

Internet Engineering Task Force
INTERNET-DRAFT
March, 25, 2004
Expires September 24, 2004

A.Durand
SUN Microsystems,inc.
J. Ihren
Autonomica

DNS IPv6 transport operational guidelines
<[draft-ietf-dnsop-ipv6-transport-guidelines-02.txt](#)>

Status of this Memo

This document is an Internet-Draft and is in full conformance with all provisions of [Section 10 of RFC2026](#).

Internet-Drafts are working documents of the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF), its areas, and its working groups. Note that other groups may also distribute working documents as Internet-Drafts.

Internet-Drafts are draft documents valid for a maximum of six months and may be updated, replaced, or obsoleted by other documents at any time. It is inappropriate to use Internet-Drafts as reference material or to cite them other than as "work in progress."

The list of current Internet-Drafts can be accessed at <http://www.ietf.org/ietf/lid-abstracts.txt>.

The list of Internet-Draft Shadow Directories can be accessed at <http://www.ietf.org/shadow.html>.

This Internet-Draft will expire on September 24, 2004.

Copyright Notice

Copyright (C) The Internet Society (2004). All Rights Reserved.

Abstract

This memo provides guidelines and Best Current Practice for operating DNS in a world where queries and responses are carried in a mixed environment of IPv4 and IPv6 networks.

Acknowledgment

This document is the result of many conversations that happened in the DNS community at IETF and elsewhere since 2001. During that

period of time, a number of Internet drafts have been published to clarify various aspects of the issues at stake. This document focuses on the conclusion of those discussions.

The authors would like to acknowledge the role of Pekka Savola in his thorough review of the document.

1. Terminology

The phrase "IPv4 name server" indicates a name server available over IPv4 transport. It does not imply anything about what DNS [[1](#),[2](#)] data is served. Likewise, "IPv6 [[5](#),[6](#),[7](#)] name server" indicates a name server available over IPv6 transport. The phrase "dual-stack name server" indicates a name server that is actually configured to run both protocols, IPv4 and IPv6, and not merely a server running on a system capable of running both but actually configured to run only one.

2. Introduction to the Problem of Name Space Fragmentation: following the referral chain

A resolver that tries to look up a name starts out at the root, and follows referrals until it is referred to a name server that is authoritative for the name. If somewhere down the chain of referrals it is referred to a name server that is only accessible over a transport which the resolver cannot use, the resolver is unable to finish the task.

When the Internet moves from IPv4 to a mixture of IPv4 and IPv6 it is only a matter of time until this starts to happen. The complete DNS hierarchy then starts to fragment into a graph where authoritative name servers for certain nodes are only accessible over a certain transport. The concern is that a resolver using only a particular version of IP, querying information about another node using the same version of IP can not do it because, somewhere in the chain of servers accessed during the resolution process, one or more of them will only be accessible with the other version of IP.

With all DNS data only available over IPv4 transport everything is simple. IPv4 resolvers can use the intended mechanism of following referrals from the root and down while IPv6 resolvers have to work through a "translator", i.e. they have to use a recursive name server on a so-called "dual stack" host as a "forwarder" since they cannot access the DNS data directly.

With all DNS data only available over IPv6 transport everything would be equally simple, with the exception of IPv4 recursive name servers having to switch to a forwarding configuration.

However, the second situation will not arise in the foreseeable future. Instead, the transition will be from IPv4 only to a mixture of IPv4 and IPv6, with three categories of DNS data depending on whether the information is available only over IPv4 transport, only over IPv6 or both.

Having DNS data available on both transports is the best situation. The major question is how to ensure that it as quickly as possible becomes the norm. However, while it is obvious that some DNS data will only be available over v4 transport for a long time it is also obvious that it is important to avoid fragmenting the name space available to IPv4 only hosts. I.e. during transition it is not acceptable to break the name space that we presently have available for IPv4-only hosts.

3. Policy Based Avoidance of Name Space Fragmentation

Today there are only a few DNS "zones" on the public Internet that are available over IPv6 transport, and most of them can be regarded as "experimental". However, as soon as the root and top level domains are available over IPv6 transport, it is reasonable to expect that it will become more common to have zones served by IPv6 servers.

Having those zones served only by IPv6-only name server would not be a good development, since this will fragment the previously unfragmented IPv4 name space and there are strong reasons to find a mechanism to avoid it.

The recommended approach to maintain name space continuity is to use administrative policies, as described in the next section.

4. DNS IPv6 Transport recommended Guidelines

In order to preserve name space continuity, the following administrative policies are recommended:

- every recursive name server SHOULD be either IPv4-only or dual stack,

This rules out IPv6-only recursive servers. However, one might well design configurations where a chain of IPv6-only name server forward queries to a set of dual stack recursive name server actually performing those recursive queries.

- every DNS zone SHOULD be served by at least one IPv4-reachable authoritative name server.

This rules out DNS zones served only by IPv6-only authoritative name servers.

Note: zone validation processes SHOULD ensure that there is at least one IPv4 address record available for the name servers of any child delegations within the zone.

5. Security Considerations

The guidelines described in this memo introduce no new security considerations into the DNS protocol or associated operational scenarios.

6. IANA considerations

This memo creates no new requirements on IANA namespaces [\[4\]](#).

7. Authors Addresses

Alain Durand
SUN Microsystems, Inc
17 Network circle UMPK17-202
Menlo Park, CA, 94025
USA
Mail: Alain.Durand@sun.com

Johan Ihren
Autonomica
Bellmansgatan 30
SE-118 47 Stockholm, Sweden
Mail: johani@autonomica.se

8. Normative References

- [1] Mockapetris, P., "Domain Names - Concepts and Facilities", STD 13, [RFC 1034](#), November 1987.
- [2] Mockapetris, P., "Domain Names - Implementation and Specification", STD 13, [RFC 1035](#), November 1987.
- [3] The Internet Standards Process, S. Bradner, [RFC2026](#), October 1996.
- [4] Guidelines for Writing an IANA Considerations Section in RFCs, T. Narten, H. Alvestrand, [RFC2434](#), October 1998.
- [5] Internet Protocol, Version 6 (IPv6) Specification. S. Deering, R. Hinden, [RFC2460](#), December 1998.

- [6] Hinden, R. and S. Deering, "Internet Protocol Version 6 (IPv6) Addressing Architecture", [RFC 3513](#), April 2003.
- [7] DNS Extensions to Support IP Version 6. S. Thomson, C. Huitema, V. Ksinant, M. Souissi, [RFC3596](#), October 2003.

9. Full Copyright Statement

Intellectual Property Statement

The IETF takes no position regarding the validity or scope of any intellectual property or other rights that might be claimed to pertain to the implementation or use of the technology described in this document or the extent to which any license under such rights might or might not be available; neither does it represent that it has made any effort to identify any such rights. Information on the IETF's procedures with respect to rights in standards-track and standards-related documentation can be found in [BCP-11](#). Copies of claims of rights made available for publication and any assurances of licenses to be made available, or the result of an attempt made to obtain a general license or permission for the use of such proprietary rights by implementors or users of this specification can be obtained from the IETF Secretariat.

The IETF invites any interested party to bring to its attention any copyrights, patents or patent applications, or other proprietary rights which may cover technology that may be required to practice this standard. Please address the information to the IETF Executive Director.

Full Copyright Statement

Copyright (C) The Internet Society (2004). All Rights Reserved.

This document and translations of it may be copied and furnished to others, and derivative works that comment on or otherwise explain it or assist in its implementation may be prepared, copied, published and distributed, in whole or in part, without restriction of any kind, provided that the above copyright notice and this paragraph are included on all such copies and derivative works. However, this document itself may not be modified in any way, such as by removing the copyright notice or references to the Internet Society or other Internet organizations, except as needed for the purpose of developing Internet standards in which case the procedures for copyrights defined in the Internet Standards process must be followed, or as required to translate it into languages other than English.

The limited permissions granted above are perpetual and will not be

revoked by the Internet Society or its successors or assignees.

This document and the information contained herein is provided on an "AS IS" basis and THE INTERNET SOCIETY AND THE INTERNET ENGINEERING TASK FORCE DISCLAIMS ALL WARRANTIES, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO ANY WARRANTY THAT THE USE OF THE INFORMATION HEREIN WILL NOT INFRINGE ANY RIGHTS OR ANY IMPLIED WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE.

Acknowledgment

Funding for the RFC Editor function is currently provided by the Internet Society.