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Extensions to OSPF for Advertising Optional Router Capabilities
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Abstract

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OSPF Capability Extensions

November 2004

It is useful for routers in an OSPF routing domain to know the capabilities of their neighbors and other routers in the OSPF routing domain. This draft proposes extensions to OSPF for advertising optional router capabilities. A new Router Information (RI) opaque LSA is proposed for this purpose.

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1. Introduction

It is useful for routers in an OSPF routing domain to know the capabilities of their neighbors and other routers in the OSPF routing domain. This can be useful for various applications:

- o In MPLS Traffic Engineering (TE), it can be used as a discovery mechanism [TECAP] to announce a LSR's TE capabilities like Path Computation Server capability (Capability of an LSR to be a Path Computation Server for TE LSP path computation) or the intention of an LSR to be part of a particular MPLS TE mesh group.
- o For network management and troubleshooting. It gives operators a network wide view of OSPF capabilities on different routers. The presence of a capability on a given router implies that the software version supports the capability and the router is configured to support it. On the other hand, the absence of an expected capability on a particular router can imply either misconfiguration or an incorrect software version. Hence, this capability information can be used to track problems resulting from misconfiguration or an incorrect software version.

OSPF uses the options field in the hello packet to advertise optional router capabilities [[OSPF](#)]. However, all the bits in this field have been allocated and there is no way to advertise new optional or MPLS TE capabilities. This document proposes extensions to OSPF to advertise these optional capabilities. For existing OSPF capabilities, this advertisement will be used primarily for informational purposes. For MPLS TE features, it is used for advertisement and discovery. Future OSPF features could also use this mechanism for advertisement and discovery.

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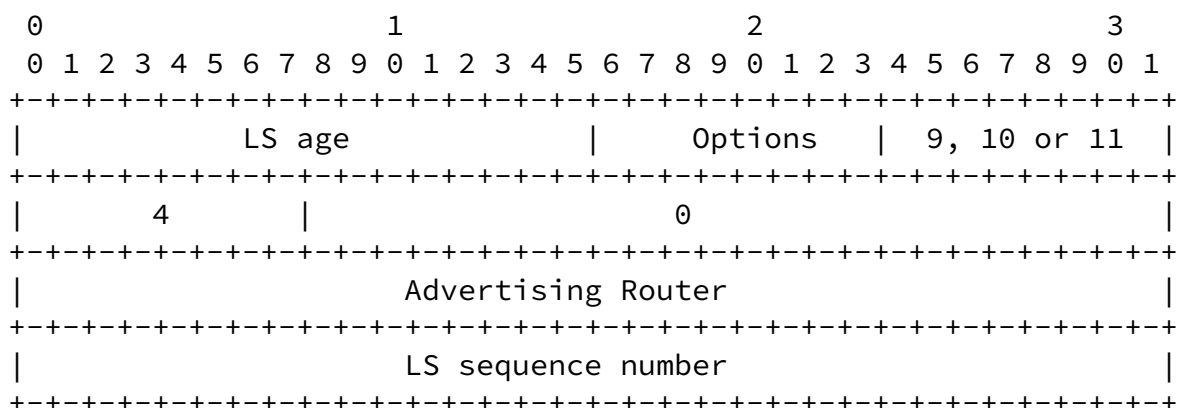
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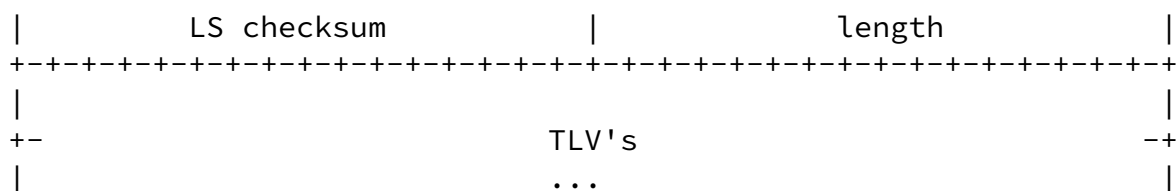
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2. OSPF Router Information (RI) Opaque LSA

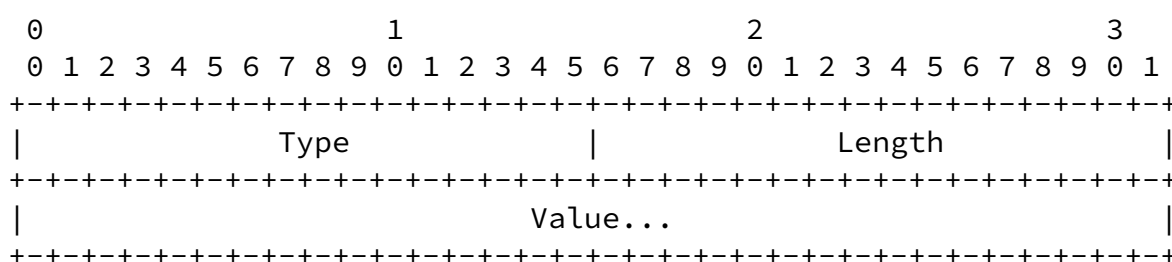
OSPF routers will optionally advertise their optional capabilities in an area-scoped, local scope, or AS-scoped Opaque-LSA [[OPAQUE](#)]. If a router does not advertise this LSA, it does not imply that the router does not support one or more of the defined capabilities. For existing OSPF capabilities, this advertisement will be used primarily for informational purposes. For MPLS TE features, it is used for advertisement and discovery. Future OSPF features could also use this mechanism for advertisement and discovery. The RI opaque LSA will be originated when one of the advertised capabilities is configured or changed.

The Router Information LSA will have an Opaque type of 4 and Opaque ID of 0.





The format of the TLV's within the body of a router information LSA is the same as the format used by the Traffic Engineering Extensions to OSPF [TE]. The LSA payload consists of one or more nested Type/Length/Value (TLV) triplets. The format of each TLV is:

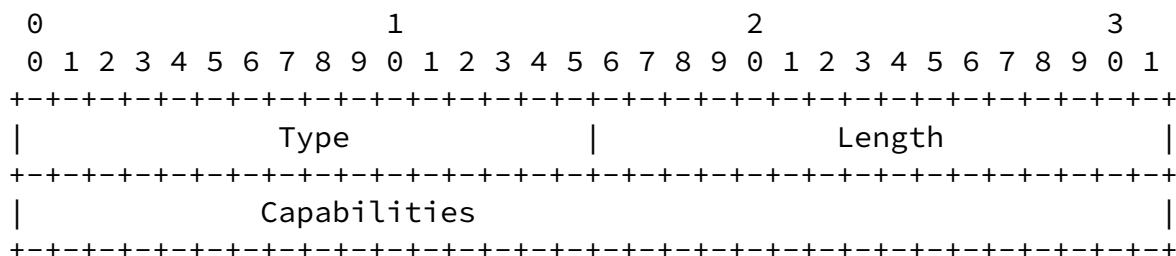


The Length field defines the length of the value portion in octets (thus a TLV with no value portion would have a length of zero). The TLV is padded to four-octet alignment; padding is not included in the length field (so a three octet value would have a length of three, but the total size of the TLV would be eight octets). Nested TLV's are also 32-bit aligned. For example, a one byte value would have the length field set to 1, and three bytes of padding would be added to the end of the value portion of the TLV. Unrecognized types are ignored.

2.1 OSPF Router Capabilities TLV

The first defined TLV in the body of an RI opaque LSA is the Router Capabilities TLV. A router advertising an RI opaque LSA SHOULD include the Router Capabilities TLV and SHOULD correctly identify the status of the capabilities defined in [section 2.2](#).

The format of the Router Capabilities TLV is as follows:



Type A 16 bit field set to 1.

Length A 16 bit field that indicates the length of the value portion in bytes. Its set to N x 4 octets. N starts from 1 and can be increased when there is a need. Each 4 octets are referred to as a capability flag.

Value This comprises one or more capability flags. For each 4 octets, the bits are indexed from the most significant to the least significant, where each bit represents one router capability. When the first 32 capabilities are defined, a new capability flag will be used to accommodate the next capability.

The Router Capabilities TLV MAY be followed by optional TLV's that further specify a capability.

[2.2](#) Reserved OSPF Router Capability Bits

The following bits in the first capability flag have been assigned:

Bit	Capabilities
0-3	Reserved
4	OSPF graceful restart capable [GRACE]
5	OSPF graceful restart helper [GRACE]
6	OSPF Stub Router support [STUB]
7	OSPF Traffic Engineering support [TE]
8	OSPF point-to-point over LAN [P2PLAN]
9	OSPF Path Computation Server discovery [TECAP]
10	OSPF Experimental TE [EXPTTE]
11-31	Future assignments

[2.3](#) Flooding Scope of the Router Information LSA

The flooding scope for a Router Information opaque LSA is determined by the LSA type. A type 9 (link-scope), type 10 (area-scoped), or a

type 11 (AS-scoped) opaque LSA may be flooded. If a type 11 opaque LSA is chosen, the originating router should also advertise type 10 LSA(s) into any attached NSSA/stub area(s). An OSPF router MAY advertise different capabilities when both NSSA/stub area type 10 LSA(s) and an AS scoped type 11 opaque LSA is advertised. The choice of flooding scope is made by the advertising router and is a matter of local policy. The originating router MAY advertise multiple RI

opaque LSAs as long as the flooding scopes differ. TLV flooding scope rules will be specified on a per-TLV basis.

3. Security Considerations

This memo does not create any new security issues for the OSPF protocol. Security considerations for the base OSPF protocol are covered in [[OSPF](#)].

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[4.](#) IANA Considerations

A new opaque LSA type will need to be assigned by IANA. Additionally, IANA will need to have registries for the Router Information opaque LSA TLV's. The TLV assignee will be responsible for allocation of any sub-TLV's for the IANA assigned TLV. All TLV's and sub-TLV's will be subject to OSPF WG review.

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[5.](#) References

[5.1](#) Normative References

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[5.2](#) Informative References

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[Appendix A](#). Acknowledgments

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