

Internet-Draft  
OpenPGP Working Group  
[draft-ietf-openpgp-multisig-01.txt](#)

D. Del Torto  
CryptoRights Foundation  
R. Levien  
University of California at Berkeley  
T. Roessler  
August 2000

## Multiple Signatures using Security Multiparts

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Abstract

This document describes how the Security Multiparts defined in [RFC 1847](#) [1] can be used to transport multiple digital signatures.

This draft is being discussed on the "ietf-openpgp" mailing list. To join the list, send a message to <[ietf-openpgp-request@imc.org](mailto:ietf-openpgp-request@imc.org)> with the single word "subscribe" in the subject. A web site containing an archive of the list can be found at  
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## **1. Introduction**

Various digital signature services for electronic mail rely on the framework defined in [RFC 1847](#). These signature services do not address the issue of parallel signatures on the same content.

Instead of specifying parallel signature formats for individual signature services such as OpenPGP, the present document defines a "multipart/mixed" protocol for the "multipart/signed" body type introduced in [RFC 1847](#). The "multipart/mixed" protocol permits users to bundle parallel signatures for the same content into one "multipart/signed" body part. It is independent of the protocols used to form the individual digital signatures.

### **1.1. Compliance**

In order for an implementation to be compliant with this specification, is it absolutely necessary for it to obey all items labeled as MUST or REQUIRED.

## **2. The "multipart/mixed" protocol**

### **2.1. Specification**

Digitally signed messages conforming to this document are denoted by the "multipart/signed" content type, defined in [RFC 1847](#), with a "protocol" parameter which MUST have a value of "multipart/mixed". (MUST be quoted).

The "micalg" parameter MUST contain a comma-separated list of hash-symbols. These hash-symbols identify the message integrity check (MIC) algorithm(s) used to generate the subsequent signature(s). Hash-symbols MUST NOT occur more than once in this list.

The multipart/signed body MUST consist of exactly two parts. The first part contains the signed data in MIME canonical format, including a set of appropriate content headers describing the data.

The second part MUST be of type "multipart/mixed". Each sub-part represents an individual digital signature which has been formed according to [RFC 1847](#) and the specification of the signature protocol used.



## [2.2.](#) Example message

From: Dave Del Torto <ddt@openpgp.net>  
To: Raph Levien <raph@acm.org>  
Mime-Version: 1.0  
Content-Type: multipart/signed; protocol="multipart/mixed";  
boundary=0000\_031; micalg="pgp-sha1, rsa-md5, pgp-md5"

--0000\_031  
Content-Type: text/plain

Hi Raph,

Here's some text with parallel (multiple) digital signatures  
in various formats.

dave

---

"All email luxuriantly hand-crafted using only the finest ASCII text."

--0000\_031  
Content-Type: multipart/mixed; boundary=0000\_032

--0000\_032  
Content-Type: application/pgp-signature

-----BEGIN PGP SIGNATURE-----  
Version: PGP for Personal Privacy 5.0  
Comment: Hash computed using SHA-1 micalg (FIPS 180-1).

iQCVAwUBM0It9qHB0F9KrwDlAQFBaQQAisIzQUgyknT2v729b7MImcUc3R0dRBh6  
nwMyAfdeWQYCDxqdWvnD1UWoUjwjA1JNA6qhTXBxs8yPtZdDZaguOG2zWawyat9  
Jib556AuSx10psREDC3vNsaJ99MV8SKFF92H53l9w/YhVOA0aMZEnfLE0jJVypkY  
/so4/7DHhqQ=  
=/wlj  
-----END PGP SIGNATURE-----

--0000\_032  
Content-Type: application/x-pkcs7-signature  
Content-Transfer-Encoding: base64  
Comment: Hash computed using S/MIME MD5 micalg.

MIAGCSqGSib3DQEHAqCAMIACAQExDjAMBggqhkiG9w0CBQUAMIAGCSqGSib3DQEH

[signature material removed]



+kNIWIbXNiNje1wlzIhaGjrGrOnvYc8+tFn2LgAAAAAAAAA

--0000\_032

Content-Type: application/pgp-signature

-----BEGIN PGP SIGNATURE-----

Version: PGP 2.6.2

Comment: Hash computed using MD5 micalg.

iQCVAwUBM0Iu16HB0F9KrwDlAQGaiQP9EU1YXgMSoNxDAqSmo7UoCE52DuYCfxm7  
x8RfRr9+Xz3nPFytSYM2TIWGMeki1fVr5PhfjdrKv0h9sCq97h6zndZVpGA9x62k  
mPvN/QY3fz1eOdyJbYvW4ba7WQ1l50oA6cqmEb9tWwh4ra4yE8hZMnLS9a0uPpuB  
5dpiTTAE/gY=  
=hD3D

-----END PGP SIGNATURE-----

--0000\_032--

--0000\_031--

### **3. Security Considerations**

Use of this protocol has the same security considerations as [RFC 1847](#) and the individual digital signature protocols used. It is not known to either increase or decrease the security of messages using it.

Users should be aware of the fact that each individual signature can be broken out and used to create a valid "multipart/signed" body according to the underlying protocol and [RFC 1847](#).

### **4. Acknowledgements**

We thank Jim Galvin, Sandy Murphy, Steve Crocker, and Ned Freed for their pioneering work on security using MIME multipart, on which the refinement specified in this document is based.

This draft document relies on the work of the IETF's OpenPGP Working Group.

### **5. Addresses of the Authors and OpenPGP Working Group Chair**

The OpenPGP working group can be contacted via the current chair:

John W. Noerenberg, II  
Qualcomm, Inc.  
5775 Morehouse Dr.  
San Diego, CA 92121 USA  
Email: jwn2@qualcomm.com



The principal authors of this draft are:

Dave Del Torto  
CryptoRights Foundation  
80 Alviso Street, Mailstop: CRF  
San Francisco, CA 94127 USA  
Tel: +1 415 334 5533  
Email: ddt@cryptorights.org, ddt@openpgp.net

Raph Levien  
University of California at Berkeley  
579 Soda Hall  
Berkeley, CA 94720 USA  
Tel: +1 510 642 6509  
Email: raph@acm.org

Thomas Roessler  
Nordstrasse 99  
D-53111 Bonn  
Germany  
Tel.: +49 228 638007  
Email: roessler@does-not-exist.org

#### References

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