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Discovering PREF64 in Router Advertisements
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Abstract

This document specifies a Router Advertisement option to communicate NAT64 prefixes to clients.

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Internet-Draft Discovering PREF64 in Router Advertisements October 2018

Table of Contents

1.	Introduction	2
1.1.	Requirements Language	2
1.2.	Terminology	2
2.	Why include the NAT64 prefix in Router Advertisements	3
3.	Semantics	3
4.	Option format	4
5.	Handling Multiple NAT64 Prefixes	4
6.	Multihoming	5
7.	IANA Considerations	6
8.	Security Considerations	6
9.	Acknowledgements	6
10.	References	6
10.1.	Normative References	6
10.2.	Informative References	7
10.3.	URIs	8
	Authors' Addresses	8

[1.](#) Introduction

NAT64 [[RFC6146](#)] with DNS64 [[RFC6147](#)] is a widely-deployed mechanism to provide IPv4 access on IPv6-only networks. In order to support functions such as local validation of DNSSEC [[RFC4033](#)] responses, 464xlat [[RFC6877](#)], and local IPv4 address synthesis [[RFC8305](#)], the host must be aware of the NAT64 prefix in use by the network. This document specifies a Router Advertisement [[RFC4861](#)] option to communicate the NAT64 prefix to hosts.

[1.1.](#) 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](#)].

[1.2.](#) Terminology

Pref64: an IPv6 prefix used for IPv6 address synthesis [[RFC6146](#)];

RA Router Advertisement, a message used by IPv6 routers to advertise their presence together with various link and Internet parameters ([RFC4861](#));

PvD-aware host A host that supports the association of network configuration information into PvDs and the use of these PvDs. Also named PvD-aware node in [[RFC7556](#)].

Internet-Draft Discovering PREF64 in Router Advertisements October 2018

2. Why include the NAT64 prefix in Router Advertisements

Fate sharing: NAT64 requires a routing to be configured. IPv6 routing configuration requires receiving an IPv6 Router Advertisement [[RFC4861](#)]. Compared to currently-deployed NAT64 prefix discovery methods such as [[RFC7050](#)], including the NAT64 prefix in the Router Advertisement minimizes the number of packets required to configure a host. This speeds up the process of connecting to a network that supports NAT64/DNS64, and simplifies host implementation by removing the possibility that the host can have an incomplete layer 3 configuration (e.g., IPv6 addresses and prefixes, but no NAT64 prefix).

Deployability: all IPv6 hosts and networks are required to support [[RFC4861](#)]. Other options such as [[RFC7225](#)] require implementing other protocols.

3. Semantics

For simplicity, this option only supports a NAT64 prefix length of 96 bits, as this is by the most common configuration used by hosts. Networks using one of the other prefix lengths supported in ([[RFC6052](#)]) can use other mechanisms such as [[RFC7050](#)] or [[RFC7225](#)]. If different prefix lengths become common, another RA option can be created to configure them.

This option may appear more than once in a Router Advertisement. Host behaviour with regards to synthesizing IPv6 addresses from IPv4 addresses SHOULD follow the recommendations given in [Section 3 of \[\[RFC7050\]\(#\)\]](#), limited to the NAT64 prefixes that have non-zero lifetime.

This option specifies exactly one NAT64 prefix for all IPv4 destinations. If the network operator desires to route different parts of the IPv4 address space to different NAT64 devices, this can be accomplished by routing more specifics of the NAT64 prefix to those devices. For example, if the operator would like to route

10.0.0.0/8 through NAT64 device A and the rest of the IPv4 space through NAT64 device B, and the operator's NAT64 prefix is 2001:db8:a:b::/96, then the operator can route 2001:db8:a:b::a00:0/104 to NAT64 A and 2001:db8:a:b::/64 to NAT64 B.

In a network that provides both IPv4 and NAT64, it may be desirable for certain IPv4 addresses not to be translated. An example might be private address ranges that are local to the network and should not be reached through the NAT64. This type of configuration cannot be conveyed to hosts using this option, or through other NAT64 prefix provisioning mechanisms such as [RFC7050] or [RFC7225]. This problem does not apply in IPv6-only networks, because in such networks, the

host does not have an IPv4 address and cannot reach any IPv4 destinations without the NAT64.

4. Option format

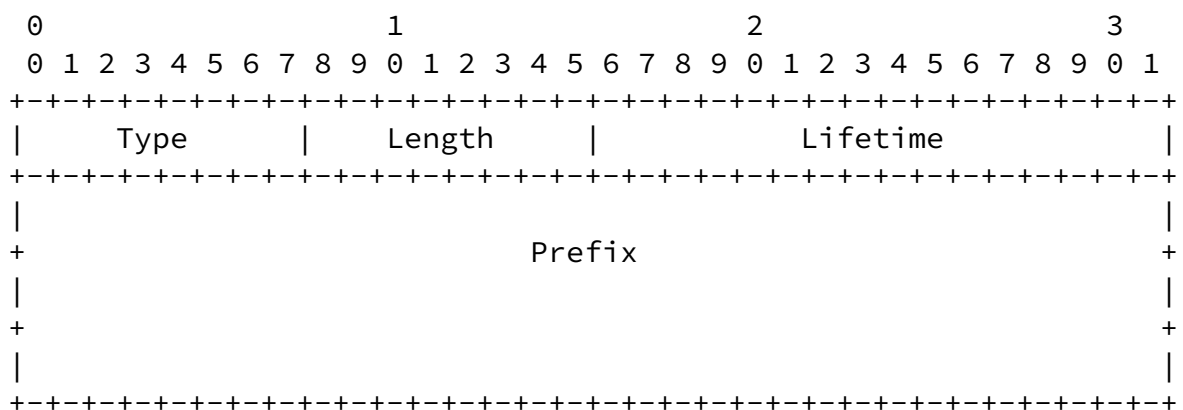


Figure 1: NAT64 Prefix Option Format

Fields:

- Type 8-bit identifier of the RDNSS option type as assigned by IANA: TBD
- Length 8-bit unsigned integer. The length of the option (including the Type and Length fields) is in units of 8 octets. The sender MUST set the Length to 2. A host MUST ignore the

NAT64 prefix option if the length field value is 1. If the Length field value exceeds 2, the host MUST utilize the first 16 octets and ignore the rest of the option.

Lifetime 16-bit unsigned integer. The maximum time in seconds over which this NAT64 prefix MAY be used. The value of Lifetime SHOULD by default be set to lesser of $3 \times \text{MaxRtrAdvInterval}$ or 65535 seconds. A value of zero means that the prefix MUST no longer be used.

Prefix The 96-bit NAT64 prefix.

5. Handling Multiple NAT64 Prefixes

In some cases a host may receive multiple NAT64 prefixes from different sources. Possible scenarios include (but are not limited to):

- o the host is using multiple mechanisms to discover Pref64 prefixes (e.g. by using PCP ([\[RFC7225\]](#)) and/or by resolving IPv4-only fully

qualified domain name ([\[RFC7050\]](#)) in addition to receiving the Pref64 RA option);

- o The pref64 option presents in a single RA more than once;
- o the host receives multiple RAs with different Pref64 prefixes on one or multiple interfaces.

When multiple Pref64 were discovered via RA Pref64 Option (the Option presents more than once in a single RA or multiple RAs were received), host behaviour with regards to synthesizing IPv6 addresses from IPv4 addresses SHOULD follow the recommendations given in [Section 3 of \[RFC7050\]](#), limited to the NAT64 prefixes that have non-zero lifetime..

When different Pref64 are discovered by using multiple mechanisms, hosts SHOULD select one source of information only. The RECOMMENDED order is:

- o PCP-discovered prefixes ([\[RFC7225\]](#)), if supported;
- o Pref64 discovered via RA Option;

- o Pref64 resolving IPv4-only fully qualified domain name ([RFC7050])

Note that if the network provides Pref64 both via this RA option and [RFC7225], hosts that receive the Pref64 via RA option may choose to use it immediately before waiting for PCP to complete, and therefore some traffic may not reflect any more detailed configuration provided by PCP.

6. Multihoming

Like most IPv6 configuration information, the Pref64 option is specific to the network on which it is received. For example, a Pref64 option received on a particular wireless network may not be usable unless the traffic is also sourced on that network. Similarly, a host connected to a cellular network that provides NAT64 generally cannot use that NAT64 for destinations reached through a VPN tunnel that terminates outside that network.

Thus, correct use of this option on a multihomed host generally requires the host to be PVD-aware.

This issue is not specific to the Pref64 RA option and, for example, is quite typical for DNS resolving on multihomed hosts (e.g. a host might resolve a destination name by using the corporate DNS server

via the VPN tunnel but then send the traffic via its Internet-facing interface).

7. IANA Considerations

The IANA is requested to assign a new IPv6 Neighbor Discovery Option type for the PREF64 option defined in this document.

Option Name	Type
PREF64 option	(TBD)

Table 1

The IANA registry for these options is:

<https://www.iana.org/assignments/icmpv6-parameters> [1]

8. Security Considerations

Because Router Advertisements are required in all IPv6 configuration scenarios, on IPv6-only networks, Router Advertisements must already be secured, e.g., by deploying RA guard [RFC6105]. Providing all configuration in Router Advertisements increases security by ensuring that no other protocols can be abused by malicious attackers to provide hosts with invalid configuration.

The security measures that must already be in place to ensure that Router Advertisements are only received from legitimate sources eliminate the problem of NAT64 prefix validation described in [section 3.1 of \[RFC7050\]](#).

9. Acknowledgements

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10. References

10.1. Normative References

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10.3. URIs

[1] <https://www.iana.org/assignments/icmpv6-parameters>

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