

Network Working Group
Internet-Draft
Intended status: Standards Track
Expires: May 24, 2010

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November 20, 2009

Extensions to View-based Access Control Model for use with RADIUS
draft-nelson-isms-extended-vacm-01.txt

Abstract

This memo describes a backward compatible extension to the View-based Access Control Model for SNMPv3 for use with RADIUS and other AAA services to provide authorization of MIB database access. This extension is intended to be used in conjunction with secure SNMP Transport Models that facilitate RADIUS authentication, such as the Secure Shell Transport Model.

Requirements Language

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](#)].

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1. Introduction

1.1. General

The Simple Network Management Protocol version 3 (SNMPv3) provides message security services through the Security Subsystem. Transport Subsystem for the Simple Network Management Protocol [[RFC5590](#)] defines a Transport Subsystem, Transport Security Model for SNMP [[RFC5591](#)] a new Transport Security Model, Secure Shell Transport Model for SNMP [[RFC5592](#)] a Secure Shell Transport Model and Remote Authentication Dial-In User Service (RADIUS) Usage for Simple Network Management Protocol (SNMP) Transport Models [[RFC5608](#)] a method for authenticating SNMPv3 users via the Remote Authentication Dial-In User Service (RADIUS).

It is now possible to authenticate SNMPv3 messages via a RADIUS when those messages are sent over the SSH transport. This document builds on that work and describes a means to centrally authorize a given SNMP transaction using on-device, pre-existing authorization configuration. In order to leverage a centralized RADIUS service to its full extent, the access control decision in the Access Control Subsystem needs to be based on authorization information received from RADIUS as well. This document defines an extension to the View-based Access Control Model to obtain authorization information for an authenticated principal, from RADIUS.

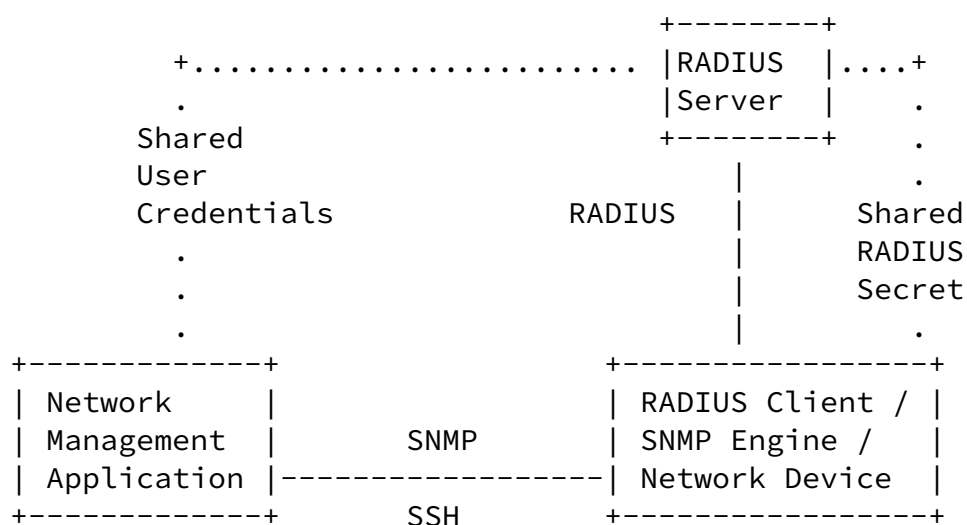
Additional introductory material on the RADIUS operational model and RADIUS usage with SNMP may be found in Sections [1.3](#) and [1.5](#) of [[RFC5608](#)].

It is important to understand the SNMP architecture and the terminology of the architecture to understand where the Extended View-based Access Control Model described in this memo fits into the architecture and interacts with other subsystems and models within the architecture. It is expected that reader will have also read and understood [RFC3411](#) [[RFC3411](#)], [RFC3412](#) [[RFC3412](#)], [RFC3413](#) [[RFC3413](#)],

[RFC3415](#) [[RFC3415](#)] and [RFC3418](#) [[RFC3418](#)]. As this document describes an extension to VACM, it relies on much of the material in [RFC3415](#) [[RFC3415](#)].

1.2. System Block Diagram

A block diagram of the major system components referenced in this document may be useful to understanding the text that follows.



Block Diagram

This diagram illustrates that a network management application communicates with a network device, the managed entity, using SNMP over SSH. The network devices uses RADIUS to communicate with a RADIUS Server to authenticate the network management application (or the user whose credentials that application provides) and to obtain authorization information related to access via SNMP for purpose of device management. Other secure transport protocols might be used instead of SSH.

1.3. Using RADIUS with SNMP

There are two use cases for RADIUS support of management access via SNMP. These are (a) service authorization and (b) access control authorization. RADIUS almost always involves user authentication as prerequisite to authorization, and there is a user authentication phase for each of these two use cases. The first use case is discussed in detail in [\[RFC5608\]](#). The second use case is the subject of this document. This document describes how RADIUS attributes and messages are applied to the specific application area of SNMP Access Control Models, and VACM in particular.

This document assumes that Extended VACM will be used in conjunction with an SNMP secure Transport Model and the SNMP Transport Security Model. The rationale for this assumption is as follows. The [RFC 3411](#) SNMP architecture maintains strong modularity and separation of concerns, extending to separating user identity (authentication) from user database access rights (authorization). The former is the business of the Security Subsystem and the latter is the business of the Access Control Subsystem. RADIUS, on the other hand, allows for no such separation of authorization from authentication. In order to

use RADIUS with SNMP, binding of user authentication to user authorization must be achieved, without violating the modularity of the [RFC 3411](#) SNMP architecture.

RADIUS does support a limited form of Authorize-Only operations. The RADIUS "Authorize Only" Service-Type Attribute can be specified in an Access-Request message, but only when accompanied by a RADIUS State Attribute, which contains an implementation specific "cookie" representing the successful outcome of a previous authentication transaction. For that reason, it is not possible to completely separate the use of RADIUS by the Access Control Subsystem from the use of RADIUS by other subsystems. This suggests that the most straightforward approach is to leverage the existing RADIUS usage, as documented in [\[RFC5608\]](#), and the tmStateReference cache, as documented in [Section 5.2 of \[RFC5590\]](#).

This document also assumes that the detailed access control rules are pre-configured in the NAS. Dynamic user authorization for MIB database access control, as defined herein, is limited to mapping the authenticated user to a pre-existing group, which in turn is mapped to the pre-existing rules. The operative use case assumption is that roles within an organization (i.e. groups and rules) change

infrequently while the users assigned to those roles change much more frequently. It is the user to role mapping that is outsourced to the RADIUS server.

[2.](#) Extended VACM for RADIUS Authorization

This document will rely on implementation specific integration of the RADIUS client for user authentication and authorization. Further, it will rely on implementation specific caching of MIB database access policy information, in the form of the RADIUS Management-Policy-Id Attribute, such that it will be available to Extended VACM.

A NAS that is compliant to this specification, MUST treat any RADIUS Access-Accept message that provisions a specific policy for MIB database access control that cannot be provided as if an Access-Reject message had been received instead.

The RADIUS Management-Policy-Id Attribute MUST be used in an Access-Accept message to provision a user-specific access control policy for use in conjunction with Extended VACM. The syntax and semantics of the Management-Policy-Id attribute are described in [Section 6.3 of \[RFC5607\]](#).

The intended use of the content of the Management-Policy-Id attribute is to provision a mapping between the authenticated user, associated

with the secure transport session, and an access control group pre-provisioned in the VACM MIB module. Details of this mapping are described in following sections.

[3.](#) VACM Extension for RADIUS Authorization

The extension to VACM [\[RFC3415\]](#) described in this document is a method for one or more of its MIB module objects to be dynamically provisioned based on information received from RADIUS, or some similar AAA service. This extension requires no changes to the Abstract Service Interface (ASI) for the Access Control Subsystem, nor any changes in the Elements of Procedure (EOP) for VACM. A new MIB module that augments the vacmSecurityToGroupTable is defined in this document, as well as supplemental EOP for Extended VACM to

follow. It does require that a module of code somewhere in the NAS be able to write to the VACM MIB module and Extended VACM MIB Module, and that it reliably and consistently do so in immediate response to access control policy information received from RADIUS.

3.1. Dynamic Update of VACM and Extended VACM MIB Module Objects

The implementation dependent interface between the RADIUS Client function in the NAS and the SNMP Engine in the NAS is responsible for updating the vacmSecurityToGroupTable table within the VACM MIB Module [[RFC3415](#)] and the corresponding rows of the extendedVacmSecurityToGroupTable. These row objects are dynamically updated from RADIUS authorization data. Specifically, the RADIUS User-Name Attribute is used as the vacmSecurityName and the RADIUS Management-Policy-Id Attribute is used as the vacmGroupName. The vacmSecurityModel is the encoding for the Transport Security Model. The vacmSecurityToGroupStorageType should be (2) volatile.

In creating a row entry in the vacmSecurityToGroupTable, there are three cases to consider:

- o No existing row has a matching vacmSecurityName.
- o An existing row has a matching vacmSecurityName.
- o No additional rows can be created, e.g. because of resource constraints, etc.

The second and third cases require special consideration. The second case may represent a conflict between dynamic access control authorization from RADIUS and local access control configuration by a security administrator, e.g. via remote or local SNMP MIB module updates. If one assumes that the security administrator intentionally configured a table entry for the "conflicting" vacmSecurityName, with full knowledge that it might over-ride dynamic

authorization information from RADIUS, the right thing to do would be nothing. That is to say, do not update the table based on RADIUS authorization information. On the other hand, it is possible that the "name collision" is the result of a mistake, or the result of stale configuration information.

The behavior specified for Extended VACM is to make not update to the vacmSecurityToGroupTable, and to increment the

extVacmSecurityNameConflict counter.

The third case is likely to be rare, and SHOULD result in a notification of some sort being logged for action by the system administrator.

It is expected that the value of the RADIUS Management-Policy-Id Attribute match an existing vacmGroupName that can be successfully used as an index to the vacmAccessTable. If no matching vacmGroupName exists, then the access control defaults to this will result in the default access rights of "no access", which is the desired result. The NAS should increment the extVacmMissingGroupName counter, for troubleshooting purposes, as this most likely indicates an administrative misconfiguration.

In addition to creating a new row in the vacmSecurityToGroupTable, the NAS creates a corresponding new row in the extVacmSecurityToGroupTable, using the same values for index as were used to create the row in the vacmSecurityToGroupTable. The value of the rowCreatedBy object is set to RADIUS (1), and the value of rowLifetime is set to the value of the RADIUS Session-Timeout Attribute, if one was received by the RADIUS Client for this session, or to zero (0) otherwise.

[3.2.](#) Purging Volatile Entries in the Extended VACM MIB Module

When the secure transport session is torn down, disconnected or times out, any volatile table rows created in the vacmSecurityToGroupTable by the Extended VACM function MUST be removed. The mechanism to accomplish this task is implementation specific.

[4.](#) Elements of Procedure for Extended VACM

This section describes the Elements of Procedure for Extended VACM. The function of the VACM extension is to manage the creation and deletion of rows in the vacmSecurityToGroupTable, based on the outcome of RADIUS authorization. All access control decision functions are taken by VACM, as defined in [[RFC3415](#)]. The EOP for VACM remains as listed in [Section 3](#) of that document.

control for a user-authenticated secure transport session, the NAS causes the RADIUS provisioning information to be made available to the Extended VACM facility, which populates the vacmSecurityToGroupTable, as follows:

1. If the the RADIUS Management-Policy-Id Attribute is not available, increment the extVacmNoPolicy counter. Do not create a table row.
2. If the the RADIUS Management-Policy-Id Attribute is available, and if no existing row has a vacmSecurityName matching the RADIUS User-Name Attribute, create a new row with the columns populated as follows:
 - A. vacmSecurityModel = (x) secureTransportSecurityModel
 - B. vacmSecurityName = RADIUS User-Name Attribute
 - C. vacmGroupName = RADIUS Management-Policy-Id Attribute
 - D. vacmSecurityToGroupStorageType = (2)
 - E. volatilevacmSecurityToGroupStatus = createAndGo ???
 - F. extVacmRowCreatedBy = (1)
 - G. radiusextVacmRowLifetime = RADIUS Session-Timeout Attribute | zero (0)
 - H. extVacmTransportSessionID = ID provided by the Secure Transport Model
3. If an existing table row has a matching vacmSecurityName, increment the extVacmSecurityNameConflict counter. Do not create a table row. If no additional table rows can be created, e.g. because of resource constraints, increment the extVacmResourceError counter.

When a RADIUS-authenticated secure transport session is disconnected by the remote peer, the NAS causes the Extended VACM to remove the corresponding table row from the vacmSecurityToGroupTable. The NAS provides an implementation dependent identifier of the session in question to Extended VACM.

1. Search for a row with a matching extVacmTransportSessionID.
2. If found, check to see that the extVacmRowCreateby value is (1) radius. If not, ignore the request.
3. If a table row exists with a matching value of extVACMTransportSessionID, that row is deleted.

5. MIB Module Definition

```
SNMP-EXT-VIEW-BASED-ACM-MIB DEFINITIONS ::= BEGIN
```

IMPORTS

```
MODULE-COMPLIANCE, OBJECT-GROUP      FROM SNMPv2-CONF
MODULE-IDENTITY, OBJECT-TYPE,
snmpModules                           FROM SNMPv2-SMI
TestAndIncr,
RowStatus, StorageType               FROM SNMPv2-TC
SnmpAdminString,
SnmpSecurityLevel,
SnmpSecurityModel,                   FROM SNMP-FRAMEWORK-MIB
vacmSecurityToGroupTable              FROM SNMP-VIEW-BASED-ACM-MIB;
```

```
snmpExtVacmMIB    MODULE-IDENTITY
```

```
  LAST-UPDATED "200910260000Z"          -- 26 Oct 2009, midnight
```

```
  ORGANIZATION "ISMS Working Group"
```

```
  CONTACT-INFO "WG-email:  isms@ietf.org"
```

```
  DESCRIPTION "The management and local datastore information
               definitions for the Extended View-based Access
               Control Model for SNMP.
```

```
               Copyright (C) The Internet Society (2009)."
```

```
 ::= { TBD }
```

```
extVacmMIBObjects    OBJECT IDENTIFIER ::= { snmpExtVacmMIB 1 }
```

```
extVacmMIBConformance OBJECT IDENTIFIER ::= {snmpExtVacmMIB 2 }
```

```
extVacmCounters      OBJECT IDENTIFIER ::= { extVacmMIBObjects 1 }
```

```
extVacmResourceError OBJECT-TYPE
```

```
  SYNTAX Counter32
```

```
  UNITS "lost rows"
```

```
  MAX-ACCESS read-only
```

```
  STATUS current
```

```
  DESCRIPTION
```

```
    "The number of VACM Security Name to Security
    Group table rows that could not be created by
    Extended VACM because of insufficient resources."
```

```
 ::= { extVacmCounters 1 }
```

```
extVacmNoPolicy OBJECT-TYPE
```

```
  SYNTAX Counter32
```

```
  UNITS "lost rows"
```

```
  MAX-ACCESS read-only
```

```
  STATUS current
```

```
  DESCRIPTION
```

"The number of VACM Security Name to Security
Group table rows that could not be created by

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Extended VACM because the AAA-provisioned
group policy did not match an existing row in
the VACM access table."

::= { extVacmCounters 2 }

extVacmSecurityNameConflict OBJECT-TYPE

SYNTAX Counter32

UNITS "lost rows"

MAX-ACCESS read-only

STATUS current

DESCRIPTION

"The number of VACM Security Name to Security
Group table rows that could not be created by
Extended VACM because the AAA-provisioned
security name (user name) conflicted with an
existing row in the table."

::= { extVacmCounters 3 }

vacmSecurityToGroupTable OBJECT-TYPE

SYNTAX SEQUENCE OF VacmSecurityToGroupEntry

MAX-ACCESS not-accessible

STATUS current

DESCRIPTION "This table maps a combination of securityModel and
securityName into a groupName which is used to define
an accesscontrol policy for a group of principals."

::= { vacmMIBObjects 2 }

vacmSecurityToGroupEntry OBJECT-TYPE

SYNTAX VacmSecurityToGroupEntry

MAX-ACCESS not-accessible

STATUS current

DESCRIPTION "An entry in this table maps the combination of a
securityModel and securityName into a groupName."

INDEX {
 vacmSecurityModel,
 vacmSecurityName
}

::= { vacmSecurityToGroupTable 1 }

VacmSecurityToGroupEntry ::= SEQUENCE

```
{
    vacmSecurityModel          SnmpSecurityModel,
    vacmSecurityName           SnmpAdminString,
    vacmGroupName              SnmpAdminString,
    vacmSecurityToGroupStorageType StorageType,
    vacmSecurityToGroupStatus   RowStatus
    extVacmRowCreatedBy         INTEGER
    extVacmRowLifetime          INTEGER
}
```

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```
    extVacmTransportSessionID    INTEGER
}
```

vacmSecurityModel OBJECT-TYPE

```
SYNTAX      SnmpSecurityModel(1..2147483647)
MAX-ACCESS   not-accessible
STATUS       current
DESCRIPTION  "The Security Model, by which the vacmSecurityName
              referenced by this entry is provided.
              Note, this object may not take the 'any' (0) value."
::= { vacmSecurityToGroupEntry 1 }
```

vacmSecurityName OBJECT-TYPE

```
SYNTAX      SnmpAdminString (SIZE(1..32))
MAX-ACCESS   not-accessible
STATUS       current
DESCRIPTION  "The securityName for the principal, represented in a
              Security Model independent format, which is mapped by
              this entry to a groupName."
::= { vacmSecurityToGroupEntry 2 }
```

vacmGroupName OBJECT-TYPE

```
SYNTAX      SnmpAdminString (SIZE(1..32))
MAX-ACCESS   read-create
STATUS       current
DESCRIPTION  "The name of the group to which this entry (e.g., the
              combination of securityModel and securityName)
              belongs.
```

This groupName is used as index into the
vacmAccessTable to select an access control policy.
A value in this table does not imply that an instance

with the value exists in table vacmAcceSTable."
 ::= { vacmSecurityToGroupEntry 3 }

vacmSecurityToGroupStorageType OBJECT-TYPE

SYNTAX StorageType
MAX-ACCESS read-create
STATUS current
DESCRIPTION "The storage type for this conceptual row.
 Conceptual rows having the value 'permanent' need not
 allow write-access to any columnar objects in the row."
DEFVAL { nonVolatile }
 ::= { vacmSecurityToGroupEntry 4 }

vacmSecurityToGroupStatus OBJECT-TYPE

SYNTAX RowStatus
MAX-ACCESS read-create

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STATUS current
DESCRIPTION "The status of this conceptual row.

Until instances of all corresponding columns are
appropriately configured, the value of the
corresponding instance of the vacmSecurityToGroupStatus
column is 'notReady'.

In particular, a newly created row cannot be made
active until a value has been set for vacmGroupName.

The RowStatus TC [[RFC2579](#)] requires that this
DESCRIPTION clause states under which circumstances
other objects in this row can be modified:

The value of this object has no effect on whether
other objects in this conceptual row can be modified."
 ::= { vacmSecurityToGroupEntry 5 }

extVacmRowCreatedBy OBJECT-TYPE

SYNTAX INTEGER
 { radius (1), -- Row created by Extended VACM
 other (2) -- ???
 }
MAX-ACCESS read-create

STATUS current
DESCRIPTION "The source of the information in this row
is indicated by the value of this object.
In the case of VACM this column probably won't
exist."
::= { vacmSecurityToGroupEntry 6 }

extVacmRowLifetime OBJECT-TYPE
SYNTAX INTEGER
MAX-ACCESS read-create
STATUS current
DESCRIPTION "The number of seconds for which this row
is valid. Extended VACM SHOULD delete the
row after this lifetime expires."
::= { vacmSecurityToGroupEntry 7 }

extVacmTransportSessionID OBJECT-TYPE
SYNTAX INTEGER
MAX-ACCESS read-create
STATUS current
DESCRIPTION "An identifier of the secure transport
model's session associated with this
authenticated user. The identifier

MUST be unique within the scope of the NAS.
It's content is implementation dependant
and it SHOULD be used merely as an index."
::= { vacmSecurityToGroupEntry 8 }

END

[6.](#) IANA Considerations

TO DO.

[7.](#) Security Considerations

TO DO.

8. References

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