

Port Control Protocol
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PCP Support for Multi-Zone Environments
draft-penno-pcp-zones-01

Abstract

A zone is a notion which denotes a routing instance, a set interfaces or prefixes characterized by having a different address realm and/or security policy. A NAT device can route packets with the same source IP address to different zones depending on configuration policies such as destination IP address. This functionality has been present for many years in NAT devices from multiple vendors. PCP allows a host to interact with a PCP-controlled NAT device and request an external IP and port. Therefore a PCP Server that controls the NAT device and receives a PCP request from a host needs to know from which NAT pool to allocate an external IP address and port. This document specifies an extension to PCP to support the zone concept.

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 [RFC 2119](#) [[RFC2119](#)].

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1. Introduction

A zone is a routing instance, set interfaces or prefixes characterized by having a different address domain or security policy. A NAT device is present on each zone through NAT pools which are used to translate packet to and from a zone. The PCP protocol allows a host to interact with a NAT device and request a external IP and port. Since a NAT Device can route packets with the same source IP address to different Zones depending on policy or packet match conditions, the PCP Server that interacts with the NAT device and receives a PCP request from a host needs to know from which NAT pool to allocate an IP address and port.

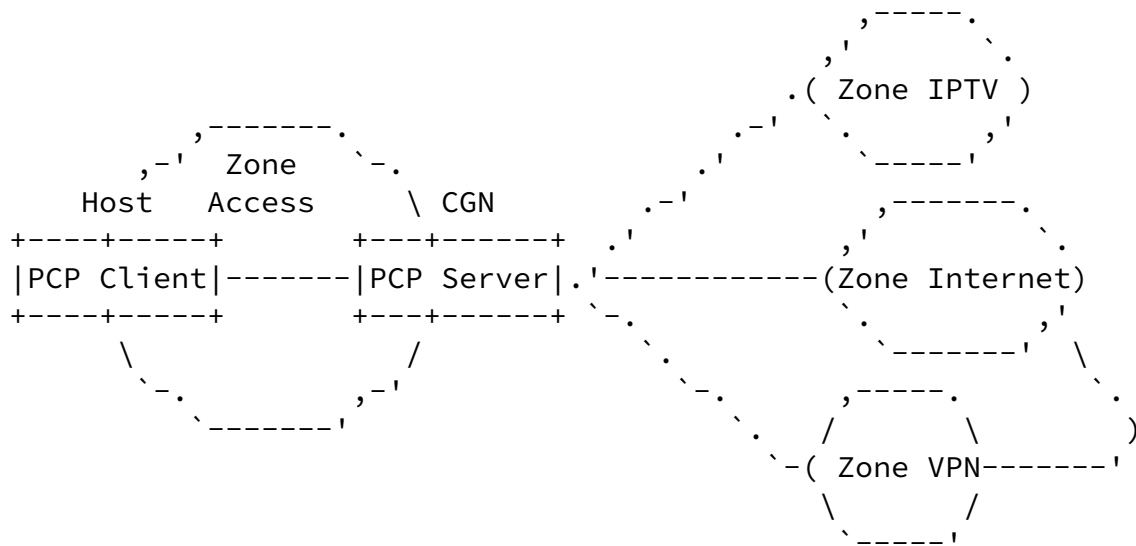
1.1. Terminology

This document uses PCP terminology defined in [[I-D.ietf-pcp-base](#)]]. In addition the following terms are defined in this document:

- o Zone: A routing instance, set of interfaces or network prefixes that has a separate addressing domain or security policy.
- o Address Domain: A collection of IP addresses. A NAT device is present on each domain through one or more NAT pools associated with each Zone.

1.2. Problem Statement

A PCP Server can control a NAT attached to distinct zones; each zone is characterised by one or several address pools. In such environment the NAT must rely on a pre-configured policy to determine which address pool to use when handling an IP packet coming from an internal host. An example of such policy may be to rely on the destination IP address, DSCP value(s), protocol (e.g., SIP, RTP, RTSP), etc.



The core of the problem is that packets from the same source IP address can be routed to any of the zones depending on match conditions based on the 5-tuple. Moreover, sessions could be initiated from any of these zones toward the host. These zones many times have different addressing domains and therefore different NAT pools. This means that packets from the host will use a different NAT pool depending on the destination zone.

It is important to notice that zones (or similar concept) has been present in Enterprise NAT and CGN from multiple vendors for many years. It is the advent and interaction with PCP that has created a need for a standardized approach.

[1.3.](#) Scope

The matching conditions that ultimately decide where to route a packet can be very elaborate including even application layer information. But the scope of this document is to abstract such implementation specific approaches behind the concept of a Zone-ID.

[2.](#) PCP Base Support for Multiple Zones

Before discussing extensions to the PCP protocol in the following sections we discuss how to support multiple zones with the current methods present in the base PCP protocol.

[2.1.](#) PCP PEER Request

A PCP PEER request could contains the destination IP address, port and Transport protocol of the peer the host will be trying to communicate . In that case, if the NAT device maintains a mapping of

zones (and associated NAT pools) to network prefixes it can choose the appropriate NAT pool. It is important to understand that this will only work if the policy that decides to which Zone to route packets is only based on the information present on the PCP PEER request.

Therefore if the PCP Client knows it is behind a NAT with zone support, it is RECOMMENDED that it includes the remote peer's 5-tuple in the PCP PEER request in the connect-then-lifetime case. If the peer's 5-tuple is not present in the PCP request, the external IP and port returned in the message is non-deterministic.

[2.2.](#) PCP MAP Request

In the case of PCP MAP request the NAT device does not know from which zone to install a mapping and consequently from which NAT pool to choose an external IP address and port. A FILTER Option may be included to allow the PCP Server select the external address pool to use. If other information than the destination IP address is used to drive the selection of the external address pool, additional information is required to be conveyed in the PCP MAP request (e.g., DSCP marking policy (see <http://tools.ietf.org/html/>

[draft-boucadair-pcp-extensions-01#section-3](#)).

3. PCP Extension for Multiple Zones

The proposed PCP extension is a new PCP Option that would convey the Zone-ID. The Zone-ID is an opaque identifier that is known by the PCP Client and the PCP-controlled NAT device. The procedure to provision the Zone-ID is out of scope.

When the NAT device receives a PCP request with a Zone-ID, it will use that or a derivative of it to determine the NAT pool from which to allocate an IP address and port.

Option Name: ZONEID

Number: TBA (IANA); Mandatory to process

Purpose: It allows the client request and server indicate from which Zone-ID the external IP:port were allocated.

Valid for Opcodes: MAP, PEER

Length: Variable

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May appear in: both

Maximum occurrences: 1

4. IANA Considerations

TBD

5. Security Considerations

Subscribers can only request ports for the specific Zone-IDs allowed in their security profile. For example, in a typical Wireless deployment, mobile terminals could request mappings in zones

'Internet', 'HTTP Proxy Farm', and 'Video Farm'. A PCP request that contains a zone-id considered a security violation would be silently dropped.

6. Acknowledgements

Thanks to Mohamed Boucadair for early review comments

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