

Link State Routing  
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OSPF BFD Strict-Mode  
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## Abstract

This document specifies the extensions to OSPF that enables a router and its neighbor to signal their intention to use Bidirectional Forwarding Detection (BFD) for their adjacency using link-local advertisement between them. The signaling of this BFD enablement, allows the router to block and not allow the establishment of adjacency with its neighbor router until a BFD session is successfully established between them. The document describes this "strict-mode" of BFD establishment as a prerequisite to OSPF adjacency formation.

## Requirements Language

The key words "MUST", "MUST NOT", "REQUIRED", "SHALL", "SHALL NOT", "SHOULD", "SHOULD NOT", "RECOMMENDED", "NOT RECOMMENDED", "MAY", and "OPTIONAL" in this document are to be interpreted as described in [BCP 14](#) [[RFC2119](#)] [[RFC8174](#)] when, and only when, they appear in all capitals, as shown here.

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[1.](#) Introduction

Bidirectional Forwarding Detection (BFD) [[RFC5880](#)] enables routers to monitor dataplane connectivity over links between them and to detect faults in the bidirectional path between them. This capability is leveraged by routing protocols like Open Shortest Path First (OSPFv2) [[RFC2328](#)] and OSPFv3 [[RFC5340](#)] to detect connectivity failures for their adjacencies and trigger the rerouting of traffic around this failure more quickly than their periodic hello messaging based detection mechanism.

The use of BFD for monitoring routing protocols adjacencies is described in [[RFC5882](#)]. When BFD monitoring is enabled for OSPF

adjacencies, the BFD session is bootstrapped based on the neighbor address information discovered by the exchange of OSPF hello messages. Faults in the bidirectional forwarding detected via BFD then result in the bringing down of the OSPF adjacency. Note that it is possible in some failure scenarios for the network to be in a

state such that the OSPF adjacency is capable of coming up, but the BFD session cannot be established, and, more particularly, data cannot be forwarded. In certain other scenarios, a degraded or poor quality link may result in OSPF adjacency formation to succeed only to result in BFD session establishment not being successful or the BFD session going down frequently due to its faster detection mechanism.

To avoid such situations which result in routing churn in the network, it would be beneficial not to allow OSPF to establish a neighbor adjacency until the BFD session is successfully established and stabilized. However, this would preclude the OSPF operation in an environment in which not all OSPF routers support BFD and are enabled for BFD monitoring. A solution would be to block the establishment of OSPF adjacencies if both systems are willing to establish a BFD session but a BFD session cannot be established. Such a mode of BFD use by OSPF is referred to as "strict-mode" wherein BFD session establishment becomes a prerequisite for OSPF adjacency coming up.

This document specifies the OSPF protocol extensions using link-local signaling (LLS) [[RFC5613](#)] for a router to indicate to its neighbor the willingness to establish a BFD session in the "strict-mode".

A similar functionality for IS-IS is specified [[RFC6213](#)].

## 2. LLS B-bit Flag

A new B-bit is defined in the LLS Type 1 Extended Options and Flags field. This bit is defined for the LLS block included in Hello packets and indicates that BFD is enabled on the link and that the router supports BFD strict-mode. [Section 6](#) describes the position of this new B-bit.

A router MUST include the LLS block with the LLS Type 1 Extended Options and Flags TLV with the B-bit set its Hello messages when BFD

is enabled on the link.

### 3. Procedures

A router supporting BFD strict-mode advertises this capability through its hello messages as described in [Section 2](#) above. When a router supporting BFD strict-mode, detects a new neighbor router that also supports BFD strict-mode, then it proceeds to establish adjacency with that neighbor as described further in this section.

This document updates the OSPF neighbor state machine as described in [\[RFC2328\]](#) specifically the operations related to the Init state as below when BFD strict-mode is used:

#### Init (without BFD strict-mode)

In this state, an Hello packet has recently been seen from the neighbor. However, bidirectional communication has not yet been established with the neighbor (i.e., the router itself did not appear in the neighbor's Hello packet). All neighbors in this state (or higher) are listed in the Hello packets sent from the associated interface.

#### Init (with BFD strict-mode)

In this state, an Hello packet has recently been seen from the neighbor. However, bidirectional communication has not yet been established with the neighbor (i.e., the router itself did not appear in the neighbor's Hello packet). A BFD session establishment to the neighbor is requested, if not already done (e.g. in the event of transition from 2-way state). All neighbors in higher than Init state and those in Init state with BFD session up are listed in the Hello packets sent from the associated interface.

Whenever the neighbor state transitions to Down state, the removal of the BFD session associated with that neighbor SHOULD be requested by OSPF and the session re-setup SHOULD similarly be requested by OSPF after transitioning into Init state. This may result in the deletion

and creation of BFD session respectively when OSPF is the only client interested in BFD session to the neighbor address.

An implementation MUST NOT wait for BFD session establishment in Init state unless BFD strict-mode is enabled on the router and the specific neighbor indicates BFD strict-mode capability via its Hello messages. When BFD is enabled, but the strict-mode of operation cannot be used, then an implementation SHOULD start the BFD session establishment only in 2-Way or higher state. This makes it possible for router to operate a mix of BFD operation in strict-mode or normal mode across different interfaces or even different neighbors on the same multi-access LAN interface.

Once the OSPF state machine has moved beyond the Init state, any change in the B-bit advertised in subsequent Hello messages MUST NOT result in any trigger in either the OSPF adjacency or the BFD session management (i.e. the B-bit is considered only when in the Init state). The disabling of BFD (or BFD strict-mode) on a router would result in its not setting the B-bit in its subsequent Hello messages.

The disabling of BFD would result in bringing down of any established session with its neighbor and thereby also bringing down the OSPF adjacency as a result of the BFD state change and not the B-bit change.

#### [4.](#) Operations & Management Considerations

An implementation SHOULD report the BFD session status along with the OSPF Init adjacency state when operating in BFD strict-mode and perform logging operations on state transitions to include the BFD events. This allows an operator to detect scenarios where an OSPF adjacency may be stuck waiting for BFD session establishment.

#### [5.](#) Backward Compatibility

An implementation MUST support OSPF adjacency formation and operations with a neighbor router that does not advertise the BFD strict-mode capability - both when that neighbor router does not support BFD and when it does support BFD but not in the strict-mode of operation as described in this document. Implementations MAY provide an option to specifically enable BFD operations only in the strict-mode in which case, OSPF adjacency with a neighbor that does

not support BFD strict-mode would not be established successfully.

The signaling specified in this document happens at a link-local level between routers on that link. A router which does not support this specification would ignore the B-bit in the LLS block of hello messages from its neighbors and continue to bootstrap BFD sessions, if enabled, without holding back the OSPF adjacency formation. Since the router which does not support this specification would not have set the B-bit in the LLS block of its own hello messages, its neighbor routers that support this specification would not use BFD strict-mode with it. As a result, the behavior would be the same as before this specification. Therefore, there are no backward compatibility related issues or considerations that need to be taken care of when implementing this specification.

## 6. IANA Considerations

This specification updates Link Local Signaling TLV Identifiers registry.

Following values are requested for allocation:

- o B-bit from "LLS Type 1 Extended Options and Flags" registry at bit position 0x00000010.

## 7. Security Considerations

The security considerations for "OSPF Link-Local Signaling" [[RFC5613](#)] also apply to the extension described in this document. Inappropriate use of the B-bit in the LLS block of an OSPF hello message could prevent an OSPF adjacency from forming or lead to failure to detect bidirectional forwarding failures. If authentication is being used in the OSPF routing domain [[RFC5709](#)] [[RFC7474](#)], then the Cryptographic Authentication TLV [[RFC5613](#)] SHOULD also be used to protect the contents of the LLS block.

## 8. Acknowledgements

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