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DTLS Encapsulation of SCTP Packets
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Abstract

The Stream Control Transmission Protocol (SCTP) is a transport protocol originally defined to run on top of the network protocols IPv4 or IPv6. This document specifies how SCTP can be used on top of the Datagram Transport Layer Security (DTLS) protocol.

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Table of Contents

1.	Introduction	2
2.	Conventions	3
3.	Encapsulation and Decapsulation Procedure	3
4.	DTLS Considerations	3
5.	SCTP Considerations	3
6.	IANA Considerations	5
7.	Security Considerations	5
8.	Acknowledgments	5
9.	References	5
	Authors' Addresses	6

[1.](#) Introduction

[1.1.](#) Overview

The Stream Control Transmission Protocol (SCTP) as defined in [\[RFC4960\]](#) is a transport protocol running on top of the network protocols IPv4 or IPv6. This document specifies how SCTP is used on top of the Datagram Transport Layer Security (DTLS) protocol. This encapsulation is used for example within the RTCWeb protocol suite (see [\[I-D.ietf-rtcweb-overview\]](#) for an overview) for transporting non-media data between browsers. The architecture of this stack is described in [\[I-D.ietf-rtcweb-data-channel\]](#).

[1.2.](#) Terminology

This document uses the following terms:

Association: An SCTP association.

Stream: A unidirectional stream of an SCTP association. It is uniquely identified by a stream identifier.

[1.3.](#) Abbreviations

DTLS: Datagram Transport Layer Security.

MTU: Maximum Transmission Unit.

PPID: Payload Protocol Identifier.

SCTP: Stream Control Transmission Protocol.

TCP: Transmission Control Protocol.

TLS: Transport Layer Security.

2. Conventions

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](#)].

3. Encapsulation and Decapsulation Procedure

When an SCTP packet is sent down to the DTLS layer, the complete SCTP packet, consisting of the SCTP common header and a number of SCTP chunks, MUST be handled as the payload of the application layer protocol of DTLS. When the DTLS layer has processed a DTLS record containing a message of the application layer protocol, the payload MUST be given up to the SCTP layer. The SCTP layer expects an SCTP common header followed by a number of SCTP chunks.

4. DTLS Considerations

The DTLS implementation MUST be based on [[RFC6347](#)].

If path MTU discovery is performed by the DTLS layer, the method described in [[RFC4821](#)] MUST be used. For probe packets, the extension defined in [[RFC6520](#)] MUST be used.

If path MTU discovery is performed by the SCTP layer and IPv4 is used as the network layer protocol, the DTLS implementation MUST allow the DTLS user to enforce that the corresponding IPv4 packet is sent with the DF bit set.

SCTP performs segmentation and reassembly based on the path MTU. Therefore the DTLS layer MUST NOT use any compression algorithm.

The DTLS MUST support sending messages larger than the current path MTU. This might result in sending IP level fragmented messages.

5. SCTP Considerations

5.1. Base Protocol

SCTP as specified in [[RFC4960](#)] is used. However, the following restrictions are necessary to reflect that the lower layer is the connection oriented protocol DTLS instead of the connection less protocol IPv4 and IPv6:

- o A DTLS connection MUST be established before an SCTP association can be set up.
- o All associations MUST be single-homed.
- o The INIT and INIT-ACK chunk MUST NOT contain any IPv4 Address or IPv6 Address parameters. The INIT chunk MUST NOT contain the Supported Address Types parameter.
- o The implementation MUST NOT rely on processing ICMP or ICMPv6 packets. This applies in particular to path MTU discovery when performed by SCTP.

5.2. Padding Extension

The padding extension defined in [[RFC4820](#)] MUST be supported and used for probe packets when performing path MTU discovery as specified in [[RFC4821](#)].

5.3. Dynamic Address Reconfiguration Extension

If the dynamic address reconfiguration extension defined in [[RFC5061](#)] is used, only wildcard addresses MUST be used in ASCONF chunks.

5.4. SCTP Authentication Extension

The SCTP authentication extension defined in [[RFC4895](#)] can be used with DTLS encapsulation, but does not require any additional benefit.

5.5. Partial Reliability Extension

Partial reliability as defined in [[RFC3758](#)] can be used in combination with DTLS encapsulation. It is also possible to use additional PR-SCTP policies.

5.6. Stream Reset Extension

The SCTP stream reset extension defined in [[RFC6525](#)] can be used with DTLS encapsulation. It is used to reset streams and add streams during the lifetime of the SCTP association.

5.7. Interleaving of Large User Message

SCTP as defined in [[RFC4960](#)] does not support the interleaving of large user messages that need to be fragmented and reassembled by the SCTP layer. The protocol extension defined in [[I-D.stewart-tsvwg-sctp-ndata](#)] overcomes this limitation and can be used with DTLS encapsulation.

6. IANA Considerations

This document requires no actions from IANA.

7. Security Considerations

Security considerations for DTLS are specified in [[RFC6347](#)] and for SCTP in [[RFC4960](#)], [[RFC3758](#)], and [[RFC6525](#)]. The combination of SCTP and DTLS introduces no new security considerations.

8. Acknowledgments

The authors wish to thank Gorrry Fairhurst for his invaluable comments.

9. References

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