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OSPFv2 Link Traffic Engineering (TE) Attribute Reuse
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Abstract

Various link attributes have been defined in OSPFv2 in the context of the MPLS Traffic Engineering (TE) and GMPLS. Many of these link attributes can be used for purposes other than MPLS Traffic Engineering or GMPLS. This document defines how to distribute such attributes in OSPFv2 for applications other than MPLS Traffic Engineering or GMPLS purposes.

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[1. Introduction](#)

Various link attributes have been defined in OSPFv2 [[RFC2328](#)] in the context of the MPLS traffic engineering and GMPLS. All these attributes are distributed by OSPFv2 as sub-TLVs of the Link-TLV advertised in the OSPFv2 TE Opaque LSA [[RFC3630](#)].

Many of these link attributes are useful outside of the traditional MPLS Traffic Engineering or GMPLS. This brings its own set of problems, in particular how to distribute these link attributes in OSPFv2 when MPLS TE or GMPLS are not deployed or are deployed in parallel with other applications that use these link attributes.

[RFC7855] discusses use cases/requirements for SR. Included among these use cases is SRTE. If both RSVP-TE and SRTE are deployed in a network, link attribute advertisements can be used by one or both of these applications. As there is no requirement for the link attributes advertised on a given link used by SRTE to be identical to the link attributes advertised on that same link used by RSVP-TE, there is a clear requirement to indicate independently which link attribute advertisements are to be used by each application.

As the number of applications which may wish to utilize link attributes may grow in the future, an additional requirement is that the extensions defined allow the association of additional applications to link attributes without altering the format of the advertisements or introducing new backwards compatibility issues.

Finally, there may still be many cases where a single attribute value can be shared among multiple applications, so the solution should minimize advertising duplicate link/attribute when possible.

[1.1. Requirements notation](#)

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

2. Link attributes examples

This section lists some of the link attributes originally defined for MPLS Traffic Engineering that can be used for other purposes in OSPFv2. The list doesn't necessarily contain all the required attributes.

1. Remote Interface IP address [[RFC3630](#)] - OSPFv2 currently cannot distinguish between parallel links between two OSPFv2 routers. As a result, the two-way connectivity check performed during SPF may succeed when the two routers disagree on which of the links to use for data traffic.
2. Link Local/Remote Identifiers - [[RFC4203](#)] - Used for the two-way connectivity check for parallel unnumbered links. Also used for identifying adjacencies for unnumbered links in Segment Routing traffic engineering.
3. Shared Risk Link Group (SRLG) [[RFC4203](#)] - In IPFRR, the SRLG is used to compute diverse backup paths [[RFC5714](#)].
4. Unidirectional Link Delay/Loss Metrics [[RFC7471](#)] - Could be used for the shortest path first (SPF) computation using alternate metrics within an OSPF area.

3. Advertising Link Attributes

This section outlines possible approaches for advertising link attributes originally defined for MPLS Traffic Engineering purposes or GMPLS when they are used for other applications.

3.1. TE Opaque LSA

One approach for advertising link attributes is to continue to use TE Opaque LSA ([[RFC3630](#)]). There are several problems with this approach:

1. Whenever the link is advertised in a TE Opaque LSA, the link becomes a part of the TE topology, which may not match IP routed topology. By making the link part of the TE topology, remote nodes may mistakenly believe that the link is available for MPLS TE or GMPLS, when, in fact, MPLS is not enabled on the link.
2. The TE Opaque LSA carries link attributes that are not used or required by MPLS TE or GMPLS. There is no mechanism in a TE Opaque LSA to indicate which of the link attributes are passed to MPLS TE application and which are used by other applications including OSPFv2 itself.

3. Link attributes used for non-TE purposes are partitioned across multiple LSAs - the TE Opaque LSA and the Extended Link Opaque LSA. This partitioning will require implementations to lookup multiple LSAs to extract link attributes for a single link, bringing needless complexity to OSPFv2 implementations.

The advantage of this approach is that there is no additional standardization requirement to advertise the TE/GMPL attributes for other applications. Additionally, link attributes are only advertised once when both OSPF TE and other applications are deployed on the same link. This is not expected to be a common deployment scenario.

3.2. Extended Link Opaque LSA

An alternative approach for advertising link attributes is to use Extended Link Opaque LSAs as defined in [[RFC7684](#)]. This LSA was defined as a generic container for distribution of the extended link attributes. There are several advantages in using Extended Link LSA:

1. Advertisement of the link attributes does not make the link part of the TE topology. It avoids any conflicts and is fully compatible with the [[RFC3630](#)].
2. The TE Opaque LSA remains truly opaque to OSPFv2 as originally defined in [[RFC3630](#)]. Its content is not inspected by OSPFv2 and OSPFv2 acts as a pure transport.
3. There is clear distinction between link attributes used by TE and link attributes used by other OSPFv2 applications.
4. All link attributes that are used by OSPFv2 applications are advertised in a single LSA, the Extended Link Opaque LSA.

The disadvantage of this approach is that in rare cases, the same link attribute is advertised in both the TE Opaque and Extended Link Attribute LSAs. Additionally, there will be additional standardization effort. However, this could also be viewed as an advantage as the non-TE use cases for the TE link attributes are documented and validated by the OSPF working group.

3.3. Selected Approach

It is RECOMMENDED to use the Extended Link Opaque LSA ([[RFC7684](#)] to advertise any link attributes used for non-TE purposes in OSPFv2, including those that have been originally defined for TE purposes. TE link attributes used for TE purposes continue to use TE Opaque LSA ([[RFC3630](#)]).

It is also RECOMMENDED to keep the format of the link attribute TLVs that have been defined for TE purposes unchanged even when they are used for non-TE purposes.

Finally, it is RECOMMENDED to allocate unique code points for link attribute TLVs that have been defined for TE purposes for the OSPFv2 Extended Link TLV Sub-TLV Registry as defined in [\[RFC7684\]](#). For each reused TLV, the code point will be defined in an IETF document along with the expected usecase(s).

4. Reused TE link attributes

This section defines the use case and code points for the OSPFv2 Extended Link TLV Sub-TLV Registry for some of the link attributes that have been originally defined for TE or GMPLS purposes.

Remote interface IP address and Link Local/Remote Identifiers have been added as sub-TLVs of OSPFv2 Extended Link TLV by [\[I-D.ietf-ospf-link-overload\]](#).

4.1. Shared Risk Link Group (SRLG)

The SRLG of a link can be used in IPFRR to compute a backup path that does not share any SRLG group with the protected link.

To advertise the SRLG of the link in the OSPFv2 Extended Link TLV, the same format of the sub-TLV as defined in [section 1.3. of \[RFC4203\]](#) is used and TLV type TBD1 is used.

4.2. Extended Metrics

[\[RFC3630\]](#) defines several link bandwidth types. [\[RFC7471\]](#) defines extended link metrics that are based on link bandwidth, delay and loss characteristics. All these can be used to compute best paths within an OSPF area to satisfy requirements for bandwidth, delay (nominal or worst case) or loss.

To advertise extended link metrics in the OSPFv2 Extended Link TLV, the same format of the sub-TLVs as defined in [\[RFC7471\]](#) is used with following TLV types:

TBD2 - Unidirectional Link Delay

TBD3 - Min/Max Unidirectional Link Delay

TBD4 - Unidirectional Delay Variation

TBD5 - Unidirectional Link Loss

TBD6 - Unidirectional Residual Bandwidth

TBD7 - Unidirectional Available Bandwidth

TBD8 - Unidirectional Utilized Bandwidth

4.3. Administrative Group

[RFC3630] and [RFC7308] define Administrative Group and Extended Administrative Group sub-TLVs.

One use case where advertisement of the Extended Administrative Group(s) for a link is required is described in [I-D.hegdeppsenak-isis-sr-flex-algo].

To advertise Administrative Group and Extended Administrative Group in the OSPFv2 Extended Link TLV, the same format of the sub-TLVs as defined in [RFC3630] and [RFC7308] is used with following TLV types:

TBD9 - Administrative Group

TBD10 - Extended Administrative Group

5. Advertisement of Application Specific Values

Multiple applications can utilize link attributes that are flooded by OSPFv2. Some examples of applications using the link attributes are Segment Routing Traffic Engineering and LFA [RFC5286].

In some cases the link attribute only has a single value that is applicable to all applications. An example is a Remote interface IP address or Link Local/Remote Identifiers [I-D.ietf-ospf-link-overload].

In some cases the link attribute MAY have different values for different applications. An example could be SRLG [Section 4.1], where values used by LFA could be different then the values used by Segment Routing Traffic Engineering.

To allow advertisement of the application specific values of the link attribute, a new Extended Link Attribute sub-TLV of the Extended Link TLV [RFC7471] is defined. The Extended Link Attribute sub-TLV is an optional sub-TLV and can appear multiple times in the Extended Link TLV. It has following format:

User Defined Application Bit-Mask: Optional set of bits, where each bit represents a single user defined application.

Standard Application Bits are defined/sent starting with Bit 0. Additional bit definitions that may be defined in the future SHOULD be assigned in ascending bit order so as to minimize the number of octets that will need to be transmitted.

User Defined Application bits have no relationship to Standard Application bits and are NOT managed by IANA or any other standards body. It is recommended that bits are used starting with Bit 0 so as to minimize the number of octets required to advertise all of them.

Undefined bits in both Bit-Masks MUST be transmitted as 0 and MUST be ignored on receipt. Bits that are NOT transmitted MUST be treated as if they are set to 0 on receipt.

If the link attribute advertisement is limited to be used by a specific set of applications, corresponding Bit-Masks MUST be present and application specific bit(s) MUST be set for all applications that use the link attributes advertised in the Extended Link Attribute sub-TLV.

Application Bit-Masks apply to all link attributes that support application specific values and are advertised in the Extended Link Attribute sub-TLV.

The advantage of not making the Application Bit-Masks part of the attribute advertisement itself is that we can keep the format of the link attributes that have been defined previously and reuse the same format when advertising them in the Extended Link Attribute sub-TLV.

If the link attribute is advertised and there is no Application Bit-Mask present in the Extended Link Attribute Sub-TLV, the link attribute advertisement MAY be used by any application. If, however, another advertisement of the same link attribute includes any Application Bit-Mask in the Extended Link Attribute sub-TLV, applications that are listed in the Application Bit-Masks of such Extended Link Attribute sub-TLV SHOULD use the attribute advertisement which has the application specific bit set in the Application Bit-Masks.

If the same application is listed in the Application Bit-Masks of more than one Extended Link Attribute sub-TLV, the application SHOULD use the first advertisement and ignore any subsequent advertisements of the same attribute. This situation SHOULD be logged as an error.

This document defines the set of link attributes for which the Application Bit-Masks may be advertised. If any of the Application Bit-Masks is included in the Extended Link Attribute sub-TLV that advertises any link attribute(s) NOT listed below, the Application

Bit-Masks MUST NOT be used for such link attribute(s). It MUST be used for those attribute(s) that support application specific values. Documents which define new link attributes MUST state whether the new attributes support application specific values. The link attributes to which the Application Bit-Masks may apply are:

- Shared Risk Link Group
- Unidirectional Link Delay
- Min/Max Unidirectional Link Delay
- Unidirectional Delay Variation
- Unidirectional Link Loss
- Unidirectional Residual Bandwidth
- Unidirectional Available Bandwidth
- Unidirectional Utilized Bandwidth
- Administrative Group
- Extended Administrative Group

5.1. Special Considerations for Maximum Link Bandwidth

Maximum link bandwidth is an application independent attribute of the link. When advertised using the Application Specific Link Attributes sub-TLV, multiple values for the same link MUST NOT be advertised. This can be accomplished most efficiently by having a single advertisement for a given link where both the Standard Application Bit Mask and the User Defined Application Bit Mask are not present (See Section [Section 5](#)).

Alternatively, similar can be achieved by having a single advertisement for a given link where the Application Bit Mask identifies all the applications which are making use of the value for that link.

It is also possible to advertise the same value for a given link multiple times with disjoint sets of applications specified in the Application Bit Mask. This is less efficient but still valid.

If different values for Maximum Link Bandwidth for a given link are advertised, all values MUST be ignored.

5.2. Special Considerations for Unreserved Bandwidth

Unreserved bandwidth is an attribute specific to RSVP. When advertised using the Application Specific Link Attributes sub-TLV, bits other than the RSVP-TE(R-bit) MUST NOT be set in the Application Bit Mask. If an advertisement of Unreserved Bandwidth is received with bits other than the RSVP-TE bit set, the advertisement MUST be ignored.

6. Deployment Considerations

If link attributes are advertised associated with zero length application bit masks for both standard applications and user defined applications, then that set of link attributes MAY be used by any application. If support for a new application is introduced on any node in a network in the presence of such advertisements, these advertisements MAY be used by the new application. If this is not what is intended, then existing advertisements MUST be readvertised with an explicit set of applications specified before a new application is introduced.

7. Attribute Advertisements and Enablement

This document defines extensions to support the advertisement of application specific link attributes.

Whether the presence of link attribute advertisements for a given application indicates that the application is enabled on that link depends upon the application. Similarly, whether the absence of link attribute advertisements indicates that the application is not enabled depends upon the application.

In the case of RSVP-TE, the advertisement of application specific link attributes implies that RSVP is enabled on that link.

In the case of SRTE, advertisement of application specific link attributes does NOT indicate enablement of SRTE. The advertisements are only used to support constraints which may be applied when specifying an explicit path. SRTE is implicitly enabled on all links which are part of the Segment Routing enabled topology independent of the existence of link attribute advertisements.

In the case of LFA, advertisement of application specific link attributes does NOT indicate enablement of LFA on that link. Enablement is controlled by local configuration.

In the case of Flexible Algorithm, advertisement of application specific link attributes does NOT indicate enablement of Flexible

Algorithm on that link. Rather the attributes are used to determine what links are included/excluded in the algorithm specific constrained SPF. This is fully specified in [\[I-D.hegdeppsenak-isis-sr-flex-algo\]](#).

If, in the future, additional standard applications are defined to use this mechanism, the specification defining this use MUST define the relationship between application specific link attribute advertisements and enablement for that application.

This document allows the advertisement of application specific link attributes with no application identifiers i.e., both the Standard Application Bit Mask and the User Defined Application Bit Mask are not present (See Section [Section 5](#)). This supports the use of the link attribute by any application. In the presence of an application where the advertisement of link attribute advertisements is used to infer the enablement of an application on that link (e.g., RSVP-TE), the absence of the application identifier leaves ambiguous whether that application is enabled on such a link. This needs to be considered when making use of the "any application" encoding.

8. Backward Compatibility

Link attributes may be concurrently advertised in both the TE Opaque LSA [\[RFC3630\]](#) and the Extended Link Opaque LSA [\[RFC7684\]](#).

In fact, there is at least one OSPF implementation that utilizes the link attributes advertised in TE Opaque LSAs [\[RFC3630\]](#) for Non-RSVP TE applications. For example, this implementation of LFA and remote LFA utilizes links attributes such as Shared Risk Link Groups (SRLG) [\[RFC4203\]](#) and Admin Group [\[RFC3630\]](#) advertised in TE Opaque LSAs. These applications are described in [\[RFC5286\]](#), [\[RFC7490\]](#), [\[I-D.ietf-rtgwg-lfa-manageability\]](#) and [\[I-D.psarkar-rtgwg-rlfa-node-protection\]](#).

When an OSPF routing domain includes routers using link attributes from TE Opaque LSAs for Non-RSVP TE applications such as LFA, OSPF routers in that domain should continue to advertise such TE Opaque LSAs. If there are also OSPF routers using the link attributes described herein for any application, OSPF routers in the routing domain will also need to advertise these attributes in OSPF Extended Link Attributes LSAs [\[RFC7684\]](#). In such a deployment, the advertised attributes SHOULD be the same and Non-RSVP application access to link attributes is a matter of local policy.

9. Security Considerations

Implementations must assure that malformed TLV and Sub-TLV permutations do not result in errors that cause hard OSPFv2 failures.

10. IANA Considerations

OSPFv2 Extended Link TLV Sub-TLVs registry [[RFC7684](#)] defines sub-TLVs at any level of nesting for OSPFv2 Extended Link TLVs. This specification updates OSPFv2 Extended Link TLV sub-TLVs registry with the following TLV types:

- TBD1 (9 Recommended) - Shared Risk Link Group
- TBD2 (10 Recommended) - Unidirectional Link Delay
- TBD3 (11 Recommended) - Min/Max Unidirectional Link Delay
- TBD4 (12 Recommended) - Unidirectional Delay Variation
- TBD5 (13 Recommended) - Unidirectional Link Loss
- TBD6 (14 Recommended) - Unidirectional Residual Bandwidth
- TBD7 (15 Recommended) - Unidirectional Available Bandwidth
- TBD8 (16 Recommended) - Unidirectional Utilized Bandwidth
- TBD9 (17 Recommended) - Administrative Group
- TBD10 (18 Recommended) - Extended Administrative Group
- TBD11 (8 Recommended) - Extended Link Attribute

11. Acknowledgments

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