from flow receiver towards the sender). This could be used to support firewall signalling to control traffic from an un-cooperative sender, or signalling in general where the flow sender was not NSIS-capable. This capability is incorporated into GIST by defining an encapsulation and processing rules for sending Query messages upstream.

In general, it is not possible to determine the hop-by-hop route upstream because of asymmetric IP routing. However, in particular cases, the upstream peer can be discovered with a high degree of confidence, for example:

- o The upstream GIST peer is 1 IP hop away, and can be reached by tracing back through the interface on which the flow arrives.
- o The upstream peer is a border router of a single-homed (stub) network.

This section defines an upstream Q-mode encapsulation and validation checks for when it can be used. The functionality to generate upstream Queries is OPTIONAL, but if received they MUST be processed in the normal way. No special functionality is needed for this.

It is possible for routing state at a given node, for a specific MRI and NSLPID, to be created by both an upstream Query exchange (initiated by the node itself), and a downstream Query exchange (where the node is the responder). If the SIDs are different, these items of routing state MUST be considered as independent; if the SIDs

match, the routing state installed by the downstream exchange MUST take precedence, provided that the downstream Query passed ingress filtering checks. The rationale for this is that the downstream Query is in general a more reliable way to install state, since it directly probes the IP routing infrastructure along the flow path, whereas use of the upstream Query depends on the correctness of the Querying node's understanding of the topology.

The details of the encapsulation are as follows:

- o The destination address SHOULD be the flow source address as given in the MRI of the message payload. An implementation with more detailed knowledge of local IP routing MAY use an alternative destination address (e.g. the address of its default router).

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- o The source address SHOULD be the signalling node address, so in the common header S=1.
- o A router alert option is included as in the downstream case.
- o The DiffServ codepoint and (for IPv6) flow label MAY be set to match the values from the MRI as in the downstream case, and the UDP port selection is also the same.
- o The IP layer TTL of the message MUST be set to 255.

The sending GIST implementation SHOULD attempt to send the Query via the same interface and to the same link layer neighbour from which the data packets of the flow are arriving.

The receiving GIST node MAY apply validation checks to the message and MRI, to reject Query messages which have reached a node at which they can no longer be trusted. In particular, a node SHOULD reject

a

message which has been propagated more than one IP hop, with an "Invalid IP layer TTL" error message (Appendix A.4.4.11). This can be determined by examining the received IP layer TTL, similar to the generalised IP TTL security mechanism described in [28].

Alternatively, receipt of an upstream Query at the flow source MAY

be

used to trigger setup of GIST state in the downstream direction. These restrictions may be relaxed in a future version.

5.8.2. The Loose-End MRM

The Loose-End MRM is used to discover GIST nodes with particular properties in the direction of a given address, for example to discover a NAT along the upstream data path as in [35].

5.8.2.1. Message Routing Information

For the loose-end MRM, only a simplified version of the Flow Identifier is needed.

```
MRI = network-layer-version
      source-address
      destination-address
```

The source address is the address of the node initiating the discovery process, for example the node that will be the data receiver in the NAT discovery case. The destination address is the address of a node which is expected to be the other side of the node to be discovered. Additional control information defines the direction of the message relative to this flow as in the path-coupled case.

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5.8.2.2. Downstream Q-mode Encapsulation

Only one encapsulation is defined for the loose-end MRM; by convention, this is referred to as the downstream encapsulation, and is defined as follows:

- o The IP destination address MUST be the destination address as given in the MRI of the message payload.
- o By default, the IP source address is the source address, again from the MRI (S=0). However, the use of the signalling source address (S=1) is allowed as in the case of the path-coupled MRM.

A router alert option is included in the IP header. The option value depends on the NSLP being signalled for. There are no special requirements on the setting of the DiffServ codepoint, IP layer TTL, or (for IPv6) the flow label. Nor are any special validation checks applied.

6. Formal Protocol Specification

This section provides a more formal specification of the operation of

GIST processing, in terms of rules for transitions between states of a set of communicating state machines within a node. The following description captures only the basic protocol specification; additional mechanisms can be used by an implementation to accelerate route change processing, and these are captured in [Section 7.1](#). A more detailed description of the GIST protocol operation in state machine syntax can be found in [\[43\]](#).

Conceptually, GIST processing at a node may be seen in terms of four types of cooperating state machine:

1. There is a top-level state machine which represents the node itself (Node-SM). It is responsible for the processing of events which cannot be directed towards a more specific state machine, for example, inbound messages for which no routing state currently exists. This machine exists permanently, and is responsible for creating per-MRI state machines to manage the GIST handshake and routing state maintenance procedures.
2. For each flow and signalling direction where the node is responsible for the creation of routing state, there is an instance of a Query-Node state machine (Querying-SM). This machine sends Query and Confirm messages and waits for Responses, according to the requirements from local API commands or timer processing, such as message repetition or routing state refresh.
3. For each flow and signalling direction where the node has accepted the creation of routing state by a peer, there is an instance of a Responding-Node state machine (Responding-SM). This machine is responsible for managing the status of the routing state for that flow. Depending on policy, it MAY be responsible for [re]transmission of Response messages, or this MAY be handled by the Node-SM, and a Responding-SM is not even created for a flow until a properly formatted Confirm has been accepted.
4. Messaging associations have their own lifecycle, represented by MA-SM, from when they are first created (in an incomplete state, listening for an inbound connection or waiting for outbound connections to complete), to when they are active and available for use.

Apart from the fact that the various machines can be created and destroyed by each other, there is almost no interaction between them.

The machines for different flows do not interact; the Querying-SM

and

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Responding-SM for a single flow and signalling direction do not interact. That is, the Responding-SM which accepts the creation of routing state for a flow on one interface has no direct interaction with the Querying-SM which sets up routing state on the next interface along the path. This interaction is mediated instead through the NSLP.

The state machine descriptions use the terminology rx_MMMM, tg_TTTT and er_EEEE for incoming messages, API/lower layer triggers and error

conditions respectively. The possible events of these types are given in the table below. In addition, timeout events denoted to_TTTT may also occur; the various timers are listed independently for each type of state machine in the following subsections.

Name	Meaning
rx_Query	A Query has been received.
rx_Response	A Response has been received.
rx_Confirm	A Confirm has been received.
rx_Data	A Data message has been received.
rx_Message	rx_Query rx_Response rx_Confirm rx_Data.
rx_MA-Hello	A MA-Hello message has been received.
tg_NSLPData	A signalling application has requested data transfer (via API SendMessage).
tg_Connected	The protocol stack for a messaging

```
|
|           | association has completed connecting.
|
|           |
| tg_RawData | GIST wishes to transfer data over a
|           | particular messaging association.
|           |
| tg_MAIIdle | GIST decides that it is no longer necessary
|           | to keep an MA open for itself.
|           |
| er_NoRSM   | A "No Routing State" error was received.
|           |
| er_MACo    | A messaging association protocol failed to
|           | complete a connection.
|           |
| er_MAFail  | A messaging association failed.
|
+-----+-----+
+
```


Incoming Events

6.1. Node Processing

The Node level state machine is responsible for processing events for

which no more appropriate messaging association state or routing state exists. Its structure is trivial: there is a single state ('Idle'); all events cause a transition back to Idle. Some events cause the creation of other state machines. The only events that are

processed by this state machine are incoming GIST messages (Query/Response/Confirm/Data) and API requests to send data; no other events

are possible. In addition to this event processing, the Node level machine is responsible for managing listening endpoints for messaging

associations. Although these relate to Responding node operation, they cannot be handled by the Responder state machine since they are not created per flow. The processing rules for each event are as follows:

Rule 1 (rx_Query):

```
use the GIST service interface to determine the signalling
  application policy relating to this peer
  // note that this interaction delivers any NSLP-Data to
  // the NSLP as a side effect
if (the signalling application indicates that routing state should
  be created) then
  if (routing state can be created without a 3-way handshake) then
    create Responding-SM and transfer control to it
  else
    send Response with R=1
else
  propagate the Query with any updated NSLP payload provided
```

Rule 2 (rx_Response):

```
// a routing state error
discard message
```

Rule 3 (rx_Confirm):

```
if (routing state can be created before receiving a Confirm) then
  // we should already have Responding-SM for it,
  // which would handle this message
  discard message
  send "No Routing State" error message
else
  create Responding-SM and pass message to it
```

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```
Rule 4 (rx_Data):
if (node policy will only process Data messages with matching
    routing state) then
    send "No Routing State" error message
else
    pass directly to NSLP
```

```
Rule 4 (er_NoRSM):
discard the message
```

```
Rle 5 (tg_NSLPData):
if Q-mode encapsulation is not possible for this MRI
    reject message with an error
else
    if (local policy & transfer attributes say routing
        state is not needed) then
        send message statelessly
    else
        create Querying-SM and pass message to it
```

6.2. Query Node Processing

The Querying-Node state machine (Querying-SM) has three states:

- o Awaiting Response
- o Established
- o Awaiting Refresh

The Querying-SM is created by the Node-SM machine as a result of a request to send a message for a flow in a signalling direction where the appropriate state does not exist. The Query is generated immediately and the No_Response timer is started. The NSLP data MAY be carried in the Query if local policy and the transfer attributes allow it, otherwise it MUST be queued locally pending MA establishment. Then the machine transitions to the Awaiting

Response

state, in which timeout-based retransmissions are handled. Data messages (rx_Data events) should not occur in this state; if they

do,

this may indicate a lost Response and a node MAY also retransmit a Query for this reason.

Once a Response has been successfully received and routing state created, the machine transitions to Established, during which NSLP data can be sent and received normally. Further Responses received in this state (which may be the result of a lost Confirm) MUST be treated the same way. The Awaiting Refresh state can be considered as a substate of Established, where a new Query has been generated

to

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refresh the routing state (as in Awaiting Response) but NSLP data can be handled normally.

The timers relevant to this state machine are as follows:

Refresh_QNode: Indicates when the routing state stored by this state machine must be refreshed. It is reset whenever a Response is received indicating that the routing state is still valid. Implementations MUST set the period of this timer based on the value in the RS-validity-time field of a Response to ensure that a Query is generated before the peer's routing state expires.

No_Response: Indicates that a Response has not been received in answer to a Query. This is started whenever a Query is sent and stopped when a Response is received.

Inactive_QNode: Indicates that no traffic is currently being handled by this state machine. This is reset whenever the state machine handles NSLP data, in either direction. When it expires, the state machine MAY be deleted. The period of the timer can be set at any time via the API (SetStateLifetime), and if the period is reset in this way the timer itself MUST be restarted.

The main events (including all those that cause state transitions) are shown in the figure below, tagged with the number of the processing rule that is used to handle the event. These rules are listed after the diagram. All events not shown or described in the text above are assumed to be impossible in a correct implementation and MUST be ignored.

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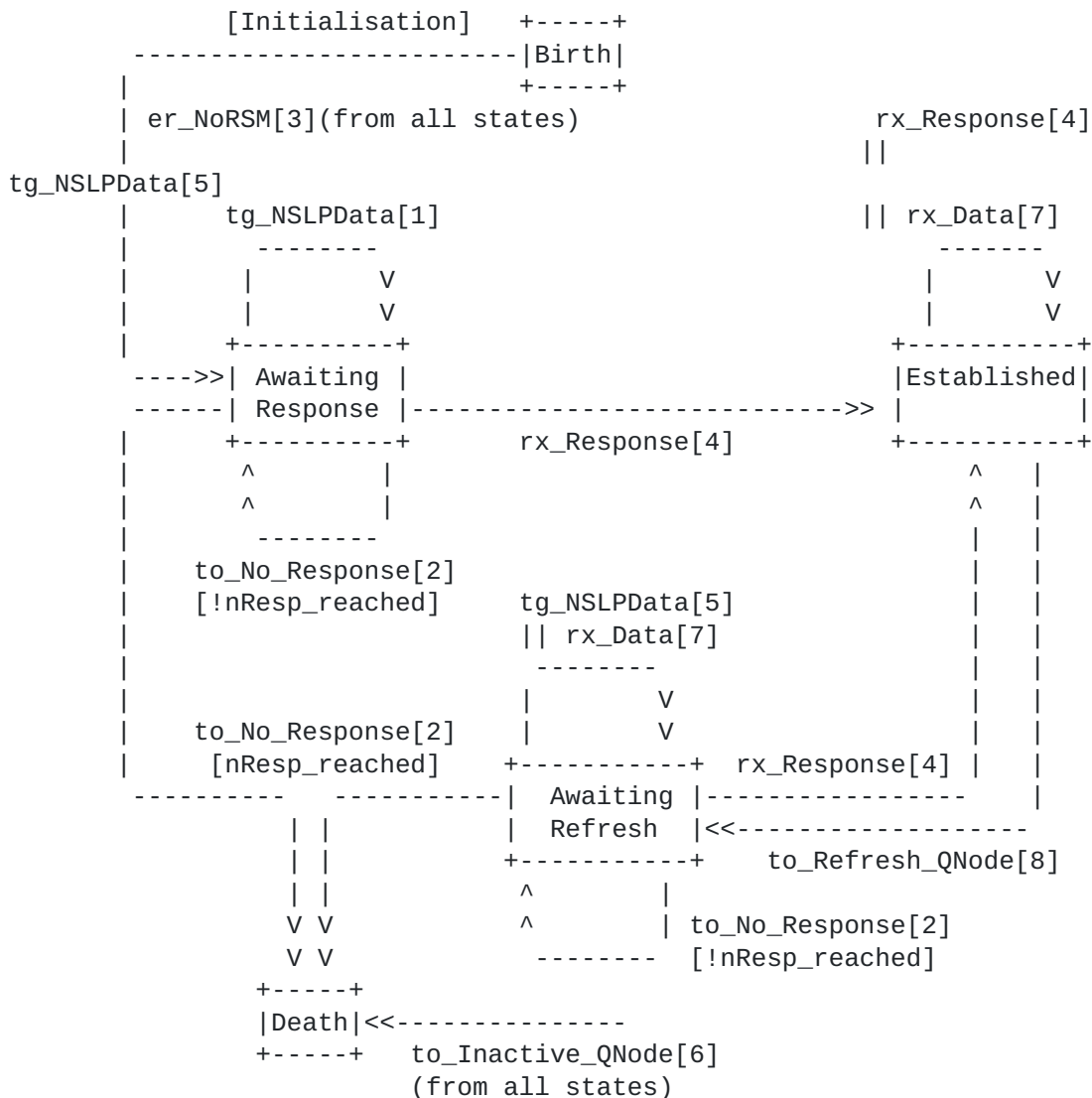


Figure 5: Query Node State Machine

The processing rules are as follows:

Rule 1: Store the message for later transmission

Rule 2:

```

if number of Queries sent has reached the threshold
  // nQuery_isMax is true
  indicate No Response error to NSLP
  destroy self
else
  send Query
  start No_Response timer with new value
  
```


Rule 3:

```
// Assume the Confirm was lost in transit or the peer has reset;  
// restart the handshake  
send Query  
start No_Response timer
```

Rule 4:

```
if a new MA-SM is needed create one  
if the R flag was set send a Confirm  
pass any NSLP-Data object to the NSLP  
send any stored Data messages  
stop No_Response timer  
start Refresh_QNode and (re)start Inactive_QNode timers
```

Rule 5:

```
send Data message  
restart Inactive_QNode timer
```

Rule 6: Terminate

Rule 7:

```
pass any data to the NSLP  
restart Inactive_QNode timer
```

Rule 8:

```
send Query  
start No_Response timer  
stop Refresh_QNode timer
```

6.3. Responder Node Processing

The Responding-Node state machine (Responding-SM) has three states:

- o Awaiting Confirm
- o Established
- o Awaiting Refresh

The policy governing the handling of Query messages and the creation of the Responding-SM has three cases:

1. No Confirm is required for a Query, and the state machine can be created immediately.
2. A Confirm is required for a Query, but the state machine can still be created immediately. A timer is used to retransmit Response messages and the Responding-SM is destroyed if no valid

Confirm is received.

3. A Confirm is required for a Query, and the state machine can only be created when it is received; the initial Query will have been handled by the Node level machine.

In case 2 the Responding-SM is created in the Awaiting Confirm state, and remains there until a Confirm is received, at which point it transitions to Established. In cases 1 and 3 the Responding-SM is created directly in the Established state. Note that if the machine is created on receiving a Query, some of the message processing will already have been performed in the Node state machine. In principle, an implementation MAY change its policy on handling a Query message at any time; however, the state machine descriptions here cover only the case where the policy is fixed while waiting for a Confirm message.

In the Established state the NSLP can send and receive data normally, and any additional rx_Confirm events MUST be silently ignored. The Awaiting Refresh state can be considered a substate of Established, where a Query has been received to begin the routing state refresh. In the Awaiting Refresh state the Responding-SM behaves as in the Awaiting Confirm state, except that the NSLP can still send and receive data. In particular, in both states there is timer-based retransmission of Response messages until a Confirm is received; additional rx_Query events in these states MUST also generate a reply and restart the no_Confirm timer.

The timers relevant to the operation of this state machine are as follows:

Expire_RNode: Indicates when the routing state stored by this state machine needs to be expired. It is reset whenever a Query or Confirm (depending on local policy) is received indicating that the routing state is still valid. Note that state cannot be refreshed from the R-Node.

No_Confirm: Indicates that a Confirm has not been received in answer to a Response. This is started/reset whenever a Response is sent and stopped when a Confirm is received.

The detailed state transitions and processing rules are described below as in the Query node case.

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Rule 2:
pass any NSLP-Data object to the NSLP
start Expire_RNode timer

Rule 3: send the Data message

Rule 4: pass data to NSLP

Rule 5:
// no Confirm is required
send Response with R=0
start Expire_RNode timer

Rule 6: send "No Routing State" error message

Rule 7: store Data message

Rule 8:
pass any NSLP-Data object to the NSLP
send any stored Data messages
stop No_Confirm timer
start Expire_RNode timer

Rule 9:
if number of Responses sent has reached threshold
 // nResp_isMax is true
 destroy self
else
 send Response
 start No_Response timer

Rule 10:
// can happen e.g. a retransmitted Response causes a duplicate
Confirm
silently ignore

Rule 11: destroy self

6.4. Messaging Association Processing

Messaging associations (MAs) are modelled for use within GIST with a simple three-state process. The Awaiting Connection state indicates that the MA is waiting for the connection process(es) for every protocol in the messaging association to complete; this might involve creating listening endpoints or attempting active connects. Timers may also be necessary to detect connection failure (e.g. no incoming connection within a certain period), but these are not modelled explicitly.

The Connected state indicates that the MA is open and ready to use, and that the node wishes it to remain open. In this state, the node operates a timer (SendHello) to ensure that messages are regularly sent to the peer, to ensure that the peer does not tear the MA down. The node transitions from Connected to Idle (indicating that it no longer needs the association) as a matter of local policy; one way to manage the policy is to use an activity timer but this is not specified explicitly by the state machine (see also [Section 4.4.5](#)).

In the Idle state, the node no longer requires the messaging association but the peer still requires it and is indicating this by sending periodic MA-Hello messages. A different timer (NoHello) operates to purge the MA when these messages stop arriving. If real data is transferred over the MA, the state machine transitions back to Connected.

At any time in the Connected or Idle states, a node MAY test the connectivity to its peer and the liveness of the GIST instance at that peer by sending a MA-Hello request with R=1. Failure to receive a reply with a matching Hello-ID within a timeout MAY be taken as a reason to trigger er_MAFailure. Initiation of such a test and the timeout setting are left to the discretion of the implementation. Note that er_MAFailure may also be signalled by indications from the underlying messaging association protocols. If a messaging association fails, this MUST be indicated back to the routing state machines which use it, and these MAY generate indications to signalling applications. In particular, if the messaging association was being used to deliver messages reliably, this MUST be reported as a NetworkNotification error (Appendix B.4).

Clearly, many internal details of the messaging association protocols are hidden in this model, especially where the messaging association uses multiple protocol layers. Note also that although the existence of messaging associations is not directly visible to signalling applications, there is some interaction between the two because security-related information becomes available during the open process, and this may be indicated to signalling applications if they have requested it.

The timers relevant to the operation of this state machine are as follows:

SendHello: Indicates that an MA-Hello message should be sent to the remote node. The period of this timer is determined by the MA-Hold-Time sent by the remote node during the Query/Response/

Confirm exchange.

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Rule 3:
if reply requested
 send MA-Hello
 restart SendHello timer

Rule 4:
send MA-Hello message
restart SendHello timer

Rule 5: queue message for later transmission

Rule 6:
pass outstanding queued messages to transport layer
stop any timers controlling connection establishment
start SendHello timer

Rule 7:
stop SendHello timer
start NoHello timer

Rule 8:
report failure to routing state machines and signalling applications
destroy self

Rule 9:
if reply requested
 send MA-Hello
 restart NoHello timer

7. Additional Protocol Features

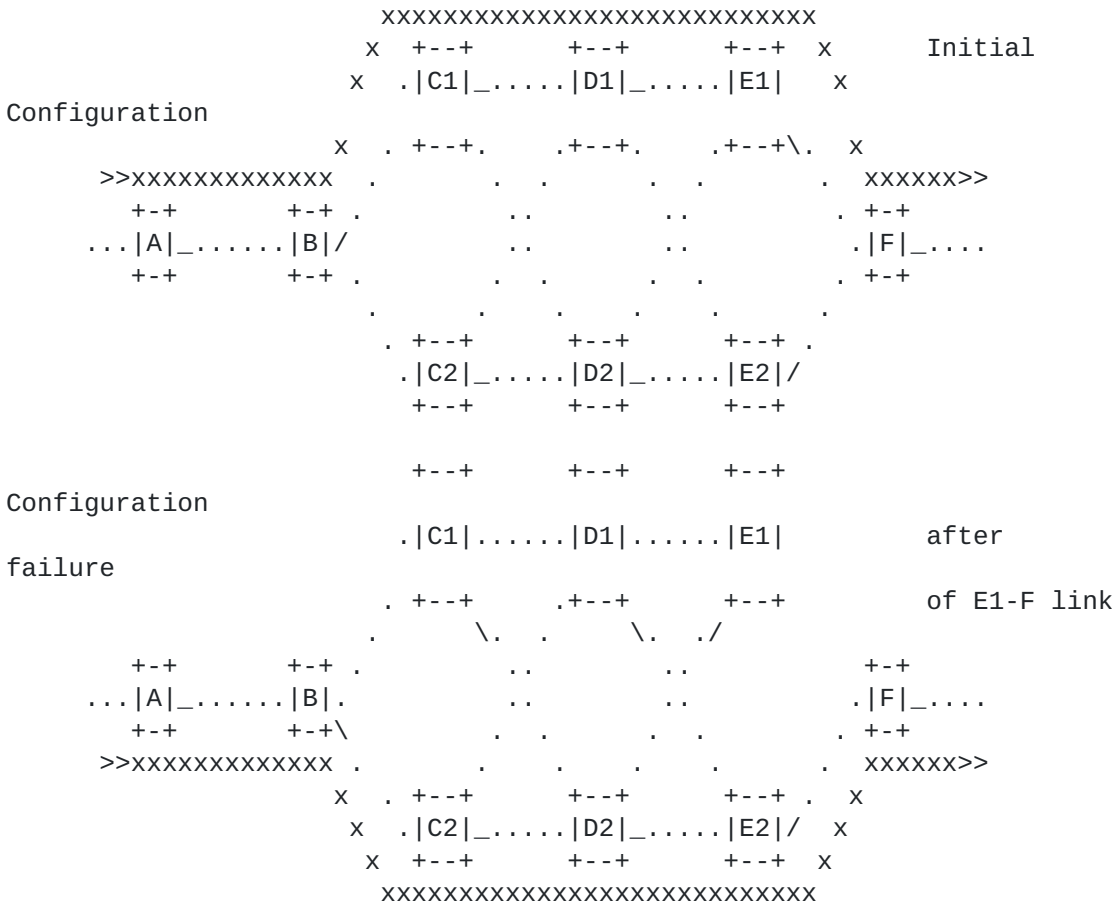
7.1. Route Changes and Local Repair

7.1.1. Introduction

When IP layer re-routing takes place in the network, GIST and signalling application state need to be updated for all flows whose paths have changed. The updates to signalling application state depend mainly on the signalling application: for example, if the path

characteristics have actually changed, simply moving state from the old to the new path is not sufficient. Therefore, GIST cannot carry out the complete path update processing. Its responsibilities are to

- detect the route change, update its local routing state consistently,
- and inform interested signalling applications at affected nodes.



..... = physical link topology
 >>xxxxxxx>> = flow direction
 _..... = outgoing link for flow xxxxxx given by local forwarding table

Figure 8: A Re-Routing Event

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Route change management is complicated by the distributed nature of the problem. Consider the re-routing event shown in Figure 8. An external observer can tell that the main responsibility for controlling the updates will probably lie with nodes B and F; however, E1 is best placed to detect the event quickly at the GIST level, and C1 and D1 could also attempt to initiate the repair.

The NSIS framework [30] makes the assumption that signalling applications are soft-state based and operate end to end. In this case, because GIST also periodically updates its picture of routing state, route changes will eventually be repaired automatically. The specification as already given includes this functionality.

However,

especially if upper layer refresh times are extended to reduce signalling load, the duration of inconsistent state may be very long indeed. Therefore, GIST includes logic to exchange prompt notifications with signalling applications, to allow local repair if possible. The additional mechanisms to achieve this are described

in

the following subsections. To a large extent, these additions can

be

seen as implementation issues; the protocol messages and their significance are not changed, but there are extra interactions through the API between GIST and signalling applications, and additional triggers for transitions between the various GIST states.

7.1.2. Route Change Detection Mechanisms

There are two aspects to detecting a route change at a single node:

- o Detecting that the outgoing path, in the direction of the Query, has or may have changed.
- o Detecting that the incoming path, in the direction of the Response, has (or may have) changed, in which case the node may

no

longer be on the path at all.

At a single node, these processes are largely independent, although clearly a change in one direction at a node corresponds to a change the opposite direction at its peer. Note that there are two

possible

forms for a route change: the interface through which a flow leaves or enters a node may change, and the adjacent peer may change. In general, a route change can include one or the other or both (or indeed neither, although such changes are very hard to detect).

The route change detection mechanisms available to a node depend on the MRM in use and the role the node played in setting up the

routing

state in the first place (i.e. as Querying or Responding node). The following discussion is specific to the case of the path-coupled MRM

using downstream Queries only; other scenarios may require other methods. However, the repair logic described in the subsequent

subsections is intended to be universal.

There are five mechanisms for a node to detect that a route change has occurred, which are listed below. They apply differently depending on whether the change is in the Query or Response direction, and these differences are summarised in the following table.

Local Trigger: In local trigger mode, GIST finds out from the local forwarding table that the next hop has changed. This only works if the routing change is local, not if it happens a few IP hops away, including the case that it happens at a GIST-unaware node.

Extended Trigger: Here, GIST checks a link-state topology database to discover that the path has changed. This makes certain assumptions on consistency of IP route computation and only works within a single area for OSPF [17] and similar link-state protocols. Where available, this offers the most accurate and rapid indication of route changes, but requires more access to the routing internals than a typical operating system may provide.

GIST C-mode Monitoring: GIST may find that C-mode packets are arriving (from either peer) with a different IP layer TTL or on a different interface. This provides no direct information about the new flow path, but indicates that routing has changed and that rediscovery may be required.

Data Plane Monitoring: The signalling application on a node may detect a change in behaviour of the flow, such as IP layer TTL change, arrival on a different interface, or loss of the flow altogether. The signalling application on the node is allowed to notify this information locally to GIST (Appendix B.6).

GIST Probing: According to the specification, each GIST node MUST periodically repeat the discovery (Query/Response) operation. Values for the probe frequency are discussed in [Section 4.4.4](#). The querying node will discover the route change by a modification in the Network-Layer-Information in the Response. The period can be negotiated independently for each GIST hop, so nodes that have access to the other techniques listed above MAY use long periods for the probing operation.

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Method	Query direction	Response direction
Local	Discovers new interface (and peer if local)	Not applicable
Extended	Discovers new interface and may determine new peer	May determine that route from peer will have changed
C-mode Monitoring	Provides hint that change has occurred	Provides hint that change has occurred
Data Plane Monitoring	Not applicable	NSLP informs GIST that a change may have occurred
Probing	Discovers changed NLI in Response	Discovers changed NLI in Query

7.1.3. GIST Behaviour Supporting Re-Routing

The basic GIST behaviour necessary to support re-routing can be modelled using a 3-level classification of the validity of each item of current routing state. (In addition to current routing state, NSIS can maintain past routing state, described in [Section 7.1.4](#) below.) This classification applies separately to the Querying and Responding node for each pair of GIST peers. The levels are:

Bad: The routing state is either missing altogether, or not safe to use to send data.

Tentative: The routing state may have changed, but it is still

usable for sending NSLP data pending verification.

Good: The routing state has been established and no events affecting it have since been detected.

These classifications are not identical to the states described in [Section 6](#), but there are dependencies between them. Specifically, routing state is considered Bad until the machine first enters the Established state, at which point it becomes Good. Thereafter, the status may be invalidated for any of the reasons discussed above; it is an implementation issue to decide which techniques to implement in any given node, and how to reclassify routing state (as Bad or Tentative) for each. The status returns to Good, either when the state machine re-enters the Established state, or if GIST can determine from direct examination of the IP routing or forwarding

tables that the peer has not changed. When the status returns to Good, GIST MUST if necessary update its routing state table so that the relationships between MRI/SID/NSLPID tuples and messaging associations are up to date.

When classification of the routing state for the downstream direction

changes to Bad/Tentative because of local IP routing indications, GIST MAY automatically change the classification in the upstream direction to Tentative unless local routing indicates that this is not necessary. This SHOULD NOT be done in the case where the initial

change was indicated by the signalling application. This mechanism accounts for the fact that a routing change may affect several nodes,

and so can be an indication that upstream routing may also have changed. In any case, whenever GIST updates the routing status, it informs the signalling application with the NetworkNotification API (Appendix B.4), unless the change was caused via the API in the first place.

The GIST behaviour for state repair is different for the Querying and

Responding node. At the Responding node, there is no additional behaviour, since the Responding node cannot initiate protocol transitions autonomously, it can only react to the Querying node. The Querying node has three options, depending on how the transition from 'Good' was initially caused:

1. To inspect the IP routing/forwarding table and verifying that the

next peer has not changed. This technique MUST NOT be used if the transition was caused by a signalling application, but SHOULD be used otherwise if available.

2. To move to the 'Awaiting Refresh' state. This technique MUST NOT

be used if the current status is 'Bad', since data is being incorrectly delivered.

3. To move to the 'Awaiting Response' state. This technique may be used at any time, but has the effect of freezing NSLP communication while GIST state is being repaired.

The second and third techniques trigger the execution of a GIST handshake to carry out the repair. It may be desirable to delay the start of the handshake process, either to wait for the network to stabilise, to avoid flooding the network with Query traffic for a large number of affected flows, or to wait for confirmation that the node is still on the path from the upstream peer. One approach is

to

delay the handshake until there is NSLP data to be transmitted. Implementation of such delays is a matter of local policy; however, GIST MUST begin the handshake immediately if the status change was caused by an InvalidateRoutingState API call marked as 'Urgent', and

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SHOULD begin it if the upstream routing state is still known to be Good.

7.1.4. Load Splitting and Route Flapping

The Q-mode encapsulation rules of [Section 5.8](#) try to ensure that the Query messages discovering the path mimic the flow as accurately as possible. However, in environments where there is load balancing over multiple routes, and this is based on header fields differing between flow and Q-mode packets or done on a round-robin basis, the path discovered by the Query may vary from one handshake to the next even though the underlying network is stable. This will appear to GIST as a route flap; route flapping can also be caused by problems in the basic network connectivity or routing protocol operation.

For

example, a mobile node might be switching back and forth between two links, or might appear to have disappeared even though it is still attached to the network via a different route.

This specification does not define mechanisms for GIST to manage multiple parallel routes or an unstable route; instead, GIST MAY expose this to the NSLP, which can then manage it according to signalling application requirements. The algorithms already described always maintain the concept of the current route, i.e. the latest peer discovered for a particular flow. Instead, GIST allows the use of prior signalling paths for some period while the signalling applications still need them. Since NSLP peers are a single GIST hop apart, the necessary information to represent a path can be just an entry in the node's routing state table for that flow (more generally, anything that uniquely identifies the peer, such as the NLI, could be used). Rather than requiring GIST to maintain multiple generations of this information, it is provided to the signalling application in the same node in an opaque form for each message that is received from the peer. The signalling application can store it if necessary and provide it back to the GIST layer in case it needs to be used. Because this is a reference to

information

about the source of a prior signalling message, it is denoted 'SII-Handle' (for Source Identification Information) in the abstract API of [Appendix B](#).

Note that GIST if possible SHOULD use the same SII-Handle for multiple sessions to the same peer, since this then allows signalling

applications to aggregate some signalling, such as summary refreshes or bulk teardowns. Messages sent using the SII-Handle MUST bypass the routing state tables at the sender, and this MUST be indicated

by

setting the E flag in the common header (Appendix A.1). Messages other than Data messages MUST NOT be sent in this way. At the receiver, GIST MUST NOT validate the MRI/SID/NSLPID against local routing state and instead indicates the mode of reception to

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signalling applications through the API (Appendix B.2). Signalling applications should validate the source and effect of the message themselves, and if appropriate should in particular indicate to GIST (see [Appendix B.5](#)) that routing state is no longer required for this flow. This is necessary to prevent GIST in nodes on the old path initiating routing state refresh and thus causing state conflicts at the crossover router.

GIST notifies signalling applications about route modifications as two types of event, additions and deletions. An addition is notified as a change of the current routing state according to the Bad/Tentative/Good classification above, while deletion is expressed as a statement that an SII handle no longer lies on the path. Both can be reported through the NetworkNotification API call (Appendix B.4). A minimal implementation MAY notify a route change as a single (add, delete) operation; however, a more sophisticated implementation MAY delay the delete notification, for example if it knows that the old route continues to be used in parallel, or that the true route is flapping between the two. It is then a matter of signalling application design whether to tear down state on the old path, leave it unchanged, or modify it in some signalling application specific way to reflect the fact that multiple paths are operating in parallel.

7.1.5. Signalling Application Operation

Signalling applications can use these functions as provided by GIST to carry out rapid local repair following re-routing events. The signalling application instances carry out the multi-hop aspects of the procedure, including crossover node detection, and tear-down/reinstallation of signalling application state; they also trigger GIST to carry out the local routing state maintenance operations over each individual hop. The local repair procedures depend heavily on the fact that stateful NSLP nodes are a single GIST hop apart; this is enforced by the details of the GIST peer discovery process.

The following outline description of a possible set of NSLP actions takes the scenario of Figure 8 as an example.

1. The signalling application at node E1 is notified by GIST of route changes affecting the downstream and upstream directions. The downstream status was updated to Bad because of a trigger from the local forwarding tables, and the upstream status changed automatically to Tentative as a consequence. The signalling application at E1 MAY begin local repair immediately, or MAY propagate a notification upstream to D1 that re-routing has occurred.

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2. The signalling application at node D1 is notified of the route change, either by signalling application notifications or from the GIST level (e.g. by a trigger from a link-state topology database). If the information propagates faster within the IP routing protocol, GIST will change the upstream/downstream routing state to Tentative/Bad automatically, and this will cause the signalling application to propagate the notification further upstream.
3. This process continues until the notification reaches node A. Here, there is no downstream routing change, so GIST only learns of the update via the signalling application trigger. Since the upstream status is still Good, it therefore begins the repair handshake immediately.
4. The handshake initiated by node A causes its downstream routing state to be confirmed as Good and unchanged there; it also confirms the (Tentative) upstream routing state at B as Good. This is enough to identify B as the crossover router, and the signalling application and GIST can begin the local repair process.

An alternative way to reach step (4) is that node B is able to determine autonomously that there is no likelihood of an upstream route change. For example, it could be an area border router and the route change is only intra-area. In this case, the signalling application and GIST will see that the upstream state is Good and can begin the local repair directly.

After a route deletion, a signalling application may wish to remove state at another node which is no longer on the path. However, since it is no longer on the path, in principle GIST can no longer send messages to it. In general, provided this state is soft, it will time out anyway; however, the timeouts involved may have been set to be very long to reduce signalling load. Instead, signalling applications MAY use the SII-Handle described above to route explicit teardown messages.

7.2. NAT Traversal

GIST messages, for example for the path-coupled MRM, must carry addressing and higher layer information as payload data in order to define the flow signalled for. (This applies to all GIST messages, regardless of how they are encapsulated or which direction they are travelling in.) At an addressing boundary the data flow packets will have their headers translated; if the signalling payloads are not

translated consistently, the signalling messages will refer to incorrect (and probably meaningless) flows after passing through the

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boundary. In addition, GIST handshake messages carry additional addressing information about the GIST nodes themselves, and this must also be processed appropriately when traversing a NAT.

There is a dual problem of whether the GIST peers either side of the boundary can work out how to address each other, and whether they can work out what translation to apply to the signalling packet payloads.

Existing generic NAT traversal techniques such as STUN [26] or TURN [27] can operate only on the two addresses visible in the IP header. It is therefore intrinsically difficult to use these techniques to discover a consistent translation of the three or four interdependent addresses for the flow and signalling source and destination.

For legacy NATs and MRMs that carry addressing information, the base GIST specification is therefore limited to detecting the situation and triggering the appropriate error conditions to terminate the signalling path. (MRMs that do not contain addressing information could traverse such NATs safely, with some modifications to the GIST processing rules. Such modifications could be described in the documents defining such MRMs.) Legacy NAT handling is covered in [Section 7.2.1](#) below. A more general solution can be constructed using GIST-awareness in the NATs themselves; this solution is outlined in [Section 7.2.2](#) with processing rules in [Section 7.2.3](#).

In all cases, GIST interaction with the NAT is determined by the way the NAT handles the Query/Response messages in the initial GIST handshake; these messages are UDP datagrams. Best current practice for NAT treatment of UDP traffic is defined in [39], and the legacy NAT handling defined in this specification is fully consistent with that document. The GIST-aware NAT traversal technique is equivalent to requiring an Application Layer Gateway in the NAT for a specific class of UDP transactions, namely those where the destination UDP port for the initial message is the GIST port (see [Section 9](#)).

[7.2.1](#). Legacy NAT Handling

Legacy NAT detection during the GIST handshake depends on analysis of the IP header and S flag in the GIST common header, and the NLI object included in the handshake messages. The message sequence proceeds differently depending on whether the Querying node is on the internal or external side of the NAT.

For the case of the Querying node on the internal side of the NAT, if the S flag is not set in the Query (S=0), a legacy NAT cannot be detected. The receiver will generate a normal Response to the

interface-address given in the NLI in the Query, but the interface-address will not be routable and the Response will not be delivered. If retransmitted Queries keep S=0, this behaviour will persist until

the Querying node times out. The signalling path will thus terminate at this point, not traversing the NAT.

The situation changes once S=1 in a Query; note the Q-mode encapsulation rules recommend that S=1 is used at least for some retransmissions (see [Section 5.8](#)). If S=1, the receiver MUST check the source address in the IP header against the interface-address in the NLI, and if these addresses do not match this indicates that a legacy NAT has been found. For MRMs which contain addressing information that needs translation, legacy NAT traversal is not possible. The receiver MUST return an "Object Type Error" message (Appendix A.4.4.9) with subcode 4 ("Untranslated Object") indicating the MRI as the object in question. The error message MUST be addressed to the source address from the IP header of the incoming message. The Responding node SHOULD use the destination IP address of the original datagram as the source address for IP header of the Response; this makes it more likely that the NAT will accept the incoming message, since it looks like a normal UDP/IP request/reply exchange. If this message is able to traverse back through the NAT, the Querying node will terminate the handshake immediately; otherwise, this reduces to the previous case of a lost Response and the Querying node will give up on reaching its retransmission limit.

When the Querying node is on the external side of the NAT, the Query will only traverse the NAT if some static configuration has been carried out on the NAT to forward GIST Q-mode traffic to a node on the internal network. Regardless of the S-flag in the Query, the Responding node cannot directly detect the presence of the NAT. It MUST send a normal Response with S=1 to an address derived from the Querying node's NLI which will traverse the NAT as normal UDP traffic. The Querying node MUST check the source address in the IP header with the NLI in the Response, and when it finds a mismatch it MUST terminate the handshake.

Note that in either of the error cases (internal or external Querying node), an alternative to terminating the handshake could be to invoke some legacy NAT traversal procedure. This specification does not define any such procedure, although one possible approach is described in [\[41\]](#). Any such traversal procedure MUST be incorporated into GIST using the existing GIST extensibility capabilities.

7.2.2. GIST-aware NAT Traversal

The most robust solution to the NAT traversal problem is to require that a NAT is GIST-aware, and to allow it to modify messages based on the contents of the MRI. This makes the assumption that NATs only rewrite the header fields included in this payload, and not other

higher layer identifiers. Provided this is done consistently with

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the data flow header translation, signalling messages will be valid each side of the boundary, without requiring the NAT to be signalling application aware. Note, however, that if the NAT does not understand the MRI, and the N-flag in the MRI is clear (see [Appendix A.3.1](#)), it should reject the message with an "Object Type Error" message (Appendix A.4.4.9) with subcode 4 ("Untranslated Object").

This specification defines an additional object that a NAT inserts into all Q-mode encapsulated messages and which is echoed back in any replies, i.e. Response or Error messages. NATs apply GIST-specific processing only to Q-mode encapsulated messages or replies carrying the NAT traversal object. All other GIST messages, either in C-mode, or D-mode messages with no NAT-Traversal object, should be treated as normal data traffic by the NAT, i.e. with IP and transport layer header translation but no GIST-specific processing.

The new object, the NAT-Traversal object (Appendix A.3.9), carries the translation between the MRIs which are appropriate for the internal and external sides of the NAT. It also carries a list of which other objects in the message have been translated. This should always include the NLI, and the Stack-Configuration-Data if present; if GIST is extended with further objects that carry addressing data, this list allows a message receiver to know if the new objects were supported by the NAT. Finally, the NAT-Traversal object MAY be used to carry data to assist the NAT in back-translating D-mode responses; this could be the original NLI or SCD, or opaque equivalents in the case of topology hiding.

A consequence of this approach is that the routing state tables at the signalling application peers each side of the NAT are no longer directly compatible. In particular, the values for Message-Routing-Information are different, which is why the unmodified MRI is propagated in the NAT-Traversal object to allow subsequent C-mode messages to be interpreted correctly.

7.2.3. Message Processing Rules

This specification normatively defines the behaviour of a GIST node receiving a message containing a NAT-Traversal object. However, it does not define normative behaviour for a NAT translating GIST messages, since much of this will depend on NAT implementation and policy about allocating bindings. In addition, it is not necessary for a GIST implementation itself. Therefore, those aspects of the following description are informative; full details of NAT behaviour for handling GIST messages can be found in [\[42\]](#).

A possible set of operations for a NAT to process a Q-mode

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encapsulated message is as follows. Note that for a Data message, only a subset of the operations is applicable.

1. Verify that bindings for any data flow are actually in place.
2. Create a new Message-Routing-Information object with fields modified according to the data flow bindings.
3. Create bindings for subsequent C-mode signalling based on the information in the Network-Layer-Information and Stack-Configuration-Data objects.
4. Create new Network-Layer-Information and if necessary Stack-Configuration-Data objects with fields to force D-mode response messages through the NAT, and to allow C-mode exchanges using the C-mode signalling bindings.
5. Add a NAT-Traversal object, listing the objects which have been modified and including the unmodified MRI and any other data needed to interpret the response. If a NAT-Traversal object is already present, in the case of a sequence of NATs, the list of modified objects may be updated and further opaque data added, but the MRI contained in it is left unchanged.
6. Encapsulate the message according to the normal rules of this specification for the Q-mode encapsulation. If the S-flag was set in the original message, the same IP source address selection policy should be applied to the forwarded message.
7. Forward the message with these new payloads.

A GIST node receiving such a message MUST verify that all mandatory objects containing addressing have been translated correctly, or else

reject the message with an "Object Type Error" message (Appendix A.4.4.9) with subcode 4 ("Untranslated Object"). The error

message MUST include the NAT-Traversal object as the first TLV after the common header, and this is also true for any other error message generated as a reply. Otherwise, the message is processed essentially as normal. If no state needs to be updated for the message, the NAT-Traversal object can be effectively ignored. The other possibility is that a Response must be returned, either because

the message is the beginning of a handshake for a new flow, or it is a refresh for existing state. In both cases, the GIST node MUST create the Response in the normal way using the local form of the MRI, and its own NLI and (if necessary) SCD. It MUST also include the NAT-Traversal object as the first object in the Response after the common header.

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A NAT will intercept D-mode messages with the normal encapsulation containing such echoed NAT-Traversal objects. The NAT processing is a subset of the processing for the Q-mode encapsulated case:

1. Verify the existence of bindings for the data flow.
2. Leave the Message-Routing-Information object unchanged.
3. Modify the NLI and SCD objects for the Responding node if necessary, and create or update any bindings for C-mode signalling traffic.
4. Forward the message.

A GIST node receiving such a message MUST use the MRI from the NAT-Traversal object as the key to index its internal routing state; it MAY also store the translated MRI for additional (e.g. diagnostic) information, but this is not used in the GIST processing. The remainder of GIST processing is unchanged.

Note that Confirm messages are not given GIST-specific processing by the NAT. Thus, a Responding node which has delayed state installation until receiving the Confirm, only has available the untranslated MRI describing the flow, and the untranslated NLI as peer routing state. This would prevent the correct interpretation of the signalling messages; also, subsequent Query (refresh) messages would always be seen as route changes because of the NLI change. Therefore, a Responding node that wishes to delay state installation until receiving a Confirm must somehow reconstruct the translations when the Confirm arrives. How to do this is an implementation issue; one approach is to carry the translated objects as part of the Responder cookie which is echoed in the Confirm. Indeed, for one of the cookie constructions in [Section 8.5](#) this is automatic.

7.3. Interaction with IP Tunnelling

The interaction between GIST and IP tunnelling is very simple. An IP packet carrying a GIST message is treated exactly the same as any other packet with the same source and destination addresses: in other words, it is given the tunnel encapsulation and forwarded with the other data packets.

Tunnelled packets will not be identifiable as GIST messages until they leave the tunnel, since any router alert option and the standard

GIST protocol encapsulation (e.g. port numbers) will be hidden within

the standard tunnel encapsulation. If signalling is needed for the

tunnel itself, this has to be initiated as a separate signalling session by one of the tunnel endpoints - that is, the tunnel counts

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as a new flow. Because the relationship between signalling for the microflow and signalling for the tunnel as a whole will depend on the signalling application in question, it is a signalling application responsibility to be aware of the fact that tunnelling is taking place and to carry out additional signalling if necessary; in other words, at least one tunnel endpoint must be signalling application aware.

In some cases, it is the tunnel exit point (i.e. the node where tunnelled data and downstream signalling packets leave the tunnel) that will wish to carry out the tunnel signalling, but this node will not have knowledge or control of how the tunnel entry point is carrying out the data flow encapsulation. The information about how the inner MRI/SID relate to the tunnel MRI/SID needs to be carried in the signalling data from the tunnel entry point; this functionality is the equivalent to the RSVP SESSION_ASSOC object of [18]. In the NSIS protocol suite, these bindings are managed by the signalling applications, either implicitly (e.g. by SID re-use) or explicitly by carrying objects that bind the inner and outer SIDs as part of the NSLP payload.

7.4. IPv4-IPv6 Transition and Interworking

GIST itself is essentially IP version neutral: version dependencies are isolated in the formats of the Message-Routing-Information, Network-Layer-Information and Stack-Configuration-Data objects, and GIST also depends on the version independence of the protocols that support messaging associations. In mixed environments, GIST operation will be influenced by the IP transition mechanisms in use. This section provides a high level overview of how GIST is affected, considering only the currently predominant mechanisms.

Dual Stack: (As described in [36].) In mixed environments, GIST MUST use the same IP version for Q-mode encapsulated messages as given by the MRI of the flow it is signalling for, and SHOULD do so for other signalling also (see [Section 5.2.2](#)). Messages with mismatching versions MUST be rejected with a "MRI Validation Failure" error message (Appendix A.4.4.12) with subcode 1 ("IP Version Mismatch"). The IP version used in D-mode is closely tied to the IP version used by the data flow, so it is intrinsically impossible for an IPv4-only or IPv6-only GIST node to support signalling for flows using the other IP version. Hosts which are dual stack for applications and routers which are dual stack for forwarding need GIST implementations which can support both IP versions. Applications with a choice of IP versions might select a version based on which could be supported in the network by GIST, which could be established by invoking parallel discovery

procedures.

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Packet Translation: (Applicable to SIIT [9] and NAT-PT [19].) Some transition mechanisms allow IPv4 and IPv6 nodes to communicate by placing packet translators between them. From the GIST perspective, this should be treated essentially the same way as any other NAT operation (e.g. between internal and external addresses) as described in [Section 7.2](#). The translating node needs to be GIST-aware; it will have to translate the addressing payloads between IPv4 and IPv6 formats for flows which cross between the two. The translation rules for the fields in the MRI payload (including e.g. DiffServ-codepoint and flow-label) are as defined in [9].

Tunnelling: (Applicable to 6to4 [21].) Many transition mechanisms handle the problem of how an end to end IPv6 (or IPv4) flow can be carried over intermediate IPv4 (or IPv6) regions by tunnelling; the methods tend to focus on minimising the tunnel administration overhead.

From the GIST perspective, the treatment should be similar to any other IP tunnelling mechanism, as described in [Section 7.3](#). In particular, the end to end flow signalling will pass transparently through the tunnel, and signalling for the tunnel itself will have to be managed by the tunnel endpoints. However, additional considerations may arise because of special features of the tunnel management procedures. In particular, [22] is based on using an anycast address as the destination tunnel endpoint. GIST MAY use anycast destination addresses in the Q-mode encapsulation of D-mode messages if necessary, but MUST NOT use them in the Network-Layer-Information addressing field; unicast addresses MUST be used instead. Note that the addresses from the IP header are not used by GIST in matching requests and replies, so there is no requirement to use anycast source addresses.

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8. Security Considerations

The security requirement for GIST is to protect the signalling plane against identified security threats. For the signalling problem as

a whole, these threats have been outlined in [\[31\]](#); the NSIS framework [\[30\]](#) assigns a subset of the responsibilities to the NTLP. The main issues to be handled can be summarised as:

Message Protection: Signalling message content can be protected against eavesdropping, modification, injection and replay while in transit. This applies both to GIST payloads, and GIST should also provide such protection as a service to signalling applications between adjacent peers.

Routing State Integrity Protection: It is important that signalling messages are delivered to the correct nodes, and nowhere else. Here, 'correct' is defined as 'the appropriate nodes for the signalling given the Message-Routing-Information'. In the case where the MRI is based on the Flow Identification for path-coupled signalling, 'appropriate' means 'the same nodes that the infrastructure will route data flow packets through'. GIST has no role in deciding whether the data flow itself is being routed correctly; all it can do is ensure the signalling is routed consistently with it. GIST uses internal state to decide how to route signalling messages, and this state needs to be protected against corruption.

Prevention of Denial of Service Attacks: GIST nodes and the network have finite resources (state storage, processing power, bandwidth). The protocol tries to minimise exhaustion attacks against these resources and not allow GIST nodes to be used to launch attacks on other network elements.

The main additional issue is handling authorisation for executing signalling operations (e.g. allocating resources). This is assumed to be done in each signalling application.

In many cases, GIST relies on the security mechanisms available in messaging associations to handle these issues, rather than introducing new security measures. Obviously, this requires the interaction of these mechanisms with the rest of the GIST protocol to be understood and verified, and some aspects of this are discussed in [Section 5.7](#).

8.1. Message Confidentiality and Integrity

GIST can use messaging association functionality, specifically in this version TLS ([Section 5.7.3](#)), to ensure message confidentiality

and integrity. Implementation of this functionality is REQUIRED but its use for any given flow or signalling application is OPTIONAL.

In

some cases, confidentiality of GIST information itself is not likely to be a prime concern, in particular since messages are often sent

to

parties which are unknown ahead of time, although the content

visible

even at the GIST level gives significant opportunities for traffic analysis. Signalling applications may have their own mechanism for securing content as necessary; however, they may find it convenient to rely on protection provided by messaging associations, since it runs unbroken between signalling application peers.

8.2. Peer Node Authentication

Cryptographic protection (of confidentiality or integrity) requires

a

security association with session keys. These can be established by an authentication and key exchange protocol based on shared secrets, public key techniques or a combination of both. Authentication and key agreement is possible using the protocols associated with the messaging association being secured. TLS incorporates this functionality directly. GIST nodes rely on the messaging

association

protocol to authenticate the identity of the next hop, and GIST has no authentication capability of its own.

With routing state discovery, there are few effective ways to know what is the legitimate next or previous hop as opposed to an impostor. In other words, cryptographic authentication here only provides assurance that a node is 'who' it is (i.e. the legitimate owner of identity in some namespace), not 'what' it is (i.e. a node which is genuinely on the flow path and therefore can carry out signalling for a particular flow). Authentication provides only limited protection, in that a known peer is unlikely to lie about

its

role. Additional methods of protection against this type of attack are considered in [Section 8.3](#) below.

It is an implementation issue whether peer node authentication should

be made signalling application dependent; for example, whether successful authentication could be made dependent on presenting credentials related to a particular signalling role (e.g. signalling for QoS). The abstract API of [Appendix B](#) leaves open such policy

and

authentication interactions between GIST and the NSLP it is serving. However, it does allow applications to inspect the authenticated identity of the peer to which a message will be sent before transmission.

8.3. Routing State Integrity

Internal state in a node (see [Section 4.2](#)) is used to route messages.

If this state is corrupted, signalling messages may be misdirected.

In the case where the MRM is path-coupled, the messages need to be routed identically to the data flow described by the MRI, and the routing state table is the GIST view of how these flows are being routed through the network in the immediate neighbourhood of the node. Routes are only weakly secured (e.g. there is no cryptographic binding of a flow to a route), and there is no authoritative information about flow routes other than the current state of the network itself. Therefore, consistency between GIST and network routing state has to be ensured by directly interacting with the IP routing mechanisms to ensure that the signalling peers are the appropriate ones for any given flow. An overview of security issues and techniques in this context is provided in [\[38\]](#).

In one direction, peer identification is installed and refreshed only on receiving a Response (compare Figure 4). This MUST echo the cookie from a previous Query, which will have been sent along the flow path with the Q-mode encapsulation, i.e. end-to-end addressed. Hence, only the true next peer or an on-path attacker will be able to generate such a message, provided freshness of the cookie can be checked at the querying node.

In the other direction, peer identification MAY be installed directly on receiving a Query containing addressing information for the signalling source. However, any node in the network could generate such a message; indeed, many nodes in the network could be the genuine upstream peer for a given flow. To protect against this, four strategies are used:

Filtering: the receiving node MAY reject signalling messages which claim to be for flows with flow source addresses which could be ruled out by ingress filtering. An extension of this technique would be for the receiving node to monitor the data plane and to check explicitly that the flow packets are arriving over the same interface and if possible from the same link layer neighbour as the D-mode signalling packets. If they are not, it is likely that at least one of the signalling or flow packets is being spoofed.

Return routability checking: the receiving node MAY refuse to install upstream state until it has completed a Confirm handshake with the peer. This echoes the Response cookie of the Response, and discourages nodes from using forged source addresses. This also plays a role in denial of service prevention, see below.

Authorisation: a stronger approach is to carry out a peer authorisation check (see [Section 4.4.2](#)) as part of messaging association setup. The ideal situation is that the receiving node

can determine the correct upstream node address from routing
table
analysis or knowledge of local topology constraints, and then

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verify from the authorised peer database (APD) that the peer has this IP address. This is only technically feasible in a limited set of deployment environments. The APD can also be used to list the subsets of nodes which are feasible peers for particular source or destination subnets, or to blacklist nodes which have previously originated attacks or exist in untrustworthy networks, which provide weaker levels of authorisation checking.

SID segregation: The routing state lookup for a given MRI and NSLPID

MUST also take the SID into account. A malicious node can only overwrite existing GIST routing state if it can guess the corresponding SID; it can insert state with random SID values,

but

generally this will not be used to route signalling messages for which state has already been legitimately established.

8.4. Denial of Service Prevention and Overload Protection

GIST is designed so that in general each Query only generates at most one Response which is at most only slightly larger than the Query, so

that a GIST node cannot become the source of a denial of service amplification attack. (There is a special case of retransmitted Response messages, see [Section 5.3.3.](#))

However, GIST can still be subjected to denial-of-service attacks where an attacker using forged source addresses forces a node to establish state without return routability, causing a problem similar

to TCP SYN flood attacks. Furthermore, an adversary might use modified or replayed unprotected signalling messages as part of such an attack. There are two types of state attacks and one computational resource attack. In the first state attack, an attacker floods a node with messages that the node has to store

until

it can determine the next hop. If the destination address is chosen so that there is no GIST-capable next hop, the node would accumulate messages for several seconds until the discovery retransmission attempt times out. The second type of state-based attack causes

GIST

state to be established by bogus messages. A related computational/network-resource attack uses unverified messages to cause a node query an authentication or authorisation infrastructure, or attempt to cryptographically verify a digital signature.

We use a combination of two defences against these attacks:

1. The responding node need not establish a session or discover its next hop on receiving the Query, but MAY wait for a Confirm, possibly on a secure channel. If the channel exists, the

additional delay is one one-way delay and the total is no more than the minimal theoretically possible delay of a three-way handshake, i.e., 1.5 node-to-node round-trip times. The delay

gets significantly larger if a new connection needs to be established first.

2. The Response to the Query contains a cookie, which is repeated in the Confirm. State is only established for messages that contain a valid cookie. The setup delay is also 1.5 round-trip times. This mechanism is similar to that in SCTP [20] and other modern protocols.

There is a potential overload condition if a node is flooded with Query or Confirm messages. One option is for the node to bypass these messages altogether as described in [Section 4.3.2](#), effectively falling back to being a non-NSIS node. If this is not possible, a node MAY still choose to limit the rate at which it processes Query messages and discard the excess, although it SHOULD first adapt its policy to one of sending Responses statelessly if it is not already doing so. A conformant GIST node will automatically decrease the load by retransmitting Queries with an exponential backoff. A non-conformant node (launching a DoS attack) can generate uncorrelated Queries at an arbitrary rate, which makes it hard to apply rate-limiting without also affecting genuine handshake attempts.

However,

if Confirm messages are requested, the cookie binds the message to a Querying node address which has been validated by a return routability check and rate-limits can be applied per-source.

Once a node has decided to establish routing state, there may still be transport and security state to be established between peers. This state setup is also vulnerable to denial of service attacks. GIST relies on the implementations of the lower layer protocols that make up messaging associations to mitigate such attacks. In the current specification, the querying node is always the one wishing

to

establish a messaging association, so it is the responding node that needs to be protected. It is possible for an attacking node to execute these protocols legally to set up large numbers of associations that were never used, and responding node implementations MAY use rate-limiting or other techniques to control the load in such cases.

Signalling applications can use the services provided by GIST to defend against certain (e.g. flooding) denial of service attacks.

In

particular, they can elect to process only messages from peers that have passed a return routability check or been authenticated at the messaging association level (see [Appendix B.2](#)). Signalling applications that accept messages under other circumstances (in particular, before routing state has been fully established at the GIST level) need to take this into account when designing their denial of service prevention mechanisms, for example by not creating

local state as a result of processing such messages. Signalling

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applications can also manage overload by invoking flow control, as described in [Section 4.1.1](#).

8.5. Requirements on Cookie Mechanisms

The requirements on the Query cookie can be summarised as follows:

Liveness: The cookie must be live, that is, it must change from one handshake to the next. To prevent replay attacks.

Unpredictability: The cookie must not be guessable e.g. from a sequence or timestamp. To prevent direct forgery based on seeing a history of captured messages.

Easily validated: It must be efficient for the Q-Node to validate that a particular cookie matches an in-progress handshake, for a routing state machine which already exists. To discard responses which have been randomly generated by an adversary, or to discard responses to queries which were generated with forged source addresses or an incorrect address in the included NLI object.

Uniqueness: The cookie must be unique to a given handshake since it is actually used to match the Response to a handshake anyway,
e.g. because of messaging association multiplexing.

Likewise, the requirements on the Responder cookie can be summarised as follows:

Liveness: The cookie must be live as above. To prevent replay attacks.

Creation simplicity: The cookie must be lightweight to generate.
To avoid resource exhaustion at the responding node.

Validation simplicity: It must be simple for the R-node to validate that an R-cookie was generated by itself and no-one else, without storing state about the handshake it was generated for.

Binding: The cookie must be bound to the routing state that will be installed. To prevent use with different routing state e.g. in a modified Confirm. The routing state here includes the NLI of the Query, the MRI/NSLPID for the messaging, and the interface on which the Query was received.

A suitable implementation for the Q-Cookie is a cryptographically strong random number which is unique for this routing state machine handshake. A node MUST implement this or an equivalently strong mechanism. Guidance on random number generation can be found in

[32].

A suitable implementation for the R-Cookie is as follows:

```
R-Cookie = liveness data + hash (locally known secret,  
                                Q-Node NLI, MRI, NSLPID,  
                                reception interface,  
                                liveness data)
```

A node MUST implement this or an equivalently strong mechanism. There are several alternatives for the liveness data. One is to use a timestamp like SCTP. Another is to give the local secret a (rapid)

rollover, with the liveness data as the generation number of the secret, like IKEv2. In both cases, the liveness data has to be carried outside the hash, to allow the hash to be verified at the Responder. Another approach is to replace the hash with encryption under a locally known secret, in which case the liveness data does not need to be carried in the clear. Any symmetric cipher immune to known plaintext attacks can be used.

To support the validation simplicity requirement, the Responder can check the liveness data to filter out some blind (flooding) attacks before beginning any cryptographic cookie verification. To support this usage, the liveness data must be carried in the clear and not be

easily guessable; this rules out the timestamp approach, and suggests the use of sequence of secrets with the liveness data identifying the position in the sequence. The secret strength and rollover frequency must be high enough that the secret cannot be brute-forced during its lifetime. Note that any node can use a Query to discover the current

liveness data, so it remains hard to defend against sophisticated attacks which disguise such probes within a flood of Queries from forged source addresses. Therefore, it remains important to use an efficient hashing mechanism or equivalent.

If a node receives a message for which cookie validation fails, it MAY return an "Object Value Error" message (Appendix A.4.4.10) with subcode 4 ("Invalid Cookie") to the sender, as well as dropping the message. However, sending the error in general makes a node a source of backscatter. Therefore, this MUST only be enabled selectively, e.g. during initial deployment or debugging.

8.6. Security Protocol Selection Policy

This specification defines a single mandatory-to-implement security

protocol (TLS, [Section 5.7.3](#)). However, it is possible to define additional security protocols in the future, for example to allow re-use with other types of credentials, or migrate towards protocols with stronger security properties. In addition, use of any security

protocol for a messaging association is optional. Security protocol selection is carried out as part of the GIST handshake mechanism ([Section 4.4.1](#)).

The selection process may be vulnerable to downgrade attacks, where

a

man in the middle modifies the capabilities offered in the Query or Response to mislead the peers into accepting a lower level of protection than is achievable. There is a two part defence against such attacks (the following is based the same concepts as [\[25\]](#)):

1. The Response does not depend on the Stack-Proposal in the Query (see [Section 5.7.1](#)). Therefore, tampering with the Query has no effect on the resulting messaging association configuration.
2. The Responding node's Stack-Proposal is echoed in the Confirm. The Responding node checks this to validate that the proposal it made in the Response is the same as the one received by the Querying node. Note that as a consequence of the previous

point,

the Responding node does not have to remember the proposal explicitly, since it is a static function of local policy.

The validity of the second part depends on the strength of the security protection provided for the Confirm. If the Querying node is prepared to create messaging associations with null security properties (e.g. TCP only), the defence is ineffective, since the man in the middle can re-insert the original Responder's Stack-Proposal, and the Responding node will assume that the minimal protection is a consequence of Querying node limitations. However, if the messaging association provides at least integrity protection that cannot be broken in real-time, the Confirm cannot be modified

in

this way. Therefore, if the Querying node does not apply a security policy to the messaging association protocols to be created that ensures at least this minimal level of protection is met, it remains open to the threat that a downgrade has occurred. Applying such a policy ensures capability discovery process will result in the setup of a messaging association with the correct security properties as appropriate for the two peers involved.

8.7. Residual Threats

Taking the above security mechanisms into account, the main residual threats against NSIS are three types of on-path attack, as well as implementation-related weaknesses.

An on-path attacker who can intercept the initial Query can do most things it wants to the subsequent signalling. It is very hard to protect against this at the GIST level; the only defence is to use strong messaging association security to see whether the Responding

node is authorised to take part in NSLP signalling exchanges. To some extent, this behaviour is logically indistinguishable from correct operation, so it is easy to see why defence is difficult. Note that an on-path attacker of this sort can do anything to the traffic as well as the signalling. Therefore, the additional threat induced by the signalling weakness seems tolerable.

At the NSLP level, there is a concern about transitivity of trust of correctness of routing along the signalling chain. The NSLP at the querying node can have good assurance that it is communicating with an on-path peer or a node delegated by the on-path node by depending on the security protection provided by GIST. However, it has no assurance that the node beyond the responder is also on-path, or that

the MRI (in particular) is not being modified by the responder to refer to a different flow. Therefore, if it sends signalling messages with payloads (e.g. authorisation tokens) which are valuable

to nodes beyond the adjacent hop, it is up to the NSLP to ensure that

the appropriate chain of trust exists. This could be achieved using higher layer security protection such as CMS [29].

There is a further residual attack by a node which is not on the path

of the Query, but is on the path of the Response, or is able to use a

Response from one handshake to interfere with another. The attacker modifies the Response to cause the Querying node to form an adjacency

with it rather than the true peer. In principle, this attack could be prevented by including an additional cryptographic object in the Response which ties the Response to the initial Query and the routing

state and can be verified by the Querying node.

Certain security aspects of GIST operation depend on signalling application behaviour: a poorly implemented or compromised NSLP could

degrade GIST security. However, the degradation would only affect GIST handling of the NSLP's own signalling traffic or overall resource usage at the node where the weakness occurred, and implementation weakness or compromise could have just as great an effect within the NSLP itself. GIST depends on NSLPs to choose SIDs appropriately ([Section 4.1.3](#)). If NSLPs choose non-random SIDs this makes off-path attacks based on SID guessing easier to carry out. NSLPs can also leak information in structured SIDs, but they could leak similar information in the NSLP payload data anyway.

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9. IANA Considerations

This section defines the registries and initial codepoint assignments

for GIST. It also defines the procedural requirements to be followed

by IANA in allocating new codepoints. Note that the guidelines on the technical criteria to be followed in evaluating requests for new codepoint assignments are covered normatively in a separate document which considers the NSIS protocol suite in a unified way. That document discusses the general issue of NSIS extensibility, as well as the technical criteria for particular registries; see [14] for further details.

The registry definitions that follow leave large blocks of codes marked "Reserved - not to be allocated". This is to allow a future revision of this specification or another Standards Track document

to modify the relative space given to different allocation policies without having to change the initial rules retrospectively if they turn out to have been inappropriate, e.g. if the space for one particular policy is exhausted too quickly.

The allocation policies used in this section follow the guidance given in [6]. In addition, for a number of the GIST registries,

this specification also defines private/experimental ranges as discussed in [11]. Note that the only environment in which these codepoints can validly be used is a closed one in which the experimenter knows all the experiments in progress.

This specification allocates the following codepoints in existing registries:

Well-known UDP port XXX as the destination port for Q-mode encapsulated GIST messages ([Section 5.3](#)).

This specification creates the following registries with the structures as defined below:

NSLP Identifiers: Each signalling application requires the assignment of one of more NSLPIDs. The following NSLPID is allocated by this specification:

NSLPID	Application
0	Used for GIST messages not related to any signalling

| application.

|
+-----+-----
+

Every other NSLPID that uses an MRM which requires RAO usage MUST

be associated with a specific RAO value; multiple NSLPIDs MAY be associated with the same value. RAO value assignments require a specification of the processing associated with messages that carry the value. NSLP specifications MUST normatively depend on this document for the processing, specifically [Section 4.3.1](#), [Section 4.3.4](#) and [Section 5.3.2](#). The NSLPID is a 16 bit integer, and allocation policies for further values are as follows:

1-32703: IESG Approval

32704-32767: Private/Experimental Use

32768-65536: Reserved - not to be allocated

GIST Message Type: The GIST common header (Appendix A.1) contains a 1 byte message type field. The following values are allocated by this specification:

MType	Message
0	Query
1	Response
2	Confirm
3	Data
4	Error
5	MA-Hello

Allocation policies for further values are as follows:

6-63: Standards Action

64-119: Expert Review

120-127: Private/Experimental Use

128-255: Reserved - not to be allocated

Object Types: There is a 12-bit field in the object header (Appendix A.2). The following values for object type are defined by this specification:

OType	Object Type
0	Message Routing Information
1	Session ID
2	Network Layer Information
3	Stack Proposal
4	Stack Configuration Data
5	Query Cookie
6	Responder Cookie
7	NAT Traversal
8	NSLP Data
9	Error
10	Hello ID

Allocation policies for further values are as follows:

10-1023: Standards Action

1024-1999: Specification Required

2000-2047: Private/Experimental Use

2048-4095: Reserved - not to be allocated

When a new object type is allocated according to one of the first two policies, the specification MUST provide the object format

and

define the setting of the extensibility bits (A/B, see [Appendix A.2.1](#)).

Message Routing Methods: GIST allows multiple message routing methods (see [Section 3.3](#)). The MRM is indicated in the leading byte of the MRI object (Appendix A.3.1). This specification defines the following values:

MRM-ID	Message Routing Method
0	Path Coupled MRM
1	Loose End MRM

Allocation policies for further values are as follows:

2-63: Standards Action

64-119: Expert Review

120-127: Private/Experimental Use

128-255: Reserved - not to be allocated

When a new MRM is defined according to one of the first two policies, a specification document will be required. This MUST provide the information described in [Section 3.3](#).

MA-Protocol-IDs: Each protocol that can be used in a messaging association is identified by a 1-byte MA-Protocol-ID ([Section 5.7](#)). Note that the MA-Protocol-ID is not an IP Protocol number; indeed, some of the messaging association protocols - such as TLS - do not have an IP Protocol number. This is used as a tag in the Stack-Proposal and Stack-Configuration-Data objects (Appendix A.3.4 and [Appendix A.3.5](#)). The following values are defined by this specification:

MA-Protocol-ID	Protocol
0	Reserved - not to be allocated
1	TCP opened in the forwards direction
2	TLS initiated in the forwards direction

Allocation policies for further values are as follows:

3-63: Standards Action

64-119: Expert Review

120-127: Private/Experimental Use

128-255: Reserved - not to be allocated

When a new MA-Protocol-ID is allocated according to one of the first two policies, a specification document will be required. This MUST define the format for the MA-protocol-options field (if any) in the Stack-Configuration-Data object that is needed to define its configuration. If a protocol is to be used for reliable message transfer, it MUST be described how delivery errors are to be detected by GIST. Extensions to include new channel security protocols MUST include a description of how to integrate the functionality described in [Section 3.9](#) with the

rest

of GIST operation. If the new MA-Protocol-ID can be used in conjunction with existing ones (for example, a new transport protocol option which could be used with Transport Layer Security), the specification MUST define the interaction between the two.

Error Codes/Subcodes: There is a 2 byte error code and 1 byte subcode in the Value field of the Error object (Appendix A.4.1). Error codes 1-12 are defined in [Appendix A.4.4](#) together with subcodes 0-5 (code 1), 0-5 (code 9), 0-5 (code 10), and 0-2 (code 12). Additional codes and subcodes are allocated on a first-

come,

first-served basis. When a new code/subcode combination is allocated, the following information MUST be provided:

Error case: textual name of error

Error class: from the categories given in [Appendix A.4.3](#)

Error code: allocated by IANA, if a new code is required

Error subcode: subcode point, also allocated by IANA

Additional information: what additional information fields it is mandatory to include in the error message, from [Appendix A.4.2](#)

Additional Information Types: An Error object (Appendix A.4.1) may contain Additional Information fields. Each possible field type is identified by a 16-bit AI-Type. AI-Types 1-4 are defined in [Appendix A.4.2](#); additional AI-Types are allocated on a first-

come,

first-served basis.

10. Acknowledgements

This document is based on the discussions within the IETF NSIS working group. It has been informed by prior work and formal and informal inputs from: Cedric Aoun, Attila Bader, Roland Bless, Bob Braden, Marcus Brunner, Benoit Campedel, Yoshiko Chong, Luis Cordeiro, Elwyn Davies, Christian Dickmann, Pasi Eronen, Alan Ford, Xiaoming Fu, Bo Gao, Ruediger Geib, Eleanor Hepworth, Thomas Herzog, Cheng Hong, Teemu Huovila, Jia Jia, Cornelia Kappler, Georgios Karagiannis, Ruud Klaver, Chris Lang, John Loughney, Allison Mankin, Jukka Manner, Pete McCann, Andrew McDonald, Glenn Morrow, Dave Oran, Andreas Pashalidis, Henning Peters, Tom Phelan, Akbar Rahman, Takako Sanda, Charles Shen, Melinda Shore, Martin Stiernerling, Martijn Swanink, Mike Thomas, Hannes Tschofenig, Sven van den Bosch, Michael Welzl, Lars Westberg, and Mayi Zoumaro-djayoon. Parts of the TLS usage description ([Section 5.7.3](#)) were derived from the Diameter base

protocol specification, [RFC3588](#). In addition, Hannes Tschofenig provided a detailed set of review comments on the security section, and Andrew McDonald provided the formal description for the initial packet formats and the name matching algorithm for TLS. Chris

Lang's

implementation work provided objective feedback on the clarity and feasibility of the specification, and he also provided the state machine description and the initial error catalogue and formats. Magnus Westerlund carried out a detailed AD review which identified

a

number of issues and led to significant clarifications, which was followed by an even more detailed IESG review, with comments from Jari Arkko, Ross Callon, Brian Carpenter, Lisa Dusseault, Lars Eggert, Ted Hardie, Sam Hartman, Russ Housley, Cullen Jennings, and

a

very detailed analysis by Adrian Farrel from the Routing Area directorate.

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February 2007.

Appendix A. Bit-Level Formats and Error Messages

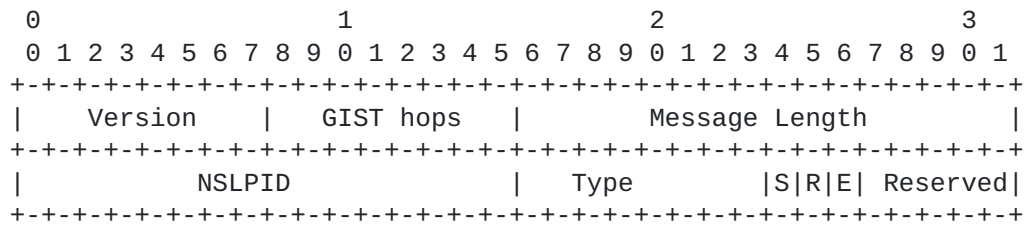
This appendix provides formats for the various component parts of the GIST messages defined abstractly in [Section 5.2](#). The whole of this appendix is normative.

Each GIST message consists of a header and a sequence of objects. The GIST header has a specific format, described in more detail in [Appendix A.1](#) below. An NSLP message is one object within a GIST message. Note that GIST itself provides the NSLP message length information and signalling application identification. General object formatting guidelines are provided in [Appendix A.2](#) below, followed in [Appendix A.3](#) by the format for each object. Finally, [Appendix A.4](#) provides the formats used for error reporting.

In the following object diagrams, '/' is used to indicate a variable sized field and ':' is used to indicate a field that is optionally present.

A.1. The GIST Common Header

This header begins all GIST messages. It has a fixed format, as shown below.



- Version (8 bits): The GIST protocol version number.
- GIST hops (8 bits): A hop count for the number of GIST-aware nodes this message can still be processed by (including the destination).
- Message Length (16 bits): The total number of 32-bit words in the message after the common header itself.
- NSLPID (16 bits): IANA assigned identifier of the signalling application the message refers to.
- Type (8 bits): The GIST message type (Query, Response, etc.).

S flag: S=1 if the IP source address is the same as the signalling source address, S=0 if it is different.

R flag: R=1 if a reply to this message is explicitly requested.

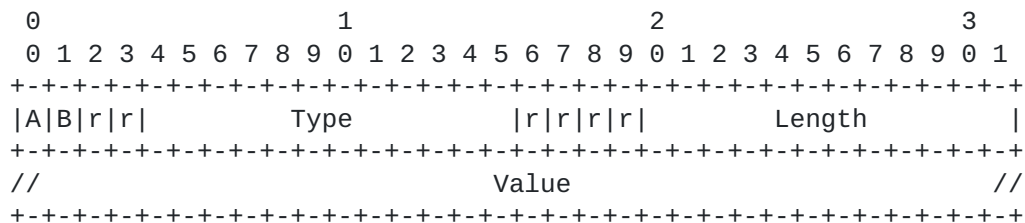
E flag: E=1 if the message was explicitly routed ([Section 7.1.5](#)).

The rules governing the use of the R-flag depend on the GIST message type. It MUST always be set (R=1) in Query messages, since these always elicit a Response, and never in Confirm, Data or Error messages. It MAY be set in an MA-Hello; if set, another MA-Hello MUST be sent in reply. It MAY be set in a Response, but MUST be set if the Response contains a Responder cookie; if set, a Confirm MUST be sent in reply. The E flag MUST NOT be set unless the message type is a Data message.

Parsing failures may be caused by unknown Version or Type values, inconsistent R or E flag setting, or a Message Length inconsistent with the set of objects carried. In all cases the receiver MUST if possible return a "Common Header Parse Error" message (Appendix A.4.4.1) with the appropriate subcode, and not process the message further.

[A.2. General Object Format](#)

Each object begins with a fixed header giving the object Type and object Length. This is followed by the object Value, which is a whole number of 32-bit words long.



A/B flags: The bits marked 'A' and 'B' are extensibility flags which are defined in [Appendix A.2.1](#) below; the remaining bits marked 'r' are reserved.

Type (12 bits): An IANA-assigned identifier for the type of object.

Length (12 bits): Length has the units of 32-bit words, and measures the length of Value. If there is no Value, Length=0. If the Length is not consistent with the contents of the object, an "Object Value Error" message (Appendix A.4.4.10) with subcode 0 "Incorrect Length" MUST be returned and the message dropped.

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Value (variable): Value is (therefore) a whole number of 32 bit words. If there is any padding required, the length and location are defined by the object-specific format information; objects which contain variable length (e.g. string) types may need to include additional length subfields to do so.

Any part of the object used for padding or defined as reserved (marked 'Reserved' or 'Rsv' or, in the case of individual bits, 'r' in the diagrams below) MUST be set to 0 on transmission and MUST be ignored on reception.

A.2.1. Object Extensibility

The leading two bits of the TLV header are used to signal the desired treatment for objects whose Type field is unknown at the receiver. The following three categories of object have been identified, and are described here.

AB=00 ("Mandatory"): If the object is not understood, the entire message containing it MUST be rejected with an "Object Type Error" message (Appendix A.4.4.9) with subcode 1 ("Unrecognised Object").

AB=01 ("Ignore"): If the object is not understood, it MUST be deleted and the rest of the message processed as usual.

AB=10 ("Forward"): If the object is not understood, it MUST be retained unchanged in any message forwarded as a result of message processing, but not stored locally.

The combination AB=11 is reserved. If a message is received containing an object with AB=11, it MUST be rejected with an "Object Type Error" message (Appendix A.4.4.9) with subcode 5 ("Invalid Extensibility Flags").

These extensibility rules define only the processing within the GIST layer. There is no requirement on GIST implementations to support an extensible service interface to signalling applications, so unrecognised objects with AB=01 or AB=10 do not need to be indicated to NSLPs. If a new GIST object is defined which requires such an interaction, it should be specified with AB=11.

A.3. GIST TLV Objects

A.3.1. Message-Routing-Information

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IP-Ver (4 bits): The IP version number, 4 or 6.

Source/Destination address (variable): The source and destination addresses are always present and of the same type; their length depends on the value in the IP-Ver field.

Source/Dest Prefix (each 8 bits): The length of the mask to be applied to the source and destination addresses for address wildcarding. In the normal case where the MRI refers only to traffic between specific host addresses, the Source/Dest Prefix values would both be 32/128 for IPv4/6 respectively.

P flag: P=1 means that the Protocol field is significant.

IP
the
IP
option headers. This is therefore not necessarily the same as the
Next Header value from the base IPv6 header.

Protocol (8 bits): The IP protocol number. This MUST be ignored if P=0. In the case of IPv6, the Protocol field refers to the true upper layer protocol carried by the packets, i.e. excluding any

T flag: T=1 means that DiffServ field (DS-field) is significant.

DS-field (6 bits): The DiffServ field. See [\[7\]](#) and [\[24\]](#).

F flag: F=1 means that flow label is present and is significant. F MUST NOT be set if IP-Ver is not 6.

Flow Label (20 bits): The flow label; only present if F=1. If F=0, the entire 32 bit word containing the Flow Label is absent.

S flag: S=1 means that the SPI field is present and is significant. The S flag MUST be 0 if the P flag is 0.

32
SPI field (32 bits): The SPI field; see [\[37\]](#). If S=0, the entire
bit word containing the SPI is absent.

port
A/B flags: These can only be set if P=1. If either is set, the
fields are also present. If P=0, the A/B flags MUST both be zero and the word containing the port numbers is absent.

is
Source/Destination Port (each 16 bits): If either of A (source), B (destination) is set the word containing the port numbers is included in the object. However, the contents of each field is only significant if the corresponding flag is set; otherwise, the contents of the field is regarded as padding, and the MRI refers to all ports (i.e. acts as a wildcard). If the flag is set and Port=0x0000, the MRI will apply to a specific port, whose value

not yet known. If neither of A or B is set, the word is absent.

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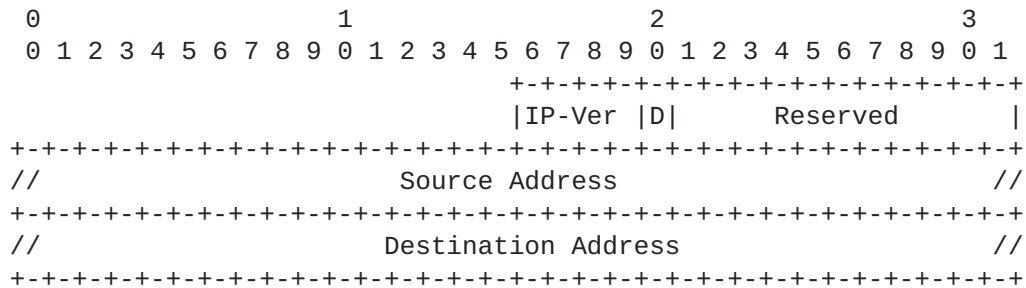
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D flag: The Direction flag has the following meaning: the value 0 means 'in the same direction as the flow' (i.e. downstream), and the value 1 means 'in the opposite direction to the flow' (i.e. upstream).

The MRI format defines a number of constraints on the allowed combinations of flags and fields in the object. If these constraints are violated this constitutes a parse error, and an "Object Value Error" message (Appendix A.4.4.10) with subcode 2 ("Invalid Flag-Field Combination") MUST be returned.

A.3.1.2. Loose-End MRM

In the case of the loose-end MRM, the addressing information takes the following format. The N-flag N=0 for this MRM.



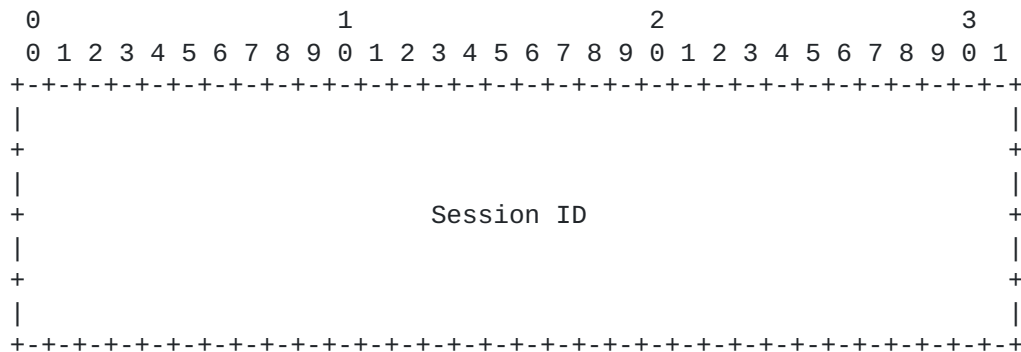
IP-Ver (4 bits): The IP version number, 4 or 6.

Source/Destination address (variable): The source and destination addresses are always present and of the same type; their length depends on the value in the IP-Ver field.

D flag: The Direction flag has the following meaning: the value 0 means 'towards the edge of the network', and the value 1 means 'from the edge of the network'. Note that for Q-mode messages, the only valid value is D=0 (see [Section 5.8.2](#)).

A.3.2. Session Identification

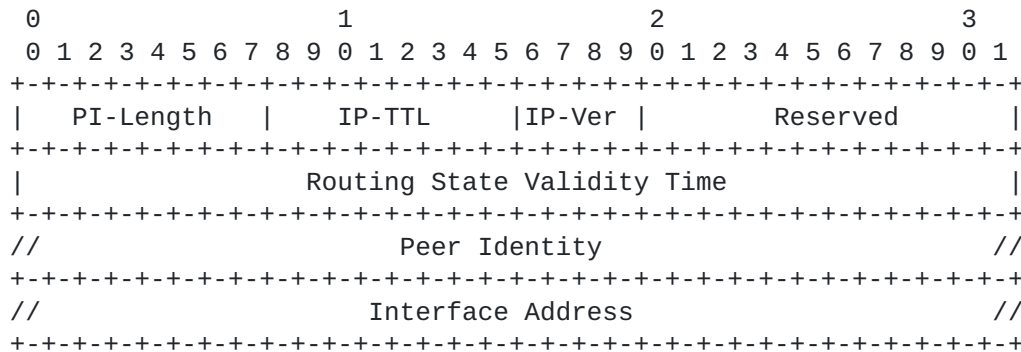
Type: Session-Identification
Length: Fixed (4 32-bit words)



A.3.3. Network-Layer-Information

Type: Network-Layer-Information

Length: Variable (depends on length of Peer-Identity and IP version)

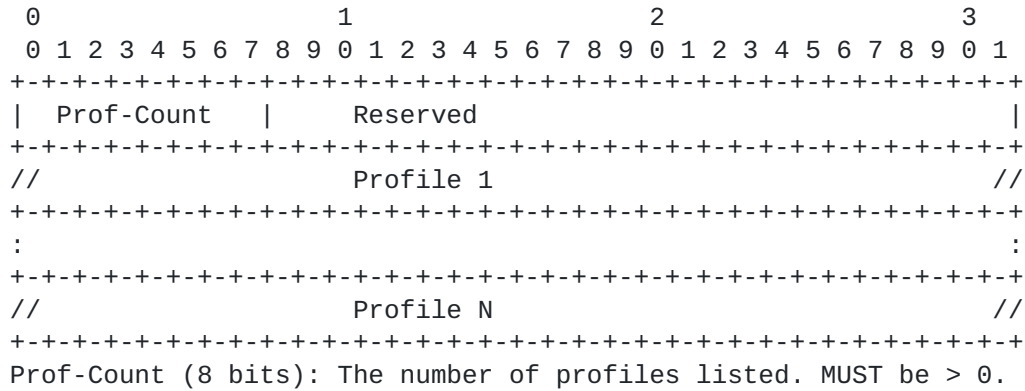


- PI-Length (8 bits): The byte length of the Peer Identity field.
- Peer Identity (variable): The Peer Identity field. Note that the Peer-Identity field itself is padded to a whole number of words.
- IP-TTL (8 bits): Initial or reported IP layer TTL.
- IP-Ver (4 bits): The IP version for the Interface Address field.
- Interface Address (variable): The IP address allocated to the interface, matching the IP-Ver field.
- Routing State Validity Time (32 bits): The time for which the routing state for this flow can be considered correct without a refresh. Given in milliseconds. The value 0 (zero) is reserved and MUST NOT be used.

A.3.4. Stack Proposal

Type: Stack-Proposal

Length: Variable (depends on number of profiles and size of each profile)



Each profile is itself a sequence of protocol layers, and the profile

is formatted as a list as follows:

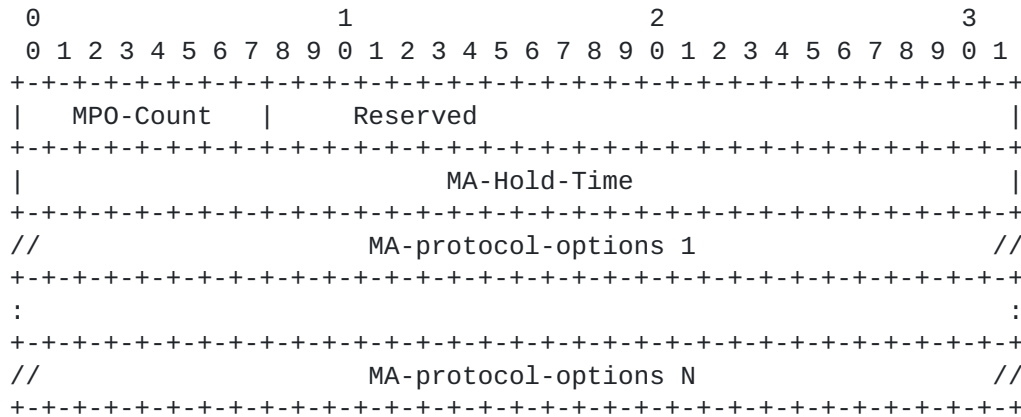
- o The first byte is a count of the number of layers in the profile. MUST be > 0.
- o This is followed by a sequence of 1-byte MA-Protocol-IDs as described in [Section 5.7](#).
- o The profile is padded to a word boundary with 0, 1, 2 or 3 zero bytes. These bytes MUST be ignored at the receiver.

If there are no profiles (Prof-Count=0) then an "Object Value Error" message (Appendix A.4.4.10) with subcode 1 ("Value Not Supported") MUST be returned; if a particular profile is empty (the leading byte of the profile is zero), then subcode 3 ("Empty List") MUST be used. In both cases, the message MUST be dropped.

A.3.5. Stack-Configuration-Data

Type: Stack-Configuration-Data

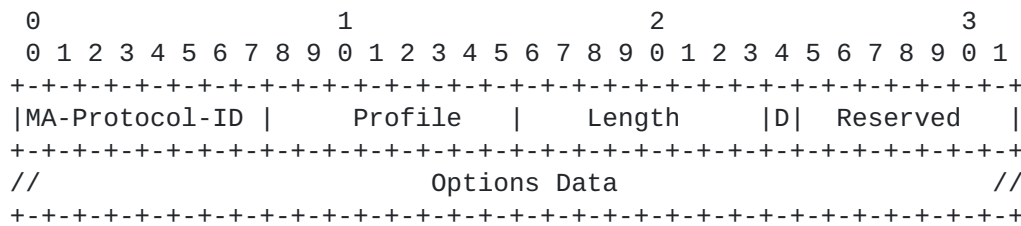
Length: Variable (depends on number of protocols and size of each MA-protocol-options field)



MPO-Count (8 bits): The number of MA-protocol-options fields present (these contain their own length information). The MPO-Count MAY be zero, but this will only be the case if none of the MA-protocols referred to in the Stack-Proposal require option data.

MA-Hold-Time (32 bits): The time for which the messaging association will be held open without traffic or a hello message. Note that this value is given in milliseconds, so the default time of 30 seconds ([Section 4.4.5](#)) corresponds to a value of 30000. The value 0 (zero) is reserved and MUST NOT be used.

The MA-protocol-options fields are formatted as follows:



MA-Protocol-ID (8 bits): Protocol identifier as described in [Section 5.7](#).

Profile (8 bits): Tag indicating which profile from the accompanying Stack-Proposal object this applies to. Profiles are numbered from 1 upwards; the special value 0 indicates 'applies to all profiles'.

Length (8 bits): The byte length of MA-protocol-options field that follows. This will be zero-padded up to the next word boundary.

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D flag: If set (D=1), this protocol MUST NOT be used for a messaging association.

Options Data (variable): Any options data for this protocol. Note that the format of the options data might differ depending on whether the field is in a Query or Response.

A.3.6. Query Cookie

Type: Query-Cookie

Length: Variable (selected by querying node)

```

      0                               1                               2                               3
      0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 1
+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+
//                               Query Cookie                               //
+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+

```

The contents are implementation defined. See [Section 8.5](#) for further discussion.

A.3.7. Responder Cookie

Type: Responder-Cookie

Length: Variable (selected by responding node)

```

      0                               1                               2                               3
      0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 1
+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+
//                               Responder Cookie                               //
+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+

```

The contents are implementation defined. See [Section 8.5](#) for further discussion.

A.3.8. Hello-ID

Type: Hello-ID

Length: Fixed (1 32-bit word)


```

      0             1             2             3
      0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 1
+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+
|                                     Hello-ID                                     |
+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+

```

The contents are implementation defined. See [Section 5.2.2](#) for further discussion.

A.3.9. NAT Traversal

Type: NAT-Traversal

Length: Variable (depends on length of contained fields)

This object is used to support the NAT traversal mechanisms described in [Section 7.2.2](#).

```

      0             1             2             3
      0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 1
+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+
| MRI-Length   | Type-Count   | NAT-Count   | Reserved   |
+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+
//              Original Message-Routing-Information              //
+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+
//              List of translated objects                        //
+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+
| Length of opaque information |                                     |
+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+
//              Information replaced by NAT #1                    |
+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+
:                                                         :
+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+
| Length of opaque information |                                     |
+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+
//              Information replaced by NAT #N                    |
+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+---+

```

MRI-Length (8 bits): The length of the included MRI payload in 32-bit words.

Original Message-Routing-Information (variable): The MRI data from when the message was first sent, not including the object header.

Type-Count (8 bits): The number of objects in the 'List of translated objects' field.

List of translated objects (variable): This field lists the types of

the objects that were translated by every NAT through which the message has passed. Each element in the list is a 16-bit field containing the first 16 bits of the object TLV header, including the AB extensibility flags, two reserved bits, and 12 bit object type. The list is initialised by the first NAT on the path; subsequent NATs may delete elements in the list. Padded with 2 null bytes if necessary.

NAT-Count (8 bits): The number of NATs traversed by the message, and

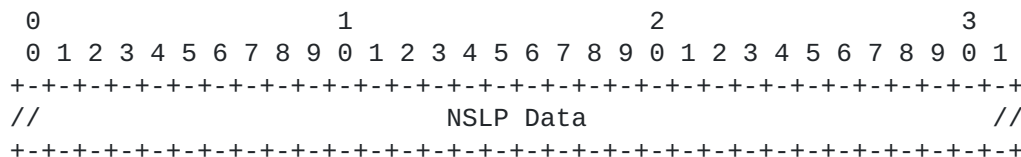
the number of opaque payloads at the end of the object. The length fields for each opaque payload are byte counts, not including the 2 bytes of the length field itself. Note that each opaque information field is zero-padded to the next 32-bit word boundary if necessary.

A.3.10. NSLP Data

Type: NSLP-Data

Length: Variable (depends on NSLP)

This object is used to deliver data between NSLPs. GIST regards the data as a number of complete 32-bit words, as given by the length field in the TLV; any padding to a word boundary must be carried out within the NSLP itself.

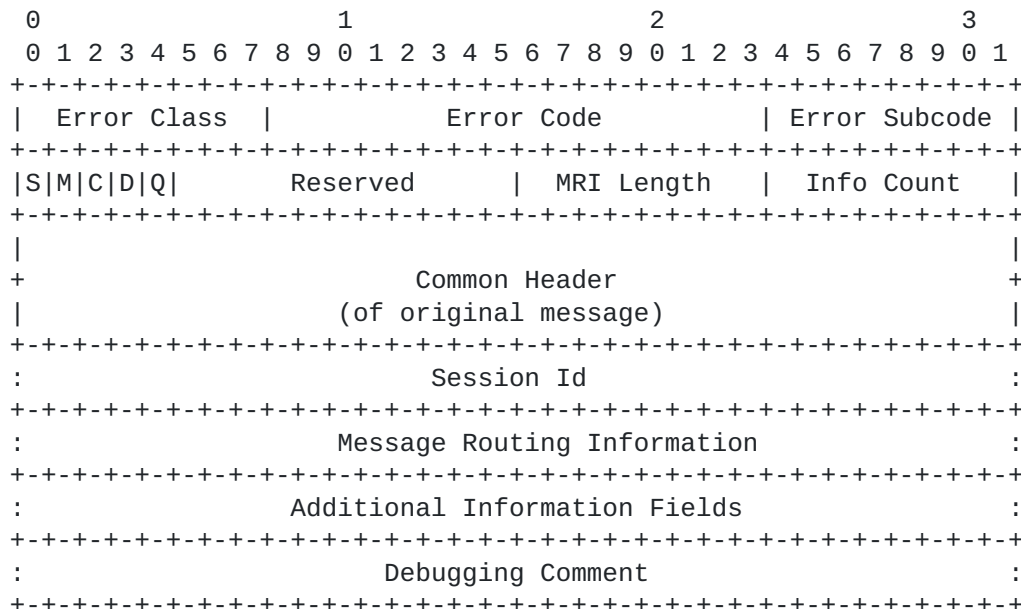


A.4. Errors

A.4.1. Error Object

Type: Error

Length: Variable (depends on error)



The flags are:

- S - S=1 means the Session ID object is present
- M - M=1 means MRI object is present
- C - C=1 means a debug Comment is present after header.
- D - D=1 means the original message was received in D-mode
- Q - Q=1 means the original message was received Q-mode encapsulated (can't be set if D=0).

A GIST Error object contains an 8 bit error-class (see [Appendix A.4.3](#)), a 16 bit error-code, an 8 bit error-subcode, and as much information about the message which triggered the error as is available. This information MUST include the Common header of the original message and MUST also include the Session Id and MRI

objects

if these could be decoded correctly. These objects are included in their entirety, except for their TLV Headers. The MRI Length field gives the length of the MRI object in 32-bit words.

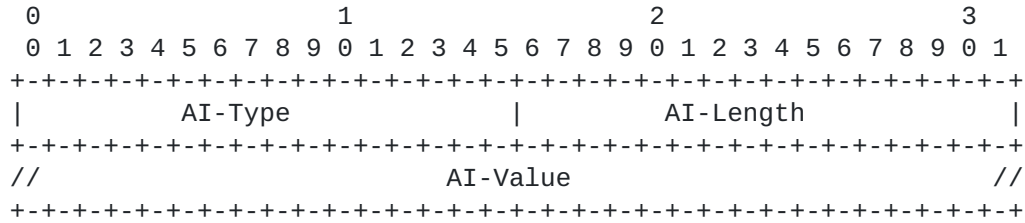
The Info Count field contains the number of Additional Information fields in the object, and the possible formats for these fields are given in [Appendix A.4.2](#). The precise set of fields to include depends on the error code/subcode. For every error description in the error catalogue [Appendix A.4.4](#), the line "Additional Info:" states what fields MUST be included; further fields beyond these MAY be included by the sender, and the fields may be included in any order. The Debugging Comment is a null-terminated UTF-8 string, padded if necessary to a whole number of 32-bit words with more

null

characters.

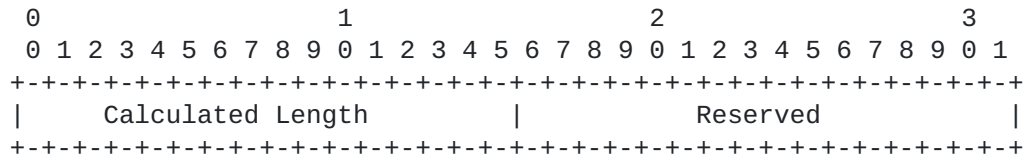
A.4.2. Additional Information Fields

The Common Error Header may be followed by some Additional Information fields. Each Additional Information field has a simple TLV format as follows:



The AI-Type is a 16-bit IANA assigned value. The AI-Length gives the number of 32-bit words in AI-Value; if an AI-Value is not present, AI-Length=0. The AI-Types and AI-Lengths and AI-Value formats of the currently defined Additional Information fields are shown below.

Message Length Info:

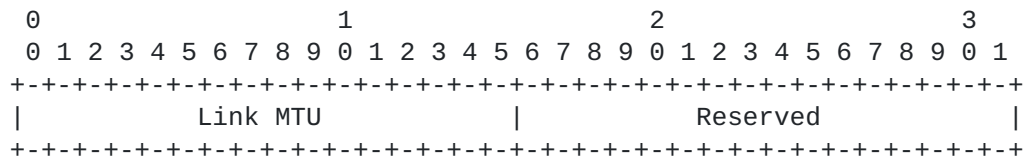


AI-Type: 1

AI-Length: 1

Calculated Length (16 bits): the length of the original message calculated by adding up all the objects in the message. Measured in 32-bit words.

MTU Info:

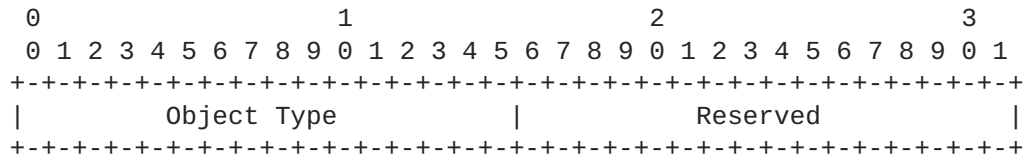


AI-Type: 2

AI-Length: 1

Link MTU (16 bits): the IP MTU for a link along which a message could not be sent. Measured in bytes.

Object Type Info:

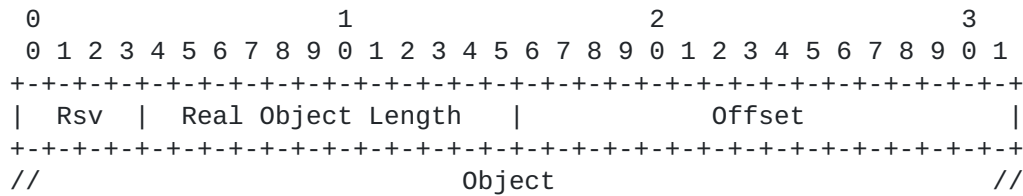


AI-Type: 3

AI-Length: 1

Object type (16 bits): This provides information about the type of object which caused the error.

Object Value Info:



AI-Type: 4

AI-Length: variable (depends on Object length)

This object carries information about a TLV object which was found to be invalid in the original message. An error message MAY contain more than one Object Value Info object.

Real Object Length (12 bits) Since the length in the original TLV header may be inaccurate, this field provides the actual length of the object (including the TLV Header) included in the error message. Measured in 32-bit words.

Offset (16 bits): The byte in the object at which the GIST node found the error. The first byte in the object has offset=0.

Object (variable): The invalid TLV object (including the TLV Header).

A.4.3. Error Classes

The first byte of the error object, "Error Class", indicates the severity level. The currently defined severity levels are:

0 (Informational): reply data which should not be thought of as changing the condition of the protocol state machine.

1 (Success): reply data which indicates that the message being responded to has been processed successfully in some sense.

- 2 (Protocol-Error): the message has been rejected because of a protocol error (e.g. an error in message format).
- 3 (Transient-Failure): the message has been rejected because of a particular local node status which may be transient (i.e. it may be worthwhile to retry after some delay).
- 4 (Permanent-Failure): the message has been rejected because of local node status which will not change without additional out of band (e.g. management) operations.

Additional error class values are reserved.

The allocation of error classes to particular errors is not precise; the above descriptions are deliberately informal. Actual error processing SHOULD take into account the specific error in question; the error class may be useful supporting information (e.g. in network debugging).

A.4.4. Error Catalogue

This section lists all the possible GIST errors, including when they are raised and what additional information fields MUST be carried in the error object.

A.4.4.1. Common Header Parse Error

Class: Protocol-Error
Code: 1
Additional Info: For subcode 3 only, Message Length Info carries the calculated message length.

This message is sent if a GIST node receives a message where the common header cannot be parsed correctly, or where an error in the overall message format is detected. Note that in this case the original MRI and Session ID MUST NOT be included in the Error Object.

This error code is split into subcodes as follows:

- 0: Unknown Version: The GIST version is unknown. The (highest) supported version supported by the node can be inferred from the Common Header of the Error message itself.
- 1: Unknown Type: The GIST message type is unknown.
- 2: Invalid R-flag: The R flag in the header is inconsistent with the message type.

3: Incorrect Message Length: The overall message length is not consistent with the set of objects carried.

4: Invalid E-flag: The E flag is set in the header but this is not a Data message.

5: Missing Magic Number A D-mode message directly addressed to this node (with the normal or Q-mode encapsulation) did not begin with the correct magic number.

A.4.4.2. Hop Limit Exceeded

Class: Permanent-Failure
Code: 2
Additional Info: None

This message is sent if a GIST node receives a message with a GIST hop count of zero, or a GIST node tries to forward a message after its GIST hop count has been decremented to zero on reception. This message indicates either a routing loop or too small an initial hop count value.

A.4.4.3. Incorrect Encapsulation

Class: Protocol-Error
Code: 3
Additional Info: None

This message is sent if a GIST node receives a message which uses an incorrect encapsulation method (e.g. a Query arrives over an MA).

A.4.4.4. Incorrectly Delivered Message

Class: Protocol-Error
Code: 4
Additional Info: None

This message is sent if a GIST node receives a message over an MA which is not associated with the MRI/NSLPID/SID combination in the message.

A.4.4.5. No Routing State

Class: Protocol-Error
Code: 5
Additional Info: None

This message is sent if a node receives a message for which routing

state should exist, but has not yet been created and thus there is no appropriate Querying-SM or Responding-SM. This can occur on receiving a Data or Confirm message at a node whose policy requires routing state to exist before such messages can be accepted. See also [Section 6.1](#) and [Section 6.3](#).

A.4.4.6. Unknown NSLPID

Class: Permanent-Failure
Code: 6
Additional Info: None

This message is sent if a router receives a directly addressed message for an NSLP which it does not support.

A.4.4.7. Endpoint Found

Class: Permanent-Failure
Code: 7
Additional Info: None

This message is sent if a GIST node at a flow endpoint receives a Query message for an NSLP which it does not support.

A.4.4.8. Message Too Large

Class: Permanent-Failure
Code: 8
Additional Info: MTU Info

A router receives a message which it can't forward because it exceeds the IP MTU on the next or subsequent hops.

A.4.4.9. Object Type Error

Class: Protocol-Error
Code: 9
Additional Info: Object Type Info

This message is sent if a GIST node receives a message containing a TLV object with an invalid type. The message indicates the object type at fault in the additional info field. This error code is split into subcodes as follows:

0: Duplicate Object: This subcode is used if a GIST node receives a message containing multiple instances of an object which may only appear once in a message. In the current specification, this applies to all objects.

- 1: Unrecognised Object: This subcode is used if a GIST node receives a message containing an object which it does not support, and the extensibility flags AB=00.
- 2: Missing Object: This subcode is used if a GIST node receives a message which is missing one or more mandatory objects. This message is also sent if a Stack-Proposal is sent without a matching Stack-Configuration-Data object when one was necessary, or vice versa.
- 3: Invalid Object Type: This subcode is used if the object type is known, but it is not valid for this particular GIST message type.
- 4: Untranslated Object: This subcode is used if the object type is known and is mandatory to interpret, but it contains addressing data which has not been translated by an intervening NAT.
- 5: Invalid Extensibility Flags: This subcode is used if an object is received with the extensibility flags AB=11.

A.4.4.10. Object Value Error

Class: Protocol-Error
Code: 10
Additional Info: 1 or 2 Object Value Info fields as given below

This message is sent if a node receives a message containing an object which cannot be properly parsed. The error message contains a single Object Value Info object, except for subcode 5 as stated below. This error code is split into subcodes as follows:

- 0: Incorrect Length: The overall length does not match the object length calculated from the object contents.
- 1: Value Not Supported: The value of a field is not supported by the GIST node.
- 2: Invalid Flag-Field Combination: An object contains an invalid combination of flags and/or fields. At the moment this only relates to the Path-Coupled MRI (Appendix A.3.1.1), but in future there may be more.
- 3: Empty List: At the moment this only relates to Stack-Proposals. The error message is sent if a stack proposal with a length > 0 contains only null bytes (a length of 0 is handled as "Value Not Supported").

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4: Invalid Cookie: The message contains a cookie which could not be verified by the node.

5: Stack-Proposal - Stack-Configuration-Data Mismatch: This subcode is used if a GIST node receives a message in which the data in the Stack-Proposal object is inconsistent with the information in the Stack Configuration Data object. In this case, both the Stack-Proposal object and Stack-Configuration-Data object MUST be included in separate Object Value Info fields in that order.

A.4.4.11. Invalid IP layer TTL

Class: Permanent-Failure
Code: 11
Additional Info: None

This error indicates that a message was received with an IP layer TTL outside an acceptable range; for example, that an upstream Query was received with an IP layer TTL of less than 254 (i.e. more than one IP hop from the sender). The actual IP distance can be derived from the IP-TTL information in the NLI object carried in the same message.

A.4.4.12. MRI Validation Failure

Class: Permanent-Failure
Code: 12
Additional Info: Object Value Info

This error indicates that a message was received with an MRI that could not be accepted, e.g. because of too much wildcarding or failing some validation check (cf. [Section 5.8.1.2](#)). The Object Value Info includes the MRI so the error originator can indicate the part of the MRI which caused the problem. The error code is divided into subcodes as follows:

0: MRI Too Wild: The MRI contained too much wildcarding (e.g. too short a destination address prefix) to be forwarded correctly down a single path.

1: IP Version Mismatch: The MRI in a path-coupled Query message refers to an IP version which is not implemented on the interface used, or is different from the IP version of the Query encapsulation (see [Section 7.4](#)).

2: Ingress Filter Failure: The MRI in a path-coupled Query message describes a flow which would not pass ingress filtering on the interface used.

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Appendix B. API between GIST and Signalling Applications

This appendix provides an abstract API between GIST and signalling applications. It should not constrain implementers, but rather help clarify the interface between the different layers of the NSIS protocol suite. In addition, although some of the data types carry the information from GIST information elements, this does not imply that the format of that data as sent over the API has to be the same.

Conceptually the API has similarities to the sockets API, particularly that for unconnected UDP sockets. An extension for an API like that for UDP connected sockets could be considered. In this case, for example, the only information needed in a SendMessage primitive would be NSLP-Data, NSLP-Data-Size, and NSLP-Message-Handle (which can be null). Other information which was persistent for a group of messages could be configured once for the socket. Such extensions may make a concrete implementation more efficient but do not change the API semantics, and so are not considered further here.

B.1. SendMessage

This primitive is passed from a signalling application to GIST. It is used whenever the signalling application wants to initiate sending a message.

```
SendMessage ( NSLP-Data, NSLP-Data-Size, NSLP-Message-Handle,  
              NSLPID, Session-ID, MRI, SII-Handle,  
              Transfer-Attributes, Timeout, IP-TTL, GIST-Hop-Count )
```

The following arguments are mandatory.

NSLP-Data: The NSLP message itself.

NSLP-Data-Size: The length of NSLP-Data.

NSLP-Message-Handle: A handle for this message, that can be used by GIST as a reference in subsequent MessageStatus notifications (Appendix B.3). Notifications could be about error conditions or about the security attributes that will be used for the message. A NULL handle may be supplied if the NSLP is not interested in such notifications.

NSLPID: An identifier indicating which NSLP this is.

Session-ID: The NSIS session identifier. Note that it is assumed that the signalling application provides this to GIST rather than GIST providing a value itself.

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MRI: Message routing information for use by GIST in determining the correct next GIST hop for this message. The MRI implies the message routing method to be used and the message direction.

The following arguments are optional:

SII-Handle: A handle, previously supplied by GIST, to a data structure that should be used to route the message explicitly to a particular GIST next hop.

Transfer-Attributes: Attributes defining how the message should be handled (see [Section 4.1.2](#)). The following attributes can be considered:

Reliability: Values 'unreliable' or 'reliable'.

Security: This attribute allows the NSLP to specify what level of security protection is requested for the message (such as 'integrity' or 'confidentiality'), and can also be used to specify what authenticated signalling source and destination identities should be used to send the message. The possibilities can be learned by the signalling application from prior MessageStatus or RecvMessage notifications. If an NSLP-Message-Handle is provided, GIST will inform the signalling application of what values it has actually chosen for this attribute via a MessageStatus callback. This might take place either synchronously (where GIST is selecting from available messaging associations), or asynchronously (when a new messaging association needs to be created).

Local Processing: This attribute contains hints from the signalling application about what local policy should be applied to the message; in particular, its transmission priority relative to other messages, or whether GIST should attempt to set up or maintain forward routing state.

Timeout: Length of time GIST should attempt to send this message before indicating an error.

IP-TTL: The value of the IP layer TTL that should be used when sending this message (may be overridden by GIST for particular messages).

GIST-Hop-Count: The value for the hop count when sending the message.

B.2. RecvMessage

This primitive is passed from GIST to a signalling application. It is used whenever GIST receives a message from the network, including the case of null messages (zero length NSLP payload), typically initial Query messages. For Queries, the results of invoking this primitive are used by GIST to check whether message routing state should be created (see the discussion of the 'Routing-State-Check' argument below).

```
RecvMessage ( NSLP-Data, NSLP-Data-Size, NSLPID, Session-ID, MRI,  
              Routing-State-Check, SII-Handle, Transfer-Attributes,  
              IP-TTL, IP-Distance, GIST-Hop-Count,  
              Inbound-Interface )
```

NSLP-Data: The NSLP message itself (may be empty).

NSLP-Data-Size: The length of NSLP-Data (may be zero).

NSLPID: An identifier indicating which NSLP this message is for.

Session-ID: The NSIS session identifier.

MRI: Message routing information that was used by GIST in forwarding this message. Implicitly defines the message routing method that was used and the direction of the message relative to the MRI.

Routing-State-Check: This boolean is True if GIST is checking with the signalling application to see if routing state should be created with the peer or the message should be forwarded further (see [Section 4.3.2](#)). If True, the signalling application should return the following values via the RecvMessage call:

A boolean indicating whether to set up the state.

Optionally, an NSLP-Payload to carry in the generated Response or forwarded Query respectively.

This mechanism could be extended to enable the signalling application to indicate to GIST whether state installation should be immediate or deferred (see [Section 5.3.3](#) and [Section 6.3](#) for further discussion).

SII-Handle: A handle to a data structure, identifying a peer address and interface. Can be used to identify route changes and for explicit routing to a particular GIST next hop.

Transfer-Attributes: The reliability and security attributes that were associated with the reception of this particular message.

As

well as the attributes associated with SendMessage, GIST may indicate the level of verification of the addresses in the MRI. Three attributes can be indicated:

- * Whether the signalling source address is one of the flow endpoints (i.e. whether this is the first or last GIST hop);
- * Whether the signalling source address has been validated by a return routability check.
- * Whether the message was explicitly routed (and so has not been validated by GIST as delivered consistently with local routing state).

IP-TTL: The value of the IP layer TTL this message was received with (if available).

IP-Distance: The number of IP hops from the peer signalling node which sent this message along the path, or 0 if this information is not available.

GIST-Hop-Count: The value of the hop count the message was received with, after being decremented in the GIST receive-side processing.

Inbound-Interface: Attributes of the interface on which the message was received, such as whether it lies on the internal or external side of a NAT. These attributes have only local significance and are implementation defined.

B.3. MessageStatus

This primitive is passed from GIST to a signalling application. It is used to notify the signalling application that a message that it requested to be sent could not be dispatched, or to inform the signalling application about the transfer attributes that have been selected for the message (specifically, security attributes). The signalling application can respond to this message with a return code to abort the sending of the message if the attributes are not acceptable.

MessageStatus (NSLP-Message-Handle, Transfer-Attributes, Error-Type)

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NSLP-Message-Handle: A handle for the message provided by the signalling application in SendMessage.

Transfer-Attributes: The reliability and security attributes that will be used to transmit this particular message.

Error-Type: Indicates the type of error that occurred. For example, 'no next node found'.

B.4. NetworkNotification

This primitive is passed from GIST to a signalling application. It indicates that a network event of possible interest to the signalling application occurred.

NetworkNotification (NSLPID, MRI, Network-Notification-Type)

NSLPID: An identifier indicating which NSLP this message is for.

MRI: Provides the message routing information to which the network notification applies.

Network-Notification-Type: Indicates the type of event that caused the notification and associated additional data. Five events have been identified:

Last Node: GIST has detected that this is the last NSLP-aware node in the path. See [Section 4.3.4](#).

Routing Status Change: GIST has installed new routing state, has detected that existing routing state may no longer be valid, or has re-established existing routing state. See [Section 7.1.3](#). The new status is reported; if the status is Good, the SII-Handle of the peer is also reported, as for RecvMessage.

Route Deletion: GIST has determined that an old route is now definitely invalid, e.g. that flows are definitely not using it (see [Section 7.1.4](#)). The SII-Handle of the peer is also reported.

Node Authorisation Change: The authorisation status of a peer has changed, meaning that routing state is no longer valid or that a signalling peer is no longer reachable; see [Section 4.4.2](#).

Communication Failure: Communication with the peer has failed; messages may have been lost.

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B.5. SetStateLifetime

This primitive is passed from a signalling application to GIST. It indicates the duration for which the signalling application would like GIST to retain its routing state. It can also give a hint that the signalling application is no longer interested in the state.

SetStateLifetime (NSLPID, MRI, SID, State-Lifetime)

NSLPID: Provides the NSLPID to which the routing state lifetime applies.

MRI: Provides the message routing information to which the routing state lifetime applies; includes the direction (in the D flag).

SID: The session ID which the signalling application will be using with this routing state. Can be wildcarded.

State-Lifetime: Indicates the lifetime for which the signalling application wishes GIST to retain its routing state (may be zero, indicating that the signalling application has no further interest in the GIST state).

B.6. InvalidateRoutingState

This primitive is passed from a signalling application to GIST. It indicates that the signalling application has knowledge that the next

signalling hop known to GIST may no longer be valid, either because of changes in the network routing or the processing capabilities of signalling application nodes. See [Section 7.1](#).

InvalidateRoutingState (NSLPID, MRI, Status, NSLP-Data, NSLP-Data-Size, Urgent)

NSLPID: The NSLP originating the message. May be null (in which case the invalidation applies to all signalling applications).

MRI: The flow for which routing state should be invalidated; includes the direction of the change (in the D flag).

Status: The new status that should be assumed for the routing state, one of Bad or Tentative (see [Section 7.1.3](#)).

NSLP-Data, NSLP-Data-Size Optional: a payload provided by the NSLP to be used the next GIST handshake. This can be used as part of a conditional peering process (see [Section 4.3.2](#)). The payload will be transmitted without security protection.

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Urgent: A hint as to whether rediscovery should take place
immediately, or only with the next signalling message.

[Appendix C](#). Deployment Issues with Router Alert Options

The GIST peer discovery handshake ([Section 4.4.1](#)) depends on the interception of Q-mode encapsulated IP packets ([Section 4.3.1](#) and [Section 5.3.2](#)) by routers. There are two fundamental requirements on the process:

1. Packets relevant to GIST must be intercepted.
2. Packets not relevant to GIST must be forwarded transparently.

This specification defines the GIST behaviour to ensure that both requirements are met for a GIST-capable node. However, GIST packets will also encounter non-GIST nodes, for which requirement (2) still applies. If non-GIST nodes block Q-mode packets, GIST will not function. It is always possible for middleboxes to block specific traffic types; by using a normal encapsulation for Q-mode traffic at the UDP level, GIST allows NATs at least to pass these messages ([Section 7.2.1](#)), and firewalls can be configured with standard policies. However, where the Q-mode encapsulation uses a Router Alert Option (RAO) at the IP level this can lead to additional problems. The situation is different for IPv4 and IPv6.

The IPv4 RAO is defined by [3], which defines the RAO format with a 2-byte value field; however, only one value (zero) is defined and there is no IANA registry for further allocations. It states that unknown values should be ignored (i.e. the packets forwarded as normal IP traffic); however, it has also been reported that some existing implementations simply ignore the RAO value completely (i.e.

process any packet with an RAO as though the option value was zero). Therefore, the use of non-zero RAO values cannot be relied on to make

GIST traffic transparent to existing implementations. (Note that it may still be valuable to be able to allocate non-zero RAO values for IPv4: this makes the interception process more efficient for nodes which do examine the value field, and makes no difference to nodes which - incorrectly - ignore it. Whether or not non-zero RAO values are used does not change the GIST protocol operation, but needs to be

decided when new NSLPs are registered.)

The second stage of the analysis is therefore what happens when a non-GIST node which implements RAO handling sees a Q-mode packet. The RAO specification simply states that "Routers that recognize this

option shall examine packets carrying it more closely (check the IP Protocol field, for example) to determine whether or not further processing is necessary." There are two possible basic behaviours for GIST traffic:

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1. The "closer examination" of the packet is sufficiently intelligent to realise that the node does not need to process it and should forward it. This could either be by virtue of the fact that the node has not been configured to match IP-Protocol=UDP for RAO packets at all, or that even if UDP traffic is intercepted the port numbers do not match anything locally configured.
2. The "closer examination" of the packet identifies it as UDP, and delivers it to the UDP stack on the node. In this case, it can no longer be guaranteed to be processed appropriately. Most likely it will simply be dropped or rejected with an ICMP error (because there is no GIST process on the destination port to deliver it to).

Analysis of open-source operating system source code shows the first type of behaviour, and this has also been seen in direct GIST experiments with commercial routers, including the case when they process other uses of the RAO (i.e. RSVP). However, it has also been reported that other RAO implementations will exhibit the second type of behaviour. The consequence of this would be that Q-mode packets are blocked in the network and GIST could not be used. Note that although this caused by some subtle details in the RAO processing rules, the end result is the same as if the packet was simply blocked for other reasons (for example, many IPv4 firewalls drop packets with options by default).

The GIST specification allows two main options for circumventing nodes which block Q-mode traffic in IPv4. Whether to use these options is a matter of implementation and configuration choice.

- o A GIST node can be configured to send Q-mode packets without the RAO at all. This should avoid the above problems, but should only be done if it is known that nodes on the path to the receiver are able to intercept such packets. (See [Section 5.3.2.1.](#))
- o If a GIST node can identify exactly where the packets are being blocked (e.g. from ICMP messages), or can discover some point on the path beyond the blockage (e.g. by use of traceroute or by routing table analysis), it can send the Q-mode messages to that point using IP-in-IP tunnelling without any RAO. This bypasses the input side processing on the blocking node, but picks up normal GIST behaviour beyond it.

If in the light of deployment experience the problem of blocked Q-mode traffic turns out to be widespread and these techniques turn out to be insufficient, a further possibility is to define an alternative Q-mode encapsulation which does not use UDP. This would

require a specification change. Such an option would be restricted to network-internal use, since operation through NATs and firewalls would be much harder with it.

The situation with IPv6 is rather different, since in that case the use of non-zero RAO values is well established in the specification ([8]) and an IANA registry exists. The main problem is that several implementations are still immature: for example, some treat any RAO-marked packet as though it was for local processing without further analysis. Since this prevents any RAO usage at all (including the existing standardised ones) in such a network, it seems reasonable to assume that such implementations will be fixed as part of the general deployment of IPv6.

Appendix D. Example Routing State Table and Handshake

Figure 9 shows a signalling scenario for a single flow being managed by two signalling applications using the path-coupled message routing method. The flow sender and receiver and one router support both, two other routers support one each. The figure also shows the routing state table at node B.

A		B		C		D		E	
Flow	Receiver	NSLP1	NSLP1	NSLP1	NSLP2	NSLP2	NSLP2	Flow	
Sender	Receiver	GIST	GIST	GIST					
Flow Direction ----->>									
Message Routing Information				Session ID	NSLPID	Routing State			
MRM = Path Coupled; Flow ID = {IP-A, IP-E, proto/ports}; D=up				0xABCD	NSLP1	IP-A			
MRM = Path Coupled; Flow ID = {IP-A, IP-E, proto/ports}; D=down				0xABCD	NSLP1	(null)			
MRM = Path Coupled; Flow ID = {IP-A, IP-E, proto/ports}; D=up				0x1234	NSLP2	IP-A			
MRM = Path Coupled; Flow ID = {IP-A, IP-E, proto/ports}; D=down				0x1234	NSLP2	Points to B-D MA			

+-----+-----+-----+-----+
+

Figure 9: A Signalling Scenario

The upstream state is just the same address for each application. For the downstream direction, NSLP1 only requires D-mode messages and so no explicit routing state towards C is needed. NSLP2 requires a messaging association for its messages towards node D, and node C does not process NSLP2 at all, so the peer state for NSLP2 is a pointer to a messaging association that runs directly from B to D. Note that E is not visible in the state table (except implicitly in the address in the message routing information); routing state is stored only for adjacent peers. (In addition to the peer identification, IP hop counts are stored for each peer where the state itself is not null; this is not shown in the table.)

Figure 10 shows a GIST handshake setting up a messaging association

for B-D signalling, with the exchange of Stack Proposals and MA-protocol-options in each direction. The Querying node selects TLS/TCP as the stack configuration and sets up the messaging association over which it sends the Confirm.

```
----- Query ----->
IP(Src=IP#A; Dst=IP#E; RAO for NSLP2); UDP(Src=6789; Dst=GIST)
Q-mode magic number (0x4e04 bda5)
GIST(Header(Type=Query; NSLPID=NSLP2; R=1; S=0)
      MRI(MRM=Path-Coupled; Flow=F; Direction=down)
      SessionID(0x1234) NLI(Peer='string1'; IA=IP#B)
      QueryCookie(0x139471239471923526)
      StackProposal(#Proposals=3;1=TLS/TCP; 2=TLS/SCTP; 3=TCP)
      StackConfigurationData(HoldTime=300; #MPO=2;
        TCP(Applicable: all; Data: null)
        SCTP(Applicable: all; Data: null)))

<----- Response -----
IP(Src=IP#D; Dst=IP#B); UDP(Src=GIST; Dst=6789)
D-mode magic number (0x4e04 bda5)
GIST(Header(Type=Response; NSLPID=NSLP2; R=1; S=1)
      MRI(MRM=Path-Coupled; Flow=F; Direction=up)
      SessionID(0x1234) NLI(Peer='stringr2', IA=IP#D)
      QueryCookie(0x139471239471923526)
      ResponderCookie(0xacdefedcdfaeeded)
      StackProposal(#Proposals=3; 1=TCP; 2=SCTP; 3=TLS/TCP)
      StackConfigurationData(HoldTime=200; #MPO=3;
        TCP(Applicable: 3; Data: port=6123)
        TCP(Applicable: 1; Data: port=5438)
        SCTP(Applicable: all; Data: port=3333)))

-----TCP SYN----->
<-----TCP SYN/ACK-----
-----TCP ACK----->
TCP connect(IP Src=IP#B; IP Dst=IP#D; Src Port=9166; Dst Port=6123)
<-----TLS INIT----->

----- Confirm ----->
[Sent within messaging association]
GIST(Header(Type=Confirm; NSLPID=NSLP2; R=0; S=1)
      MRI(MRM=Path-Coupled; Flow=F; Direction=down)
      SessionID(0x1234) NLI(Peer='string1'; IA=IP#B)
      ResponderCookie(0xacdefedcdfaeeded)
      StackProposal(#Proposals=3; 1=TCP; 2=SCTP; 3=TLS/TCP)
      StackConfigurationData(HoldTime=300))
```

Figure 10: GIST Handshake Message Sequence

[Appendix E](#). Change History

Note to the RFC Editor: this appendix to be removed before publication as an RFC.

[E.1](#). Changes in Version -13

The following changes were made in version 13. Some are further follow ups to IESG review comments.

1. Changed the C-mode/D-mode selection rules in [Section 4.3.3](#) to make the use of C-mode a SHOULD unless capacity can be explicitly engineered. Also added a reference to this fact in the rate control section, [Section 5.3.3](#), and an explanation of the effect this has on signalling application behaviour. [Lars Eggert]
2. Amended the message size limit text in [Section 4.3.3](#) to include a check on the first-hop MTU as well as the path MTU and 576 byte limit. [Lars Eggert]
3. Added 2119 text at the start of [Section 5.8](#) to define the level of support required for particular MRMs.
4. Added a note at the end of the first paragraph of [Section 7.1.4](#) to point out the applicability to mobile environments.
5. Added the possibility for the InvalidateRoutingState call (Appendix B.6) to provide an NSLP payload to support conditional peering.
6. Clarified the text in [Section 4.4.1](#) to state that the MA-Hold-Time in the Confirm overrides that in the Query, and also rewrote part of [Section 4.4.5](#) to make more precise that the MA-Hold-Time is the time that a node will keep an MA open, rather than the time it requires the peer to keep it open.
7. Modified the text on MA multiplexing in [Section 5.7.1](#) to make it clear that re-use is allowed if the candidate MA has equivalent or better (transport and security) performance as any of the options offered in the Query, not that it has to be equivalent to all of them.
8. Extended the rules about message transmission at the end of [Section 4.3.3](#), to point out that absence of routing state may be used as trigger for a handshake.

9. Made the reference to TLS1.0 informational to satisfy nit processing rules.
10. Added text in [Section 5.3.3](#) to clarify that a node should stop its retransmission process on receiving a response to any of its messages.
11. Modified the magic number so that it is carried in all D-mode message (normal and otherwise), with changes in [Section 3.6](#), [Section 5.2.1](#), and [Section 5.3](#) and a new error subcode in [Appendix A.4.4.1](#).

E.2. Changes in Version -12

The following changes were made in response to IESG review. The changes have been classified into three categories: protocol changes (things which would directly affect, technical clarifications, and editorial issues. The name of the reviewer is included with each change.

Protocol changes:

1. Modified the processing rules for the GIST hop count. An initial check for $GHC=0$ followed by a decrement is now done on the receive side ([Section 4.3.1](#)); the local processing description in [Section 4.3.2](#) now forces peering (preventing bypass) if the GHC has reached zero. A check is added for a valid NSLP-supplied GHC in [Section 4.3.3](#), and this also includes the old text from [Section 4.3.4](#) on loop control in NSLPs by preserving the GHC. [Section 4.3.3](#) also includes guidance on how to select an initial GHC (referring to IP TTL setting). A note been on not retrying if a loop was known to have been formed has been removed, and it has been clarified that the mechanism does not prevent looping per se, just infinite looping. [Adrian Farrel]
2. Changed the class of the "Endpoint Found" error (Appendix A.4.4.7) to Permanent-Failure, to ensure that the Querying state machine terminates when it occurs. [Adrian Farrel]
3. Modified the MA-Hello message ([Section 5.1](#), [Section 5.2.2](#), [Appendix A.3.8](#)) to include a Hello-ID object which allows the correlation of request/response exchanges, and described the corresponding processing - that failure to get a response can trigger er_MAFailure - in [Section 6.4](#). Note that the response message must have $R=0$. [Adrian Farrel, Roland Bless]

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4. Added a new section on Legacy NAT handling in [Section 7.2.1](#) describing how to detect and respond to such NATs; also re-arranged some of the text from old [section 1.1](#) into the start of [Section 7.2](#), and added minor details of S flag processing in [Section 5.2.2](#), [Section 5.3.1](#), and [Section 5.3.2](#). [Jari Arkko, Brian Carpenter]
5. Modified the error message format in [Appendix A.4](#) so that the Additional Information fields are carried in proper TLV objects. Also created a registry for these objects in [Section 9](#) and updated other IANA text about error code registration. The individual error messages now only define the minimum Additional Information fields to be carried; their order, and whether to carry others, are left open. [Adrian Farrel]
6. Added a magic number to the Q-mode encapsulation in [Section 5.3.2](#) to minimise the risk of incorrect interception of UDP datagrams as GIST packets, also updating the reception rules in [Section 4.3.1](#) and the example in [Appendix D](#). Also added a new [Section 3.6](#) in the overview part explaining the architectural impacts of GIST arising from the way that it can intercept end to end packets. [Sam Hartman]
7. Extended the analysis of routing state errors to handle cases including peer node restarts and malicious traffic (blind attacks). The overall description is now in a dedicated [Section 4.4.6](#), with the discussion in [Section 5.3.3](#) simplified and corresponding corrections in [Section 4.3.2](#) and [Section 6](#). [Adrian Farrel]
8. Added a new [Section 4.4.2](#) on the criteria which should be used in deciding whether to authorise the creation of a secured MA, and pointers in [Section 4.4.1](#) and [Section 4.4.3](#) to when during protocol operation those criteria should be invoked. Also updated the text in [Section 8.3](#) to indicate how these authorisation checks prevent the on-path or upstream node attacks mentioned there. [Sam Hartman, Russ Housley, Cullen Jennings]
9. Added a new [Section 5.7.3.1](#) to define the algorithm used to check names against the database of authorised peers, and noted in [Section 9](#) that definition of future channel security protocols must provide the same information. [Sam Hartman, Russ Housley, Cullen Jennings]
10. Extended the text (mainly in [Section 4.3.1](#), also in [Section 4.3.4](#) and [Section 9](#)) to be explicit about how the GIST

for specification provides the required message processing rules

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packets carrying the RAO and how this should be called up when RAO value assignments are requested by NSLPs. Also, made the prohibition on packet fragmentation in Q-mode absolute in [Section 5.3.2.1](#). Added an informative [Appendix C](#) on deployment issues with the RAO in IPv4. [Adrian Farrel]

11. Made the NLI present in all Response messages (even those sent over an MA as a result of multiplexing). The NLI is needed because it contains the Responding node's value for the routing state validity time, and also can be monitored by the Querying node for certain classes of route change (e.g. changes in the inbound interface at the peer). [Raised during interoperability testing]

Technical clarifications:

1. Added text in [Section 4.3.3](#) and extended text in [Section 4.4.5](#) to explain the restrictions on MA usage when in-order delivery (for a single SID) is required. [Lars Eggert]
2. Strengthened the text in [Section 4.3.3](#) to be more precise about the message size thresholds which cause C mode to be required. Also, tidied up related text in [Section 5.3.2](#), [Section 5.8.1.2](#), [Section 5.8.1.3](#), and [Section 5.8.2.2](#). [Lars Eggert]
3. Added text in [Section 3.2](#) to explain why D-mode is not expected to evolve and how such functionality would actually be incorporated. Also added a discussion about how a very simple version of some security functions could be added directly to D-mode. [Lars Eggert, Sam Hartman]
4. Clarified that the validation checks in [Section 4.3.2](#) must be applied in sequence, and re-ordered the sequence of checks to prevent carrying out a routing state inventory over a messaging association. [Adrian Farrel]
5. Modified [Section 4.3.2](#) to prohibit bypass in the case that the node is the endpoint of a flow; correspondingly, clarified the routing state table in [Section 4.2.1](#) to eliminate storing null state for flow endpoints, and [Section 4.3.3](#) to prevent sending messages from a flow endpoint to itself. [Adrian Farrel]
6. Added text in [Section 4.4.3](#) to clarify the uniqueness requirement on Peer-Identity, and to note the possibility of using the Router-ID as a source for it, with caveats on when this may not be sufficient. [Adrian Farrel]

7. Clarified the format of the object list in the NAT Traversal object (Appendix A.3.9) as containing all 16 bits of the start of the object TLV. [Adrian Farrel]
8. Modified the description of TLS usage in [Section 5.7.3](#) to clarify that negotiation is performed within TLS, and also using [RFC4307](#)-style terminology to describe the ciphersuites to be supported. [Russ Housley]
9. Strengthened the text in [Section 4.3.2](#) and [Section 4.3.4](#) to explain why it is crucial that a node forwarding Query messages must not modify them, and give some implementation guidance on how to do so. [Adrian Farrel]
10. Modified the description of MA multiplexing with matching Peer-Identity and non-matching Interface-Address in [Section 4.4.3](#) to indicate that while the non-malicious cases should be rare, the malicious case needs to be considered under the general heading of denial of service issues, for which the text in [Section 8.4](#) has been slightly extended. [Adrian Farrel]
11. Refined the text in [Section 4.4.4](#) to clarify that the requirement is to have a Query received within the timeout period (rather than just to send it), and to provide more detailed guidance on how to adapt the timer value if rate limiting is impacting the number of Queries that can be sent. [Adrian Farrel]
12. Moved the text on SID selection from [Section 3.7](#) to a new [Section 4.1.3](#) where it is more reasonable for it to be normative (as a requirement on the API). Also added text on residual threats in [Section 8.7](#) explaining how GIST depends on the NSLP to follow the rules here. [Sam Hartman]
13. Totally restructured the description of Q-mode encapsulation in [Section 5.3.2](#), to provide more detailed rules for IP-level interception and UDP encapsulation, including a description of what IP-layer options are allowed (and how they should be handled) and what additional encapsulation layers are not allowed. [Sam Hartman]
14. Added discussion of overload protection mechanisms mainly in [Section 8.4](#), with supporting text in [Section 4.1.1](#) and [Section 4.3.2](#). [Adrian Farrel]
15. Clarified in [Section 6.3](#) that the policy on whether to require a Confirm can be changed at a node whenever it likes, but that the state machine diagram only covers the simple case where the

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policy is fixed when one is in a state waiting for a Confirm in the first place. [Adrian Farrel]

16. Clarified when the R flag should be set in Responses, added a rule for receiving a Confirm in Established state, and clarified when to_Expire_RNode can occur in [Section 6.3](#). [Adrian Farrel]
17. Added text in [Section 6.4](#) explaining what other actions should be taken when a messaging association fails. [Adrian Farrel]
18. Extended the text in [Section 4.3.1](#) to explain the different significance of the RAO and NSLPID values in a Q-mode message. [Lisa Dusseault]
19. Modified the route change discussion in [Section 7.1](#), adding a new [Section 7.1.4](#) covering the possibility that there may be multiple routes in use in parallel (either because of load splitting or very rapid route flapping). The new subsection includes some of the text from the old [section 1.1](#), and also introduces the SII concept. [Brian Carpenter, Cullen Jennings]

Editorial issues:

1. Merged together the two subsections in [Section 5.4](#) and removed the old figure. The section apparently caused confusion between C- and D-mode and was in any case technically incorrect for the case of TCP. [Lars Eggert]
2. Added a note in [Section 3.1](#) to clarify that the actual set of allowed protocol combinations is in [Section 5.7](#) and that this section is only for conceptual guidance. Also modified the diagram to indicate that both TLS and DTLS are possible instantiations of Transport Layer Security, and removed references to DTLS in [Section 5.7.3](#), instead clarifying in [Section 9](#) that defining new MA-Protocol-IDs requires the definition of any interactions with existing options. [Lars Eggert, Russ Housley, Lisa Dusseault]
3. Retitled [Section 7](#) from 'Advanced' to 'Additional'. Some of the features were felt not to be so advanced. [Lars Eggert]
4. Use British English consistently (this affects only the word 'signalling' and its associates). [Lars Eggert]
5. Eliminated the term 'primary key' from the description of the routing state table in [Section 4.2.1](#). [Adrian Farrel]

6. Clarified what determines whether Q-mode messages have a Router Alert Option in their IP encapsulation in [Section 4.3.1](#). [Adrian Farrel]
7. Clarified how routing state table entries are created in [Section 4.2.1](#) by adding a reference to the handshake sections [Adrian Farrel]
8. Added a reference in [Section 4.1.2](#) to the authentication section ([Section 8.2](#)) to indicate the origin of the keying material [Adrian Farrel]
9. Re-wrote the start of [Section 4.1](#) to clarify that the interface definition itself is non-normative. [Adrian Farrel]
10. Eliminated the [RFC2119](#) words in [Section 3](#), since these related to NSLP behaviour or related node configuration requirements. [Adrian Farrel]
11. Modified the text in [Section 3.7](#) to clarify that the SID really is the responsibility of the NSLP to chose, maintain along the path, and enforce uniqueness of. [Adrian Farrel]
12. Deleted the word 'policy' in [Section 4.3.2](#); the interaction is with the signalling application itself, not the signalling application policy. [Adrian Farrel]
13. Added a note in [Section 4.3.4](#) that directly addressed messages shouldn't be received at nodes without the NSLP during normal operation (i.e. that this is not impossible, it's just not expected). [Adrian Farrel]
14. Modified the text at the start of [Section 4.4](#) to make it clear that messaging associations have an independent lifecycle from routing state once they have been created. [Adrian Farrel]
15. Modified the text in [Section 4.4.3](#) to describe use of an MA for multiple items of routing state as multiplexing rather than re-use; changed some of the other uses of the term 're-use' to multiplexing also. [Adrian Farrel]
16. Expanded the definition of the D flag in [Appendix A.3.1.2](#) to give an interpretation for the values 0 and 1. [Adrian Farrel]
17. Deleted the confusing terms 'Upper Layer' and 'Higher Layer' in the description of the MA-Protocol-ID registry, [Section 9](#). [Adrian Farrel]

18. Added text in [Section 1](#) highlighting the importance of the framework and threats document as background reading for this specification. [Adrian Farrel, Cullen Jennings]
19. Clarified the padding issues for NSLP-Data in [Appendix A.3.10](#); the NSLP itself provides and receives data which is already aligned on 32-bit boundaries. [Adrian Farrel]
20. Added a note on the Stack-Configuration-Data object (Appendix A.3.5) that the format allows the MPO-Count to be zero. [Adrian Farrel]
21. Clarified that profiles in the Stack-Proposal object (Appendix A.3.4) must be non-empty; an error is raised for either empty profiles or an empty list of profiles. Also, that pad bytes must be ignored. [Adrian Farrel]
22. Clarified the syntax of the Confirm message including how it depends on when and how it is sent. In particular, [Section 4.4.1](#) now states that the first Confirm MUST contain the abbreviated SCD, and [Section 4.4.5](#) covers the error case if the object is missing. The description of the Confirm in [Section 5.1](#) has been re-written, and the format of the SCD in [Appendix A.3.5](#) emphasises that the time is given in milliseconds and that the value 0 is reserved. [Adrian Farrel, Roland Bless]
23. Modified the text in [Section 6.4](#) to explain and motivate the differences between the various MA states and the logic for transitions between them; in particular, turned the Connected -> Idle transition into one driven by policy rather than directly by timers. Clarified that the value 0 for MA-Hold-Time is reserved in [Appendix A.3.5](#), and also emphasised that the format carries a value in milliseconds. [Adrian Farrel, Roland Bless]
24. Clarified that the value 0 for Routing-State Validity time is reserved and must not be used. [Adrian Farrel]
25. Updated the text in [Appendix A](#) to use [RFC2119](#) language correctly. [Adrian Farrel]
26. Clarified the text on extensibility in [Appendix A.2.1](#) to explain that adding new non-mandatory objects should not change the interaction with NSLPs. [Adrian Farrel]
27. Updated the text in [Appendix A.3.1.1](#) to clarify under what circumstances various combinations of flags can be set, and to indicate what error message should be returned if the rules are

violated. [Adrian Farrel]

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28. Added a reference to the working group state machine draft in [Section 6](#). [Adrian Farrel]
29. Added a reference to the framework for the origin of the assumption about signalling application behaviour supporting re-routing in [Section 7.1.1](#). [Adrian Farrel]
30. Extended the description of the meaning of the 'Reserved' blocks in the IANA considerations ([Section 9](#)). [Adrian Farrel]
31. Clarified in [Section 9](#) that the information needed to justify certain registrations needs to be in the separate specification document (rather than in the registry itself). [Adrian Farrel]
32. Clarified the required information to accompany the registration of a new error in [Section 9](#). [Adrian Farrel]
33. Added a note in [Section 4.4.5](#) that the MA-Hello request/response diagnostic can be used for MA protocol failure detection. [Adrian Farrel]
34. Added a note in [Section 4.4.5](#) to indicate that the MA-Hold-Time setting can take NSLP behaviour (e.g. refresh timers) into account. [Adrian Farrel]
35. Rephrased the description of the case of colliding peer-identity and interface-address in [Section 4.4.3](#) including a forward reference to [Section 8.7](#) for the case of on-path attacks. [Adrian Farrel]
36. Added clarification in [Section 4.4.1](#) about how the Querying node knows when downstream routing state has been installed, and included a forward pointer from [Section 3.4](#). [Adrian Farrel]
37. Expanded the rationale for the use of UDP for D-mode in [Section 3.2](#) (that it is at least partly NAT-friendly). [Adrian Farrel]
38. Expanded the rationale for the existence of C-mode in [Section 3.2](#). [Adrian Farrel]
39. Added a definition for [message] routing in [Section 2](#), distinguishing it from normal IP routing; qualified the term 'routing' in other parts of the document, where this could be ambiguous. [Adrian Farrel]

40. Modified the text in step 5 of the example in [Section 3.10](#) to make it clear that the forwarding between successive hops is a

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signalling application rather than a GIST responsibility. [Sam Hartman, Lisa Dusseault]

41. Modified the text in [Section 3.10](#), [Section 5.7.3](#), and [Appendix B.1](#) to make it clear that 'security' is not a simple true/false attribute. (The more detailed text on message transfer attributes elsewhere already made this distinction.) [Sam Hartman]
42. Added a note to the end of [Section 1](#) pointing more strongly to the NSIS extensibility document for general guidelines on protocol extensibility. [Sam Hartman]
43. Added a note at the start of [Section 7.2](#) to highlight the relationship of the various NAT traversal solutions for GIST to the IETF BCP on NAT traversal. [Sam Hartman]
44. Modified the description of upstream node attacks in [Section 3.7](#) and [Section 8.3](#) to clarify that the effect would be to disrupt the signalling flow rather than the traffic flow itself. [Sam Hartman]
45. Removed old [section 5.7.4](#) on alternative channel security protocols, and created a new [Section 3.9](#) describing the security services that GIST requires and where it depends on the channel security protocol to provide them. [Russ Housley]
46. Modified some of the text in [Section 1](#) about the meaning of the term "path-coupled", and also noted in [Section 3.3](#) the future flexibility about defining alternative probe methods. [Adrian Farrel]
47. Modified [Section 1](#) to leave open the concept of using GIST for multicast in certain circumstances. [Adrian Farrel]
48. Added a new [Section 3.5](#) introducing the peering concept in more detail, removing some of the related terminology details and providing forward pointers to the relevant normative sections. [Ted Hardie]
49. Modified the start of the example ([Section 3.10](#)) to be clear that it covers just a single segment of the path. [Lisa Dusseault]
50. Modified the end of [Section 3.2](#) to clarify that there is no semantic relationship between the MA and flow concepts. [Lisa Dusseault]

51. Extended the definition of D-mode in [Section 3.2](#) to introduce Query-mode at the same time. [Lisa Dusseault]
52. Rewrote the start and end of [Section 4.3.2](#) to clarify that the scope of the discussion is the interaction with the NSLP, and that only the description of the GIST internal processing is deferred to a later section. [Lisa Dusseault]
53. Modified the text at the end of [Section 4.3.3](#) to be clear about which options use Q-mode and which do on. [Lisa Dusseault]
54. Modified the labelling in Figure 4 to avoid the label 'Q-node' etc. (could cause confusion with Q-mode). [Lisa Dusseault]
55. Split the old section on state maintenance into [Section 4.4.4](#) and [Section 4.4.5](#) to avoid confusion between the two types of operation. [Lisa Dusseault]

Various other minor editorial corrections have also been made.

[E.3. Changes In Version -11](#)

1. Added some text in [Section 1](#) to clarify the scope of GIST applicability with non-path-coupled message routing methods.
2. Loosened the text about the Query encapsulation to indicate that
a Router Alert Option is needed for all the current message routing methods but not necessarily for future ones.
3. Clarified the rules for deriving protocol encapsulation addresses for the Response and other messages in [Section 4.4.1](#) and [Section 5.3.1](#).
4. Updated the ABNF and message descriptions in [Section 3.4](#) to cover the case of NAT traversal for stateless data messages; also minor changes in [Section 7.2](#).
5. Re-corrected the timeout processing rules in [Section 6.4](#)
(update in version 10 changed rule 3 but should have changed rule 4). In addition, the rule 3 processing is made conditional on the state (i.e. split) since different timers are running in the
two states.
6. Clarified that the E flag can only be set on Data messages, and added notes to the flag description in [Section 7.1.5](#) and the format description in [Appendix A.1](#). Also, included a new error condition to cover incorrect setting in [Appendix A.4.4.1](#).

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7. Clarified the text in [Section 8.4](#) to note the issues about Response size contributing to reflection attacks, and also the defence against various forms of message spoofing in [Section 8.5](#).
8. Stated that MA-Protocol-ID value 0 is reserved (not allocated) in [Section 9](#).
9. Clarified the units (bytes, 32-bit words) for all length fields in [Appendix A](#).
10. Clarified that the restriction on the D flag value for the loose-end MRM applies only to Q-mode messages in [Appendix A.3.1.2](#).
11. Added the Hold Time to the example in [Appendix D](#).

E.4. Changes In Version -10

1. Added further guidance on parameter setting for initial backoff and rate control for D-mode to [Section 5.3.3](#) [AD review comment M1].
2. Rephrased the end of [Section 8.6](#) to highlight the threat left open when the Querying node does not apply a strong security policy to offered Stack-Proposal [AD review comment M2].
3. Clarified in [Section 7.2](#) that although NAT behaviour is only informatively described in this specification, it is being defined in a separate document [AD review M3].
4. Strengthened and clarified the reference to the extensibility document for technical guidance on codepoint allocation, and made the reference normative. Added rationale for the 'Reserved' blocks in the various registries, and added further notes on what information must be provided to support an allocation request [AD review comment M4].
5. Fixed an identifier collision in the ABNF for the GIST messages in [Section 5.2.2](#) (Common-Header in the message header and common-header as a payload in error messages) and re-verified the ABNF [AD review comment L1].
6. Clarified the text in [Section 3.3](#) about the impact on NATs of defining a new MRM, referring to the specification split described in [Section 7.2.3](#). Also added a flag to the MRM

format

(Appendix A.3.1) to denote MRIs which do not contain network or transport addresses, and made more specific the error message

to

be returned if a NAT does not understand an MRM in [Section 7.2.2](#) [AD review comment L2].

7. Added discussion in [Section 4.1.2](#) on delivery failure detected for reliable messaging in general, and for the case of Forwards-

TCP in particular in [Section 5.7.2](#). Also noted that this needs to be considered for future MA-Protocol-IDs used for reliable messaging ([Section 9](#)) [AD review comment L3].

8. Added clarifying text to [Section 5.1](#) on what it means to invert the direction of an MRI [AD review comment L5].

9. Enhanced the format descriptions in [Appendix A](#) to include descriptions of all message and object fields and also field lengths [AD review comment L6].

10. Added more explanation in [Section 5.2.2](#) of how a message direction is defined, in particular in the context of TTL measurement [AD review comment L7].

11. Added a new explanation of why a well-known port is needed for the query encapsulation in [Section 5.3.2](#) [AD review comment L8].

12. Added a note that DCCP does not provide reliability in [Section 5.4](#) [AD review comment L9].

13. Clarified the rules on how long to retain stack configuration data in [Section 5.7.1](#) and included a default timer value [AD review comment L10].

14. Modified the text about stack-proposal verification as part of downgrade protection in [Section 5.7.1](#), to clarify that the MUST applies directly to the object verification itself; also noted the action to be taken in case of a failed verification [AD review comment L11].

15. Added further information on the addressing used in opening a forwards-TCP connection in [Section 5.7.2](#) [AD review comment L12].

16. Modified the text in [Section 5.8.1.2](#) to say that using the signalling source address is a consequence of setting DF itself rather than why DF was set in the first place; also weakened the instruction from MUST to SHOULD [AD review comment L14].

17. Added further clarification of why routing state installed by a downstream Query should supersede that from an upstream Query in

[Section 5.8.1.3](#) [AD review comment L15].

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18. Corrected a timer in the Messaging Association state machine ([Section 6.4](#)) from NoHello to SendHello. Also, added default values for MA-Hold-Time and route change probe frequency, and explanatory text for each, to [Section 4.4.4](#) and [Section 4.4.5](#) [AD review comment L16].
19. Re-arranged the text in [Section 7.2](#) to highlight the rules about precisely which messages are and are not translated in a GIST-specific way by NATs [AD review comment L19].
20. Explicitly noted that 'r' bits are also reserved in [Appendix A.2](#) [AD review comment L20].
21. Added an error condition for processing messages which have the extensibility flags AB set to 11 in [Appendix A.2.1](#) [AD review comment L21].
22. Fixed the table of MRM identifiers in [Section 9](#) so the field name matches that in [Appendix A.3.1](#) [AD review comment L22].
23. Clarified why only D=0 is valid for the loose-end MRM in [Appendix A.3.1.2](#) [AD review comment L23].
24. Clarified the rules about processing the NAT traversal object in [Appendix A.3.9](#) to cover the case where there are several NATs along the path with different capabilities [AD review comment L24].
25. Strengthened the text in [Appendix A.4.1](#) to be clearer about what additional information fields must be included in error messages [AD review comment L25].
26. Tidied up the use of acronyms throughout the document, including adding some to the terminology list in [Section 2](#) [AD review comment N1].
27. Added references to [RFC4086](#) and updated 2119 language for cryptographic randomness of SIDs and cookies in [Section 3.7](#) and [Section 8.5](#) respectively [AD review comment N2].
28. Modified the transition labelling in Figure 7 to make it clearer that in the Established-Established transition, the [!confirmRequired] qualification applies only to the rx_Query case [AD review comment N4].

29. Added a reference for OSPF in [Section 7.1.2](#) [AD review comment N5].

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30. Changed NAT terminology from public/private to external/
internal
to match BEHAVE usage in [Section 7.2](#) and [Section 7.4](#) [AD review
comment N6].
31. Updated a number of i-d references to published RFCs or working
group documents [AD review comment N7 partial].
32. Fixed [rfc2119](#) capitalisation of MUST not in [Appendix A.3.5](#) [AD
review comment N8].
33. Fixed an error subcode name from 'Invalid Object' to 'Invalid
Object Type' in [Appendix A.4.4.9](#) [AD review comment N9].
34. Added the NTO to the GIST message ABNF in [Section 5.1](#) and
updated the forward reference to the NAT traversal section
[tracker issue 104].
35. Removed a spurious rule about creating listening MAs in
[Section 6.3](#) and strengthened the rules about needing to have
these available but with an open policy on when to create and
destroy them in [Section 5.7.1](#) [tracker issue 105].
36. Added text that limits the applicability of the private/
experimental space to closed network environments [tracker
issue
106].
37. Added text in [Section 7.1.5](#) encouraging GIST to use a single
SII
across multiple sessions if possible to allow signalling
application aggregation [tracker issue 107].
38. Specified that this document would define GIST version 1 in
[Section 5.2.1](#) [tracker issue 108].
39. Added the ability for RecvMessage to pass up interface
attributes in [Appendix B.2](#) [tracker issue 110].
40. Added additional text on rules for selecting stack proposals
and
MA re-use in [Section 5.7.1](#) to ensure that re-used associations
have properties that the Querying node actually needs [tracker
issue 111].
41. Added a brief introduction to the GIST message types in a new
[Section 3.4](#).

In addition, the following AD review comments did not lead to text
changes. See the mailing list discussion at
<http://www1.ietf.org/mail-archive/web/nsis/current/msg06307.html>.

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- L4: Direct use of PMTUD by GIST.
- L13: Use of TLS 1.0 rather than 1.1.
- L17: Guidance on NSLP behaviour during rerouting,
- L18: Behaviour of GIST-unaware NATs.
- N3: Node state machine logic.

E.5. Changes In Version -09

1. Added a new [Section 3.8](#) clarifying the relationship between signalling applications and NSLPIDs; modified terminology in the remainder of the document likewise.
2. Added a new [Section 8.6](#) explaining the rationale behind the downgrade attack prevention mechanism.
3. Re-wrote parts of [Section 4.3.2](#), [Section 6.1](#) and [Appendix B.2](#) to clarify the way that GIST is assumed to interact with signalling applications to exercise policy control over whether or not two nodes become signalling peers during a GIST handshake.
4. Generalised an error message [Appendix A.4.4.12](#) to cover additional MRI validation checks in [Section 4.3.4](#) and [Section 5.8.1.2](#).
5. Allowed an optional Stack-Configuration-Data object in Confirm messages to allow messaging association lifetime to be negotiated even in the case of late state installation at the Responding node (see [Section 4.4.1](#) and [Section 4.4.5](#)).
6. Removed the option in [Section 4.4.3](#) of allowing a node to treat messaging associations with the same authenticated end points as equivalent.
7. Include additional guidance in [Section 4.4.4](#) to prevent routing state being erroneously refreshed in the case of rerouting events; also included general guidance notes on timer setting.
8. Clarified that the Stack-Proposal lists protocols in top-to-bottom order (see [Section 5.7.1](#)).
9. Enhanced the definition of TLS usage in [Section 5.7.3](#) with details on ciphersuite requirements and authentication methods.

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10. Tidied up terminology and discussion of how protocol options data is carried in the SCD; renamed higher-layer-addressing to MA-protocol-options.

E.6. Changes In Version -08

1. Changed the protocol name from GIMPS to GIST (everywhere).
2. Inserted [RFC2119](#) language (MUST etc.) in the appropriate places.
3. Added references to the actions to be taken in various error conditions, including the error messages to be send (throughout).
4. Added legacy NAT traversal to the list of excluded functions in old [section 1.1](#).
5. Included some text at the end of [Section 3.3](#) analysing the case of a GIST node which does not support a particular MRM.
6. Added a flag to mark when messages have been explicitly routed, so they can bypass validation against current routing state (see [Section 4.3.1](#)).
7. Re-wrote the discussion in [Section 4.3.4](#) to cover all cases of nodes not hosting an NSLP (including end systems), in particular the validations that can be performed at intermediate GIST nodes (this replaces the old [section 7.2](#)).
8. Clarified the rules about R and S flag setting in the common header and D flag in the MRI ([Section 5](#)).
9. Included discussion of how a node with a choice of interfaces or IP versions should select one to use in the NLI ([Section 5.2.2](#)).
10. Modified the description of messaging association protocol selections ([Section 5.7](#) and elsewhere) to clarify that this is essentially capability discovery rather than an open ended protocol negotiation.
11. Modified the description of how higher layer addressing information is carried ([Section 5.7.1](#) and [Appendix A.3.5](#)) to allow the data to be tagged against a specific profile if necessary, or omitted if the protocol does not need it.
12. Added a higher layer protocol definition for TLS in

[Section 5.7.3.](#)

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13. Simplified and restructured the state machine presentation in [Section 6](#), in particular using a single list for the events and eliminating the transition tables. Also modified the operation of the Responder machine to handle retransmitted Query messages correctly.
14. Re-wrote the route change handling text in [Section 7.1](#) to clarify the relative responsibilities of GIST and NSLPs and their interaction through the API. Notifications are now assumed to be a signalling application responsibility, and GIST behaviour is defined in terms of handling changes in a 3-state model of the correctness of the routing state for each direction.
15. Updated the NAT traversal description in [Section 7.2](#), including normative text about how GIST nodes should handle messages containing NAT-Traversal objects.
16. Likewise, clarified that the responsibility for session/flow binding in the case of tunnelling is handled by NSLPs ([Section 7.3](#)).
17. Formalised the IANA considerations ([Section 9](#)).
18. Extended the routing state example (Appendix D) to include a message sequence for association setup.
19. Re-arranged the sequence of sections, including placing this change history at the end.

[E.7](#). Changes In Version -07

1. The open issues section has finally been removed in favour of the authoritative list of open issues in an online issue tracker at <http://nsis.srmr.co.uk/cgi-bin/roundup.cgi/nsis-ntlp-issues/> index.
2. Clarified terminology on peering and adjacencies that there may be NSIS nodes between GIMPS peers that do some message processing, but that are not explicitly visible in the peer state tables.
3. Added a description of the loose-end MRM ([Section 5.8.2](#) and [Appendix A.3.1.2](#)).
4. Added a description of an upstream Query encapsulation for the path-coupled MRM, [Section 5.8.1.3](#), including rationale for and restrictions on its use.

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5. The formal description of the protocol in [Section 6](#) has been significantly updated and extended in terms of detail.
6. Modified the description of the interaction between NSLPs and GIMPS for handling inbound messages for which no routing state exists, to allow the NSLP to indicate whether state setup should proceed and to provide NSLP payloads for the Response or forwarded message ([Section 3.10](#), [Section 4.3.2](#) and [Appendix B](#)).
7. Included new text, [Section 5.6](#), on the processing and encapsulation of error messages. Also added formats and an error message catalogue in [Appendix A.4](#), including a modified format for the overall GIMPS-Error message and the GIMPS-Error-Data object.
8. Removed the old [section 5.3.3](#) on NSLPID/RAO setting on the assumption that this will be covered in the extensibility document.
9. Included a number of other minor corrections and clarifications.

[E.8. Changes In Version -06](#)

Version -06 does not introduce any major structural changes to the protocol definition, although it does clarify a number of details and resolve some outstanding open issues. The primary changes are as follows:

1. Added a new high level [Section 3.3](#) which gathers together the various aspects of the message routing method concept.
2. Added a new high level [Section 3.7](#) which explains the concept and significance of the session identifier. Also clarified that the routing state always depends on the session identifier.
3. Added notes about the level of address validation performed by GIMPS in [Section 4.1.2](#) and extensions to the API in [Appendix B](#).
4. Split the old Node-Addressing object into a Network-Layer-Information object and Stack-Configuration-Data object. The former refers to basic information about a node, and the latter carries information about messaging association configuration. Redefined the content of the various handshake messages accordingly in [Section 4.4.1](#) and [Section 5.1](#).
5. Re-wrote [Section 4.4.4](#) and [Section 4.4.5](#) to clarify the rules on refresh and purge of routing state and messaging associations. Also, moved the routing state lifetime into the Network-Layer-

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Information object and added a messaging association lifetime to the Stack- Configuration-Data object ([Section 5.2](#)).

6. Added specific message types for errors and MA-Refresh in [Section 5.1](#). The error object is now GIMPS-specific ([Appendix A.4.1](#)).
7. Moved the Flow-Identifier information about the message routing method from the general description of the object to the path-coupled MRM section ([Section 5.8.1.1](#)), and made a number of clarifications to the bit format ([Appendix A.3.1.1](#)).
8. Removed text about assumptions on the version numbering of NSLPs, and restricted the scope of the description of TLV object formats and extensibility flags to GIMPS rather than the whole of NSIS ([Appendix A](#)).
9. Added a new [Section 5.5](#) explaining the possible relationships between message types and encapsulation formats.
10. Added a new [Section 6](#) in outline form, to capture the formal specification of the protocol operation.
11. Added new security sections on cookie requirements ([Section 8.5](#)) and residual threats ([Section 8.7](#)).

[E.9](#). Changes In Version -05

Version -05 reformulates the specification, to describe routing state

maintenance in terms of exchanging explicitly identified Query/Response/Confirm messages, leaving the upstream/downstream distinction as a specific detail of how Query messages are encapsulated. This necessitated widespread changes in the specification text, especially [Section 4.2.1](#), [Section 4.4](#), [Section 5.1](#) and [Section 5.3](#) (although the actual message sequences are unchanged). A number of other issues, especially in the area of message encapsulation, have also been closed. The main changes are the following:

1. Added a reference to an individual draft on the Loose End MRM as a concrete example of an alternative message routing method.
2. Added further text (particularly in [Section 2](#)) on what GIMPS means by the concept of 'session'.
3. Firmed up the selection of UDP as the encapsulation choice for D-mode, removing the open issue on this topic.

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4. Defined the interaction between GIMPS and signalling applications for communicating about the cryptographic security properties of how a message will be sent or has been received (see [Section 4.1.2](#) and [Appendix B](#)).
5. Closed the issue on whether Query messages should use the signalling or flow source address in the IP header; both options are allowed by local policy and a flag in the common header indicates which was used. (See [Section 5.8.1.2](#).)
6. Added the necessary information elements to allow the IP hop count between adjacent GIMPS peers to be measured and reported. (See [Section 5.2.2](#) and [Appendix A.3.3](#).)
7. The old open-issue text on selection of IP router alert option values has been moved into the main specification to capture the technical considerations that should be used in assigning such values (in old [section 5.3.3](#)).
8. Resolved the open issue on lost Confirm messages by allowing a choice of timer-based retransmission of the Response, or an error message from the responding node which causes the retransmission of the Confirm (see [Section 5.3.3](#)).
9. Closed the open issue on support for message scoping (this is now assumed to be a NSLP function).
10. Moved the authoritative text for most of the remaining open issues to an online issue tracker.

E.10. Changes In Version -04

Version -04 includes mainly clarifications of detail and extensions in particular technical areas, in part to support ongoing implementation work. The main details are as follows:

1. Substantially updated [Section 4](#), in particular clarifying the rules on what messages are sent when and with what payloads during routing and messaging association setup, and also adding some further text on message transfer attributes.
2. The description of messaging association protocol setup including the related object formats has been centralised in a new [Section 5.7](#), removing the old [Section 6.6](#) and also closing old open issues 8.5 and 8.6.
3. Made a number of detailed changes in the message format definitions (Appendix A), as well as incorporating initial rules

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for encoding message extensibility information. Also included explicit formats for a general purpose Error object, and the objects used to discover supported messaging association protocols. Updated the corresponding open issues section (old [section 9.3](#)) with a new item on NSLP versioning.

4. Updated the GIMPS API (Appendix B), including more precision on message transfer attributes, making the NSLP hint about storing reverse path state a return value rather than a separate primitive, and adding a new primitive to allow signalling applications to invalidate GIMPS routing state. Also, added a new parameter to SendMessage to allow signalling applications

to

'bypass' a message statelessly, preserving the source of an input message.

5. Added an outline for the future content of an IANA considerations section ([Section 9](#)). Currently, this is restricted to identifying the registries and allocations required, without defining the allocation policies and other considerations involved.
6. Shortened the background design discussion in [Section 3](#).
7. Made some clarifications in the terminology section relating to how the use of C-mode does and does not mandate the use of transport or security protection.
8. The ABNF for message formats in [Section 5.1](#) has been re-written with a grammar structured around message purpose rather than message direction, and additional explanation added to the information element descriptions in [Section 5.2](#).
9. The description of the D-mode transport in [Section 5.3](#) has been updated. The encapsulation rules (covering IP addressing and UDP port allocation) have been corrected, and a new subsection on message retransmission and rate limiting has been added, superseding the old open issue on the same subject ([section 8.10](#)).
10. A new open issue on IP TTL measurement to detect non-GIMPS capable hops has been added (old [section 9.5](#)).

E.11. Changes In Version -03

Version -03 includes a number of minor clarifications and extensions compared to version -02, including more details of the GIMPS API and messaging association setup and the node addressing object. The full

list of changes is as follows:

1. Added a new section pinning down more formally the interaction between GIMPS and signalling applications ([Section 4.1](#)), in particular the message transfer attributes that signalling applications can use to control GIMPS ([Section 4.1.2](#)).
2. Added a new open issue identifying where the interaction between the security properties of GIMPS and the security requirements of signalling applications should be identified (old [section 9.10](#)).
3. Added some more text in [Section 4.2.1](#) to clarify that GIMPS has the (sole) responsibility for generating the messages that refresh message routing state.
4. Added more clarifying text and table to GHC and IP TTL handling discussion of [Section 4.3.4](#).
5. Split [Section 4.4](#) into subsections for different scenarios, and added more detail on Node-Addressing object content and use to handle the case where association re-use is possible in [Section 4.4.3](#).
6. Added strawman object formats for Node-Addressing and Stack-Proposal objects in [Section 5.1](#) and [Appendix A](#).
7. Added more detail on the bundling possibilities and appropriate configurations for various transport protocols in [Section 5.4](#).
8. Included some more details on NAT traversal in [Section 7.2](#), including a new object to carry the untranslated address-bearing payloads, the NAT-Traversal object.
9. Expanded the open issue discussion in old [section 9.3](#) to include an outline set of extensibility flags.

[E.12](#). Changes In Version -02

Version -02 does not represent any radical change in design or structure from version -01; the emphasis has been on adding details in some specific areas and incorporation of comments, including early review comments. The full list of changes is as follows:

1. Added a new [section 1.1](#) (since removed in version 12) which summarises restrictions on scope and applicability; some corresponding changes in terminology in [Section 2](#).
2. Closed the open issue on including explicit GIMPS state teardown functionality. On balance, it seems that the difficulty of specifying this correctly (especially taking account of the

security issues in all scenarios) is not matched by the saving of state enabled.

3. Removed the option of a special class of message transfer for reliable delivery of a single message. This can be implemented (inefficiently) as a degenerate case of C-mode if required.
4. Extended [Appendix A](#) with a general discussion of rules for message and object formats across GIMPS and other NSLPs. Some remaining open issues are noted in old [section 9.3](#) (since removed).
5. Updated the discussion of RAO/NSLPID relationships to take into account the proposed message formats and rules for allocation of NSLP id, and propose considerations for allocation of RAO values.
6. Modified the description of the information used to route messages (first given in [Section 4.2.1](#) but also throughout the document). Previously this was related directly to the flow identification and described as the Flow-Routing-Information. Now, this has been renamed Message-Routing-Information, and identifies a message routing method and any associated addressing.
7. Modified the text in [Section 4.3](#) and elsewhere to impose sanity checks on the Message-Routing-Information carried in C-mode messages, including the case where these messages are part of a GIMPS-Query/Response exchange.
8. Added rules for message forwarding to prevent message looping in a new [Section 4.3.4](#), including rules on IP TTL and GIMPS hop count processing. These take into account the new RAO considerations described above.
9. Added an outline mechanism for messaging association protocol stack setup, with the details in a new [Section 6.6](#) and other changes in [Section 4.4](#) and the various sections on message formats.
10. Removed the open issue on whether storing reverse routing state is mandatory or optional. This is now explicit in the API (under the control of the local NSLP).
11. Added an informative annex describing an abstract API between GIMPS and NSLPs in [Appendix B](#).

E.13. Changes In Version -01

The major change in version -01 is the elimination of 'intermediaries', i.e. imposing the constraint that signalling application peers are also GIMPS peers. This has the consequence that if a signalling application wishes to use two classes of signalling transport for a given flow, maybe reaching different subsets of nodes, it must do so by running different signalling sessions; and it also means that signalling adaptations for passing through NATs which are not signalling application aware must be carried out in D-mode. On the other hand, it allows the elimination of significant complexity in the C-mode handling and also various other protocol features (such as general route recording).

The full set of changes is as follows:

1. Added a worked example in [Section 3.10](#).
2. Stated that nodes which do not implement the signalling application should bypass the message ([Section 4.3](#)).
3. Decoupled the state handling logic for routing state and messaging association state in [Section 4.4](#). Also, allow messaging associations to be used immediately in both directions once they are opened.
4. Added simple ABNF for the various GIMPS message types in a new [Section 5.1](#), and more details of the common header and each object in [Section 5.2](#), including bit formats in [Appendix A](#). The common header format means that the encapsulation is now the same for all transport types ([Section 5.4](#)).
5. Added some further details on D-mode encapsulation in [Section 5.3](#), including more explanation of why a well known port is needed.
6. Removed the possibility for fragmentation over DCCP ([Section 5.4](#)), mainly in the interests of simplicity and loss amplification.
7. Removed all the tunnel mode encapsulations (old sections [5.3.3](#) and [5.3.4](#)).
8. Fully re-wrote the route change handling description ([Section 7.1](#)), including some additional detection mechanisms and more clearly distinguishing between upstream and downstream route changes. Included further details on GIMPS/NSLP interactions, including where notifications are delivered and

how local repair storms could be avoided. Removed old discussion of propagating notifications through signalling application unaware nodes (since these are now bypassed automatically). Added discussion on how to route messages for local state removal on the old path.

9. Revised discussion of policy-based forwarding (old [Section 7.2](#)) to account for actual Flow-Routing-Information definition, and also how wildcarding should be allowed and handled.
10. Removed old route recording section (old [Section 6.3](#)).
11. Extended the discussion of NAT handling ([Section 7.2](#)) with an extended outline on processing rules at a GIMPS-aware NAT and a pointer to implications for C-mode processing and state management.
12. Clarified the definition of 'correct routing' of signalling messages in [Section 8](#) and GIMPS role in enforcing this. Also, opened the possibility that peer node authentication could be signalling application dependent.
13. Removed old open issues on C-mode Encapsulation ([section 8.7](#)); added new open issues on Message Routing (old [Section 9.3](#) of version -05, later moved to [Section 3.3](#)) and D-mode congestion control.
14. Added this change history.

Authors' Addresses

Henning Schulzrinne
Columbia University
Department of Computer Science
450 Computer Science Building
New York, NY 10027
US

Phone: +1 212 939 7042
Email: hgs+nsis@cs.columbia.edu
URI: <http://www.cs.columbia.edu>

Robert Hancock
Siemens/Roke Manor Research
Old Salisbury Lane
Romsey, Hampshire S051 0ZN
UK

Email: robert.hancock@roke.co.uk
URI: <http://www.roke.co.uk>

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Acknowledgment

Funding for the RFC Editor function is provided by the IETF
Administrative Support Activity (IASA).

Schulzrinne & Hancock Expires October 4, 2007

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