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Private Discovery  
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Abstract

This document specifies a protocol for advertising and discovering devices and services while preserving privacy and confidentiality.

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## 1. Introduction

Advertising and discovering devices and services on the network can leak a lot of information about a device or person, such as their name, the types of services they provide or use, and persistent identifiers. This information can be used to identify and track a person's location and daily routine (e.g. buys coffee every morning at 8 AM at Starbucks on Main Street). It can also reveal intimate details about a person's behavior and medical conditions, such as discovery requests for a glucose monitor, possibly indicating diabetes.

This document specifies a system for advertising and discovery of devices and services while preserving privacy and confidentiality.

This document does not specify how keys are provisioned. Provisioning keys is complex enough to justify its own document(s). This document assumes each peer has a long-term asymmetric key pair (LTPK and LTSK) and communicating peers have each other's long-term asymmetric public key (LTPK).

## 2. Conventions and Terminology

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].

- "\*Announcement\*"** Unsolicited multicast message sent to inform friends on the network that you have become available or have updated data.
- "\*Answer\*"** Solicited unicast message sent in response to a query to provide info or indicate the lack of info.
- "\*Friend\*"** A peer you have a cryptographic relationship with. Specifically, that you have the peer's LTPK.
- "\*DH/ECDH\*"** Diffie-Hellman key exchange. ECDH is the elliptic curve version of DH.
- "\*LTPK\*"** Long-term asymmetric public key. Used for verifying signatures.
- "\*LTSK\*"** Long-term asymmetric secret key. Used for generating signatures.
- "\*Multicast\*"** This term is used in the generic sense of sending a message that targets 0 or more peers. It's not strictly required to be a UDP packet with a multicast destination address. It could be sent via TCP or some other transport to a router that repeats the message via unicast to each peer.
- "\*Probe\*"** Unsolicited multicast message sent to find friends on the network.
- "\*Response\*"** Solicited unicast message sent in response to a probe or announcement.
- "\*Query\*"** Unsolicited unicast message sent to get specific info from a peer.
- "\*Unicast\*"** This term is used in the generic sense of sending a message that targets a single peer. It's not strictly required to be a UDP packet with a unicast destination address.

Multi-byte values are encoded from the most significant byte to the least significant byte (big endian).

When multiple items are concatenated together, the symbol "||" (without quotes) between each item is used to indicate this. For example, a combined item of A followed by B followed by C would be written as "A || B || C".

### 3. Protocol

This document uses two techniques to preserve privacy and provide confidentiality. The first is announcing, probing, and responding with only enough info to allow a peer with your public key to detect that it's you while hiding your identity from peers without your public key. This technique uses a fresh random, signed with your private key using a signature algorithm that doesn't reveal your public key. The second technique is to query and answer in a way that only a specific friend can read the data. This uses ephemeral key exchange and symmetric encryption and authentication.

The general flow of the protocol is a device sends multicast probes to discover friend devices on the network. If friend devices are found, it directly communicates with them via unicast queries and answers. Announcements are sent to report availability and when services are added or removed.

Messages use a common header with a flags/type field. This indicates the format of the data after the header. Unknown message types MUST be ignored. Any data beyond the type-specific message body MUST be ignored. Future versions of this document may define additional data and this MUST NOT cause older message parsers to break. Updated formats that break compatibility with older parsers MUST use a new message type.

This protocol avoids explicit version numbers. It's versioned using message types and flags. Flags are used for protocol extensions where a flag can indicate the presence of an optional field. A new message type is used when the old message type structure cannot reasonably be extended without breaking older parsers. For example, if the probe message in this document changed to use a different key type then older parsers would misinterpret the content of the message. A new type MUST be used in this case so it will be ignored by older, compliant parsers.

Message format:

```

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 bits
+-----+-----+-----+
|Flags|  Type  | Type-specific data
+-----+-----+-----+
```

\* Flags: Flags for future use. Set to 0 when sending. Ignore when receiving.

\* Type: Message type. See Section 7.

### 3.1. Probe

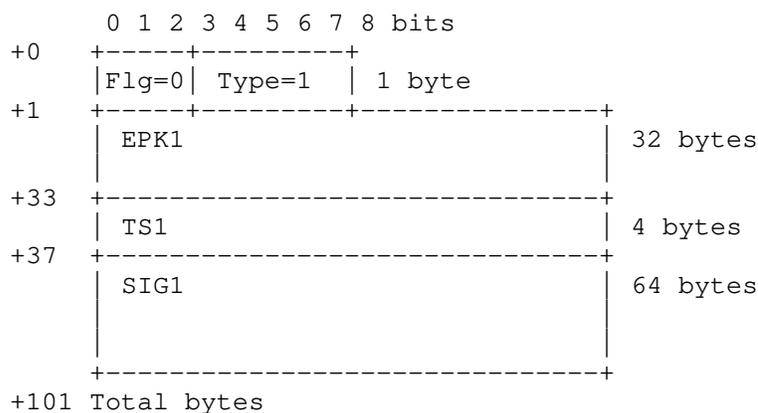
A probe is used to discover friends on the network. It provides enough info for a friend to identify the source, but doesn't allow non-friends to identify it. Probe procedure:

1. Generate a fresh ephemeral public key (EPK1) and its corresponding secret key (ESK1).
2. Get the current timestamp (TS1). See Timestamps Section 4.
3. Generate the payload as "Probe" || EPK1 || TS1 || "End".
4. Generate a signature of the payload (SIG1) using the prober's long-term secret key (LTSK1).
5. Generate the probe with EPK1, TS1, and SIG1.
6. Send the probe via unicast to the sender of the probe.

When a peer receives a probe, it does the following:

1. Verify TS1. If TS1 is outside the time window the message SHOULD be ignored.
2. Verify SIG1 with the public key of each of its friends. If verification fails for all public keys, ignore the probe.
3. If a verification succeeds for a friend's public key, send a response to that friend.

Message format:



### 3.2. Response

A response is sent to answer a probe and provide keys for subsequent encryption of future queries. Response procedure:

1. Generate a fresh ephemeral public key (EPK2) and its corresponding secret key (ESK2).
2. Perform DH using EPK1 and ESK2 to compute a shared secret.
3. Derive a symmetric session key (SSK2) from the shared secret.
4. Generate the payload as "Response" || EPK2 || EPK1 || TS1 || "End".
5. Generate a signature of the payload (SIG2) using the responder's long-term secret key (LTSK2).
6. Encrypt the signature with SSK2 and a nonce of 1 to generate ESIG2.
7. Generate the response with EPK2 and ESIG2.
8. Send the response via unicast to the sender of the probe.

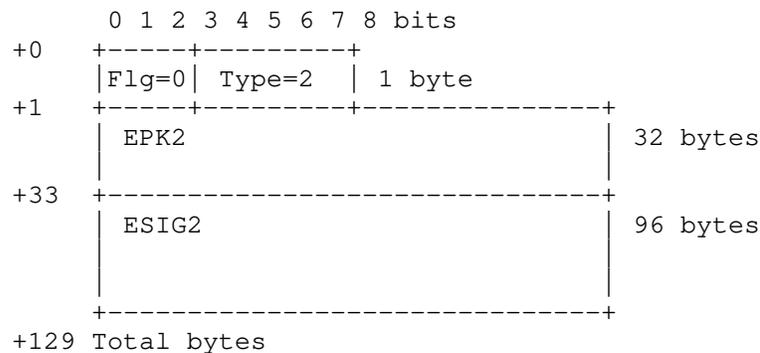
When the friend that sent the probe receives the response, it does the following:

1. Performs DH using EPK2 and ESK1 to compute a shared secret.
2. Derive a symmetric session key (SSK2) from the shared secret for decryption.
3. Symmetrically verify ESIG2 using SSK2. If this fails, ignore the response.
4. Decrypt ESIG2 to reveal SIG2.
5. Verify SIG2 with the public key of each of its friends. If verification fails for all public keys, ignore the response.
6. Derive a symmetric session key (SSK1) from the shared secret to encryption. Session keys (SSK1 and SSK2) are used for subsequent communication with the friend.

Key Derivation details:

- \* SSK1: HKDF-SHA-512 with Salt = "SSK1-Salt", Info = "SSK1-Info", Output size = 32 bytes.
- \* SSK2: HKDF-SHA-512 with Salt = "SSK2-Salt", Info = "SSK2-Info", Output size = 32 bytes.

Message format:



### 3.3. Announcement

An announcement indicates availability to friends on the network or if it has update(s). It is sent whenever a device joins a network (e.g. joins WiFi, plugged into Ethernet, etc.), its IP address changes, or when it has an update for one or more of its services. Announce procedure:

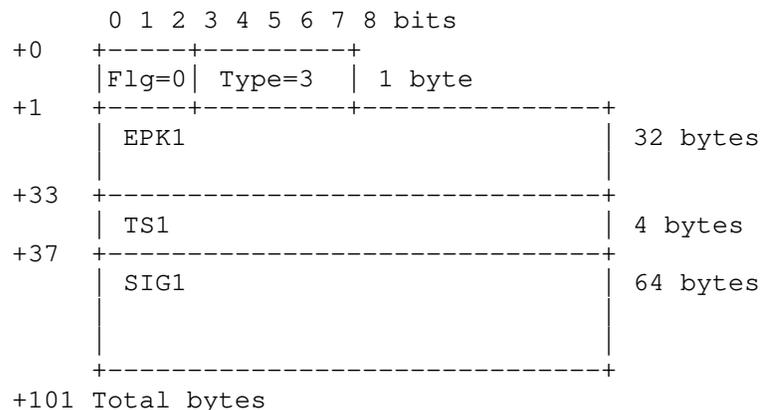
1. Generate a fresh ephemeral public key (EPK1) and its corresponding secret key (ESK1).
2. Get the current timestamp (TS1). See Timestamps Section 4.
3. Generate the payload as "Announcement" || EPK1 || TS1 || "End".
4. Generate a signature of the payload (SIG1) using the announcer's long-term secret key (LTSK1).
5. Generate the announcement with EPK1, TS1, and SIG1.
6. Send the announcement via multicast.

When a peer receives an announcement, it does the following:

1. Verify TS1. If TS1 is outside the time window the message SHOULD be ignored.

2. Verify SIG1 with the public key of each of its friends. If verification fails for all public keys, ignore the announcement.
3. If a verification succeeds for a friend's public key, it knows which friend sent the announcement.

Message format:



### 3.4. Query

A query is sent to request specific info from a friend. Query procedure:

1. Generate query data (MSG1).
2. Get the symmetric session key for the target friend. This is SSK1 for the original prober or SSK2 for the original responder.
3. Encrypt MSG1 with the symmetric session key to generate EMSG1. The nonce is 1 larger than the last nonce used with this symmetric key (e.g. nonce of 2 if this is the first message to this friend after the probe/response).
4. Send the query via unicast to the friend.

When the friend receives a query, it does the following:

1. Symmetrically verify EMSG1 against every active session's key. If this fails for all keys, ignore the query.
2. Decrypt EMSG1 to reveal MSG1.
3. Process the query and possibly send an answer.

Message format:

```

      0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 bits
+0  +-----+-----+
    | Flg=0 | Type=4 | 1 byte
+1  +-----+-----+
    | EMSG1 (Encrypted query data) | n + 16 bytes
    +-----+-----+
+17 + n Total bytes

```

### 3.5. Answer

An answer is sent in response to a query from a friend. Answer procedure:

1. Generate answer data (MSG2).
2. Get the querying friend's symmetric session key. This is SSK1 for the original prober or SSK2 for the original responder.
3. Encrypt MSG2 the symmetric session key to generate EMSG2. The nonce is 1 larger than the last nonce used with this symmetric key (e.g. nonce of 2 if this is the first message to this friend after the probe/response).
4. Send the answer via unicast to the querying friend.

When the querying friend receives the answer, it does the following:

1. Symmetrically verify EMSG2 against every active session's key. If this fails for all keys, ignore the answer.
2. Decrypt EMSG2 to reveal MSG2.
3. Process the answer.

Message format:

```

      0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 bits
+0  +-----+-----+
    | Flg=0 | Type=5 | 1 byte
+1  +-----+-----+
    | EMSG2 (Encrypted query data) | n + 16 bytes
    +-----+-----+
+17 + n Total bytes

```

#### 4. Timestamps

A timestamp in this document is the number of seconds since 1970-01-01 00:00:00 UTC (i.e. Unix Epoch Time). Timestamps sent in messages SHOULD be randomized by +/- 30 seconds to reduce the fingerprinting ability of observers. A timestamp of 0 means the sender doesn't know the current time (e.g. lacks a battery-backed RTC and access to an NTP server). Receivers MAY use a timestamp of 0 to decide whether to enforce time window restrictions. This can allow discovery in situations where one or more devices don't know the current time (e.g. location without Internet access).

A timestamp is considered valid if it's within N seconds of the current time of the receiver. The RECOMMENDED value of N is 900 seconds (15 minutes) to allow peers to remain discoverable even after a large amount of clock drift.

#### 5. Implicit Nonces

The nonces in this document are integers that increment by 1 for each encryption. Nonces are never included in any message. Including nonces in messages would enable senders to be easily tracked by their predictable nonce sequence. This may seem futile if other layers of the system also leak trackable identifiers, such as IP addresses, but this document tries to avoid introducing any new privacy leaks in anticipation of leaks by other layers eventually being fixed. Random nonces could avoid tracking, but make replay protection difficult by requiring the receiver to remember previously received messages to detect a replay.

One issue with implicit nonces and replay protection in general is handling lost messages. Message loss and reordering is expected and shouldn't cause complete failure. Accepting nonces within N of the expected nonce enables recovery from some loss and reordering. When a message is received, the expected nonce is checked first and then nonce + 1, nonce - 1, up to nonce +/- N. The RECOMMENDED value of N is 8 as a balance between privacy, robustness, and performance.

#### 6. Re-keying and Limits

Re-keying is a hedge against key compromise. The underlying algorithms have limits that far exceed reasonable usage (e.g. 96-bit nonces), but if a key was revealed then we want to reduce the damage by periodically re-keying.

Probes are periodically re-sent with a new ephemeral public key in case the previous key pair was compromised. The RECOMMENDED maximum probe ephemeral public key lifetime is 20 hours. This is close to 1

day since people often repeat actions on a daily basis, but with some leeway for natural variations. If a probe ephemeral public key is re-generated for other reasons, such as joining a WiFi network, the refresh timer is reset.

Session keys are periodically re-key'd in case a symmetric key was compromised. The RECOMMENDED maximum session key lifetime is 20 hours or 1000 messages, whichever comes first. This uses the same close-to-a-day reasoning as probes, but adds a maximum number of messages to reduce the potential for exposure when many messages are being exchanged. Responses SHOULD be throttled if it appears that a peer is making an excessive number of requests since this may indicate the peer is probing for weaknesses (e.g. timing attacks, ChopChop-style attacks).

## 7. Message Types

Name	Type	Description
Invalid	0	Invalid message type. Avoids misinterpreting zeroed memory.
Probe	1	See Section 3.1.
Response	2	See Section 3.2.
Announcement	3	See Section 3.3.
Query	4	See Section 3.4.
Answer	5	See Section 3.5.
Reserved	6-31	Reserved. Don't send. Ignore if received.

Table 1

## 8. Message Fields

Name	Description
EPK1/ EPK2	Ephemeral Public Key. 32-byte Curve25519 public key.
TS1	Timestamp. 4-byte timestamp. See Timestamps Section 4.

SIG1/ SIG2	Signature. 64-byte Ed25519 signature.
ESIG1/ ESIG2	Encrypted signature. Ed25519 signature encrypted with ChaCha20-Poly1305. Formatted as the 64-byte encrypted portion followed by a 16-byte MAC (96 bytes total).
EMSG1/ EMSG2	Encrypted message. Message encrypted with ChaCha20-Poly1305. Formatted as the N-byte encrypted portion followed by a 16-byte MAC (N + 16 bytes total).

Table 2

## 9. Security Considerations

- \* Privacy considerations are specified in draft-cheshire-dnssd-privacy-considerations.
- \* Ephemeral key exchange uses elliptic curve Diffie-Hellman (ECDH) with Curve25519 as specified in [RFC7748].
- \* Signing and verification uses Ed25519 as specified in [RFC8032].
- \* Symmetric encryption uses ChaCha20-Poly1305 as specified in [RFC7539].
- \* Key derivation uses HKDF as specified in [RFC5869] with SHA-512 as the hash function.
- \* Randoms and randomization MUST use cryptographic random numbers.

Information leaks may still be possible in some situations. For example, an attacker could capture probes from a peer they've identified and replay them elsewhere within the allowed timestamp window. This could be used to determine if their friend is present on that network.

The network infrastructure may leak identifiers in the form of persistent IP addresses and MAC addresses. Mitigating this requires changes at lower levels of the network stack, such as periodically changing IP addresses and MAC addresses.

## 10. IANA Considerations

- \* A multicast UDP port number would need to be allocated by IANA.

- \* Message types defined by this document are intended to be managed by IANA.

## 11. To Do

The following are some of the things that still need to be specified and decided:

- \* Figure out how sleep proxies might work with this protocol.
- \* Define probe and announcement random delays to reduce collisions.
- \* Describe when to use the same EPK2 in a response to reduce churn on probe/response collisions.
- \* Consider randomly answering probes for non-friends to mask real friends.
- \* Design public service protocol to allow pairing.
- \* Recommend random delays before sending responses to mask friend list sizes.

## 12. Normative References

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Service Discovery Road Map  
draft-cheshire-dnssd-roadmap-03

Abstract

Over the course of several years, a rich collection of technologies has developed around DNS-Based Service Discovery, described across multiple documents. This "Road Map" document gives an overview of how these related but separate technologies (and their documents) fit together, to facilitate service discovery in various environments.

Status of This Memo

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## 1. Road Map

DNS-Based Service Discovery [RFC6763] is a component of Zero Configuration Networking [RFC6760] [ZC].

Over the course of several years, a rich collection of technologies has developed around DNS-Based Service Discovery. These various related but separate technologies are described across multiple documents. This "Road Map" document gives an overview of how these technologies (and their documents) fit together to facilitate service discovery across a broad range of operating environments, from small scale zero-configuration networks to large scale administered networks, from local area to wide area, and from low-speed wireless links in the kb/s range to high-speed wired links operating at multiple Gb/s.

Not all of the available components are necessary or appropriate in all scenarios. One goal of this "Road Map" document is to provide guidance about which components to use depending on the problem being solved.

## 2. Namespace of Service Types

The single most important concept in service discovery is the namespace specifying how different service types are identified. This is how a client communicates what it needs, and how a server communicates what it offers. For a client to discover a server, the client and server need to have a common language to describe what they need and what they offer. They need to use the same namespace of service types, otherwise they may actually speak the same application protocol over the air or on the wire, and may in fact be completely compatible, and yet may be unable to detect this because they are using different names to refer to the same actual service. Hence, having a consistent namespace of service types is the essential prerequisite for any useful service discovery.

IANA manages the registry of Service Types [RFC6335][STR]. This registry of Service Types can (and should) be used in any service discovery protocol as the vocabulary for describing *all* IP-based services, not only DNS-Based Service Discovery [RFC6763].

In this document we focus on the use of the IANA Service Type Registry [STR] in conjunction with DNS-Based Service Discovery, though that should not be taken in any way to imply any criticism of other service discovery protocols sharing the same namespace of service types. In different circumstances different Service Discovery protocols are appropriate.

For example, for service discovery of services potentially available via a Wi-Fi access point, prior to association with that Wi-Fi access point, when no IP communication has yet been established, a service discovery protocol may use raw 802.11 frames, not necessarily IP, UDP, or DNS-formatted messages. For Service Discovery using peer-to-peer Wi-Fi technologies, without any Wi-Fi access point at all, it may also be preferable to use raw 802.11 frames instead of IP, UDP, or DNS-formatted messages. Service Discovery using IEEE 802.15.4 radios may use yet another over-the-air protocol. What is important is that they all share the same vocabulary to describe all IP-based services. Using the same service type vocabulary means that client and server software, using agnostic APIs to consume and offer services on the network, has a common language to identify those services, independent of the medium or the particular service discovery protocol in use on that medium. Just as TCP/IP runs on many different link layers, and the concept of using an IP address to identify a particular peer is consistent across many different link layers, the concept of using a name from the IANA Service Type Registry to identify a particular service type also needs to be consistent across all IP-supporting link layers.

Originally, the IANA Service Type Registry [RFC6335][STR] used the term "Service Name" rather than "Service Type". Later it became clear that this term could be ambiguous. For a given service instance on the network, there is the machine-visible name of the type of service it provides, and the human-visible name of the particular instance of that type of service. For clarity, this document and related specifications use the term "Service Type" to denote the machine-visible name of the type of service, and the term "Instance Name" to denote the human-visible name of a particular instance.

### 3. Service Discovery Operational Model

The original DNS-Based Service Discovery specification [RFC6763] used the terms "register" (advertise a service), "browse" (discover service instances), and "resolve" (get IP address and port for a specific service instance). This terminology is reflective of the thinking at the time, which viewed service discovery as a new and separate step, added to existing networking code. For example, a server would first open a listening socket as it always had, and then "register" that listening socket with the service discovery engine. Similarly, a client would first "resolve" a service instance to an IP address and port, and then, having done that, "connect" to that IP address and port.

More recent thinking in this area [RFC8305] has come to the conclusion that it is preferable wherever possible to insulate application software from networking details like having to decide between IPv4 and IPv6, having to decide among multiple IP addresses of either or both address families, and having to decide among multiple available network interfaces. Consequently this document and related specifications adopt newer terminology as follows:

1. Offer
2. Enumerate
3. Use

The first step, "Offer", is when a server is offering a service using some application-layer protocol, on a listening TCP or UDP (or other transport protocol) port, and wishes to make that known to other devices. This encompasses both making a listening socket (or the equivalent concept in whatever underlying networking API is being used) and advertising the existence of that listening socket via a service discovery mechanism.

The second step, "Enumerate", is when a client device wishes to perform some action, but does not yet know which particular service instance will be used to perform that action. For example, when a user taps the "AirPrint" button on an iPhone or iPad, the iPhone or iPad knows that the user wishes to print, but not which particular printer to use. The desired \*function\* is known (IPP printing), but not the particular instance. In this case, the client device needs to enumerate the list of available service instances that are able to perform the desired task. In some cases this list of service instances is presented to a human user to choose from; in some cases it is software that examines the list of available service instances and determines the best one to use. This second step is the operation that was called "browsing" in the original specifications.

The third step, "Use", is when particular service instance has been selected, and the client wants to make use of that service instance. This encompasses both the "resolve" step (finding IP address(es) and port(s) for the service instance) and the subsequent steps to establish communication with it, which may include details like address family selection, interface selection, transport protocol selection, etc. Ideally, application-layer code should never be exposed to IP addresses at all, just as application-layer code today is generally not exposed to details like MAC addresses [RFC8305].

The second and third steps are intentionally separate. In the second step, a limited amount of information (typically just the name) is requested about a large number of service instances. In the third step more detailed information (e.g, target host IP address, port number, etc.) is requested about one specific service instance. Requesting all the detailed information about all available service instances would be inefficient and wasteful on the network. If the information about services on the network is imagined as a table, then the second step is requesting just one column from that table (the name column) and the third step is requesting just one row from that table (the information pertaining to just one named service instance).

To give a concrete example, clicking the "+" button in the printer settings on macOS is an operation performing the second step. It is requesting the names of all available printers. Depending on the specific use case, this step may be performed only rarely. For example, a user may do this just one once, the first time they configure their computer to use their preferred printer, and never again.

Once a desired printer has been chosen and configured, subsequent printing of documents is an operation performing the third step. This step may be done frequently, perhaps multiple times per day. This third step is important because, in a world of DHCP, IPv6 Stateless Autoconfiguration, and similar dynamic address allocation schemes, a printer's IP address could change from day to day, and to use the printer, its current address must be known. However, this third step need not be performed for every printer on the network, just the specific printer that is about to be used. Also, it is not necessary to repeat the second step again, learning the names of every printer on the network, if the client device already knows the name of the printer it intends to use.

DNS-Based Service Discovery [RFC6763] implements these three principal service discovery operations using DNS records and queries, either using Multicast DNS [RFC6762] (for queries limited to the

local link) or conventional unicast DNS [RFC1034] [RFC1035] (for queries beyond the local link).

Other service discovery protocols achieve the same semantics using different packet formats and mechanisms.

One incidental benefit of using DNS as the foundation layer for service discovery, in cases where that makes sense, is that both Multicast DNS and conventional unicast DNS are also used provide name resolution (mapping host names to IP addresses). There is some efficiency and code reuse gained by using the same underlying protocol for both service discovery and naming.

A final requirement is that the service discovery protocol should not only perform discovery at a single moment in time, but should also provide ongoing change notification (sometimes called "Publish & Subscribe"). Clients need to be notified in a timely fashion when new data of interest appears, when data of interest changes, and, equally importantly, when data of interest goes away ("goodbye packets"). Without support for ongoing change notification, clients would be forced to resort to polling to keep data up to date, which is inefficient and wasteful on the network.

Multicast DNS [RFC6762] implicitly includes change notification by virtue of announcing record creation, update, and deletion, via IP Multicast, which allows these changes to be seen by all peers on the same link (i.e., same broadcast domain).

Conventional unicast DNS [RFC1034] [RFC1035] has historically not had broad support for change notification. This capability is added via the new mechanism for DNS Push Notifications [Push].

When using DNS-Based Service Discovery [RFC6763] there are two aspects to consider: firstly how the clients determine the appropriate DNS names to query (and what query mechanisms to use) and secondly how the relevant information got into the DNS namespace in the first place, so as to be available when clients query for it.

The available namespaces are discussed broadly in Section 4 below. Client operation is then discussed in detail in Section 5, and server operation is discussed in detail in Section 6.

#### 4. Service Discovery Namespace

When used with Multicast DNS [RFC6762] Service Discovery queries necessarily use the ".local" parent domain reserved for this purpose [SUDN].

When used with conventional unicast DNS [RFC1034] [RFC1035] some other domain must be used.

For individuals and organizations with a globally-unique domain name registered to them, their globally-unique domain name, or a subdomain of it, can be used for service discovery.

However, it would be convenient for advanced service discovery to be available even to people who haven't taken the step of registering and paying annually for a globally-unique domain name. For these people it would be useful if devices arrived preconfigured with some suitable factory-default service discovery domain, such as "services.home.arpa" [RFC8375]. Services published in this factory-default service discovery domain are not globally unique or globally resolvable, but they can have scope larger than the single link provided by Multicast DNS.

## 5. Client Configuration and Operation

When using DNS-Based Service Discovery [RFC6763], clients have to choose what DNS names to query.

When used with Multicast DNS [RFC6762] on the local link, queries are necessarily performed in the ".local" parent domain reserved for this purpose [SUDN].

For discovery beyond the local link, a unicast DNS domain must be used. This unicast DNS domain can be configured manually by the user, or it can be learned dynamically from the network (as has been done for many years at IETF meetings to facilitate discovery of the IETF Terminal Room printer, from outside the IETF Terminal Room). In the DNS-SD specification [RFC6763] section 11, "Discovery of Browsing and Registration Domains (Domain Enumeration)", describes how a client device learns one or more recommended service discovery domains from the network, using the special "lb.\_dns-sd.\_udp" query. All of the details from that specification are not repeated here. A walk-through describing one real-world example of how this works, using discovery of the IETF Terminal Room printer as a specific concrete case study, is given in Appendix A.

Given the service type that the user or client device is seeking (see Section 2) and one or more service discovery domains to look in, the client then sends its DNS queries, and processes the responses.

For some uses, one-shot conventional DNS queries and responses are perfectly adequate, but for service discovery, where a list may be displayed on a screen for a user to see, it is desirable to keep that list up to date without the user having to repeatedly tap a "refresh" button, and without the software repeatedly polling the network on the user's behalf.

And early solution to provide asynchronous change notifications for unicast DNS was the UDP-based protocol DNS Long-Lived Queries [DNS-LLQ]. This was used, among other things, by Apple's Back to My Mac Service [RFC6281] introduced in Mac OS X 10.5 Leopard in 2007.

A decade of operational experience has shown that an asynchronous change notification protocol built on TCP is preferable for a variety of reasons, so the IETF is has developed DNS Push Notifications [Push].

Because DNS Push Notifications is built on top of a DNS TCP connection, DNS Push Notifications adopts the conventions specified by DNS Stateful Operations [DSO] rather than inventing its own session management mechanisms.

## 6. Server Configuration and Operation

Section 5 above describes how clients perform their queries. The related question is how the relevant information got into the DNS namespace in the first place, so as to be available when clients query for it.

One trivial way that relevant service discovery information can get into the DNS namespace is simply via manual configuration, creating the necessary PTR, SRV and TXT records [RFC6763] by hand, and indeed this is how the IETF Terminal Room printer has been advertised to IETF meeting attendees for many years. While this is easy for the experienced network operators at the IETF, it can be onerous to others less familiar with how to set up DNS-SD records.

Hence it would be convenient to automate this process of populating the DNS namespace with relevant service discovery information. Two efforts are underway to address this need, the Service Discovery Proxy [DisProx] (see Section 6.1) and the Service Registration Protocol [RegProt] (see Section 6.4).

### 6.1. Service Discovery Proxy

The first technique in the direction of automatically populating the DNS namespace is the Service Discovery Proxy [DisProx]. This technology works with today's existing devices that advertise services using Multicast DNS only (such as almost all network printers sold in the last decade). A Service Discovery Proxy is a device with a presence on the same link as the devices we wish to be able to discover from afar. A remote client sends unicast queries to the Discovery Proxy, which performs local Multicast DNS queries on behalf of the remote client, and then sends back the answers it discovers.

Because the time it takes to receive Multicast DNS responses is uncertain, this mechanism benefits from being able to deliver asynchronous change notifications as new answers come in, using DNS Long-Lived Queries [DNS-LLQ] or the newer DNS Push Notifications [Push] on top of DNS Stateful Operations [DSO].

## 6.2. Multicast DNS Discovery Relay

As an alternative to having to be physically connected to the desired network link, a Service Discovery Proxy [DisProx] can use a Multicast DNS Discovery Relay [Relay] to give it a 'virtual' presence on a remote link. Indeed, when using Discovery Relays, a single Discovery Proxy can have a 'virtual' presence on hundreds of remote links. A single Discovery Proxy in the data center can serve the needs of an entire enterprise. This is modeled after the DHCP protocol. In simple residential scenarios the DHCP server resides in the home gateway, which is physically attached to the (single) local link. In complex enterprise networks, it is common to have a single centralized DHCP server, which resides in the data center and communicates with a multitude of simple lightweight BOOTP relay agents, implemented in the routers on each physical link.

## 6.3. Service Discovery Broker

Finally, when clients are communicating with multiple Service Discovery Proxies at the same time, this can be burdensome for the clients (which may be mobile and battery powered) and for the Service Discovery Proxies (which may have to serve hundreds of clients). This situation is remedied by use of a Service Discovery Broker [Broker]. A Service Discovery Broker is an intermediary between client and server. A client can issue a single query to the Service Discovery Broker and have the Service Discovery Broker do the hard work of issuing multiple queries on behalf of the client. And a Service Discovery Broker can shield a Service Discovery Proxy from excessive load by collapsing multiple duplicate queries from different client down to a single query to the Service Discovery Proxy.

#### 6.4. Service Registration Protocol

The second technique in the direction of automatically populating the DNS namespace is the Service Registration Protocol [RegProt]. This technology is designed to enable future devices that will explicitly cooperate with the network infrastructure to advertise their services.

The Service Registration Protocol is effectively DNS Update, with some minor additions.

One addition to the basic DNS Update protocol is the introduction of a lifetime on DNS Updates, using the Dynamic DNS Update Lease EDNS(0) option [DNS-UL]. This option has similar semantics to a DHCP address lease, where a device is granted an address with with a certain DHCP lease lifetime, and if the device fails to renew the DHCP lease before it expires then the address will be reclaimed and become available to be allocated to a different device. In cases where DHCP is being used for address assignment, a device will generally request a DNS Update Lease with the same expiration time as its DHCP address lease. This way, if the device is abruptly disconnected from the network, around the same time as its address gets reclaimed its DNS records will also be garbage collected.

The second addition to the basic DNS Update protocol is the introduction of information, carried using the EDNS(0) OWNER Option [Owner], that tells the Service Registration server that the device will be going to sleep to save power, and how the Service Registration server can wake it up again on demand when needed. The use of power management information in the Service Registration messages allows devices to sleep to save power, which is especially beneficial for battery-powered devices in the home.

The use of an explicit Service Registration Protocol is beneficial in networks where multicast is expensive, inefficient, or outright blocked, such as many Wi-Fi networks. An explicit Service Registration Protocol is also beneficial in networks where multicast and broadcast are supported poorly, if at all, such as some mesh networks.

#### 7. Security Considerations

As an informational document, this document introduces no new Security Considerations of its own. The various referenced documents each describe their own relevant Security Considerations as appropriate.

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## Appendix A. IETF Terminal Room Printer Discovery Walk-Through

For about a decade now, the talented IETF network staff have provided off-link DNS Service Discovery for the Terminal Room printer at IETF meetings three times a year. In the case of the IETF meetings the necessary DNS records are entered manually, whereas this document advocates for increased automation of that task, but either way the process by which clients query to discover services is the same.

This appendix gives a detailed step-by step account of how this client query process works. It starts with a client joining the Wi-Fi network and doing a DHCP request, and ends with paper coming out of the printer. The reason the explanation is gives the specific details of every step is to avoid inadvertently having a hand-waving "and then a miracle occurs" part, which misses out some important detail. And one of the reasons for asking the IETF network team to set this up for IETF meetings is that operational use is an important reality check. When standing in front of a room, giving a presentation, if you miss out some vital step, people may not notice. When running an actual service used by actual people, if you miss out some vital step, no paper comes out of the printer, and everyone notices.

Using a macOS computer, at an IETF meeting, you can repeat the steps illustrated here to see exactly how it works. Or you can simply press Cmd-P in any application and see that "term-printer" appears as an available printer, to confirm that it does in fact work.

First, let's see what the macOS computer learned from the local DHCP server:

```
% scutil
> list
...
subKey [74] = State:/Network/Service/21B5304C...54B28F4CA1D2/DHCP
...

> show State:/Network/Service/21B5304C...54B28F4CA1D2/DHCP
<dictionary> {
  Option_15 : <data> 0x6d656574696e672e696574662e6f7267
  ...
}
```

Option\_15 is Domain Name. To see what domain name, we need to decode the hexadecimal data to ASCII.

```
% echo 6d656574696e672e696574662e6f7267 0A | xxd -r -p
meeting.ietf.org
```

## A.1. Domain Enumeration using PTR queries

Our DHCP domain name is meeting.ietf.org. Does meeting.ietf.org recommend that we look in any Wide Area Service Discovery domains? This step is called Domain Enumeration [RFC6763], and is performed using a DNS PTR query for a name with the special prefix "lb.\_dns-sd.\_udp":

```
% dig lb._dns-sd._udp.meeting.ietf.org. ptr

; <<>> DiG 9.6-ESV-R4-P3 <<>> lb._dns-sd._udp.meeting.ietf.org. ptr
;; global options: +cmd
;; Got answer:
;; ->>HEADER<<- opcode: QUERY, status: NOERROR, id: 35624
;; flags: qr aa rd ra;
                QUERY: 1, ANSWER: 1, AUTHORITY: 2, ADDITIONAL: 4

;; QUESTION SECTION:
;lb._dns-sd._udp.meeting.ietf.org. IN PTR

;; ANSWER SECTION:
lb._dns-sd._udp.meeting.ietf.org. 3600 IN PTR meeting.ietf.org.

...

;; Query time: 8 msec
;; SERVER: 130.129.5.6#53(130.129.5.6)
;; WHEN: Wed Mar 13 10:16:40 2013
;; MSG SIZE rcvd: 188
```

In the middle there in the Answer Section you'll see that the answer to the PTR query is "meeting.ietf.org". In this case the answer is self-referential -- "meeting.ietf.org" is inviting us to look for services in "meeting.ietf.org", but the PTR record(s) could equally well point at any other domain, such as "services.ietf.org", or anything else.

Note that this answer does not depend on the client device being "on" the IETF meeting network, which is in any case a loosely defined concept at best. Nor does it depend on sending the DNS query to a DNS server that is "on" the IETF meeting network. Any capable DNS recursive resolver anywhere on the planet will give the same answer. We can test this by sending the same DNS PTR query to Google's 8.8.8.8 public resolver:

```
% dig @8.8.8.8 lb._dns-sd._udp.meeting.ietf.org. ptr
; <<>> DiG 9.6-ESV-R4-P3 <<>>
; @8.8.8.8 lb._dns-sd._udp.meeting.ietf.org. ptr
; (1 server found)
;; global options: +cmd
;; Got answer:
;; ->>HEADER<<- opcode: QUERY, status: NOERROR, id: 24571
;; flags: qr rd ra; QUERY:1, ANSWER:1, AUTHORITY:0, ADDITIONAL:0
;; QUESTION SECTION:
;lb._dns-sd._udp.meeting.ietf.org. IN PTR
;; ANSWER SECTION:
lb._dns-sd._udp.meeting.ietf.org. 1532 IN PTR meeting.ietf.org.
;; Query time: 21 msec
;; SERVER: 8.8.8.8#53(8.8.8.8)
;; WHEN: Wed Mar 13 10:18:27 2013
;; MSG SIZE rcvd: 64
```

In the Answer Section you'll see that the answer is still "meeting.ietf.org".

In this example, this particular test was done at the 86th IETF in Orlando, Florida, in March 2013. The Google 8.8.8.8 public resolver still gave the correct answer, even though it was 13 hops away:

```
% traceroute -q 1 8.8.8.8
traceroute to 8.8.8.8 (8.8.8.8), 64 hops max, 52 byte packets
 1  rtra (130.129.80.2)  1.369 ms
 2  75-112-170-148.net.bhntampa.com (75.112.170.148)  14.494 ms
 3  bun2.tamp20-car1.bhn.net (71.44.3.73)  19.558 ms
 4  hun0-0-0-0-tamp20-cbr1.bhn.net (72.31.117.156)  20.730 ms
 5  xe-8-2-0.bar1.tampa1.level3.net (4.53.172.9)  13.052 ms
 6  ae-5-5.ebr1.miami1.level3.net (4.69.148.213)  27.413 ms
 7  ae-1-51.edge1.miami2.level3.net (4.69.138.75)  15.552 ms
 8  google-inc.edge1.miami2.level3.net (4.59.240.26)  48.852 ms
 9  209.85.253.118 (209.85.253.118)  21.118 ms
10  216.239.48.192 (216.239.48.192)  21.890 ms
11  216.239.48.192 (216.239.48.192)  23.221 ms
12  *
13  google-public-dns-a.google.com (8.8.8.8)  32.961 ms
```

For the rest of this example we use the Google 8.8.8.8 public resolver for all the queries.

In the case of IETF meetings the PTR is self-referential -- meeting.ietf.org is advising us to look in meeting.ietf.org, but it could easily be set up to direct us elsewhere. However, since it's suggesting we look for services in meeting.ietf.org, we'll do that.

### A.2. Instance Enumeration using PTR queries on a macOS computer

Once one or more service discovery domains have been determined, the client then looks for instances of the desired service type. This step is called Instance Enumeration and is also performed using a DNS PTR queries, using a name with a prefix indicating the type of service that is being sought.

A macOS computer with appropriate printer drivers installed will look for instances of the service type "\_pdl-datastream.\_tcp" in the domain "meeting.ietf.org", as shown below. This is typically performed just once, the first time the macOS computer is set up to use that printer.

```
% dig +short @8.8.8.8 _pdl-datastream._tcp.meeting.ietf.org. ptr
term-printer._pdl-datastream._tcp.meeting.ietf.org.
```

There's one printing service available here, called "term-printer". That's what you see when you press the "+" button in the Print & Fax Preference Pane on macOS.

### A.3. Printing from a macOS computer

When the user actually prints something, macOS sends a DNS SRV query for the printer name learned in the previous Instance Enumeration step, to learn the target host and port for the service. This DNS SRV query is then followed by address queries for the target host's IPv4 and/or IPv6 addresses. The necessary address records are usually included in the Additional Section of the reply to the SRV query, so that these address queries can be answered from the local cache, without resulting in additional packets over the air.

```
% dig +short @8.8.8.8 \
      term-printer._pdl-datastream._tcp.meeting.ietf.org. srv
0 0 9100 term-printer.meeting.ietf.org.
```

```
% dig +short @8.8.8.8 term-printer.meeting.ietf.org. AAAA
2001:df8::48:200:74ff:fee0:6cf8
```

This tells the computer that to use this printer, it must connect to [2001:df8::48:200:74ff:fee0:6cf8]:9100, using the installed printer driver, which speaks the appropriate vendor-specific printing protocol for that printer.

## A.4. Instance Enumeration using PTR queries on an iOS device

Printing from an iPhone or iPad is similar, except there are no vendor-specific printer drivers installed. Instead, printing from an iPhone or iPad uses the IETF Standard IPP printing protocol, using an IPP printer that supports at least URF (Universal Raster Format). Consequently, the iOS device sends its Instance Enumeration DNS PTR queries using the prefix "\_universal.\_sub.\_ipp.\_tcp" to indicate that it is looking for the subset of IPP printers that support Universal Raster Format.

```
% dig +short @8.8.8.8 \
      _universal._sub._ipp._tcp.meeting.ietf.org. ptr
term-printer._ipp._tcp.meeting.ietf.org.
```

An iPhone or iPad will discover that there's one URF-capable IPP-based printing service available here, called "term-printer". It has the same name as the pdl-datastream printing service, and exists on the same physical hardware, but uses a different printing protocol.

## A.5. Printing from an iOS device

When the user prints from their iPhone or iPad using AirPrint, iOS does these DNS SRV and address queries:

```
% dig +short @8.8.8.8 term-printer._ipp._tcp.meeting.ietf.org. srv
0 0 631 term-printer.meeting.ietf.org.
```

```
% dig +short @8.8.8.8 term-printer.meeting.ietf.org. aaaa
2001:df8::48:200:74ff:fee0:6cf8
```

Note that the "\_ipp.\_tcp" service has the same target hostname and IPv6 address as the "\_pdl-datastream" service from the macOS example, but is accessed at a different TCP port on that hardware device.

To use this printer, the iPhone or iPad connects to [2001:df8::48:200:74ff:fee0:6cf8]:631, and uses IPP to print.

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DNS Stateful Operations  
draft-ietf-dnsop-session-signal-18

Abstract

This document defines a new DNS OPCODE for DNS Stateful Operations (DSO). DSO messages communicate operations within persistent stateful sessions, using type-length-value (TLV) syntax. Three TLVs are defined that manage session timeouts, termination, and encryption padding, and a framework is defined for extensions to enable new stateful operations. This document updates RFC 1035 by adding a new DNS header opcode which has different message semantics, and a new result code. This document updates RFC 7766 by redefining a session, providing new guidance on connection re-use, and providing a new mechanism for handling session idle timeouts.

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## 1. Introduction

This document specifies a mechanism for managing stateful DNS connections. DNS most commonly operates over a UDP transport, but can also operate over streaming transports; the original DNS RFC specifies DNS over TCP [RFC1035] and a profile for DNS over TLS [RFC7858] has been specified. These transports can offer persistent, long-lived sessions and therefore when using them for transporting DNS messages it is of benefit to have a mechanism that can establish parameters associated with those sessions, such as timeouts. In such

situations it is also advantageous to support server-initiated messages (such as DNS Push Notifications [I-D.ietf-dnssd-push]).

The existing EDNS(0) Extension Mechanism for DNS [RFC6891] is explicitly defined to only have "per-message" semantics. While EDNS(0) has been used to signal at least one session-related parameter (edns-tcp-keepalive EDNS0 Option [RFC7828]) the result is less than optimal due to the restrictions imposed by the EDNS(0) semantics and the lack of server-initiated signalling. For example, a server cannot arbitrarily instruct a client to close a connection because the server can only send EDNS(0) options in responses to queries that contained EDNS(0) options.

This document defines a new DNS OPCODE, DSO ([TBA1], tentatively 6), for DNS Stateful Operations. DSO messages are used to communicate operations within persistent stateful sessions, expressed using type-length-value (TLV) syntax. This document defines an initial set of three TLVs, used to manage session timeouts, termination, and encryption padding.

All three TLVs defined here are mandatory for all implementations of DSO. Further TLVs may be defined in additional specifications.

DSO messages may or may not be acknowledged; this is signalled by providing a non-zero message ID for messages that must be acknowledged (DSO request messages) and a zero message ID for messages that are not to be acknowledged (DSO unidirectional messages), and is also specified in the definition of a particular DSO message type. Messages are pipelined; answers may appear out of order when more than one answer is pending.

The format for DSO messages (Section 5.4) differs somewhat from the traditional DNS message format used for standard queries and responses. The standard twelve-byte header is used, but the four count fields (QDCOUNT, ANCOUNT, NSCOUNT, ARCOUNT) are set to zero and accordingly their corresponding sections are not present.

The actual data pertaining to DNS Stateful Operations (expressed in TLV syntax) is appended to the end of the DNS message header. Just as in traditional DNS over TCP [RFC1035] [RFC7766] the stream protocol carrying DSO messages (which are just another kind of DNS message) frames them by putting a 16-bit message length at the start, so the length of the DSO message is determined from that length, rather than from any of the DNS header counts.

When displayed using packet analyzer tools that have not been updated to recognize the DSO format, this will result in the DSO data being

displayed as unknown additional data after the end of the DNS message.

This new format has distinct advantages over an RR-based format because it is more explicit and more compact. Each TLV definition is specific to its use case, and as a result contains no redundant or overloaded fields. Importantly, it completely avoids conflating DNS Stateful Operations in any way with normal DNS operations or with existing EDNS(0)-based functionality. A goal of this approach is to avoid the operational issues that have befallen EDNS(0), particularly relating to middlebox behaviour (see for example [I-D.ietf-dnsop-no-response-issue] sections 3.2 and 4).

With EDNS(0), multiple options may be packed into a single OPT pseudo-RR, and there is no generalized mechanism for a client to be able to tell whether a server has processed or otherwise acted upon each individual option within the combined OPT pseudo-RR. The specifications for each individual option need to define how each different option is to be acknowledged, if necessary.

In contrast to EDNS(0), with DSO there is no compelling motivation to pack multiple operations into a single message for efficiency reasons, because DSO always operates using a connection-oriented transport protocol. Each DSO operation is communicated in its own separate DNS message, and the transport protocol can take care of packing several DNS messages into a single IP packet if appropriate. For example, TCP can pack multiple small DNS messages into a single TCP segment. This simplification allows for clearer semantics. Each DSO request message communicates just one primary operation, and the RCODE in the corresponding response message indicates the success or failure of that operation.

## 2. 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.

### 3. Terminology

DSO: DNS Stateful Operations.

connection: a bidirectional byte (or message) stream, where the bytes (or messages) are delivered reliably and in-order, such as provided by using DNS over TCP [RFC1035] [RFC7766] or DNS over TLS [RFC7858].

session: The unqualified term "session" in the context of this document refers to a persistent network connection between two endpoints which allows for the exchange of DNS messages over a connection where either end of the connection can send messages to the other end. (The term has no relationship to the "session layer" of the OSI "seven-layer model".)

DSO Session: a session established between two endpoints that acknowledge persistent DNS state via the exchange of DSO messages over the connection. This is distinct from a DNS-over-TCP session as described in the previous specification for DNS over TCP [RFC7766].

close gracefully: a normal session shutdown, where the client closes the TCP connection to the server using a graceful close, such that no data is lost (e.g., using TCP FIN, see Section 5.3).

forcibly abort: a session shutdown as a result of a fatal error, where the TCP connection is unilaterally aborted without regard for data loss (e.g., using TCP RST, see Section 5.3).

server: the software with a listening socket, awaiting incoming connection requests, in the usual DNS sense.

client: the software which initiates a connection to the server's listening socket, in the usual DNS sense.

initiator: the software which sends a DSO request message or a DSO unidirectional message during a DSO session. Either a client or server can be an initiator

responder: the software which receives a DSO request message or a DSO unidirectional message during a DSO

session. Either a client or server can be a responder.

sender: the software which is sending a DNS message, a DSO message, a DNS response, or a DSO response.

receiver: the software which is receiving a DNS message, a DSO message, a DNS response, or a DSO response.

service instance: a specific instance of server software running on a specific host (Section 9.1).

long-lived operation: a long-lived operation is an outstanding operation on a DSO session where either the client or server, acting as initiator, has requested that the responder send new information regarding the request, as it becomes available.

Early Data: A TCP SYN packet (TCP Fast Open) containing a TLS 1.3 initial handshake containing early data that begins a DSO session ([RFC8446] section 2.3). TCP Fast Open is only permitted when using TLS encapsulation: a TCP SYN message that does not use TLS encapsulation but contains data is not permitted.

DNS message: any DNS message, including DNS queries, response, updates, DSO messages, etc.

DNS request message: any DNS message where the QR bit is 0.

DNS response message: any DNS message where the QR bit is 1.

DSO message: a DSO request message, DSO unidirectional message, or a DSO response to a DSO request message. If the QR bit is 1 in a DSO message, it is a DSO response message. If the QR bit is 0 in a DSO message, it is a DSO request message or DSO unidirectional message, as determined by the specification of its primary TLV.

DSO response message: a response to a DSO request message.

DSO request message: a DSO message that requires a response.

DSO unidirectional message: a DSO message that does not require and cannot induce a response.

Primary TLV: The first TLV in a DSO message or DSO response; in the DSO message this determines the nature of the operation being performed.

Additional TLV: Any TLVs in a DSO message response that follow the primary TLV.

Response Primary TLV: The (optional) first TLV in a DSO response.

Response Additional TLV: Any TLVs in a DSO response that follow the (optional) Response Primary TLV.

inactivity timer: the time since the most recent non-keepalive DNS message was sent or received. (see Section 6.4)

keepalive timer: the time since the most recent DNS message was sent or received. (see Section 6.5)

session timeouts: the inactivity timer and the keepalive timer.

inactivity timeout: the maximum value that the inactivity timer can have before the connection is gracefully closed.

keepalive interval: the maximum value that the keepalive timer can have before the client is required to send a keepalive. (see Section 7.1)

resetting a timer: setting the timer value to zero and restarting the timer.

clearing a timer: setting the timer value to zero but not restarting the timer.

## 4. Applicability

DNS Stateful Operations are applicable to several known use cases and are only applicable on transports that are capable of supporting a DSO Session.

### 4.1. Use Cases

There are several use cases for DNS Stateful operations that can be described here.

#### 4.1.1. Session Management

Firstly, establishing session parameters such as server-defined timeouts is of great use in the general management of persistent connections. For example, using DSO sessions for stub-to-recursive DNS-over-TLS [RFC7858] is more flexible for both the client and the server than attempting to manage sessions using just the edns-tcp-keepalive EDNS0 Option [RFC7828]. The simple set of TLVs defined in this document is sufficient to greatly enhance connection management for this use case.

#### 4.1.2. Long-lived Subscriptions

Secondly, DNS-SD [RFC6763] has evolved into a naturally session-based mechanism where, for example, long-lived subscriptions lend themselves to 'push' mechanisms as opposed to polling. Long-lived stateful connections and server-initiated messages align with this use case [I-D.ietf-dnssd-push].

A general use case is that DNS traffic is often bursty but session establishment can be expensive. One challenge with long-lived connections is to maintain sufficient traffic to maintain NAT and firewall state. To mitigate this issue this document introduces a new concept for the DNS, that is DSO "Keepalive traffic". This traffic carries no DNS data and is not considered 'activity' in the classic DNS sense, but serves to maintain state in middleboxes, and to assure client and server that they still have connectivity to each other.

#### 4.2. Applicable Transports

DNS Stateful Operations are applicable in cases where it is useful to maintain an open session between a DNS client and server, where the transport allows such a session to be maintained, and where the transport guarantees in-order delivery of messages, on which DSO depends. Examples of transports that can support DNS Stateful Operations are DNS-over-TCP [RFC1035] [RFC7766] and DNS-over-TLS [RFC7858].

Note that in the case of DNS over TLS, there is no mechanism for upgrading from DNS-over-TCP to DNS-over-TLS mid-connection (see [RFC7858] section 7). A connection is either DNS-over-TCP from the start, or DNS-over-TLS from the start.

DNS Stateful Operations are not applicable for transports that cannot support clean session semantics, or that do not guarantee in-order delivery. While in principle such a transport could be constructed over UDP, the current DNS specification over UDP transport [RFC1035] does not provide in-order delivery or session semantics, and hence cannot be used. Similarly, DNS-over-HTTP [I-D.ietf-doh-dns-over-https] cannot be used because HTTP has its own mechanism for managing sessions, and this is incompatible with the mechanism specified here.

No other transports are currently defined for use with DNS Stateful Operations. Such transports can be added in the future, if they meet the requirements set out in the first paragraph of this section.

## 5. Protocol Details

The overall flow of DNS Stateful Operations goes through a series of phases:

**Connection Establishment:** A client establishes a connection to a server. (Section 4.2)

**Connected but sessionless:** A connection exists, but a DSO session has not been established. DNS messages can be sent from the client to server, and DNS responses can be sent from servers to clients. In this state a client that wishes to use DSO can attempt to establish a DSO session (Section 5.1). Standard DNS-over-TCP inactivity timeout handling is in effect [RFC7766] (see Section 7.1.2).

**DSO Session Establishment in Progress:** A client has sent a DSO request, but has not yet received a DSO response. In this phase, the client may send more DSO requests and more DNS requests, but **MUST NOT** send DSO unidirectional messages (Section 5.1).

**DSO Session Establishment Failed:** The attempt to establish the DSO session did not succeed. At this point, the client is permitted to continue operating without a DSO session (Connected but Sessionless) but does not send further DSO messages (Section 5.1).

**DSO Session Established:** Both client and server may send DSO messages and DNS messages; both may send replies in response to messages they receive (Section 5.2). The inactivity timer (Section 6.4) is active; the keepalive timer (Section 6.5) is active. Standard DNS-over-TCP inactivity timeout handling is no longer in effect [RFC7766] (see Section 7.1.2).

**Server Shutdown:** The server has decided to gracefully terminate the session, and has sent the client a Retry Delay message (Section 6.6.1). There may still be unprocessed messages from the client; the server will ignore these. The server will not send any further messages to the client (Section 6.6.1.1).

**Client Shutdown:** The client has decided to disconnect, either because it no longer needs service, the connection is inactive (Section 6.4.1), or because the server sent it a Retry Delay message (Section 6.6.1). The client closes the connection gracefully Section 5.3.

**Reconnect:** The client disconnected as a result of a server shutdown. The client either waits for the server-specified Retry Delay to expire (Section 6.6.3), or else contacts a different server

instance. If the client no longer needs service, it does not reconnect.

**Forcibly Abort:** The client or server detected a protocol error, and further communication would have undefined behavior. The client or server forcibly aborts the connection (Section 5.3).

**Abort Reconnect Wait:** The client has forcibly aborted the connection, but still needs service. Or, the server forcibly aborted the connection, but the client still needs service. The client either connects to a different service instance (Section 9.1) or waits to reconnect (Section 6.6.3.1).

#### 5.1. DSO Session Establishment

In order for a session to be established between a client and a server, the client must first establish a connection to the server, using an applicable transport (see Section 4).

In some environments it may be known in advance by external means that both client and server support DSO, and in these cases either client or server may initiate DSO messages at any time. In this case, the session is established as soon as the connection is established; this is referred to as implicit session establishment.

However, in the typical case a server will not know in advance whether a client supports DSO, so in general, unless it is known in advance by other means that a client does support DSO, a server **MUST NOT** initiate DSO request messages or DSO unidirectional messages until a DSO Session has been mutually established by at least one successful DSO request/response exchange initiated by the client, as described below. This is referred to as explicit session establishment.

Until a DSO session has been implicitly or explicitly established, a client **MUST NOT** initiate DSO unidirectional messages.

A DSO Session is established over a connection by the client sending a DSO request message, such as a DSO Keepalive request message (Section 7.1), and receiving a response, with matching MESSAGE ID, and RCODE set to NOERROR (0), indicating that the DSO request was successful.

Some DSO messages are permitted as early data (Section 11.1). Others are not. Unidirectional messages are never permitted as early data unless an implicit session exists.

If a server receives a DSO message in early data whose primary TLV is not permitted to appear in early data, the server MUST forcibly abort the connection. If a client receives a DSO message in early data, and there is no implicit DSO session, the client MUST forcibly abort the connection. If a server or client receives a TCP Fast Open message that is not a TLS 1.3 0-RTT initial handshake, it MUST forcibly abort the connection.

#### 5.1.1.1. Session Establishment Failure

If the response RCODE is set to NOTIMP (4), or in practise any value other than NOERROR (0) or DSOTYPENI (defined below), then the client MUST assume that the server does not implement DSO at all. In this case the client is permitted to continue sending DNS messages on that connection, but the client MUST NOT issue further DSO messages on that connection.

If the RCODE in the response is set to DSOTYPENI ("DSO-TYPE Not Implemented", [TBA2] tentatively RCODE 11) this indicates that the server does support DSO, but does not implement the DSO-TYPE of the primary TLV in this DSO request message. A server implementing DSO MUST NOT return DSOTYPENI for a DSO Keepalive request message, because the Keepalive TLV is mandatory to implement. But in the future, if a client attempts to establish a DSO Session using a response-requiring DSO request message using some newly-defined DSO-TYPE that the server does not understand, that would result in a DSOTYPENI response. If the server returns DSOTYPENI then a DSO Session is not considered established, but the client is permitted to continue sending DNS messages on the connection, including other DSO messages such as the DSO Keepalive, which may result in a successful NOERROR response, yielding the establishment of a DSO Session.

Two other possibilities exist: the server might drop the connection, or the server might send no response to the DSO message.

In the first case, the client SHOULD mark that service instance as not supporting DSO, and not attempt a DSO connection for some period of time (at least an hour) after the failed attempt. The client MAY reconnect but not use DSO, if appropriate (Section 6.6.3.2).

In the second case, the client SHOULD wait 30 seconds, after which time the server will be assumed not to support DSO. If the server doesn't respond within 30 seconds, the client MUST forcibly abort the connection to the server, since the server's behavior is out of spec, and hence its state is undefined. The client MAY reconnect, but not use DSO, if appropriate (Section 6.6.3.1).

### 5.1.2. Session Establishment Success

When the server receives a DSO request message from a client, and transmits a successful NOERROR response to that request, the server considers the DSO Session established.

When the client receives the server's NOERROR response to its DSO request message, the client considers the DSO Session established.

Once a DSO Session has been established, either end may unilaterally send appropriate DSO messages at any time, and therefore either client or server may be the initiator of a message.

### 5.2. Operations After Session Establishment

Once a DSO Session has been established, clients and servers should behave as described in this specification with regard to inactivity timeouts and session termination, not as previously prescribed in the earlier specification for DNS over TCP [RFC7766].

Because a server that supports DNS Stateful Operations MUST return an RCODE of NOERROR when it receives a Keepalive TLV DSO request message, the Keepalive TLV is an ideal candidate for use in establishing a DSO session. Any other option that can only succeed when sent to a server of the desired kind is also a good candidate for use in establishing a DSO session. For clients that implement only the DSO-TYPES defined in this base specification, sending a Keepalive TLV is the only DSO request message they have available to initiate a DSO Session. Even for clients that do implement other future DSO-TYPES, for simplicity they MAY elect to always send an initial DSO Keepalive request message as their way of initiating a DSO Session. A future definition of a new response-requiring DSO-TYPE gives implementers the option of using that new DSO-TYPE if they wish, but does not change the fact that sending a Keepalive TLV remains a valid way of initiating a DSO Session.

### 5.3. Session Termination

A "DSO Session" is terminated when the underlying connection is closed. Sessions are "closed gracefully" as a result of the server closing a session because it is overloaded, the client closing the session because it is done, or the client closing the session because it is inactive. Sessions are "forcibly aborted" when either the client or server closes the connection because of a protocol error.

- o Where this specification says, "close gracefully," that means sending a TLS `close_notify` (if TLS is in use) followed by a TCP `FIN`, or the equivalents for other protocols. Where this specification requires a connection to be closed gracefully, the requirement to initiate that graceful close is placed on the client, to place the burden of TCP's `TIME-WAIT` state on the client rather than the server.
- o Where this specification says, "forcibly abort," that means sending a TCP `RST`, or the equivalent for other protocols. In the BSD Sockets API this is achieved by setting the `SO_LINGER` option to zero before closing the socket.

#### 5.3.1. Handling Protocol Errors

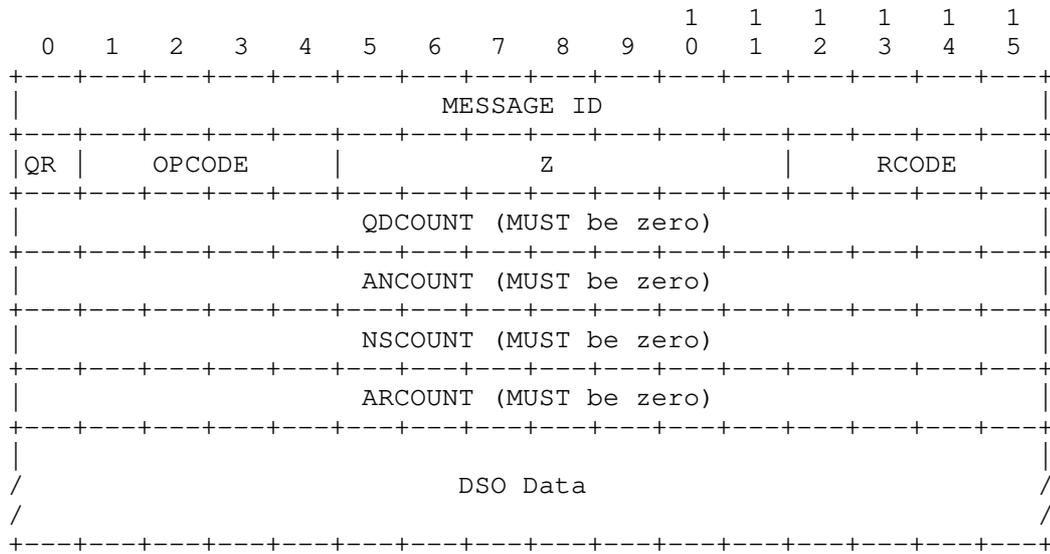
In protocol implementation there are generally two kinds of errors that software writers have to deal with. The first is situations that arise due to factors in the environment, such as temporary loss of connectivity. While undesirable, these situations do not indicate a flaw in the software, and they are situations that software should generally be able to recover from.

The second is situations that should never happen when communicating with a compliant DSO implementation. If they do happen, they indicate a serious flaw in the protocol implementation, beyond what it is reasonable to expect software to recover from. This document describes this latter form of error condition as a "fatal error" and specifies that an implementation encountering a fatal error condition "MUST forcibly abort the connection immediately".

5.4. Message Format

A DSO message begins with the standard twelve-byte DNS message header [RFC1035] with the OPCODE field set to the DSO OPCODE. However, unlike standard DNS messages, the question section, answer section, authority records section and additional records sections are not present. The corresponding count fields (QDCOUNT, ANCOUNT, NSCOUNT, ARCOUNT) MUST be set to zero on transmission.

If a DSO message is received where any of the count fields are not zero, then a FORMERR MUST be returned.



#### 5.4.1.1. DNS Header Fields in DSO Messages

In a DSO unidirectional message the MESSAGE ID field MUST be set to zero. In a DSO request message the MESSAGE ID field MUST be set to a unique nonzero value, that the initiator is not currently using for any other active operation on this connection. For the purposes here, a MESSAGE ID is in use in this DSO Session if the initiator has used it in a DSO request message for which it is still awaiting a response, or if the client has used it to set up a long-lived operation that has not yet been cancelled. For example, a long-lived operation could be a Push Notification subscription [I-D.ietf-dnssd-push] or a Discovery Relay interface subscription [I-D.ietf-dnssd-mdns-relay].

Whether a message is a DSO request message or a DSO unidirectional message is determined only by the specification for the Primary TLV. An acknowledgment cannot be requested by including a nonzero message ID in a message that is required according to its primary TLV to be unidirectional. Nor can an acknowledgment be prevented by sending a message ID of zero in a message that is required to be a DSO request message according to its primary TLV. A responder that receives either such malformed message MUST treat it as a fatal error and forcibly abort the connection immediately.

In a DSO request message or DSO unidirectional message the DNS Header QR bit MUST be zero (QR=0). If the QR bit is not zero the message is not a DSO request or DSO unidirectional message.

In a DSO response message the DNS Header QR bit MUST be one (QR=1). If the QR bit is not one, the message is not a response message.

In a DSO response message (QR=1) the MESSAGE ID field MUST contain a copy of the value of the MESSAGE ID field in the DSO request message being responded to. In a DSO response message (QR=1) the MESSAGE ID field MUST NOT be zero. If a DSO response message (QR=1) is received where the MESSAGE ID is zero this is a fatal error and the recipient MUST forcibly abort the connection immediately.

The DNS Header OPCODE field holds the DSO OPCODE value.

The Z bits are currently unused in DSO messages, and in both DSO request messages and DSO responses the Z bits MUST be set to zero (0) on transmission and MUST be ignored on reception.

In a DSO request message (QR=0) the RCODE is set according to the definition of the request. For example, in a Retry Delay message (Section 6.6.1) the RCODE indicates the reason for termination. However, in most cases, except where clearly specified otherwise, in

a DSO request message (QR=0) the RCODE is set to zero on transmission, and silently ignored on reception.

The RCODE value in a response message (QR=1) may be one of the following values:

Code	Mnemonic	Description
0	NOERROR	Operation processed successfully
1	FORMERR	Format error
2	SERVFAIL	Server failed to process DSO request message due to a problem with the server
4	NOTIMP	DSO not supported
5	REFUSED	Operation declined for policy reasons
[TBA2] 11	DSOTYPENI	Primary TLV's DSO-Type is not implemented

Use of the above RCODEs is likely to be common in DSO but does not preclude the definition and use of other codes in future documents that make use of DSO.

If a document defining a new DSO-TYPE makes use of response codes not defined here, then that document MUST specify the specific interpretation of those RCODE values in the context of that new DSO TLV.

#### 5.4.2. DSO Data

The standard twelve-byte DNS message header with its zero-valued count fields is followed by the DSO Data, expressed using TLV syntax, as described below in Section 5.4.3.

A DSO request message or DSO unidirectional message MUST contain at least one TLV. The first TLV in a DSO request message or DSO unidirectional message is referred to as the "Primary TLV" and determines the nature of the operation being performed, including whether it is a DSO request or a DSO unidirectional operation. In some cases it may be appropriate to include other TLVs in a DSO request message or DSO unidirectional message, such as the Encryption Padding TLV (Section 7.3), and these extra TLVs are referred to as the "Additional TLVs" and are not limited to what is defined in this document. New "Additional TLVs" may be defined in the future and those definitions will describe when their use is appropriate.

A DSO response message may contain no TLVs, or it may be specified to contain one or more TLVs appropriate to the information being communicated. This includes "Primary TLVs" and "Additional TLVs" defined in this document as well as in future TLV definitions. It may be permissible for an additional TLV to appear in a response to a primary TLV even though the specification of that primary TLV does not specify it explicitly. See Section 8.2 for more information.

A DSO response message may contain one or more TLVs with the Primary TLV DSO-TYPE the same as the Primary TLV from the corresponding DSO request message or it may contain zero or more Additional TLVs only. The MESSAGE ID field in the DNS message header is sufficient to identify the DSO request message to which this response message relates.

A DSO response message may contain one or more TLVs with DSO-TYPES different from the Primary TLV from the corresponding DSO request message, in which case those TLV(s) are referred to as "Response Additional TLVs".

Response Primary TLV(s), if present, MUST occur first in the response message, before any Response Additional TLVs.

It is anticipated that most DSO operations will be specified to use DSO request messages, which generate corresponding DSO responses. In some specialized high-traffic use cases, it may be appropriate to specify DSO unidirectional messages. DSO unidirectional messages can be more efficient on the network, because they don't generate a stream of corresponding reply messages. Using DSO unidirectional messages can also simplify software in some cases, by removing need

for an initiator to maintain state while it waits to receive replies it doesn't care about. When the specification for a particular TLV states that, when used as a Primary TLV (i.e., first) in an outgoing DSO request message (i.e., QR=0), that message is to be unidirectional, the MESSAGE ID field MUST be set to zero and the receiver MUST NOT generate any response message corresponding to this DSO unidirectional message.

The previous point, that the receiver MUST NOT generate responses to DSO unidirectional messages, applies even in the case of errors.

When a DSO message is received where both the QR bit and the MESSAGE ID field are zero, the receiver MUST NOT generate any response. For example, if the DSO-TYPE in the Primary TLV is unrecognized, then a DSOTYPENI error MUST NOT be returned; instead the receiver MUST forcibly abort the connection immediately.

DSO unidirectional messages MUST NOT be used "speculatively" in cases where the sender doesn't know if the receiver supports the Primary TLV in the message, because there is no way to receive any response to indicate success or failure. DSO unidirectional messages are only appropriate in cases where the sender already knows that the receiver supports, and wishes to receive, these messages.

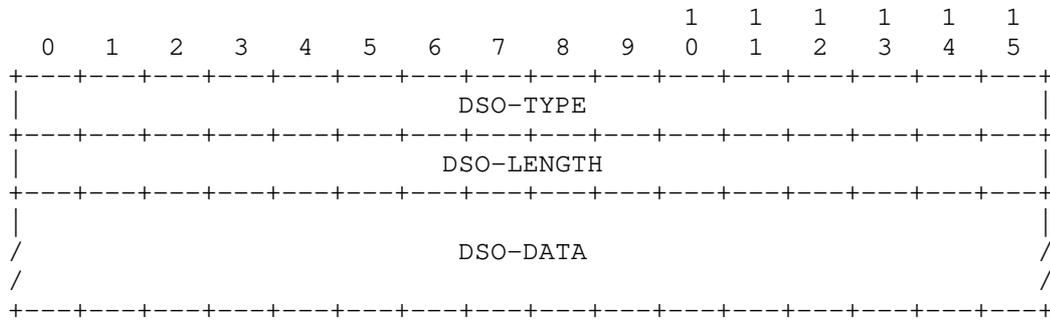
For example, after a client has subscribed for Push Notifications [I-D.ietf-dnssd-push], the subsequent event notifications are then sent as DSO unidirectional messages, and this is appropriate because the client initiated the message stream by virtue of its Push Notification subscription, thereby indicating its support of Push Notifications, and its desire to receive those notifications.

Similarly, after a Discovery Relay client has subscribed to receive inbound mDNS (multicast DNS, [RFC6762]) traffic from a Discovery Relay, the subsequent stream of received packets is then sent using DSO unidirectional messages, and this is appropriate because the client initiated the message stream by virtue of its Discovery Relay link subscription, thereby indicating its support of Discovery Relay, and its desire to receive inbound mDNS packets over that DSO session [I-D.ietf-dnssd-mdns-relay].

5.4.3. TLV Syntax

All TLVs, whether used as "Primary", "Additional", "Response Primary", or "Response Additional", use the same encoding syntax.

Specifications that define new TLVs must specify whether the DSO-TYPE can be used as the Primary TLV, used as an Additional TLV, or used in either context, both in the case of requests and of responses. The specification for a TLV must also state whether, when used as the Primary (i.e., first) TLV in a DSO message (i.e., QR=0), that DSO message is unidirectional or is a request message which requires a response. If the DSO message requires a response, the specification must also state which TLVs, if any, are to be included in the response. The Primary TLV may or may not be contained in the response, depending on what is specified for that TLV.



DSO-TYPE: A 16-bit unsigned integer, in network (big endian) byte order, giving the DSO-TYPE of the current DSO TLV per the IANA DSO Type Code Registry.

DSO-LENGTH: A 16-bit unsigned integer, in network (big endian) byte order, giving the size in bytes of the DSO-DATA.

DSO-DATA: Type-code specific format. The generic DSO machinery treats the DSO-DATA as an opaque "blob" without attempting to interpret it. Interpretation of the meaning of the DSO-DATA for a particular DSO-TYPE is the responsibility of the software that implements that DSO-TYPE.

#### 5.4.3.1. Request TLVs

The first TLV in a DSO request message or DSO unidirectional message is the "Primary TLV" and indicates the operation to be performed. A DSO request message or DSO unidirectional message MUST contain at least one TLV—the Primary TLV.

Immediately following the Primary TLV, a DSO request message or DSO unidirectional message MAY contain one or more "Additional TLVs", which specify additional parameters relating to the operation.

#### 5.4.3.2. Response TLVs

Depending on the operation, a DSO response message MAY contain no TLVs, because it is simply a response to a previous DSO request message, and the MESSAGE ID in the header is sufficient to identify the DSO request in question. Or it may contain a single response TLV, with the same DSO-TYPE as the Primary TLV in the request message. Alternatively it may contain one or more TLVs of other types, or a combination of the above, as appropriate for the information that needs to be communicated. The specification for each DSO TLV determines what TLVs are required in a response to a DSO request message using that TLV.

If a DSO response is received for an operation where the specification requires that the response carry a particular TLV or TLVs, and the required TLV(s) are not present, then this is a fatal error and the recipient of the defective response message MUST forcibly abort the connection immediately.

## 5.4.3.3. Unrecognized TLVs

If DSO request message is received containing an unrecognized Primary TLV, with a nonzero MESSAGE ID (indicating that a response is expected), then the receiver MUST send an error response with matching MESSAGE ID, and RCODE DSOTYPENI. The error response MUST NOT contain a copy of the unrecognized Primary TLV.

If DSO unidirectional message is received containing an unrecognized Primary TLV, with a zero MESSAGE ID (indicating that no response is expected), then this is a fatal error and the recipient MUST forcibly abort the connection immediately.

If a DSO request message or DSO unidirectional message is received where the Primary TLV is recognized, containing one or more unrecognized Additional TLVs, the unrecognized Additional TLVs MUST be silently ignored, and the remainder of the message is interpreted and handled as if the unrecognized parts were not present.

Similarly, if a DSO response message is received containing one or more unrecognized TLVs, the unrecognized TLVs MUST be silently ignored, and the remainder of the message is interpreted and handled as if the unrecognized parts were not present.

## 5.4.4. EDNS(0) and TSIG

Since the ARCOUNT field MUST be zero, a DSO message cannot contain a valid EDNS(0) option in the additional records section. If functionality provided by current or future EDNS(0) options is desired for DSO messages, one or more new DSO TLVs need to be defined to carry the necessary information.

For example, the EDNS(0) Padding Option [RFC7830] used for security purposes is not permitted in a DSO message, so if message padding is desired for DSO messages then the Encryption Padding TLV described in Section 7.3 MUST be used.

A DSO message can't contain a TSIG record, because a TSIG record is included in the additional section of the message, which would mean that ARCOUNT would be greater than zero. DSO messages are required to have an ARCOUNT of zero. Therefore, if use of signatures with DSO messages becomes necessary in the future, a new DSO TLV would have to be defined to perform this function.

Note however that, while DSO \*messages\* cannot include EDNS(0) or TSIG records, a DSO \*session\* is typically used to carry a whole series of DNS messages of different kinds, including DSO messages, and other DNS message types like Query [RFC1034] [RFC1035] and Update [RFC2136], and those messages can carry EDNS(0) and TSIG records.

Although messages may contain other EDNS(0) options as appropriate, this specification explicitly prohibits use of the edns-tcp-keepalive EDNS0 Option [RFC7828] in \*any\* messages sent on a DSO Session (because it is obsoleted by the functionality provided by the DSO Keepalive operation). If any message sent on a DSO Session contains an edns-tcp-keepalive EDNS0 Option this is a fatal error and the recipient of the defective message MUST forcibly abort the connection immediately.

### 5.5. Message Handling

As described above in Section 5.4.1, whether an outgoing DSO message with the QR bit in the DNS header set to zero is a DSO request or DSO unidirectional message is determined by the specification for the Primary TLV, which in turn determines whether the MESSAGE ID field in that outgoing message will be zero or nonzero.

Every DSO message with the QR bit in the DNS header set to zero and a nonzero MESSAGE ID field is a DSO request message, and MUST elicit a corresponding response, with the QR bit in the DNS header set to one and the MESSAGE ID field set to the value given in the corresponding DSO request message.

Valid DSO request messages sent by the client with a nonzero MESSAGE ID field elicit a response from the server, and valid DSO request messages sent by the server with a nonzero MESSAGE ID field elicit a response from the client.

Every DSO message with both the QR bit in the DNS header and the MESSAGE ID field set to zero is a DSO unidirectional message, and MUST NOT elicit a response.

### 5.5.1. Delayed Acknowledgement Management

Generally, most good TCP implementations employ a delayed acknowledgement timer to provide more efficient use of the network and better performance.

With a bidirectional exchange over TCP, as for example with a DSO request message, the operating system TCP implementation waits for the application-layer client software to generate the corresponding DSO response message. It can then send a single combined packet containing the TCP acknowledgement, the TCP window update, and the application-generated DSO response message. This is more efficient than sending three separate packets, as would occur if the TCP packet containing the DSO request were acknowledged immediately.

With a DSO unidirectional message or DSO response message, there is no corresponding application-generated DSO response message, and consequently, no hint to the transport protocol about when it should send its acknowledgement and window update.

Some networking APIs provide a mechanism that allows the application-layer client software to signal to the transport protocol that no response will be forthcoming (in effect it can be thought of as a zero-length "empty" write). Where available in the networking API being used, the recipient of a DSO unidirectional message or DSO response message, having parsed and interpreted the message, SHOULD then use this mechanism provided by the networking API to signal that no response for this message will be forthcoming, so that the TCP implementation can go ahead and send its acknowledgement and window update without further delay. See Section 9.5 for further discussion of why this is important.

### 5.5.2. MESSAGE ID Namespaces

The namespaces of 16-bit MESSAGE IDs are independent in each direction. This means it is *\*not\** an error for both client and server to send DSO request messages at the same time as each other, using the same MESSAGE ID, in different directions. This simplification is necessary in order for the protocol to be implementable. It would be infeasible to require the client and server to coordinate with each other regarding allocation of new unique MESSAGE IDs. It is also not necessary to require the client and server to coordinate with each other regarding allocation of new unique MESSAGE IDs. The value of the 16-bit MESSAGE ID combined with the identity of the initiator (client or server) is sufficient to unambiguously identify the operation in question. This can be thought of as a 17-bit message identifier space, using message identifiers 0x00001-0x0FFFF for client-to-server DSO request messages, and message identifiers 0x10001-0x1FFFF for server-to-client DSO request messages. The least-significant 16 bits are stored explicitly in the MESSAGE ID field of the DSO message, and the most-significant bit is implicit from the direction of the message.

As described above in Section 5.4.1, an initiator **MUST NOT** reuse a MESSAGE ID that it already has in use for an outstanding DSO request message (unless specified otherwise by the relevant specification for the DSO-TYPE in question). At the very least, this means that a MESSAGE ID can't be reused in a particular direction on a particular DSO Session while the initiator is waiting for a response to a previous DSO request message using that MESSAGE ID on that DSO Session (unless specified otherwise by the relevant specification for the DSO-TYPE in question), and for a long-lived operation the MESSAGE ID for the operation can't be reused while that operation remains active.

If a client or server receives a response (QR=1) where the MESSAGE ID is zero, or is any other value that does not match the MESSAGE ID of any of its outstanding operations, this is a fatal error and the recipient **MUST** forcibly abort the connection immediately.

If a responder receives a DSO request message (QR=0) where the MESSAGE ID is not zero, and the responder tracks request MESSAGE IDs, and the MESSAGE ID matches the MESSAGE ID of a DSO request message it received for which a response has not yet been sent, it **MUST** forcibly abort the connection immediately. This behavior is required to prevent a hypothetical attack that takes advantage of undefined behavior in this case. However, if the responder does not track MESSAGE IDs in this way, no such risk exists, so tracking MESSAGE IDs just to implement this sanity check is not required.

### 5.5.3. Error Responses

When a DSO unidirectional message type is received (MESSAGE ID field is zero), the receiver should already be expecting this DSO message type. Section 5.4.3.3 describes the handling of unknown DSO message types. Parsing errors MUST also result in the receiver forcibly aborting the connection. When a DSO unidirectional message of an unexpected type is received, the receiver SHOULD forcibly abort the connection. Whether the connection should be forcibly aborted for other internal errors processing the DSO unidirectional message is implementation dependent, according to the severity of the error.

When a DSO request message is unsuccessful for some reason, the responder returns an error code to the initiator.

In the case of a server returning an error code to a client in response to an unsuccessful DSO request message, the server MAY choose to end the DSO Session, or MAY choose to allow the DSO Session to remain open. For error conditions that only affect the single operation in question, the server SHOULD return an error response to the client and leave the DSO Session open for further operations.

For error conditions that are likely to make all operations unsuccessful in the immediate future, the server SHOULD return an error response to the client and then end the DSO Session by sending a Retry Delay message, as described in Section 6.6.1.

Upon receiving an error response from the server, a client SHOULD NOT automatically close the DSO Session. An error relating to one particular operation on a DSO Session does not necessarily imply that all other operations on that DSO Session have also failed, or that future operations will fail. The client should assume that the server will make its own decision about whether or not to end the DSO Session, based on the server's determination of whether the error condition pertains to this particular operation, or would also apply to any subsequent operations. If the server does not end the DSO Session by sending the client a Retry Delay message (Section 6.6.1) then the client SHOULD continue to use that DSO Session for subsequent operations.

## 5.6. Responder-Initiated Operation Cancellation

This document, the base specification for DNS Stateful Operations, does not itself define any long-lived operations, but it defines a framework for supporting long-lived operations, such as Push Notification subscriptions [I-D.ietf-dnssd-push] and Discovery Relay interface subscriptions [I-D.ietf-dnssd-mdns-relay].

Long-lived operations, if successful, will remain active until the initiator terminates the operation.

However, it is possible that a long-lived operation may be valid at the time it was initiated, but then a later change of circumstances may render that operation invalid. For example, a long-lived client operation may pertain to a name that the server is authoritative for, but then the server configuration is changed such that it is no longer authoritative for that name.

In such cases, instead of terminating the entire session it may be desirable for the responder to be able to cancel selectively only those operations that have become invalid.

The responder performs this selective cancellation by sending a new response message, with the MESSAGE ID field containing the MESSAGE ID of the long-lived operation that is to be terminated (that it had previously acknowledged with a NOERROR RCODE), and the RCODE field of the new response message giving the reason for cancellation.

After a response message with nonzero RCODE has been sent, that operation has been terminated from the responder's point of view, and the responder sends no more messages relating to that operation.

After a response message with nonzero RCODE has been received by the initiator, that operation has been terminated from the initiator's point of view, and the cancelled operation's MESSAGE ID is now free for reuse.

## 6. DSO Session Lifecycle and Timers

### 6.1. DSO Session Initiation

A DSO Session begins as described in Section 5.1.

The client may perform as many DNS operations as it wishes using the newly created DSO Session. When the client has multiple messages to send, it SHOULD NOT wait for each response before sending the next message.

The server MUST act on messages in the order they are received, but SHOULD NOT delay sending responses to those messages as they become available in order to return them in the order the requests were received.

Section 6.2.1.1 of the DNS-over-TCP specification [RFC7766] specifies this in more detail.

## 6.2. DSO Session Timeouts

Two timeout values are associated with a DSO Session: the inactivity timeout, and the keepalive interval. Both values are communicated in the same TLV, the Keepalive TLV (Section 7.1).

The first timeout value, the inactivity timeout, is the maximum time for which a client may speculatively keep an inactive DSO Session open in the expectation that it may have future requests to send to that server.

The second timeout value, the keepalive interval, is the maximum permitted interval between messages if the client wishes to keep the DSO Session alive.

The two timeout values are independent. The inactivity timeout may be lower, the same, or higher than the keepalive interval, though in most cases the inactivity timeout is expected to be shorter than the keepalive interval.

A shorter inactivity timeout with a longer keepalive interval signals to the client that it should not speculatively keep an inactive DSO Session open for very long without reason, but when it does have an active reason to keep a DSO Session open, it doesn't need to be sending an aggressive level of DSO keepalive traffic to maintain that session. An example of this would be a client that has subscribed to DNS Push notifications: in this case, the client is not sending any traffic to the server, but the session is not inactive, because there is a active request to the server to receive push notifications.

A longer inactivity timeout with a shorter keepalive interval signals to the client that it may speculatively keep an inactive DSO Session open for a long time, but to maintain that inactive DSO Session it should be sending a lot of DSO keepalive traffic. This configuration is expected to be less common.

In the usual case where the inactivity timeout is shorter than the keepalive interval, it is only when a client has a long-lived, low-traffic, operation that the keepalive interval comes into play, to ensure that a sufficient residual amount of traffic is generated to maintain NAT and firewall state and to assure client and server that they still have connectivity to each other.

On a new DSO Session, if no explicit DSO Keepalive message exchange has taken place, the default value for both timeouts is 15 seconds.

For both timeouts, lower values of the timeout result in higher network traffic, and higher CPU load on the server.

### 6.3. Inactive DSO Sessions

At both servers and clients, the generation or reception of any complete DNS message (including DNS requests, responses, updates, DSO messages, etc.) resets both timers for that DSO Session, with the one exception that a DSO Keepalive message resets only the keepalive timer, not the inactivity timeout timer.

In addition, for as long as the client has an outstanding operation in progress, the inactivity timer remains cleared, and an inactivity timeout cannot occur.

For short-lived DNS operations like traditional queries and updates, an operation is considered in progress for the time between request and response, typically a period of a few hundred milliseconds at most. At the client, the inactivity timer is cleared upon transmission of a request and remains cleared until reception of the corresponding response. At the server, the inactivity timer is cleared upon reception of a request and remains cleared until transmission of the corresponding response.

For long-lived DNS Stateful operations (such as a Push Notification subscription [I-D.ietf-dnssd-push] or a Discovery Relay interface subscription [I-D.ietf-dnssd-mdns-relay]), an operation is considered in progress for as long as the operation is active, i.e. until it is cancelled. This means that a DSO Session can exist, with active operations, with no messages flowing in either direction, for far longer than the inactivity timeout, and this is not an error. This is why there are two separate timers: the inactivity timeout, and the keepalive interval. Just because a DSO Session has no traffic for an extended period of time does not automatically make that DSO Session "inactive", if it has an active operation that is awaiting events.

#### 6.4. The Inactivity Timeout

The purpose of the inactivity timeout is for the server to balance the trade off between the costs of setting up new DSO Sessions and the costs of maintaining inactive DSO Sessions. A server with abundant DSO Session capacity can offer a high inactivity timeout, to permit clients to keep a speculative DSO Session open for a long time, to save the cost of establishing a new DSO Session for future communications with that server. A server with scarce memory resources can offer a low inactivity timeout, to cause clients to promptly close DSO Sessions whenever they have no outstanding operations with that server, and then create a new DSO Session later when needed.

##### 6.4.1. Closing Inactive DSO Sessions

When a connection's inactivity timeout is reached the client **MUST** begin closing the idle connection, but a client is not required to keep an idle connection open until the inactivity timeout is reached. A client **MAY** close a DSO Session at any time, at the client's discretion. If a client determines that it has no current or reasonably anticipated future need for a currently inactive DSO Session, then the client **SHOULD** gracefully close that connection.

If, at any time during the life of the DSO Session, the inactivity timeout value (i.e., 15 seconds by default) elapses without there being any operation active on the DSO Session, the client **MUST** close the connection gracefully.

If, at any time during the life of the DSO Session, twice the inactivity timeout value (i.e., 30 seconds by default), or five seconds, if twice the inactivity timeout value is less than five seconds, elapses without there being any operation active on the DSO Session, the server **MUST** consider the client delinquent, and **MUST** forcibly abort the DSO Session.

In this context, an operation being active on a DSO Session includes a query waiting for a response, an update waiting for a response, or an active long-lived operation, but not a DSO Keepalive message exchange itself. A DSO Keepalive message exchange resets only the keepalive interval timer, not the inactivity timeout timer.

If the client wishes to keep an inactive DSO Session open for longer than the default duration then it uses the DSO Keepalive message to request longer timeout values, as described in Section 7.1.

#### 6.4.2. Values for the Inactivity Timeout

For the inactivity timeout value, lower values result in more frequent DSO Session teardown and re-establishment. Higher values result in lower traffic and lower CPU load on the server, but higher memory burden to maintain state for inactive DSO Sessions.

A server may dictate any value it chooses for the inactivity timeout (either in a response to a client-initiated request, or in a server-initiated message) including values under one second, or even zero.

An inactivity timeout of zero informs the client that it should not speculatively maintain idle connections at all, and as soon as the client has completed the operation or operations relating to this server, the client should immediately begin closing this session.

A server will forcibly abort an idle client session after twice the inactivity timeout value, or five seconds, whichever is greater. In the case of a zero inactivity timeout value, this means that if a client fails to close an idle client session then the server will forcibly abort the idle session after five seconds.

An inactivity timeout of 0xFFFFFFFF represents "infinity" and informs the client that it may keep an idle connection open as long as it wishes. Note that after granting an unlimited inactivity timeout in this way, at any point the server may revise that inactivity timeout by sending a new DSO Keepalive message dictating new Session Timeout values to the client.

The largest \*finite\* inactivity timeout supported by the current Keepalive TLV is 0xFFFFFFFFE ( $2^{32}-2$  milliseconds, approximately 49.7 days).

## 6.5. The Keepalive Interval

The purpose of the keepalive interval is to manage the generation of sufficient messages to maintain state in middleboxes (such as NAT gateways or firewalls) and for the client and server to periodically verify that they still have connectivity to each other. This allows them to clean up state when connectivity is lost, and to establish a new session if appropriate.

### 6.5.1. Keepalive Interval Expiry

If, at any time during the life of the DSO Session, the keepalive interval value (i.e., 15 seconds by default) elapses without any DNS messages being sent or received on a DSO Session, the client **MUST** take action to keep the DSO Session alive, by sending a DSO Keepalive message (Section 7.1). A DSO Keepalive message exchange resets only the keepalive timer, not the inactivity timer.

If a client disconnects from the network abruptly, without cleanly closing its DSO Session, perhaps leaving a long-lived operation uncanceled, the server learns of this after failing to receive the required DSO keepalive traffic from that client. If, at any time during the life of the DSO Session, twice the keepalive interval value (i.e., 30 seconds by default) elapses without any DNS messages being sent or received on a DSO Session, the server **SHOULD** consider the client delinquent, and **SHOULD** forcibly abort the DSO Session.

### 6.5.2. Values for the Keepalive Interval

For the keepalive interval value, lower values result in a higher volume of DSO keepalive traffic. Higher values of the keepalive interval reduce traffic and CPU load, but have minimal effect on the memory burden at the server, because clients keep a DSO Session open for the same length of time (determined by the inactivity timeout) regardless of the level of DSO keepalive traffic required.

It may be appropriate for clients and servers to select different keepalive interval values depending on the nature of the network they are on.

A corporate DNS server that knows it is serving only clients on the internal network, with no intervening NAT gateways or firewalls, can impose a higher keepalive interval, because frequent DSO keepalive traffic is not required.

A public DNS server that is serving primarily residential consumer clients, where it is likely there will be a NAT gateway on the path,

may impose a lower keepalive interval, to generate more frequent DSO keepalive traffic.

A smart client may be adaptive to its environment. A client using a private IPv4 address [RFC1918] to communicate with a DNS server at an address outside that IPv4 private address block, may conclude that there is likely to be a NAT gateway on the path, and accordingly request a lower keepalive interval.

By default it is RECOMMENDED that clients request, and servers grant, a keepalive interval of 60 minutes. This keepalive interval provides for reasonably timely detection if a client abruptly disconnects without cleanly closing the session, and is sufficient to maintain state in firewalls and NAT gateways that follow the IETF recommended Best Current Practice that the "established connection idle-timeout" used by middleboxes be at least 2 hours 4 minutes [RFC5382] [RFC7857].

Note that the lower the keepalive interval value, the higher the load on client and server. For example, a (hypothetical and unrealistic) keepalive interval value of 100 ms would result in a continuous stream of ten messages per second or more, in both directions, to keep the DSO Session alive. And, in this extreme example, a single packet loss and retransmission over a long path could introduce a momentary pause in the stream of messages of over 200 ms, long enough to cause the server to overzealously abort the connection.

Because of this concern, the server MUST NOT send a DSO Keepalive message (either a response to a client-initiated request, or a server-initiated message) with a keepalive interval value less than ten seconds. If a client receives a DSO Keepalive message specifying a keepalive interval value less than ten seconds this is a fatal error and the client MUST forcibly abort the connection immediately.

A keepalive interval value of 0xFFFFFFFF represents "infinity" and informs the client that it should generate no DSO keepalive traffic. Note that after signaling that the client should generate no DSO keepalive traffic in this way, at any point the server may revise that DSO keepalive traffic requirement by sending a new DSO Keepalive message dictating new Session Timeout values to the client.

The largest \*finite\* keepalive interval supported by the current Keepalive TLV is 0xFFFFFFFFE ( $2^{32}-2$  milliseconds, approximately 49.7 days).

## 6.6. Server-Initiated Session Termination

In addition to cancelling individual long-lived operations selectively (Section 5.6) there are also occasions where a server may need to terminate one or more entire sessions. An entire session may need to be terminated if the client is defective in some way, or departs from the network without closing its session. Sessions may also need to be terminated if the server becomes overloaded, or if the server is reconfigured and lacks the ability to be selective about which operations need to be cancelled.

This section discusses various reasons a session may be terminated, and the mechanisms for doing so.

In normal operation, closing a DSO Session is the client's responsibility. The client makes the determination of when to close a DSO Session based on an evaluation of both its own needs, and the inactivity timeout value dictated by the server. A server only causes a DSO Session to be ended in the exceptional circumstances outlined below. Some of the exceptional situations in which a server may terminate a DSO Session include:

- o The server application software or underlying operating system is shutting down or restarting.
- o The server application software terminates unexpectedly (perhaps due to a bug that makes it crash, causing the underlying operating system to send a TCP RST).
- o The server is undergoing a reconfiguration or maintenance procedure, that, due to the way the server software is implemented, requires clients to be disconnected. For example, some software is implemented such that it reads a configuration file at startup, and changing the server's configuration entails modifying the configuration file and then killing and restarting the server software, which generally entails a loss of network connections.
- o The client fails to meet its obligation to generate the required DSO keepalive traffic, or to close an inactive session by the prescribed time (twice the time interval dictated by the server, or five seconds, whichever is greater, as described in Section 6.2).
- o The client sends a grossly invalid or malformed request that is indicative of a seriously defective client implementation.
- o The server is over capacity and needs to shed some load.

#### 6.6.1. Server-Initiated Retry Delay Message

In the cases described above where a server elects to terminate a DSO Session, it could do so simply by forcibly aborting the connection. However, if it did this the likely behavior of the client might be simply to treat this as a network failure and reconnect immediately, putting more burden on the server.

Therefore, to avoid this reconnection implosion, a server SHOULD instead choose to shed client load by sending a Retry Delay message, with an appropriate RCODE value informing the client of the reason the DSO Session needs to be terminated. The format of the Retry Delay TLV, and the interpretations of the various RCODE values, are described in Section 7.2. After sending a Retry Delay message, the server MUST NOT send any further messages on that DSO Session.

The server MAY randomize retry delays in situations where many retry delays are sent in quick succession, so as to avoid all the clients attempting to reconnect at once. In general, implementations should avoid using the Retry Delay message in a way that would result in many clients reconnecting at the same time, if every client attempts to reconnect at the exact time specified.

Upon receipt of a Retry Delay message from the server, the client MUST make note of the reconnect delay for this server, and then immediately close the connection gracefully.

After sending a Retry Delay message the server SHOULD allow the client five seconds to close the connection, and if the client has not closed the connection after five seconds then the server SHOULD forcibly abort the connection.

A Retry Delay message MUST NOT be initiated by a client. If a server receives a Retry Delay message this is a fatal error and the server MUST forcibly abort the connection immediately.

##### 6.6.1.1. Outstanding Operations

At the instant a server chooses to initiate a Retry Delay message there may be DNS requests already in flight from client to server on this DSO Session, which will arrive at the server after its Retry Delay message has been sent. The server MUST silently ignore such incoming requests, and MUST NOT generate any response messages for them. When the Retry Delay message from the server arrives at the client, the client will determine that any DNS requests it previously sent on this DSO Session, that have not yet received a response, now will certainly not be receiving any response. Such requests should

be considered failed, and should be retried at a later time, as appropriate.

In the case where some, but not all, of the existing operations on a DSO Session have become invalid (perhaps because the server has been reconfigured and is no longer authoritative for some of the names), but the server is terminating all affected DSO Sessions en masse by sending them all a Retry Delay message, the reconnect delay MAY be zero, indicating that the clients SHOULD immediately attempt to re-establish operations.

It is likely that some of the attempts will be successful and some will not, depending on the nature of the reconfiguration.

In the case where a server is terminating a large number of DSO Sessions at once (e.g., if the system is restarting) and the server doesn't want to be inundated with a flood of simultaneous retries, it SHOULD send different reconnect delay values to each client. These adjustments MAY be selected randomly, pseudorandomly, or deterministically (e.g., incrementing the time value by one tenth of a second for each successive client, yielding a post-restart reconnection rate of ten clients per second).

#### 6.6.2. Misbehaving Clients

A server may determine that a client is not following the protocol correctly. There may be no way for the server to recover the session, in which case the server forcibly terminates the connection. Since the client doesn't know why the connection dropped, it may reconnect immediately. If the server has determined that a client is not following the protocol correctly, it may terminate the DSO session as soon as it is established, specifying a long retry-delay to prevent the client from immediately reconnecting.

#### 6.6.3. Client Reconnection

After a DSO Session is ended by the server (either by sending the client a Retry Delay message, or by forcibly aborting the underlying transport connection) the client SHOULD try to reconnect, to that service instance, or to another suitable service instance, if more than one is available. If reconnecting to the same service instance, the client MUST respect the indicated delay, if available, before attempting to reconnect. Clients should not attempt to randomize the delay; the server will randomly jitter the retry delay values it sends to each client if this behavior is desired.

If the service instance will only be out of service for a short maintenance period, it should use a value a little longer than the

expected maintenance window. It should not default to a very large delay value, or clients may not attempt to reconnect after it resumes service.

If a particular service instance does not want a client to reconnect ever (perhaps the service instance is being de-commissioned), it SHOULD set the retry delay to the maximum value 0xFFFFFFFF (2<sup>32</sup>-1 milliseconds, approximately 49.7 days). It is not possible to instruct a client to stay away for longer than 49.7 days. If, after 49.7 days, the DNS or other configuration information still indicates that this is the valid service instance for a particular service, then clients MAY attempt to reconnect. In reality, if a client is rebooted or otherwise lose state, it may well attempt to reconnect before 49.7 days elapses, for as long as the DNS or other configuration information continues to indicate that this is the service instance the client should use.

#### 6.6.3.1. Reconnecting After a Forcible Abort

If a connection was forcibly aborted by the client, the client SHOULD mark that service instance as not supporting DSO. The client MAY reconnect but not attempt to use DSO, or may connect to a different service instance, if applicable.

#### 6.6.3.2. Reconnecting After an Unexplained Connection Drop

It is also possible for a server to forcibly terminate the connection; in this case the client doesn't know whether the termination was the result of a protocol error or a network outage. When the client notices that the connection has been dropped, it can attempt to reconnect immediately. However, if the connection is dropped again without the client being able to successfully do whatever it is trying to do, it should mark the server as not supporting DSO.

#### 6.6.3.3. Probing for Working DSO Support

Once a server has been marked by the client as not supporting DSO, the client SHOULD NOT attempt DSO operations on that server until some time has elapsed. A reasonable minimum would be an hour. Since forcibly aborted connections are the result of a software failure, it's not likely that the problem will be solved in the first hour after it's first encountered. However, by restricting the retry interval to an hour, the client will be able to notice when the problem has been fixed without placing an undue burden on the server.

7. Base TLVs for DNS Stateful Operations

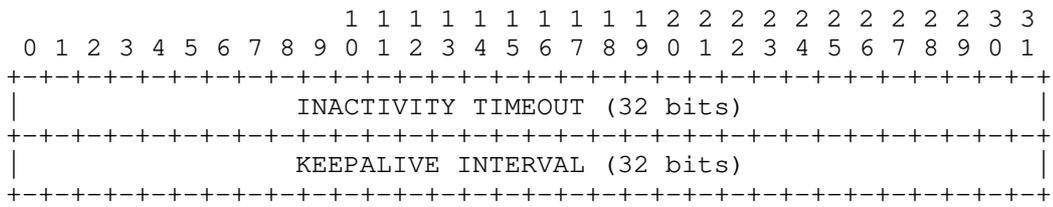
This section describes the three base TLVs for DNS Stateful Operations: Keepalive, Retry Delay, and Encryption Padding.

7.1. Keepalive TLV

The Keepalive TLV (DSO-TYPE=1) performs two functions. Primarily it establishes the values for the Session Timeouts. Incidentally, it also resets the keepalive timer for the DSO Session, meaning that it can be used as a kind of "no-op" message for the purpose of keeping a session alive. The client will request the desired session timeout values and the server will acknowledge with the response values that it requires the client to use.

DSO messages with the Keepalive TLV as the primary TLV may appear in early data.

The DSO-DATA for the Keepalive TLV is as follows:



**INACTIVITY TIMEOUT:** The inactivity timeout for the current DSO Session, specified as a 32-bit unsigned integer, in network (big endian) byte order, in units of milliseconds. This is the timeout at which the client MUST begin closing an inactive DSO Session. The inactivity timeout can be any value of the server's choosing. If the client does not gracefully close an inactive DSO Session, then after twice this interval, or five seconds, whichever is greater, the server will forcibly abort the connection.

**KEEPALIVE INTERVAL:** The keepalive interval for the current DSO Session, specified as a 32-bit unsigned integer, in network (big endian) byte order, in units of milliseconds. This is the interval at which a client MUST generate DSO keepalive traffic to maintain connection state. The keepalive interval MUST NOT be less than ten seconds. If the client does not generate the mandated DSO keepalive traffic, then after twice this interval the server will forcibly abort the connection. Since the minimum allowed keepalive interval is ten seconds, the minimum time at which a server will forcibly disconnect a client for failing to generate the mandated DSO keepalive traffic is twenty seconds.

The transmission or reception of DSO Keepalive messages (i.e., messages where the Keepalive TLV is the first TLV) reset only the keepalive timer, not the inactivity timer. The reason for this is that periodic DSO Keepalive messages are sent for the sole purpose of keeping a DSO Session alive, when that DSO Session has current or recent non-maintenance activity that warrants keeping that DSO Session alive. Sending DSO keepalive traffic itself is not considered a client activity; it is considered a maintenance activity that is performed in service of other client activities. If DSO keepalive traffic itself were to reset the inactivity timer, then that would create a circular livelock where keepalive traffic would be sent indefinitely to keep a DSO Session alive, where the only activity on that DSO Session would be the keepalive traffic keeping the DSO Session alive so that further keepalive traffic can be sent. For a DSO Session to be considered active, it must be carrying something more than just keepalive traffic. This is why merely sending or receiving a DSO Keepalive message does not reset the inactivity timer.

When sent by a client, the DSO Keepalive request message MUST be sent as an DSO request message, with a nonzero MESSAGE ID. If a server receives a DSO Keepalive message with a zero MESSAGE ID then this is a fatal error and the server MUST forcibly abort the connection immediately. The DSO Keepalive request message resets a DSO Session's keepalive timer, and at the same time communicates to the server the client's requested Session Timeout values. In a server response to a client-initiated DSO Keepalive request message, the Session Timeouts contain the server's chosen values from this point forward in the DSO Session, which the client MUST respect. This is modeled after the DHCP protocol, where the client requests a certain lease lifetime using DHCP option 51 [RFC2132], but the server is the ultimate authority for deciding what lease lifetime is actually granted.

When a client is sending its second and subsequent DSO Keepalive request messages to the server, the client SHOULD continue to request its preferred values each time. This allows flexibility, so that if conditions change during the lifetime of a DSO Session, the server can adapt its responses to better fit the client's needs.

Once a DSO Session is in progress (Section 5.1) a DSO Keepalive message MAY be initiated by a server. When sent by a server, the DSO Keepalive message MUST be sent as a DSO unidirectional message, with the MESSAGE ID set to zero. The client MUST NOT generate a response to a server-initiated DSO Keepalive message. If a client receives a DSO Keepalive request message with a nonzero MESSAGE ID then this is a fatal error and the client MUST forcibly abort the connection immediately. The DSO Keepalive unidirectional message from the

server resets a DSO Session's keepalive timer, and at the same time unilaterally informs the client of the new Session Timeout values to use from this point forward in this DSO Session. No client DSO response to this unilateral declaration is required or allowed.

In DSO Keepalive response messages, the Keepalive TLV is REQUIRED and is used only as a Response Primary TLV sent as a reply to a DSO Keepalive request message from the client. A Keepalive TLV MUST NOT be added to other responses as a Response Additional TLV. If the server wishes to update a client's Session Timeout values other than in response to a DSO Keepalive request message from the client, then it does so by sending an DSO Keepalive unidirectional message of its own, as described above.

It is not required that the Keepalive TLV be used in every DSO Session. While many DNS Stateful operations will be used in conjunction with a long-lived session state, not all DNS Stateful operations require long-lived session state, and in some cases the default 15-second value for both the inactivity timeout and keepalive interval may be perfectly appropriate. However, note that for clients that implement only the DSO-TYPEs defined in this document, a DSO Keepalive request message is the only way for a client to initiate a DSO Session.

#### 7.1.1. Client handling of received Session Timeout values

When a client receives a response to its client-initiated DSO Keepalive message, or receives a server-initiated DSO Keepalive message, the client has then received Session Timeout values dictated by the server. The two timeout values contained in the Keepalive TLV from the server may each be higher, lower, or the same as the respective Session Timeout values the client previously had for this DSO Session.

In the case of the keepalive timer, the handling of the received value is straightforward. The act of receiving the message containing the DSO Keepalive TLV itself resets the keepalive timer, and updates the keepalive interval for the DSO Session. The new keepalive interval indicates the maximum time that may elapse before another message must be sent or received on this DSO Session, if the DSO Session is to remain alive.

In the case of the inactivity timeout, the handling of the received value is a little more subtle, though the meaning of the inactivity timeout remains as specified -- it still indicates the maximum permissible time allowed without useful activity on a DSO Session. The act of receiving the message containing the Keepalive TLV does not itself reset the inactivity timer. The time elapsed since the

last useful activity on this DSO Session is unaffected by exchange of DSO Keepalive messages. The new inactivity timeout value in the Keepalive TLV in the received message does update the timeout associated with the running inactivity timer; that becomes the new maximum permissible time without activity on a DSO Session.

- o If the current inactivity timer value is less than the new inactivity timeout, then the DSO Session may remain open for now. When the inactivity timer value reaches the new inactivity timeout, the client MUST then begin closing the DSO Session, as described above.
- o If the current inactivity timer value is equal to the new inactivity timeout, then this DSO Session has been inactive for exactly as long as the server will permit, and now the client MUST immediately begin closing this DSO Session.
- o If the current inactivity timer value is already greater than the new inactivity timeout, then this DSO Session has already been inactive for longer than the server permits, and the client MUST immediately begin closing this DSO Session.
- o If the current inactivity timer value is already more than twice the new inactivity timeout, then the client is immediately considered delinquent (this DSO Session is immediately eligible to be forcibly terminated by the server) and the client MUST immediately begin closing this DSO Session. However if a server abruptly reduces the inactivity timeout in this way, then, to give the client time to close the connection gracefully before the server resorts to forcibly aborting it, the server SHOULD give the client an additional grace period of one quarter of the new inactivity timeout, or five seconds, whichever is greater.

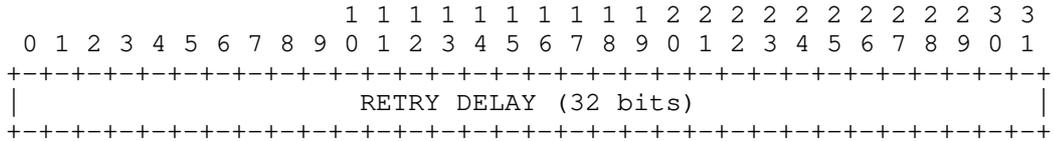
#### 7.1.2. Relationship to edns-tcp-keepalive EDNS0 Option

The inactivity timeout value in the Keepalive TLV (DSO-TYPE=1) has similar intent to the edns-tcp-keepalive EDNS0 Option [RFC7828]. A client/server pair that supports DSO MUST NOT use the edns-tcp-keepalive EDNS0 Option within any message after a DSO Session has been established. A client that has sent a DSO message to establish a session MUST NOT send an edns-tcp-keepalive EDNS0 Option from this point on. Once a DSO Session has been established, if either client or server receives a DNS message over the DSO Session that contains an edns-tcp-keepalive EDNS0 Option, this is a fatal error and the receiver of the edns-tcp-keepalive EDNS0 Option MUST forcibly abort the connection immediately.

7.2. Retry Delay TLV

The Retry Delay TLV (DSO-TYPE=2) can be used as a Primary TLV (unidirectional) in a server-to-client message, or as a Response Additional TLV in either direction. DSO messages with a Relay Delay TLV as their primary TLV are not permitted in early data.

The DSO-DATA for the Retry Delay TLV is as follows:



RETRY DELAY: A time value, specified as a 32-bit unsigned integer, in network (big endian) byte order, in units of milliseconds, within which the initiator MUST NOT retry this operation, or retry connecting to this server. Recommendations for the RETRY DELAY value are given in Section 6.6.1.

7.2.1. Retry Delay TLV used as a Primary TLV

When sent from server to client, the Retry Delay TLV is used as the Primary TLV in a DSO unidirectional message. It is used by a server to instruct a client to close the DSO Session and underlying connection, and not to reconnect for the indicated time interval.

In this case it applies to the DSO Session as a whole, and the client MUST begin closing the DSO Session, as described in Section 6.6.1. The RCODE in the message header SHOULD indicate the principal reason for the termination:

- o NOERROR indicates a routine shutdown or restart.
- o FORMERR indicates that a client request was too badly malformed for the session to continue.
- o SERVFAIL indicates that the server is overloaded due to resource exhaustion and needs to shed load.
- o REFUSED indicates that the server has been reconfigured, and at this time it is now unable to perform one or more of the long-lived client operations that were previously being performed on this DSO Session.
- o NOTAUTH indicates that the server has been reconfigured and at this time it is now unable to perform one or more of the long-

lived client operations that were previously being performed on this DSO Session because it does not have authority over the names in question (for example, a DNS Push Notification server could be reconfigured such that it is no longer accepting DNS Push Notification requests for one or more of the currently subscribed names).

This document specifies only these RCODE values for the Retry Delay message. Servers sending Retry Delay messages SHOULD use one of these values. However, future circumstances may create situations where other RCODE values are appropriate in Retry Delay messages, so clients MUST be prepared to accept Retry Delay messages with any RCODE value.

In some cases, when a server sends a Retry Delay message to a client, there may be more than one reason for the server wanting to end the session. Possibly the configuration could have been changed such that some long-lived client operations can no longer be continued due to policy (REFUSED), and other long-lived client operations can no longer be performed due to the server no longer being authoritative for those names (NOTAUTH). In such cases the server MAY use any of the applicable RCODE values, or RCODE=NOERROR (routine shutdown or restart).

Note that the selection of RCODE value in a Retry Delay message is not critical, since the RCODE value is generally used only for information purposes, such as writing to a log file for future human analysis regarding the nature of the disconnection. Generally clients do not modify their behavior depending on the RCODE value. The RETRY DELAY in the message tells the client how long it should wait before attempting a new connection to this service instance.

For clients that do in some way modify their behavior depending on the RCODE value, they should treat unknown RCODE values the same as RCODE=NOERROR (routine shutdown or restart).

A Retry Delay message from server to client is a DSO unidirectional message; the MESSAGE ID MUST be set to zero in the outgoing message and the client MUST NOT send a response.

A client MUST NOT send a Retry Delay DSO message to a server. If a server receives a DSO message where the Primary TLV is the Retry Delay TLV, this is a fatal error and the server MUST forcibly abort the connection immediately.

### 7.2.2. Retry Delay TLV used as a Response Additional TLV

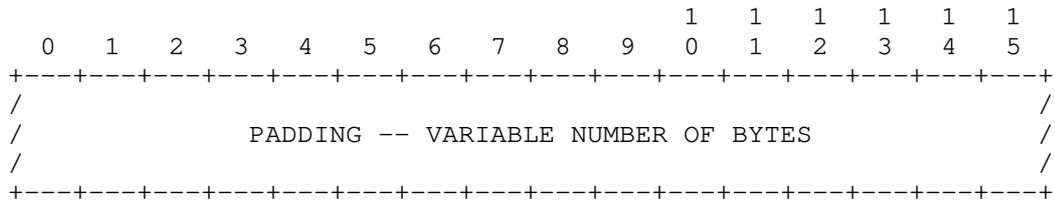
In the case of a DSO request message that results in a nonzero RCODE value, the responder MAY append a Retry Delay TLV to the response, indicating the time interval during which the initiator SHOULD NOT attempt this operation again.

The indicated time interval during which the initiator SHOULD NOT retry applies only to the failed operation, not to the DSO Session as a whole.

7.3. Encryption Padding TLV

The Encryption Padding TLV (DSO-TYPE=3) can only be used as an Additional or Response Additional TLV. It is only applicable when the DSO Transport layer uses encryption such as TLS.

The DSO-DATA for the Padding TLV is optional and is a variable length field containing non-specified values. A DSO-LENGTH of 0 essentially provides for 4 bytes of padding (the minimum amount).



As specified for the EDNS(0) Padding Option [RFC7830] the PADDING bytes SHOULD be set to 0x00. Other values MAY be used, for example, in cases where there is a concern that the padded message could be subject to compression before encryption. PADDING bytes of any value MUST be accepted in the messages received.

The Encryption Padding TLV may be included in either a DSO request message, response, or both. As specified for the EDNS(0) Padding Option [RFC7830] if a DSO request message is received with an Encryption Padding TLV, then the DSO response MUST also include an Encryption Padding TLV.

The length of padding is intentionally not specified in this document and is a function of current best practices with respect to the type and length of data in the preceding TLVs [I-D.ietf-dprive-padding-policy].

## 8. Summary Highlights

This section summarizes some noteworthy highlights about various aspects of the DSO protocol.

### 8.1. QR bit and MESSAGE ID

In DSO Request Messages the QR bit is 0 and the MESSAGE ID is nonzero.

In DSO Response Messages the QR bit is 1 and the MESSAGE ID is nonzero.

In DSO Unidirectional Messages the QR bit is 0 and the MESSAGE ID is zero.

The table below illustrates which combinations are legal and how they are interpreted:

	MESSAGE ID zero	MESSAGE ID nonzero
QR=0	DSO unidirectional Message	DSO Request Message
QR=1	Invalid - Fatal Error	DSO Response Message

## 8.2. TLV Usage

The table below indicates, for each of the three TLVs defined in this document, whether they are valid in each of ten different contexts.

The first five contexts are DSO requests or DSO unidirectional messages from client to server, and the corresponding responses from server back to client:

- o C-P - Primary TLV, sent in DSO Request message, from client to server, with nonzero MESSAGE ID indicating that this request MUST generate response message.
- o C-U - Primary TLV, sent in DSO Unidirectional message, from client to server, with zero MESSAGE ID indicating that this request MUST NOT generate response message.
- o C-A - Additional TLV, optionally added to a DSO request message or DSO unidirectional message from client to server.
- o CRP - Response Primary TLV, included in response message sent back to the client (in response to a client "C-P" request with nonzero MESSAGE ID indicating that a response is required) where the DSO-TYPE of the Response TLV matches the DSO-TYPE of the Primary TLV in the request.
- o CRA - Response Additional TLV, included in response message sent back to the client (in response to a client "C-P" request with nonzero MESSAGE ID indicating that a response is required) where the DSO-TYPE of the Response TLV does not match the DSO-TYPE of the Primary TLV in the request.

The second five contexts are their counterparts in the opposite direction: DSO requests or DSO unidirectional messages from server to client, and the corresponding responses from client back to server.

- o S-P - Primary TLV, sent in DSO Request message, from server to client, with nonzero MESSAGE ID indicating that this request MUST generate response message.
- o S-U - Primary TLV, sent in DSO Unidirectional message, from server to client, with zero MESSAGE ID indicating that this request MUST NOT generate response message.
- o S-A - Additional TLV, optionally added to a DSO request message or DSO unidirectional message from server to client.

- o SRP - Response Primary TLV, included in response message sent back to the server (in response to a server "S-P" request with nonzero MESSAGE ID indicating that a response is required) where the DSO-TYPE of the Response TLV matches the DSO-TYPE of the Primary TLV in the request.
- o SRA - Response Additional TLV, included in response message sent back to the server (in response to a server "S-P" request with nonzero MESSAGE ID indicating that a response is required) where the DSO-TYPE of the Response TLV does not match the DSO-TYPE of the Primary TLV in the request.

	C-P	C-U	C-A	CRP	CRA	S-P	S-U	S-A	SRP	SRA
KeepAlive	X			X			X			
RetryDelay					X		X			X
Padding			X		X			X		X

Note that some of the columns in this table are currently empty. The table provides a template for future TLV definitions to follow. It is recommended that definitions of future TLVs include a similar table summarizing the contexts where the new TLV is valid.

## 9. Additional Considerations

### 9.1. Service Instances

We use the term service instance to refer to software running on a host which can receive connections on some set of IP address and port tuples. What makes the software an instance is that regardless of which of these tuples the client uses to connect to it, the client is connected to the same software, running on the same node (but see Section 9.2), and will receive the same answers and the same keying information.

Service instances are identified from the perspective of the client. If the client is configured with IP addresses and port number tuples, it has no way to tell if the service offered at one tuple is the same server that is listening on a different tuple. So in this case, the client treats each such tuple as if it references a separate service instance.

In some cases a client is configured with a hostname and a port number (either implicitly, where the port number is omitted and assumed, or explicitly, as in the case of DNS SRV records). In these cases, the (hostname, port) tuple uniquely identifies the service instance (hostname comparisons are case-insensitive [RFC1034]).

It is possible that two hostnames might point to some common IP addresses; this is a configuration error which the client is not obliged to detect. The effect of this could be that after being told to disconnect, the client might reconnect to the same server because it is represented as a different service instance.

Implementations SHOULD NOT resolve hostnames and then perform matching of IP address(es) in order to evaluate whether two entities should be determined to be the "same service instance".

## 9.2. Anycast Considerations

When an anycast service is configured on a particular IP address and port, it must be the case that although there is more than one physical server responding on that IP address, each such server can be treated as equivalent. What we mean by "equivalent" here is that both servers can provide the same service and, where appropriate, the same authentication information, such as PKI certificates, when establishing connections.

If a change in network topology causes packets in a particular TCP connection to be sent to an anycast server instance that does not know about the connection, the new server will automatically terminate the connection with a TCP reset, since it will have no record of the connection, and then the client can reconnect or stop using the connection, as appropriate.

If after the connection is re-established, the client's assumption that it is connected to the same service is violated in some way, that would be considered to be incorrect behavior in this context. It is however out of the possible scope for this specification to make specific recommendations in this regard; that would be up to follow-on documents that describe specific uses of DNS stateful operations.

### 9.3. Connection Sharing

As previously specified for DNS over TCP [RFC7766]:

To mitigate the risk of unintentional server overload, DNS clients **MUST** take care to minimize the number of concurrent TCP connections made to any individual server. It is **RECOMMENDED** that for any given client/server interaction there **SHOULD** be no more than one connection for regular queries, one for zone transfers, and one for each protocol that is being used on top of TCP (for example, if the resolver was using TLS). However, it is noted that certain primary/secondary configurations with many busy zones might need to use more than one TCP connection for zone transfers for operational reasons (for example, to support concurrent transfers of multiple zones).

A single server may support multiple services, including DNS Updates [RFC2136], DNS Push Notifications [I-D.ietf-dnssd-push], and other services, for one or more DNS zones. When a client discovers that the target server for several different operations is the same service instance (see Section 9.1), the client **SHOULD** use a single shared DSO Session for all those operations.

This requirement has two benefits. First, it reduces unnecessary connection load on the DNS server. Second, it avoids paying the TCP slow start penalty when making subsequent connections to the same server.

However, server implementers and operators should be aware that connection sharing may not be possible in all cases. A single host device may be home to multiple independent client software instances that don't coordinate with each other. Similarly, multiple independent client devices behind the same NAT gateway will also typically appear to the DNS server as different source ports on the same client IP address. Because of these constraints, a DNS server **MUST** be prepared to accept multiple connections from different source ports on the same client IP address.

#### 9.4. Operational Considerations for Middlebox

Where an application-layer middlebox (e.g., a DNS proxy, forwarder, or session multiplexer) is in the path, care must be taken to avoid a configuration in which DSO traffic is mis-handled. The simplest way to avoid such problems is to avoid using middleboxes. When this is not possible, middleboxes should be evaluated to make sure that they behave correctly.

Correct behavior for middleboxes consists of one of:

- o The middlebox does not forward DSO messages, and responds to DSO messages with a response code other than NOERROR or DSOTYPENI.
- o The middlebox acts as a DSO server and follows this specification in establishing connections.
- o There is a 1:1 correspondence between incoming and outgoing connections, such that when a connection is established to the middlebox, it is guaranteed that exactly one corresponding connection will be established from the middlebox to some DNS resolver, and all incoming messages will be forwarded without modification or reordering. An example of this would be a NAT forwarder or TCP connection optimizer (e.g. for a high-latency connection such as a geosynchronous satellite link).

Middleboxes that do not meet one of the above criteria are very likely to fail in unexpected and difficult-to-diagnose ways. For example, a DNS load balancer might unbundle DNS messages from the incoming TCP stream and forward each message from the stream to a different DNS server. If such a load balancer is in use, and the DNS servers it points implement DSO and are configured to enable DSO, DSO session establishment will succeed, but no coherent session will exist between the client and the server. If such a load balancer is pointed at a DNS server that does not implement DSO or is configured not to allow DSO, no such problem will exist, but such a configuration risks unexpected failure if new server software is installed which does implement DSO.

It is of course possible to implement a middlebox that properly supports DSO. It is even possible to implement one that implements DSO with long-lived operations. This can be done either by maintaining a 1:1 correspondence between incoming and outgoing connections, as mentioned above, or by terminating incoming sessions at the middlebox, but maintaining state in the middlebox about any long-lived that are requested. Specifying this in detail is beyond the scope of this document.

### 9.5. TCP Delayed Acknowledgement Considerations

Most modern implementations of the Transmission Control Protocol (TCP) include a feature called "Delayed Acknowledgement" [RFC1122].

Without this feature, TCP can be very wasteful on the network. For illustration, consider a simple example like remote login, using a very simple TCP implementation that lacks delayed acks. When the user types a keystroke, a data packet is sent. When the data packet arrives at the server, the simple TCP implementation sends an immediate acknowledgement. Mere milliseconds later, the server process reads the one byte of keystroke data, and consequently the simple TCP implementation sends an immediate window update. Mere milliseconds later, the server process generates the character echo, and sends this data back in reply. The simple TCP implementation then sends this data packet immediately too. In this case, this simple TCP implementation sends a burst of three packets almost instantaneously (ack, window update, data).

Clearly it would be more efficient if the TCP implementation were to combine the three separate packets into one, and this is what the delayed ack feature enables.

With delayed ack, the TCP implementation waits after receiving a data packet, typically for 200 ms, and then send its ack if (a) more data packet(s) arrive (b) the receiving process generates some reply data, or (c) 200 ms elapses without either of the above occurring.

With delayed ack, remote login becomes much more efficient, generating just one packet instead of three for each character echo.

The logic of delayed ack is that the 200 ms delay cannot do any significant harm. If something at the other end were waiting for something, then the receiving process should generate the reply that the thing at the end is waiting for, and TCP will then immediately send that reply (and the ack and window update). And if the receiving process does not in fact generate any reply for this particular message, then by definition the thing at the other end cannot be waiting for anything, so the 200 ms delay is harmless.

This assumption may be true, unless the sender is using Nagle's algorithm, a similar efficiency feature, created to protect the network from poorly written client software that performs many rapid small writes in succession. Nagle's algorithm allows these small writes to be combined into larger, less wasteful packets.

Unfortunately, Nagle's algorithm and delayed ack, two valuable efficiency features, can interact badly with each other when used together [NagleDA].

DSO request messages elicit responses; DSO unidirectional messages and DSO response messages do not.

For DSO request messages, which do elicit responses, Nagle's algorithm and delayed ack work as intended.

For DSO messages that do not elicit responses, the delayed ack mechanism causes the ack to be delayed by 200 ms. The 200 ms delay on the ack can in turn cause Nagle's algorithm to prevent the sender from sending any more data for 200 ms until the awaited ack arrives. On an enterprise GigE backbone with sub-millisecond round-trip times, a 200 ms delay is enormous in comparison.

When this issues is raised, there are two solutions that are often offered, neither of them ideal:

1. Disable delayed ack. For DSO messages that elicit no response, removing delayed ack avoids the needless 200 ms delay, and sends back an immediate ack, which tells Nagle's algorithm that it should immediately grant the sender permission to send its next packet. Unfortunately, for DSO messages that *do* elicit a response, removing delayed ack removes the efficiency gains of combining acks with data, and the responder will now send two or three packets instead of one.
2. Disable Nagle's algorithm. When acks are delayed by the delayed ack algorithm, removing Nagle's algorithm prevents the sender from being blocked from sending its next small packet immediately. Unfortunately, on a network with a higher round-trip time, removing Nagle's algorithm removes the efficiency gains of combining multiple small packets into fewer larger ones, with the goal of limiting the number of small packets in flight at any one time.

For DSO messages that elicit a response, delayed ack and Nagle's algorithm do the right thing.

The problem here is that with DSO messages that elicit no response, the TCP implementation is stuck waiting, unsure if a response is about to be generated, or whether the TCP implementation should go ahead and send an ack and window update.

The solution is networking APIs that allow the receiver to inform the TCP implementation that a received message has been read, processed,

and no response for this message will be generated. TCP can then stop waiting for a response that will never come, and immediately go ahead and send an ack and window update.

For implementations of DSO, disabling delayed ack is NOT RECOMMENDED, because of the harm this can do to the network.

For implementations of DSO, disabling Nagle's algorithm is NOT RECOMMENDED, because of the harm this can do to the network.

At the time that this document is being prepared for publication, it is known that at least one TCP implementation provides the ability for the recipient of a TCP message to signal that it is not going to send a response, and hence the delayed ack mechanism can stop waiting. Implementations on operating systems where this feature is available SHOULD make use of it.

## 10. IANA Considerations

## 10.1. DSO OPCODE Registration

The IANA is requested to record the value [TBA1] (tentatively 6) for the DSO OPCODE in the DNS OPCODE Registry. DSO stands for DNS Stateful Operations.

## 10.2. DSO RCODE Registration

The IANA is requested to record the value [TBA2] (tentatively 11) for the DSOTYPENI error code in the DNS RCODE Registry. The DSOTYPENI error code ("DSO-TYPE Not Implemented") indicates that the receiver does implement DNS Stateful Operations, but does not implement the specific DSO-TYPE of the primary TLV in the DSO request message.

## 10.3. DSO Type Code Registry

The IANA is requested to create the 16-bit DSO Type Code Registry, with initial (hexadecimal) values as shown below:

Type	Name	Early Data	Status	Reference
0000	Reserved	NO	Standard	RFC-TBD
0001	KeepAlive	OK	Standard	RFC-TBD
0002	RetryDelay	NO	Standard	RFC-TBD
0003	EncryptionPadding	NA	Standard	RFC-TBD
0004-003F	Unassigned, reserved for DSO session-management TLVs	NO		
0040-F7FF	Unassigned	NO		
F800-FBFF	Experimental/local use	NO		
FC00-FFFF	Reserved for future expansion	NO		

The meanings of the fields are as follows:

Type: the 16-bit DSO type code

Name: the human-readable name of the TLV

Early Data: If OK, this TLV may be sent as early data in a TLS 0-RTT ([RFC8446] Section 2.3) initial handshake. If NA, the TLV may appear as a secondary TLV in a DSO message that is sent as early data.

Status: IETF Document status (or "External" if not documented in an IETF document).

Reference: A stable reference to the document in which this TLV is defined.

DSO Type Code zero is reserved and is not currently intended for allocation.

Registrations of new DSO Type Codes in the "Reserved for DSO session-management" range 0004-003F and the "Reserved for future expansion" range FC00-FFFF require publication of an IETF Standards Action document [RFC8126].

Any document defining a new TLV which lists a value of "OK" in the 0-RTT column must include a threat analysis for the use of the TLV in the case of TLS 0-RTT. See Section 11.1 for details.

Requests to register additional new DSO Type Codes in the "Unassigned" range 0040-F7FF are to be recorded by IANA after Expert Review [RFC8126]. The expert review should validate that the requested type code is specified in a way that conforms to this specification, and that the intended use for the code would not be addressed with an experimental/local assignment.

DSO Type Codes in the "experimental/local" range F800-FBFF may be used as Experimental Use or Private Use values [RFC8126] and may be used freely for development purposes, or for other purposes within a single site. No attempt is made to prevent multiple sites from using the same value in different (and incompatible) ways. There is no need for IANA to review such assignments (since IANA does not record them) and assignments are not generally useful for broad interoperability. It is the responsibility of the sites making use of "experimental/local" values to ensure that no conflicts occur within the intended scope of use.

## 11. Security Considerations

If this mechanism is to be used with DNS over TLS, then these messages are subject to the same constraints as any other DNS-over-

TLS messages and MUST NOT be sent in the clear before the TLS session is established.

The data field of the "Encryption Padding" TLV could be used as a covert channel.

When designing new DSO TLVs, the potential for data in the TLV to be used as a tracking identifier should be taken into consideration, and should be avoided when not required.

When used without TLS or similar cryptographic protection, a malicious entity maybe able to inject a malicious unidirectional DSO Retry Delay Message into the data stream, specifying an unreasonably large RETRY DELAY, causing a denial-of-service attack against the client.

The establishment of DSO sessions has an impact on the number of open TCP connections on a DNS server. Additional resources may be used on the server as a result. However, because the server can limit the number of DSO sessions established and can also close existing DSO sessions as needed, denial of service or resource exhaustion should not be a concern.

#### 11.1. TLS 0-RTT Considerations

DSO permits zero round-trip operation using TCP Fast Open [RFC7413] with TLS 1.3 [RFC8446] 0-RTT to reduce or eliminate round trips in session establishment. TCP Fast Open is only permitted in combination with TLS 0-RTT. In the rest of this section we refer to TLS 1.3 early data in a TLS 0-RTT initial handshake message that is included in a TCP Fast Open packet as "early data."

A DSO message may or may not be permitted to be sent as early data. The definition for each TLV that can be used as a primary TLV is required to state whether or not that TLV is permitted as early data. Only response-requiring messages are ever permitted as early data, and only clients are permitted to send any DSO message as early data, unless there is an implicit session (see Section 5.1).

For DSO messages that are permitted as early data, a client MAY include one or more such messages as early data without having to wait for a DSO response to the first DSO request message to confirm successful establishment of a DSO session.

However, unless there is an implicit session, a client MUST NOT send DSO unidirectional messages until after a DSO Session has been mutually established.

Similarly, unless there is an implicit session, a server MUST NOT send DSO request messages until it has received a response-requiring DSO request message from a client and transmitted a successful NOERROR response for that request.

Caution must be taken to ensure that DSO messages sent as early data are idempotent, or are otherwise immune to any problems that could be result from the inadvertent replay that can occur with zero round-trip operation.

It would be possible to add a TLV that requires the server to do some significant work, and send that to the server as initial data in a TCP SYN packet. A flood of such packets could be used as a DoS attack on the server. None of the TLVs defined here have this property.

If a new TLV is specified that does have this property, that TLV must be specified as not permitted in 0-RTT messages. This prevents work from being done until a round-trip has occurred from the server to the client to verify that the source address of the packet is reachable.

Documents that define new TLVs must state whether each new TLV may be sent as early data. Such documents must include a threat analysis in the security considerations section for each TLV defined in the document that may be sent as early data. This threat analysis should be done based on the advice given in [RFC8446] Section 2.3, 8 and Appendix E.5.

## 12. Acknowledgements

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March 24, 2019

Discovery Proxy for Multicast DNS-Based Service Discovery  
draft-ietf-dnssd-hybrid-10

Abstract

This document specifies a network proxy that uses Multicast DNS to automatically populate the wide-area unicast Domain Name System namespace with records describing devices and services found on the local link.

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## 1. Introduction

Multicast DNS [RFC6762] and its companion technology DNS-based Service Discovery [RFC6763] were created to provide IP networking with the ease-of-use and autoconfiguration for which AppleTalk was well known [RFC6760] [ZC] [Roadmap].

For a small home network consisting of just a single link (or a few physical links bridged together to appear as a single logical link from the point of view of IP) Multicast DNS [RFC6762] is sufficient for client devices to look up the ".local" host names of peers on the same home network, and to use Multicast DNS-Based Service Discovery (DNS-SD) [RFC6763] to discover services offered on that home network.

For a larger network consisting of multiple links that are interconnected using IP-layer routing instead of link-layer bridging, link-local Multicast DNS alone is insufficient because link-local Multicast DNS packets, by design, are not propagated onto other links.

Using link-local multicast packets for Multicast DNS was a conscious design choice [RFC6762]. Even when limited to a single link, multicast traffic is still generally considered to be more expensive than unicast, because multicast traffic impacts many devices, instead of just a single recipient. In addition, with some technologies like Wi-Fi [IEEE-11], multicast traffic is inherently less efficient and less reliable than unicast, because Wi-Fi multicast traffic is sent at lower data rates, and is not acknowledged [Mcast]. Increasing the amount of expensive multicast traffic by flooding it across multiple links would make the traffic load even worse.

Partitioning the network into many small links curtails the spread of expensive multicast traffic, but limits the discoverability of services. At the opposite end of the spectrum, using a very large local link with thousands of hosts enables better service discovery, but at the cost of larger amounts of multicast traffic.

Performing DNS-Based Service Discovery using purely Unicast DNS is more efficient and doesn't require large multicast domains, but does require that the relevant data be available in the Unicast DNS namespace. The Unicast DNS namespace in question could fall within a traditionally assigned globally unique domain name, or could use a private local unicast domain name such as ".home.arpa" [RFC8375].

In the DNS-SD specification [RFC6763], Section 10 ("Populating the DNS with Information") discusses various possible ways that a service's PTR, SRV, TXT and address records can make their way into the Unicast DNS namespace, including manual zone file configuration

[RFC1034] [RFC1035], DNS Update [RFC2136] [RFC3007] and proxies of various kinds.

Making the relevant data available in the Unicast DNS namespace by manual DNS configuration is one option. This option has been used for many years at IETF meetings to advertise the IETF Terminal Room printer. Details of this example are given in Appendix A of the Roadmap document [Roadmap]. However, this manual DNS configuration is labor intensive, error prone, and requires a reasonable degree of DNS expertise.

Populating the Unicast DNS namespace via DNS Update by the devices offering the services themselves is another option [RegProt] [DNS-UL]. However, this requires configuration of DNS Update keys on those devices, which has proven onerous and impractical for simple devices like printers and network cameras.

Hence, to facilitate efficient and reliable DNS-Based Service Discovery, a compromise is needed that combines the ease-of-use of Multicast DNS with the efficiency and scalability of Unicast DNS.

This document specifies a type of proxy called a "Discovery Proxy" that uses Multicast DNS [RFC6762] to discover Multicast DNS records on its local link, and makes corresponding DNS records visible in the Unicast DNS namespace.

In principle, similar mechanisms could be defined using other local service discovery protocols, to discover local information and then make corresponding DNS records visible in the Unicast DNS namespace. Such mechanisms for other local service discovery protocols could be addressed in future documents.

The design of the Discovery Proxy is guided by the previously published requirements document [RFC7558].

In simple terms, a descriptive DNS name is chosen for each link in an organization. Using a DNS NS record, responsibility for that DNS name is delegated to a Discovery Proxy physically attached to that link. Now, when a remote client issues a unicast query for a name falling within the delegated subdomain, the normal DNS delegation mechanism results in the unicast query arriving at the Discovery Proxy, since it has been declared authoritative for those names. Now, instead of consulting a textual zone file on disk to discover the answer to the query, as a traditional DNS server would, a Discovery Proxy consults its local link, using Multicast DNS, to find the answer to the question.

For fault tolerance reasons there may be more than one Discovery Proxy serving a given link.

Note that the Discovery Proxy uses a "pull" model. The local link is not queried using Multicast DNS until some remote client has requested that data. In the idle state, in the absence of client requests, the Discovery Proxy sends no packets and imposes no burden on the network. It operates purely "on demand".

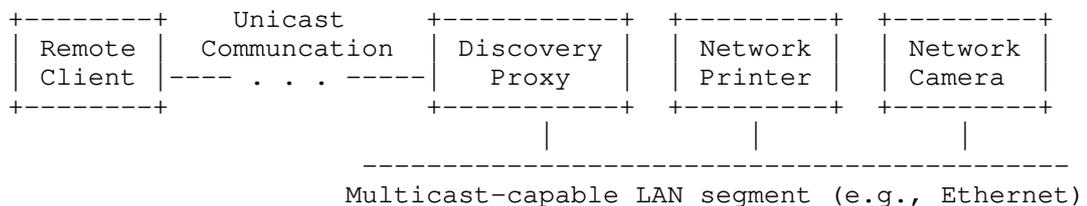
An alternative proposal that has been discussed is a proxy that performs DNS updates to a remote DNS server on behalf of the Multicast DNS devices on the local network. The difficulty with this is that Multicast DNS devices do not routinely announce their records on the network. Generally they remain silent until queried. This means that the complete set of Multicast DNS records in use on a link can only be discovered by active querying, not by passive listening. Because of this, a proxy can only know what names exist on a link by issuing queries for them, and since it would be impractical to issue queries for every possible name just to find out which names exist and which do not, there is no reasonable way for a proxy to programmatically learn all the answers it would need to push up to the remote DNS server using DNS Update. Even if such a mechanism were possible, it would risk generating high load on the network continuously, even when there are no clients with any interest in that data.

Hence, having a model where the query comes to the Discovery Proxy is much more efficient than a model where the Discovery Proxy pushes the answers out to some other remote DNS server.

A client seeking to discover services and other information achieves this by sending traditional DNS queries to the Discovery Proxy, or by sending DNS Push Notification subscription requests [Push].

How a client discovers what domain name(s) to use for its service discovery queries, (and consequently what Discovery Proxy or Proxies to use) is described in Section 5.2.

The diagram below illustrates a network topology using a Discovery Proxy to provide discovery service to a remote client.



## 2. Operational Analogy

A Discovery Proxy does not operate as a multicast relay, or multicast forwarder. There is no danger of multicast forwarding loops that result in traffic storms, because no multicast packets are forwarded. A Discovery Proxy operates as a *\*proxy\** for a remote client, performing queries on its behalf and reporting the results back.

A reasonable analogy is making a telephone call to a colleague at your workplace and saying, "I'm out of the office right now. Would you mind bringing up a printer browser window and telling me the names of the printers you see?" That entails no risk of a forwarding loop causing a traffic storm, because no multicast packets are sent over the telephone call.

A similar analogy, instead of enlisting another human being to initiate the service discovery operation on your behalf, is to log into your own desktop work computer using screen sharing, and then run the printer browser yourself to see the list of printers. Or log in using ssh and type "dns-sd -B \_ipp.\_tcp" and observe the list of discovered printer names. In neither case is there any risk of a forwarding loop causing a traffic storm, because no multicast packets are being sent over the screen sharing or ssh connection.

The Discovery Proxy provides another way of performing remote queries, except using a different protocol instead of screen sharing or ssh.

When the Discovery Proxy software performs Multicast DNS operations, the exact same Multicast DNS caching mechanisms are applied as when any other client software on that Discovery Proxy device performs Multicast DNS operations, whether that be running a printer browser client locally, or a remote user running the printer browser client via a screen sharing connection, or a remote user logged in via ssh running a command-line tool like "dns-sd", or a remote user sending DNS requests that cause a Discovery Proxy to perform discovery operations on its behalf.

### 3. Conventions and Terminology Used in this Document

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 "Key words for use in RFCs to Indicate Requirement Levels", when, and only when, they appear in all capitals, as shown here [RFC2119] [RFC8174].

The Discovery Proxy builds on Multicast DNS, which works between hosts on the same link. For the purposes of this document a set of hosts is considered to be "on the same link" if:

- o when any host from that set sends a packet to any other host in that set, using unicast, multicast, or broadcast, the entire link-layer packet payload arrives unmodified, and
- o a broadcast sent over that link, by any host from that set of hosts, can be received by every other host in that set.

The link-layer *header* may be modified, such as in Token Ring Source Routing [IEEE-5], but not the link-layer *payload*. In particular, if any device forwarding a packet modifies any part of the IP header or IP payload then the packet is no longer considered to be on the same link. This means that the packet may pass through devices such as repeaters, bridges, hubs or switches and still be considered to be on the same link for the purpose of this document, but not through a device such as an IP router that decrements the IP TTL or otherwise modifies the IP header.

### 4. Compatibility Considerations

No changes to existing devices are required to work with a Discovery Proxy.

Existing devices that advertise services using Multicast DNS work with Discovery Proxy.

Existing clients that support DNS-Based Service Discovery over Unicast DNS work with Discovery Proxy. Service Discovery over Unicast DNS was introduced in Mac OS X 10.4 in April 2005, as is included in Apple products introduced since then, including iPhone and iPad, as well as products from other vendors, such as Microsoft Windows 10.

An overview of the larger collection of related Service Discovery technologies, and how Discovery Proxy relates to those, is given in the Service Discovery Road Map document [Roadmap].

## 5. Discovery Proxy Operation

In a typical configuration, a Discovery Proxy is configured to be authoritative [RFC1034] [RFC1035] for four or more DNS subdomains, and authority for these subdomains is delegated to it via NS records:

A DNS subdomain for service discovery records.

This subdomain name may contain rich text, including spaces and other punctuation. This is because this subdomain name is used only in graphical user interfaces, where rich text is appropriate.

A DNS subdomain for host name records.

This subdomain name SHOULD be limited to letters, digits and hyphens, to facilitate convenient use of host names in command-line interfaces.

One or more DNS subdomains for IPv4 Reverse Mapping records.

These subdomains will have names that ends in "in-addr.arpa."

One or more DNS subdomains for IPv6 Reverse Mapping records.

These subdomains will have names that ends in "ip6.arpa."

In an enterprise network the naming and delegation of these subdomains is typically performed by conscious action of the network administrator. In a home network naming and delegation would typically be performed using some automatic configuration mechanism such as HNCP [RFC7788].

These three varieties of delegated subdomains (service discovery, host names, and reverse mapping) are described below in Section 5.1, Section 5.3 and Section 5.4.

How a client discovers where to issue its service discovery queries is described below in Section 5.2.

### 5.1. Delegated Subdomain for Service Discovery Records

In its simplest form, each link in an organization is assigned a unique Unicast DNS domain name, such as "Building 1.example.com" or "2nd Floor.Building 3.example.com". Grouping multiple links under a single Unicast DNS domain name is to be specified in a future companion document, but for the purposes of this document, assume that each link has its own unique Unicast DNS domain name. In a graphical user interface these names are not displayed as strings with dots as shown above, but something more akin to a typical file browser graphical user interface (which is harder to illustrate in a text-only document) showing folders, subfolders and files in a file system.

*example.com*	Building 1	1st Floor	Alice's printer
	Building 2	*2nd Floor*	Bob's printer
	*Building 3*	3rd Floor	Charlie's printer
	Building 4	4th Floor	
	Building 5		
	Building 6		

Figure 1: Illustrative GUI

Each named link in an organization has one or more Discovery Proxies which serve it. This Discovery Proxy function for each link could be performed by a device like a router or switch that is physically attached to that link. In the parent domain, NS records are used to delegate ownership of each defined link name (e.g., "Building 1.example.com") to the one or more Discovery Proxies that serve the named link. In other words, the Discovery Proxies are the authoritative name servers for that subdomain. As in the rest of DNS-Based Service Discovery, all names are represented as-is using plain UTF-8 encoding, and, as described in Section 5.5.4, no text encoding translations are performed.

With appropriate VLAN configuration [IEEE-1Q] a single Discovery Proxy device could have a logical presence on many links, and serve as the Discovery Proxy for all those links. In such a configuration the Discovery Proxy device would have a single physical Ethernet [IEEE-3] port, configured as a VLAN trunk port, which would appear to software on that device as multiple virtual Ethernet interfaces, one connected to each of the VLAN links.

As an alternative to using VLAN technology, using a Multicast DNS Discovery Relay [Relay] is another way that a Discovery Proxy can have a 'virtual' presence on a remote link.

When a DNS-SD client issues a Unicast DNS query to discover services in a particular Unicast DNS subdomain (e.g., "\_printer.\_tcp.Building 1.example.com. PTR ?") the normal DNS delegation mechanism results in that query being forwarded until it reaches the delegated authoritative name server for that subdomain, namely the Discovery Proxy on the link in question. Like a conventional Unicast DNS server, a Discovery Proxy implements the usual Unicast DNS protocol [RFC1034] [RFC1035] over UDP and TCP. However, unlike a conventional Unicast DNS server that generates answers from the data in its manually-configured zone file, a Discovery Proxy generates answers using Multicast DNS. A Discovery Proxy does this by consulting its Multicast DNS cache and/or issuing Multicast DNS queries, as appropriate, according to the usual protocol rules of Multicast DNS [RFC6762], for the corresponding Multicast DNS name, type and class, with the delegated zone part of the name replaced with ".local" (e.g., in this case, "\_printer.\_tcp.local. PTR ?"). Then, from the received Multicast DNS data, the Discovery Proxy synthesizes the appropriate Unicast DNS response, with the ".local" top-level label replaced with the name of the delegated zone. How long the Discovery Proxy should wait to accumulate Multicast DNS responses before sending its unicast reply is described below in Section 5.6.

The existing Multicast DNS caching mechanism is used to minimize unnecessary Multicast DNS queries on the wire. The Discovery Proxy is acting as a client of the underlying Multicast DNS subsystem, and benefits from the same caching and efficiency measures as any other client using that subsystem.

Note that the contents of the delegated zone, generated as it is by performing ".local" Multicast DNS queries, mirrors the records available on the local link via Multicast DNS very closely, but not precisely. There is not a full bidirectional equivalence between the two. Certain records that are available via Multicast DNS may not have equivalents in the delegated zone, possibly because they are invalid or not relevant in the delegated zone, or because they are being suppressed because they are unusable outside the local link (see Section 5.5.2). Conversely, certain records that appear in the delegated zone may not have corresponding records available on the local link via Multicast DNS. In particular there are certain administrative SRV records (see Section 6) that logically fall within the delegated zone, but semantically represent metadata *about* the zone rather than records *within* the zone, and consequently these administrative records in the delegated zone do not have any corresponding counterparts in the Multicast DNS namespace of the local link.

## 5.2. Domain Enumeration

A DNS-SD client performs Domain Enumeration [RFC6763] via certain PTR queries, using both unicast and multicast. If it receives a Domain Name configuration via DHCP option 15 [RFC2132], then it issues unicast queries using this domain. It issues unicast queries using names derived from its IPv4 subnet address(es) and IPv6 prefix(es). These are described below in Section 5.2.1. It also issues multicast Domain Enumeration queries in the "local" domain [RFC6762]. These are described below in Section 5.2.2. The results of all the Domain Enumeration queries are combined for Service Discovery purposes.

### 5.2.1. Domain Enumeration via Unicast Queries

The administrator creates Domain Enumeration PTR records [RFC6763] to inform clients of available service discovery domains. Two varieties of such Domain Enumeration PTR records exist; those with names derived from the domain name communicated to the clients via DHCP, and those with names derived from IPv4 subnet address(es) and IPv6 prefix(es) in use by the clients. Below is an example showing the name-based variety:

```

b._dns-sd._udp.example.com. PTR Building 1.example.com.
                             PTR Building 2.example.com.
                             PTR Building 3.example.com.
                             PTR Building 4.example.com.

db._dns-sd._udp.example.com. PTR Building 1.example.com.

lb._dns-sd._udp.example.com. PTR Building 1.example.com.

```

The meaning of these records is defined in the DNS Service Discovery specification [RFC6763] but for convenience is repeated here. The "b" ("browse") records tell the client device the list of browsing domains to display for the user to select from. The "db" ("default browse") record tells the client device which domain in that list should be selected by default. The "db" domain MUST be one of the domains in the "b" list; if not then no domain is selected by default. The "lb" ("legacy browse") record tells the client device which domain to automatically browse on behalf of applications that don't implement UI for multi-domain browsing (which is most of them, at the time of writing). The "lb" domain is often the same as the "db" domain, or sometimes the "db" domain plus one or more others that should be included in the list of automatic browsing domains for legacy clients.

Note that in the example above, for clarity, space characters in names are shown as actual spaces. If this data is manually entered

into a textual zone file for authoritative server software such as BIND, care must be taken because the space character is used as a field separator, and other characters like dot ('.'), semicolon (';'), dollar ('\$'), backslash ('\'), etc., also have special meaning. These characters have to be escaped when entered into a textual zone file, following the rules in Section 5.1 of the DNS specification [RFC1035]. For example, a literal space in a name is represented in the textual zone file using '\032', so "Building 1.example.com." is entered as "Building\0321.example.com."

DNS responses are limited to a maximum size of 65535 bytes. This limits the maximum number of domains that can be returned for a Domain Enumeration query, as follows:

A DNS response header is 12 bytes. That's typically followed by a single qname (up to 256 bytes) plus qtype (2 bytes) and qclass (2 bytes), leaving 65275 for the Answer Section.

An Answer Section Resource Record consists of:

- o Owner name, encoded as a two-byte compression pointer
- o Two-byte rrtype (type PTR)
- o Two-byte rrclass (class IN)
- o Four-byte ttl
- o Two-byte rdlength
- o rdata (domain name, up to 256 bytes)

This means that each Resource Record in the Answer Section can take up to 268 bytes total, which means that the Answer Section can contain, in the worst case, no more than 243 domains.

In a more typical scenario, where the domain names are not all maximum-sized names, and there is some similarity between names so that reasonable name compression is possible, each Answer Section Resource Record may average 140 bytes, which means that the Answer Section can contain up to 466 domains.

It is anticipated that this should be sufficient for even a large corporate network or university campus.

### 5.2.2. Domain Enumeration via Multicast Queries

In the case where Discovery Proxy functionality is widely deployed within an enterprise (either by having a Discovery Proxy on each link, or by having a Discovery Proxy with a remote 'virtual' presence on each link using VLANs or Multicast DNS Discovery Relays [Relay]) this offers an additional way to provide Domain Enumeration data for clients.

A Discovery Proxy can be configured to generate Multicast DNS responses for the following Multicast DNS Domain Enumeration queries issued by clients:

b._dns-sd._udp.local.	PTR	?
db._dns-sd._udp.local.	PTR	?
lb._dns-sd._udp.local.	PTR	?

This provides the ability for Discovery Proxies to indicate recommended browsing domains to DNS-SD clients on a per-link granularity. In some enterprises it may be preferable to provide this per-link configuration data in the form of Discovery Proxy configuration, rather than populating the Unicast DNS servers with the same data (in the "ip6.arpa" or "in-addr.arpa" domains).

Regardless of how the network operator chooses to provide this configuration data, clients will perform Domain Enumeration via both unicast and multicast queries, and then combine the results of these queries.

### 5.3. Delegated Subdomain for LDH Host Names

DNS-SD service instance names and domains are allowed to contain arbitrary Net-Unicode text [RFC5198], encoded as precomposed UTF-8 [RFC3629].

Users typically interact with service discovery software by viewing a list of discovered service instance names on a display, and selecting one of them by pointing, touching, or clicking. Similarly, in software that provides a multi-domain DNS-SD user interface, users view a list of offered domains on the display and select one of them by pointing, touching, or clicking. To use a service, users don't have to remember domain or instance names, or type them; users just have to be able to recognize what they see on the display and touch or click on the thing they want.

In contrast, host names are often remembered and typed. Also, host names have historically been used in command-line interfaces where spaces can be inconvenient. For this reason, host names have traditionally been restricted to letters, digits and hyphens (LDH), with no spaces or other punctuation.

While we do want to allow rich text for DNS-SD service instance names and domains, it is advisable, for maximum compatibility with existing usage, to restrict host names to the traditional letter-digit-hyphen rules. This means that while a service name "My Printer.\_ipp.\_tcp.Building 1.example.com" is acceptable and desirable (it is displayed in a graphical user interface as an instance called "My Printer" in the domain "Building 1" at "example.com"), a host name "My-Printer.Building 1.example.com" is less desirable (because of the space in "Building 1").

To accommodate this difference in allowable characters, a Discovery Proxy SHOULD support having two separate subdomains delegated to it for each link it serves, one whose name is allowed to contain arbitrary Net-Unicode text [RFC5198], and a second more constrained subdomain whose name is restricted to contain only letters, digits, and hyphens, to be used for host name records (names of 'A' and 'AAAA' address records). The restricted names may be any valid name consisting of only letters, digits, and hyphens, including Punycode-encoded names [RFC3492].

For example, a Discovery Proxy could have the two subdomains "Building 1.example.com" and "bldg1.example.com" delegated to it. The Discovery Proxy would then translate these two Multicast DNS records:

```
My Printer._ipp._tcp.local. SRV 0 0 631 prnt.local.
prnt.local.                A    203.0.113.2
```

into Unicast DNS records as follows:

```
My Printer._ipp._tcp.Building 1.example.com.
                                SRV 0 0 631 prnt.bldg1.example.com.
prnt.bldg1.example.com.        A    203.0.113.2
```

Note that the SRV record name is translated using the rich-text domain name ("Building 1.example.com") and the address record name is translated using the LDH domain ("bldg1.example.com").

A Discovery Proxy MAY support only a single rich text Net-Unicode domain, and use that domain for all records, including 'A' and 'AAAA' address records, but implementers choosing this option should be aware that this choice may produce host names that are awkward to use in command-line environments. Whether this is an issue depends on whether users in the target environment are expected to be using command-line interfaces.

A Discovery Proxy MUST NOT be restricted to support only a letter-digit-hyphen subdomain, because that results in an unnecessarily poor user experience.

As described above in Section 5.2.1, for clarity, space characters in names are shown as actual spaces. If this data were to be manually entered into a textual zone file (which it isn't) then spaces would need to be represented using '\032', so "My Printer.\_ipp.\_tcp.Building 1.example.com." would become "My\032Printer.\_ipp.\_tcp.Building\0321.example.com." Note that the '\032' representation does not appear in the network packets sent over the air. In the wire format of DNS messages, spaces are sent as spaces, not as '\032', and likewise, in a graphical user interface at the client device, spaces are shown as spaces, not as '\032'.

#### 5.4. Delegated Subdomain for Reverse Mapping

A Discovery Proxy can facilitate easier management of reverse mapping domains, particularly for IPv6 addresses where manual management may be more onerous than it is for IPv4 addresses.

To achieve this, in the parent domain, NS records are used to delegate ownership of the appropriate reverse mapping domain to the Discovery Proxy. In other words, the Discovery Proxy becomes the authoritative name server for the reverse mapping domain. For fault tolerance reasons there may be more than one Discovery Proxy serving a given link.

If a given link is using the IPv4 subnet 203.0.113/24, then the domain "113.0.203.in-addr.arpa" is delegated to the Discovery Proxy for that link.

For example, if a given link is using the IPv6 prefix 2001:0DB8:1234:5678/64, then the domain "8.7.6.5.4.3.2.1.8.b.d.0.1.0.0.2.ip6.arpa" is delegated to the Discovery Proxy for that link.

When a reverse mapping query arrives at the Discovery Proxy, it issues the identical query on its local link as a Multicast DNS query. The mechanism to force an apparently unicast name to be resolved using link-local Multicast DNS varies depending on the API set being used. For example, in the "dns\_sd.h" APIs (available on macOS, iOS, Bonjour for Windows, Linux and Android), using `kDNSServiceFlagsForceMulticast` indicates that the `DNSServiceQueryRecord()` call should perform the query using Multicast DNS. Other APIs sets have different ways of forcing multicast queries. When the host owning that IPv4 or IPv6 address responds with a name of the form "something.local", the Discovery Proxy rewrites that to use its configured LDH host name domain instead of "local", and returns the response to the caller.

For example, a Discovery Proxy with the two subdomains "113.0.203.in-addr.arpa" and "bldg1.example.com" delegated to it would translate this Multicast DNS record:

```
2.113.0.203.in-addr.arpa. PTR prnt.local.
```

into this Unicast DNS response:

```
2.113.0.203.in-addr.arpa. PTR prnt.bldg1.example.com.
```

Subsequent queries for the prnt.bldg1.example.com address record, falling as it does within the bldg1.example.com domain, which is delegated to the Discovery Proxy, will arrive at the Discovery Proxy, where they are answered by issuing Multicast DNS queries and using the received Multicast DNS answers to synthesize Unicast DNS responses, as described above.

Note that this design assumes that all addresses on a given IPv4 subnet or IPv6 prefix are mapped to hostnames using the Discovery Proxy mechanism. It would be possible to implement a Discovery Proxy that can be configured so that some address-to-name mappings are performed using Multicast DNS on the local link, while other address-to-name mappings within the same IPv4 subnet or IPv6 prefix are configured manually.

## 5.5. Data Translation

Generating the appropriate Multicast DNS queries involves, at the very least, translating from the configured DNS domain (e.g., "Building 1.example.com") on the Unicast DNS side to "local" on the Multicast DNS side.

Generating the appropriate Unicast DNS responses involves translating back from "local" to the appropriate configured DNS Unicast domain.

Other beneficial translation and filtering operations are described below.

### 5.5.1. DNS TTL limiting

For efficiency, Multicast DNS typically uses moderately high DNS TTL values. For example, the typical TTL on DNS-SD PTR records is 75 minutes. What makes these moderately high TTLs acceptable is the cache coherency mechanisms built in to the Multicast DNS protocol which protect against stale data persisting for too long. When a service shuts down gracefully, it sends goodbye packets to remove its PTR records immediately from neighboring caches. If a service shuts down abruptly without sending goodbye packets, the Passive Observation Of Failures (POOF) mechanism described in Section 10.5 of the Multicast DNS specification [RFC6762] comes into play to purge the cache of stale data.

A traditional Unicast DNS client on a distant remote link does not get to participate in these Multicast DNS cache coherency mechanisms on the local link. For traditional Unicast DNS queries (those received without using Long-Lived Query [LLQ] or DNS Push Notification subscriptions [Push]) the DNS TTLs reported in the resulting Unicast DNS response MUST be capped to be no more than ten seconds.

Similarly, for negative responses, the negative caching TTL indicated in the SOA record [RFC2308] should also be ten seconds (Section 6.1).

This value of ten seconds is chosen based on user-experience considerations.

For negative caching, suppose a user is attempting to access a remote device (e.g., a printer), and they are unsuccessful because that device is powered off. Suppose they then place a telephone call and ask for the device to be powered on. We want the device to become available to the user within a reasonable time period. It is reasonable to expect it to take on the order of ten seconds for a simple device with a simple embedded operating system to power on.

Once the device is powered on and has announced its presence on the network via Multicast DNS, we would like it to take no more than a further ten seconds for stale negative cache entries to expire from Unicast DNS caches, making the device available to the user desiring to access it.

Similar reasoning applies to capping positive TTLs at ten seconds. In the event of a device moving location, getting a new DHCP address, or other renumbering events, we would like the updated information to be available to remote clients in a relatively timely fashion.

However, network administrators should be aware that many recursive (caching) DNS servers by default are configured to impose a minimum TTL of 30 seconds. If stale data appears to be persisting in the network to the extent that it adversely impacts user experience, network administrators are advised to check the configuration of their recursive DNS servers.

For received Unicast DNS queries that use LLQ [LLQ] or DNS Push Notifications [Push], the Multicast DNS record's TTL SHOULD be returned unmodified, because the Push Notification channel exists to inform the remote client as records come and go. For further details about Long-Lived Queries, and its newer replacement, DNS Push Notifications, see Section 5.6.

#### 5.5.2. Suppressing Unusable Records

A Discovery Proxy SHOULD offer a configurable option, enabled by default, to suppress Unicast DNS answers for records that are not useful outside the local link. When the option to suppress unusable records is enabled:

- o DNS A and AAAA records for IPv4 link-local addresses [RFC3927] and IPv6 link-local addresses [RFC4862] SHOULD be suppressed.
- o Similarly, for sites that have multiple private address realms [RFC1918], in cases where the Discovery Proxy can determine that the querying client is in a different address realm, private addresses SHOULD NOT be communicated to that client.
- o IPv6 Unique Local Addresses [RFC4193] SHOULD be suppressed in cases where the Discovery Proxy can determine that the querying client is in a different IPv6 address realm.
- o By the same logic, DNS SRV records that reference target host names that have no addresses usable by the requester should be suppressed, and likewise, DNS PTR records that point to unusable SRV records should be similarly be suppressed.

### 5.5.3. NSEC and NSEC3 queries

Multicast DNS devices do not routinely announce their records on the network. Generally they remain silent until queried. This means that the complete set of Multicast DNS records in use on a link can only be discovered by active querying, not by passive listening. Because of this, a Discovery Proxy can only know what names exist on a link by issuing queries for them, and since it would be impractical to issue queries for every possible name just to find out which names exist and which do not, a Discovery Proxy cannot programmatically generate the traditional NSEC [RFC4034] and NSEC3 [RFC5155] records which assert the nonexistence of a large range of names.

When queried for an NSEC or NSEC3 record type, the Discovery Proxy issues a qtype "ANY" query using Multicast DNS on the local link, and then generates an NSEC or NSEC3 response with a Type Bit Map signifying which record types do and do not exist for just the specific name queried, and no other names.

Multicast DNS NSEC records received on the local link MUST NOT be forwarded unmodified to a unicast querier, because there are slight differences in the NSEC record data. In particular, Multicast DNS NSEC records do not have the NSEC bit set in the Type Bit Map, whereas conventional Unicast DNS NSEC records do have the NSEC bit set.

### 5.5.4. No Text Encoding Translation

A Discovery Proxy does no translation between text encodings. Specifically, a Discovery Proxy does no translation between Punycode encoding [RFC3492] and UTF-8 encoding [RFC3629], either in the owner name of DNS records, or anywhere in the RDATA of DNS records (such as the RDATA of PTR records, SRV records, NS records, or other record types like TXT, where it is ambiguous whether the RDATA may contain DNS names). All bytes are treated as-is, with no attempt at text encoding translation. A client implementing DNS-based Service Discovery [RFC6763] will use UTF-8 encoding for its service discovery queries, which the Discovery Proxy passes through without any text encoding translation to the Multicast DNS subsystem. Responses from the Multicast DNS subsystem are similarly returned, without any text encoding translation, back to the requesting client.

#### 5.5.5. Application-Specific Data Translation

There may be cases where Application-Specific Data Translation is appropriate.

For example, AirPrint printers tend to advertise fairly verbose information about their capabilities in their DNS-SD TXT record. TXT record sizes in the range 500-1000 bytes are not uncommon. This information is a legacy from LPR printing, because LPR does not have in-band capability negotiation, so all of this information is conveyed using the DNS-SD TXT record instead. IPP printing does have in-band capability negotiation, but for convenience printers tend to include the same capability information in their IPP DNS-SD TXT records as well. For local mDNS use this extra TXT record information is inefficient, but not fatal. However, when a Discovery Proxy aggregates data from multiple printers on a link, and sends it via unicast (via UDP or TCP) this amount of unnecessary TXT record information can result in large responses. A DNS reply over TCP carrying information about 70 printers with an average of 700 bytes per printer adds up to about 50 kilobytes of data. Therefore, a Discovery Proxy that is aware of the specifics of an application-layer protocol such as AirPrint (which uses IPP) can elide unnecessary key/value pairs from the DNS-SD TXT record for better network efficiency.

Also, the DNS-SD TXT record for many printers contains an "adminurl" key something like "adminurl=http://printername.local/status.html". For this URL to be useful outside the local link, the embedded ".local" hostname needs to be translated to an appropriate name with larger scope. It is easy to translate ".local" names when they appear in well-defined places, either as a record's name, or in the rdata of record types like PTR and SRV. In the printing case, some application-specific knowledge about the semantics of the "adminurl" key is needed for the Discovery Proxy to know that it contains a name that needs to be translated. This is somewhat analogous to the need for NAT gateways to contain ALGs (Application-Specific Gateways) to facilitate the correct translation of protocols that embed addresses in unexpected places.

To avoid the need for application-specific knowledge about the semantics of particular TXT record keys, protocol designers are advised to avoid placing link-local names or link-local IP addresses in TXT record keys, if translation of those names or addresses would be required for off-link operation. In the printing case, the operational failure of failing to translate the "adminurl" key correctly is that, when accessed from a different link, printing will still work, but clicking the "Admin" UI button will fail to open the printer's administration page. Rather than duplicating the host name

from the service's SRV record in its "adminurl" key, thereby having the same host name appear in two places, a better design might have been to omit the host name from the "adminurl" key, and instead have the client implicitly substitute the target host name from the service's SRV record in place of a missing host name in the "adminurl" key. That way the desired host name only appears once, and it is in a well-defined place where software like the Discovery Proxy is expecting to find it.

Note that this kind of Application-Specific Data Translation is expected to be very rare. It is the exception, rather than the rule. This is an example of a common theme in computing. It is frequently the case that it is wise to start with a clean, layered design, with clear boundaries. Then, in certain special cases, those layer boundaries may be violated, where the performance and efficiency benefits outweigh the inelegance of the layer violation.

These layer violations are optional. They are done primarily for efficiency reasons, and generally should not be required for correct operation. A Discovery Proxy MAY operate solely at the mDNS layer, without any knowledge of semantics at the DNS-SD layer or above.

## 5.6. Answer Aggregation

In a simple analysis, simply gathering multicast answers and forwarding them in a unicast response seems adequate, but it raises the question of how long the Discovery Proxy should wait to be sure that it has received all the Multicast DNS answers it needs to form a complete Unicast DNS response. If it waits too little time, then it risks its Unicast DNS response being incomplete. If it waits too long, then it creates a poor user experience at the client end. In fact, there may be no time which is both short enough to produce a good user experience and at the same time long enough to reliably produce complete results.

Similarly, the Discovery Proxy -- the authoritative name server for the subdomain in question -- needs to decide what DNS TTL to report for these records. If the TTL is too long then the recursive (caching) name servers issuing queries on behalf of their clients risk caching stale data for too long. If the TTL is too short then the amount of network traffic will be more than necessary. In fact, there may be no TTL which is both short enough to avoid undesirable stale data and at the same time long enough to be efficient on the network.

Both these dilemmas are solved by use of DNS Long-Lived Queries (DNS LLQ) [LLQ] or its newer replacement, DNS Push Notifications [Push].

Clients supporting unicast DNS Service Discovery SHOULD implement DNS Push Notifications [Push] for improved user experience.

Clients and Discovery Proxies MAY support both DNS LLQ and DNS Push, and when talking to a Discovery Proxy that supports both, the client may use either protocol, as it chooses, though it is expected that only DNS Push will continue to be supported in the long run.

When a Discovery Proxy receives a query using DNS LLQ or DNS Push Notifications, it responds immediately using the Multicast DNS records it already has in its cache (if any). This provides a good client user experience by providing a near-instantaneous response. Simultaneously, the Discovery Proxy issues a Multicast DNS query on the local link to discover if there are any additional Multicast DNS records it did not already know about. Should additional Multicast DNS responses be received, these are then delivered to the client using additional DNS LLQ or DNS Push Notification update messages. The timeliness of such update messages is limited only by the timeliness of the device responding to the Multicast DNS query. If the Multicast DNS device responds quickly, then the update message is delivered quickly. If the Multicast DNS device responds slowly, then

the update message is delivered slowly. The benefit of using update messages is that the Discovery Proxy can respond promptly because it doesn't have to delay its unicast response to allow for the expected worst-case delay for receiving all the Multicast DNS responses. Even if a proxy were to try to provide reliability by assuming an excessively pessimistic worst-case time (thereby giving a very poor user experience) there would still be the risk of a slow Multicast DNS device taking even longer than that (e.g., a device that is not even powered on until ten seconds after the initial query is received) resulting in incomplete responses. Using update message solves this dilemma: even very late responses are not lost; they are delivered in subsequent update messages.

There are two factors that determine specifically how responses are generated:

The first factor is whether the query from the client used LLQ or DNS Push Notifications (used for long-lived service browsing PTR queries) or not (used for one-shot operations like SRV or address record queries). Note that queries using LLQ or DNS Push Notifications are received directly from the client. Queries not using LLQ or DNS Push Notifications are generally received via the client's configured recursive (caching) name server.

The second factor is whether the Discovery Proxy already has at least one record in its cache that positively answers the question.

- o Not using LLQ or Push Notifications; no answer in cache:  
Issue an mDNS query, exactly as a local client would issue an mDNS query on the local link for the desired record name, type and class, including retransmissions, as appropriate, according to the established mDNS retransmission schedule [RFC6762]. As soon as any Multicast DNS response packet is received that contains one or more positive answers to that question (with or without the Cache Flush bit [RFC6762] set), or a negative answer (signified via a Multicast DNS NSEC record [RFC6762]), the Discovery Proxy generates a Unicast DNS response packet containing the corresponding (filtered and translated) answers and sends it to the remote client. If after six seconds no Multicast DNS answers have been received, cancel the mDNS query and return a negative response to the remote client. Six seconds is enough time to transmit three mDNS queries, and allow some time for responses to arrive.  
DNS TTLs in responses MUST be capped to at most ten seconds. (Reasoning: Queries not using LLQ or Push Notifications are generally queries that expect an answer from only one device, so the first response is also the only response.)

- o Not using LLQ or Push Notifications; at least one answer in cache:  
Send response right away to minimise delay.  
DNS TTLs in responses MUST be capped to at most ten seconds.  
No local mDNS queries are performed.  
(Reasoning: Queries not using LLQ or Push Notifications are generally queries that expect an answer from only one device. Given RRSets TTL harmonisation, if the proxy has one Multicast DNS answer in its cache, it can reasonably assume that it has all of them.)
- o Using LLQ or Push Notifications; no answer in cache:  
As in the case above with no answer in the cache, perform mDNS querying for six seconds, and send a response to the remote client as soon as any relevant mDNS response is received.  
If after six seconds no relevant mDNS response has been received, return negative response to the remote client (for LLQ; not applicable for Push Notifications).  
(Reasoning: We don't need to rush to send an empty answer.)  
Whether or not a relevant mDNS response is received within six seconds, the query remains active for as long as the client maintains the LLQ or Push Notification state, and if mDNS answers are received later, LLQ or Push Notification messages are sent.  
DNS TTLs in responses are returned unmodified.
- o Using LLQ or Push Notifications; at least one answer in cache:  
As in the case above with at least one answer in cache, send response right away to minimise delay.  
The query remains active for as long as the client maintains the LLQ or Push Notification state, and results in transmission of mDNS queries, with appropriate Known Answer lists, to determine if further answers are available. If additional mDNS answers are received later, LLQ or Push Notification messages are sent.  
(Reasoning: We want UI that is displayed very rapidly, yet continues to remain accurate even as the network environment changes.)  
DNS TTLs in responses are returned unmodified.

The "negative responses" referred to above are "no error no answer" negative responses, not NXDOMAIN. This is because the Discovery Proxy cannot know all the Multicast DNS domain names that may exist on a link at any given time, so any name with no answers may have child names that do exist, making it an "empty nonterminal" name.

Note that certain aspects of the behavior described here do not have to be implemented overtly by the Discovery Proxy; they occur naturally as a result of using existing Multicast DNS APIs.

For example, in the first case above (no LLQ or Push Notifications, and no answers in the cache) if a new Multicast DNS query is requested (either by a local client, or by the Discovery Proxy on behalf of a remote client), and there is not already an identical Multicast DNS query active, and there are no matching answers already in the Multicast DNS cache on the Discovery Proxy device, then this will cause a series of Multicast DNS query packets to be issued with exponential backoff. The exponential backoff sequence in some implementations starts at one second and then doubles for each retransmission (0, 1, 3, 7 seconds, etc.) and in others starts at one second and then triples for each retransmission (0, 1, 4, 13 seconds, etc.). In either case, if no response has been received after six seconds, that is long enough that the underlying Multicast DNS implementation will have sent three query packets without receiving any response. At that point the Discovery Proxy cancels its Multicast DNS query (so no further Multicast DNS query packets will be sent for this query) and returns a negative response to the remote client via unicast.

The six-second delay is chosen to be long enough to give enough time for devices to respond, yet short enough not to be too onerous for a human user waiting for a response. For example, using the "dig" DNS debugging tool, the current default settings result in it waiting a total of 15 seconds for a reply (three transmissions of the query packet, with a wait of 5 seconds after each packet) which is ample time for it to have received a negative reply from a Discovery Proxy after six seconds.

The statement that for a one-shot query (i.e., no LLQ or Push Notifications requested), if at least one answer is already available in the cache then a Discovery Proxy should not issue additional mDNS query packets, also occurs naturally as a result of using existing Multicast DNS APIs. If a new Multicast DNS query is requested (either locally, or by the Discovery Proxy on behalf of a remote client), for which there are relevant answers already in the Multicast DNS cache on the Discovery Proxy device, and after the answers are delivered the Multicast DNS query is then cancelled immediately, then no Multicast DNS query packets will be generated for this query.

## 6. Administrative DNS Records

### 6.1. DNS SOA (Start of Authority) Record

The MNAME field SHOULD contain the host name of the Discovery Proxy device (i.e., the same domain name as the rdata of the NS record delegating the relevant zone(s) to this Discovery Proxy device).

The RNAME field SHOULD contain the mailbox of the person responsible for administering this Discovery Proxy device.

The SERIAL field MUST be zero.

Zone transfers are undefined for Discovery Proxy zones, and consequently the REFRESH, RETRY and EXPIRE fields have no useful meaning for Discovery Proxy zones. These fields SHOULD contain reasonable default values. The RECOMMENDED values are: REFRESH 7200, RETRY 3600, EXPIRE 86400.

The MINIMUM field (used to control the lifetime of negative cache entries) SHOULD contain the value 10. The value of ten seconds is chosen based on user-experience considerations (see Section 5.5.1).

In the event that there are multiple Discovery Proxy devices on a link for fault tolerance reasons, this will result in clients receiving inconsistent SOA records (different MNAME, and possibly RNAME) depending on which Discovery Proxy answers their SOA query. However, since clients generally have no reason to use the MNAME or RNAME data, this is unlikely to cause any problems.

## 6.2. DNS NS Records

In the event that there are multiple Discovery Proxy devices on a link for fault tolerance reasons, the parent zone MUST be configured with NS records giving the names of all the Discovery Proxy devices on the link.

Each Discovery Proxy device MUST be configured to answer NS queries for the zone apex name by giving its own NS record, and the NS records of its fellow Discovery Proxy devices on the same link, so that it can return the correct answers for NS queries.

The target host name in the RDATA of an NS record MUST NOT reference a name that falls within any zone delegated to a Discovery Proxy. Apart from the zone apex name, all other host names that fall within a zone delegated to a Discovery Proxy correspond to local Multicast DNS host names, which logically belong to the respective Multicast DNS hosts defending those names, not the Discovery Proxy. Generally speaking, the Discovery Proxy does not own or control the delegated zone; it is merely a conduit to the corresponding ".local" namespace, which is controlled by the Multicast DNS hosts on that link. If an NS record were to reference a manually-determined host name that falls within a delegated zone, that manually-determined host name may inadvertently conflict with a corresponding ".local" host name that is owned and controlled by some device on that link.

## 6.3. DNS Delegation Records

Since the Multicast DNS specification [RFC6762] states that there can be no delegation (subdomains) within a ".local" namespace, this implies that any name within a zone delegated to a Discovery Proxy (except for the zone apex name itself) cannot have any answers for any DNS queries for RRTYPEs SOA, NS, or DS. Consequently:

- o for any query for the zone apex name of a zone delegated to a Discovery Proxy, the Discovery Proxy MUST generate the appropriate immediate answers as described above, and
- o for any query for RRTYPEs SOA, NS, or DS, for any name within a zone delegated to a Discovery Proxy, other than the zone apex name, instead of translating the query to its corresponding Multicast DNS ".local" equivalent, a Discovery Proxy MUST generate an immediate negative answer.

#### 6.4. DNS SRV Records

There are certain special DNS records that logically fall within the delegated unicast DNS subdomain, but rather than mapping to their corresponding ".local" namesakes, they actually contain metadata pertaining to the operation of the delegated unicast DNS subdomain itself. They do not exist in the corresponding ".local" namespace of the local link. For these queries a Discovery Proxy MUST generate immediate answers, whether positive or negative, to avoid delays while clients wait for their query to be answered. For example, if a Discovery Proxy does not implement Long-Lived Queries [LLQ] then it MUST return an immediate negative answer to tell the client this without delay, instead of passing the query through to the local network as a query for "\_dns-llq.\_udp.local.", and then waiting unsuccessfully for answers that will not be forthcoming.

If a Discovery Proxy implements Long-Lived Queries [LLQ] then it MUST positively respond to "\_dns-llq.\_udp.<zone> SRV" queries, "\_dns-llq.\_tcp.<zone> SRV" queries, and "\_dns-llq-tls.\_tcp.<zone> SRV" queries as appropriate, else it MUST return an immediate negative answer for those queries.

If a Discovery Proxy implements DNS Push Notifications [Push] then it MUST positively respond to "\_dns-push-tls.\_tcp.<zone>" queries, else it MUST return an immediate negative answer for those queries.

A Discovery Proxy MUST return an immediate negative answer for "\_dns-update.\_udp.<zone> SRV" queries, "\_dns-update.\_tcp.<zone> SRV" queries, and "\_dns-update-tls.\_tcp.<zone> SRV" queries, since using DNS Update [RFC2136] to change zones generated dynamically from local Multicast DNS data is not possible.

## 7. DNSSEC Considerations

### 7.1. On-line signing only

The Discovery Proxy acts as the authoritative name server for designated subdomains, and if DNSSEC is to be used, the Discovery Proxy needs to possess a copy of the signing keys, in order to generate authoritative signed data from the local Multicast DNS responses it receives. Off-line signing is not applicable to Discovery Proxy.

### 7.2. NSEC and NSEC3 Records

In DNSSEC NSEC [RFC4034] and NSEC3 [RFC5155] records are used to assert the nonexistence of certain names, also described as "authenticated denial of existence".

Since a Discovery Proxy only knows what names exist on the local link by issuing queries for them, and since it would be impractical to issue queries for every possible name just to find out which names exist and which do not, a Discovery Proxy cannot programmatically synthesize the traditional NSEC and NSEC3 records which assert the nonexistence of a large range of names. Instead, when generating a negative response, a Discovery Proxy programmatically synthesizes a single NSEC record assert the nonexistence of just the specific name queried, and no others. Since the Discovery Proxy has the zone signing key, it can do this on demand. Since the NSEC record asserts the nonexistence of only a single name, zone walking is not a concern, so NSEC3 is not necessary.

Note that this applies only to traditional immediate DNS queries, which may return immediate negative answers when no immediate positive answer is available. When used with a DNS Push Notification subscription [Push] there are no negative answers, merely the absence of answers so far, which may change in the future if answers become available.

## 8. IPv6 Considerations

An IPv4-only host and an IPv6-only host behave as "ships that pass in the night". Even if they are on the same Ethernet [IEEE-3], neither is aware of the other's traffic. For this reason, each link may have *two* unrelated ".local." zones, one for IPv4 and one for IPv6. Since for practical purposes, a group of IPv4-only hosts and a group of IPv6-only hosts on the same Ethernet act as if they were on two entirely separate Ethernet segments, it is unsurprising that their use of the ".local." zone should occur exactly as it would if they really were on two entirely separate Ethernet segments.

It will be desirable to have a mechanism to 'stitch' together these two unrelated ".local." zones so that they appear as one. Such mechanism will need to be able to differentiate between a dual-stack (v4/v6) host participating in both ".local." zones, and two different hosts, one IPv4-only and the other IPv6-only, which are both trying to use the same name(s). Such a mechanism will be specified in a future companion document.

At present, it is RECOMMENDED that a Discovery Proxy be configured with a single domain name for both the IPv4 and IPv6 ".local." zones on the local link, and when a unicast query is received, it should issue Multicast DNS queries using both IPv4 and IPv6 on the local link, and then combine the results.

## 9. Security Considerations

### 9.1. Authenticity

A service proves its presence on a link by its ability to answer link-local multicast queries on that link. If greater security is desired, then the Discovery Proxy mechanism should not be used, and something with stronger security should be used instead, such as authenticated secure DNS Update [RFC2136] [RFC3007].

### 9.2. Privacy

The Domain Name System is, generally speaking, a global public database. Records that exist in the Domain Name System name hierarchy can be queried by name from, in principle, anywhere in the world. If services on a mobile device (like a laptop computer) are made visible via the Discovery Proxy mechanism, then when those services become visible in a domain such as "My House.example.com" that might indicate to (potentially hostile) observers that the mobile device is in my house. When those services disappear from "My House.example.com" that change could be used by observers to infer when the mobile device (and possibly its owner) may have left the house. The privacy of this information may be protected using techniques like firewalls, split-view DNS, and Virtual Private Networks (VPNs), as are customarily used today to protect the privacy of corporate DNS information.

The privacy issue is particularly serious for the IPv4 and IPv6 reverse zones. If the public delegation of the reverse zones points to the Discovery Proxy, and the Discovery Proxy is reachable globally, then it could leak a significant amount of information. Attackers could discover hosts that otherwise might not be easy to identify, and learn their hostnames. Attackers could also discover the existence of links where hosts frequently come and go.

The Discovery Proxy could also provide sensitive records only to authenticated users. This is a general DNS problem, not specific to the Discovery Proxy. Work is underway in the IETF to tackle this problem [RFC7626].

### 9.3. Denial of Service

A remote attacker could use a rapid series of unique Unicast DNS queries to induce a Discovery Proxy to generate a rapid series of corresponding Multicast DNS queries on one or more of its local links. Multicast traffic is generally more expensive than unicast traffic -- especially on Wi-Fi links -- which makes this attack particularly serious. To limit the damage that can be caused by such

attacks, a Discovery Proxy (or the underlying Multicast DNS subsystem which it utilizes) MUST implement Multicast DNS query rate limiting appropriate to the link technology in question. For today's 802.11b/g/n/ac Wi-Fi links (for which approximately 200 multicast packets per second is sufficient to consume approximately 100% of the wireless spectrum) a limit of 20 Multicast DNS query packets per second is RECOMMENDED. On other link technologies like Gigabit Ethernet higher limits may be appropriate. A consequence of this rate limiting is that a rogue remote client could issue an excessive number of queries, resulting in denial of service to other legitimate remote clients attempting to use that Discovery Proxy. However, this is preferable to a rogue remote client being able to inflict even greater harm on the local network, which could impact the correct operation of all local clients on that network.

#### 10. IANA Considerations

This document has no IANA Considerations.

#### 11. Acknowledgments

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## Appendix A. Implementation Status

Some aspects of the mechanism specified in this document already exist in deployed software. Some aspects are new. This section outlines which aspects already exist and which are new.

### A.1. Already Implemented and Deployed

Domain enumeration by the client (the "b.\_dns-sd.\_udp" queries) is already implemented and deployed.

Unicast queries to the indicated discovery domain is already implemented and deployed.

These are implemented and deployed in Mac OS X 10.4 and later (including all versions of Apple iOS, on all iPhone and iPads), in Bonjour for Windows, and in Android 4.1 "Jelly Bean" (API Level 16) and later.

Domain enumeration and unicast querying have been used for several years at IETF meetings to make Terminal Room printers discoverable from outside the Terminal room. When an IETF attendee presses Cmd-P on a Mac, or selects AirPrint on an iPad or iPhone, and the Terminal room printers appear, that is because the client is sending unicast DNS queries to the IETF DNS servers. A walk-through giving the details of this particular specific example is given in Appendix A of the Roadmap document [Roadmap].

### A.2. Already Implemented

A minimal portable Discovery Proxy implementation has been produced by Markus Stenberg and Steven Barth, which runs on OS X and several Linux variants including OpenWrt [ohp]. It was demonstrated at the Berlin IETF in July 2013.

Tom Pusateri has an implementation that runs on any Unix/Linux. It has a RESTful interface for management and an experimental demo CLI and web interface.

Ted Lemon also has produced a portable implementation of Discovery Proxy, which is available in the mDNSResponder open source code.

The Long-Lived Query mechanism [LLQ] referred to in this specification exists and is deployed, but was not standardized by the IETF. The IETF has developed a superior Long-Lived Query mechanism called DNS Push Notifications [Push], which is built on DNS Stateful Operations [RFC8490]. The pragmatic short-term deployment approach is for vendors to produce Discovery Proxies that implement both the

deployed Long-Lived Query mechanism [LLQ] (for today's clients) and the new DNS Push Notifications mechanism [Push] as the preferred long-term direction.

### A.3. Partially Implemented

The current APIs make multiple domains visible to client software, but most client UI today lumps all discovered services into a single flat list. This is largely a chicken-and-egg problem. Application writers were naturally reluctant to spend time writing domain-aware UI code when few customers today would benefit from it. If Discovery Proxy deployment becomes common, then application writers will have a reason to provide better UI. Existing applications will work with the Discovery Proxy, but will show all services in a single flat list. Applications with improved UI will group services by domain.

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Multicast DNS Discovery Relay  
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Abstract

This document complements the specification of the Discovery Proxy for Multicast DNS-Based Service Discovery. It describes a lightweight relay mechanism, a Discovery Relay, which, when present on a link, allows remote clients, not attached to that link, to perform mDNS discovery operations on that link.

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## 1. Introduction

This document defines a Discovery Relay. A Discovery Relay is a companion technology that works in conjunction with Discovery Proxies, and other clients.

The Discovery Proxy for Multicast DNS-Based Service Discovery [RFC8766] is a mechanism for discovering services on a subnetted network through the use of Discovery Proxies. Discovery Proxies issue Multicast DNS (mDNS) requests [RFC6762] on various multicast links in the network on behalf of a remote host performing DNS-Based Service Discovery [RFC6763].

In the original Discovery Proxy specification, it was imagined that for every multicast link on which services will be discovered, a host will be present running a full Discovery Proxy. This document introduces a lightweight Discovery Relay that can be used in conjunction with a central Discovery Proxy to provide discovery services on a multicast link without requiring a full Discovery Proxy on every multicast link.

The primary purpose of a Discovery Relay is providing remote virtual interface functionality to Discovery Proxies, and this document is written with that usage in mind. However, in principle, a Discovery Relay could be used by any properly authorized client. In the context of this specification, a Discovery Proxy is a client to the Discovery Relay. This document uses the terms "Discovery Proxy" and "Client" somewhat interchangeably; the term "Client" is used when we are talking about the communication between the Client and the Relay, and the term "Discovery Proxy" when we are referring specifically to a Discovery Relay Client that also happens to be a Discovery Proxy. One example of another kind of device that can be a client of a Discovery Relay is an Advertising Proxy [AdProx].

The Discovery Relay operates by listening for TCP connections from Clients. When a Client connects, the connection is authenticated and secured using TLS. The Client can then specify one or more multicast links from which it wishes to receive mDNS traffic. The Client can also send messages to be transmitted on its behalf on one or more of those multicast links. DNS Stateful Operations (DSO) [RFC8490] is used as a framework for conveying interface and IP header information associated with each message. DSO formats its messages using type-length-value (TLV) data structures. This document defines additional DSO TLV types, used to implement the Discovery Relay functionality.

The Discovery Relay functions essentially as a set of one or more remote virtual interfaces for the Client, one on each multicast link to which the Discovery Relay is connected. In a complex network, it

is possible that more than one Discovery Relay will be connected to the same multicast link; in this case, the Client ideally should only be using one such Relay Proxy per multicast link, since using more than one will generate duplicate traffic.

How such duplication is detected and avoided is out of scope for this document; in principle it could be detected using HNCP [RFC7788] or configured using some sort of orchestration software in conjunction with NETCONF [RFC6241] or CPE WAN Management Protocol [TR-069].

Use of a Discovery Relay can be considered similar to using Virtual LAN (VLAN) trunk ports to give a Discovery Proxy device a virtual presence on multiple links or broadcast domains. The difference is that while a VLAN trunk port operates at the link layer and delivers all link-layer traffic to the Discovery Proxy device, a Discovery Relay operates further up the network stack and selectively delivers only relevant Multicast DNS traffic. Also, VLAN trunk ports are generally only available within a single administrative domain and require link-layer configuration and connectivity, whereas the Discovery Relay protocol, which runs over TCP, can be used between any two devices with IP connectivity to each other.

## 2. Terminology

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. These words may also appear in this document in lower case as plain English words, absent their normative meanings.

The following definitions may be of use:

**Client** A network service that uses a Discovery Relay to send and receive mDNS multicast traffic on a remote link, to enable it to communicate with mDNS Agents on that remote link.

**mDNS Agent** A host which sends and/or responds to mDNS queries directly on its local link(s). Examples include network cameras, networked printers, networked home electronics, etc.

**Discovery Proxy** A network service which receives well-formed questions using the DNS protocol, performs multicast DNS queries to find answers to those questions, and responds with those answers using the DNS protocol. A Discovery Proxy that can communicate with remote mDNS Agents, using the services of a Discovery Relay, is a Client of the Discovery Relay.

**Discovery Relay** A network service which relays mDNS messages received on a local link to a Client, and on behalf of that Client can transmit mDNS messages on a local link.

**multicast link** A maximal set of network connection points, such that any host connected to any connection point in the set may send a packet with a link-local multicast destination address (specifically the mDNS link-local multicast destination address [RFC6762]) that will be received by all hosts connected to all other connection points in the set. Note that it is becoming increasingly common for a multicast link to be smaller than its corresponding unicast link. For example it is becoming common to have multiple Wi-Fi access points on a shared Ethernet backbone, where the multiple Wi-Fi access points and their shared Ethernet backbone form a single unicast link (a single IPv4 subnet, or single IPv6 prefix) but not a single multicast link. Unicast packets sent directly between two hosts on that IPv4 subnet or IPv6 prefix, without passing through an intervening IP-layer router, are correctly delivered, but multicast packets are not forwarded between the various Wi-Fi access points. Given the slowness of Wi-Fi multicast [I-D.ietf-mboned-ieee802-mcast-problems], having a packet that may be of interest to only one or two end systems transmitted to hundreds of devices, across multiple Wi-Fi access points, is especially wasteful. Hence the common configuration decision to not forward multicast packets between Wi-Fi access points is very reasonable. This further motivates the need for technologies like Discovery Proxy and Discovery Relay to facilitate discovery on these networks.

**allow-list** A list of one or more IP addresses from which a Discovery Relay may accept connections.

**silently discard** When a message that is not supported or not permitted is received, and the required response to that message is to "silently discard" it, that means that no response is sent by the service that is discarding the message to the service that sent it. The service receiving the message may log the event, and may also count such events: "silently" does not preclude such behavior.

Take care when reading this document not to confuse the terms "Discovery Proxy" and "Discovery Relay". A Discovery Proxy [RFC8766] provides Multicast DNS discovery service to remote clients. A Discovery Relay is a simple software entity that provides virtual link connectivity to one or more Discovery Proxies or other Discovery Relay clients.

### 3. Protocol Overview

This document describes a way for a Client to communicate with mDNS agents on remote multicast links to which the client is not directly connected, using a Discovery Relay. As such, there are two parts to the protocol: connections between Clients and Discovery Relays, and communications between Discovery Relays and mDNS agents.

#### 3.1. Connections between Clients and Relays (overview)

Discovery Relays listen for incoming connection requests. Connections between Clients and Discovery Relays are established by Clients. Connections are authenticated and encrypted using TLS, with both client and server certificates. Connections are long-lived: a Client is expected to send many queries over a single connection, and Discovery Relays will forward all mDNS traffic from subscribed interfaces over the connection.

The stream encapsulated in TLS will carry DNS frames as in the DNS TCP protocol [RFC1035] Section 4.2.2. However, all messages will be DSO messages [RFC8490]. There will be four types of such messages between Discovery Relays and Clients:

- o Control messages from Client to Relay
- o Link status messages from Relay to Client
- o Encapsulated mDNS messages from Client to Relay
- o Encapsulated mDNS messages from Relay to Client

Clients can send four different control messages to Relays: Link State Request, Link State Discontinue, Link Data Request and Link Data Discontinue. The first two are used by the Client to request that the Relay report on the set of links that can be requested, and to request that it discontinue such reporting. The second two are used by the Client to indicate to the Discovery Relay that mDNS messages from one or more specified multicast links are to be relayed to the Client, and to subsequently stop such relaying.

Link Status messages from a Discovery Relay to the Client inform the Client that a link has become available, or that a formerly-available link is no longer available.

Encapsulated mDNS messages from a Discovery Relay to a Client are sent whenever an mDNS message is received on a multicast link to which the Discovery Relay has subscribed.

Encapsulated mDNS messages from a Client to a Discovery Relay cause the Discovery Relay to transmit the mDNS message on the specified multicast link to which the Discovery Relay host is directly attached.

During periods with no traffic flowing, Clients are responsible for generating any necessary keepalive traffic, as stated in the DSO specification [RFC8490].

### 3.2. mDNS Messages On Multicast Links

Discovery Relays listen for mDNS traffic on all configured multicast links that have at least one active subscription from a Client. When an mDNS message is received on a multicast link, it is forwarded on every open Client connection that is subscribed to mDNS traffic on that multicast link. In the event of congestion, where a particular Client connection has no buffer space for an mDNS message that would otherwise be forwarded to it, the mDNS message is not forwarded to it. Normal mDNS retry behavior is used to recover from this sort of packet loss. Discovery Relays are not expected to buffer more than a few mDNS packets. Excess mDNS packets are silently discarded. In practice this is not expected to be a issue. Particularly on networks like Wi-Fi, multicast packets are transmitted at rates ten or even a hundred times slower than unicast packets. This means that even at peak multicast packets rates, it is likely that a unicast TCP connection will able to carry those packets with ease.

Clients send encapsulated mDNS messages they wish to have sent on their behalf on remote multicast link(s) on which the Client has an active subscription. A Discovery Relay will not transmit mDNS packets on any multicast link on which the Client does not have an active subscription, since it makes no sense for a Client to ask to have a query sent on its behalf if it's not able to receive the responses to that query.

#### 4. Connections between Clients and Relays (details)

When a Discovery Relay starts, it opens a passive TCP listener to receive incoming connection requests from Clients. This listener may be bound to one or more source IP addresses, or to the wildcard address, depending on the implementation. When a connection is received, the relay must first validate that it is a connection to an IP address to which connections are allowed. For example, it may be that only connections to ULAs are allowed, or to the IP addresses configured on certain interfaces. If the listener is bound to a specific IP address, this check is unnecessary.

If the relay is using an IP address allow-list, the next step is for the relay to verify that the source IP address of the connection is on its allow-list. If the connection is not permitted either because of the source address or the destination address, the Discovery Relay closes the connection. If possible, before closing the connection, the Discovery Relay first sends a TLS user\_canceled alert ([RFC8446] Section 6.1). Discovery Relays SHOULD refuse to accept TCP connections to invalid destination addresses, rather than accepting and then closing the connection, if this is possible.

Otherwise, the Discovery Relay will attempt to complete a TLS handshake with the Client. Clients are required to send the post\_handshake\_auth extension ([RFC8446] Section 4.2.5). If a Discovery Relay receives a ClientHello message with no post\_handshake\_auth extension, the Discovery Relay rejects the connection with a certificate\_required alert ([RFC8446] Section 6.2).

Once the TLS handshake is complete, the Discovery Relay MUST request post-handshake authentication ([RFC8446] Section 4.6.2). If the Client refuses to send a certificate, or the key presented does not match the key associated with the IP address from which the connection originated, or the CertificateVerify does not validate, the connection is dropped with the TLS access\_denied alert ([RFC8446] Section 6.2).

Clients MUST validate server certificates. If the client is configured with a server IP address and certificate, it can validate the server by comparing the certificate offered by the server to the certificate that was provided: they should be the same. If the certificate includes a Distinguished Name that is a fully-qualified domain name, the client SHOULD present that domain name to the server in an SNI request.

Rather than being configured with an IP address and a certificate, the client may be configured with the server's FQDN. In this case, the client uses the server's FQDN as a Authentication Domain Name

[RFC8310] Section 7.1, and uses the authentication method described in [RFC8310] section 8.1, if the certificate is signed by a root authority the client trusts, or the method described in section 8.2 of the same document if not. If neither method is available, then a locally-configured copy of the server certificate can be used, as in the previous paragraph.

Once the connection is established and authenticated, it is treated as a DNS TCP connection [RFC7766].

Aliveness of connections between Clients and Relays is maintained as described in Section 4 of the DSO specification [RFC8490]. Clients must also honor the 'Retry Delay' TLV (section 5 of [RFC8490]) if sent by the Discovery Relay.

Clients SHOULD avoid establishing more than one connection to a specific Discovery Relay. However, there may be situations where multiple connections to the same Discovery Relay are unavoidable, so Discovery Relays MUST be willing to accept multiple connections from the same Client.

In order to know what links to request, the Client can be configured with a list of links supported by the Relay. However, in some networking contexts, dynamic changes in the availability of links are likely; therefore Clients may also use the Report Link Changes TLV to request that the Relay report on the availability of its links. In some contexts, for example when debugging, a Client may operate with no information about the set of links supported by a relay, simply relying on the relay to provide one.

## 5. Traffic from Relays to Clients

The mere act of connecting to a Discovery Relay does not result in any mDNS traffic being forwarded. In order to request that mDNS traffic from a particular multicast link be forwarded on a particular connection, the Client must send one or more DSO messages, each containing a single mDNS Link Data Request TLV (Section 8.1) indicating the multicast link from which traffic is requested.

When an mDNS Link Data Request message is received, the Discovery Relay validates that it recognizes the link identifier, and that forwarding is enabled for that link. If both checks are successful, it MUST send a response with RCODE=0 (NOERROR). If the link identifier is not recognized, it sends a response with RCODE=3 (NXDOMAIN/Name Error). If forwarding from that link to the Client is not enabled, it sends a response with RCODE=5 (REFUSED). If the relay cannot satisfy the request for some other reason, for example resource exhaustion, it sends a response with RCODE=2 (SERVFAIL).

If the requested link is valid, the Relay begins forwarding all mDNS messages from that link to the Client. Delivery is not guaranteed: if there is no buffer space, packets will be dropped. It is expected that regular mDNS retry processing will take care of retransmission of lost packets. The amount of buffer space is implementation dependent, but generally should not be more than the bandwidth delay product of the TCP connection [RFC7323]. The Discovery Relay should use the TCP\_NOTSENT\_LOWAT mechanism [NOTSENT][PRIO] or equivalent, to avoid building up a backlog of data in excess of the amount necessary to have in flight to fill the bandwidth delay product of the TCP connection.

Encapsulated mDNS messages from Relays to Clients are framed within DSO messages. Each DSO message can contain multiple TLVs, but only a single encapsulated mDNS message is conveyed per DSO message. Each forwarded mDNS message is sent in an Encapsulated mDNS Message TLV (Section 8.4). The source IP address and port of the message MUST be encoded in an IP Source TLV (Section 8.5). The multicast link on which the message was received MUST be encoded in a Link Identifier TLV (Section 8.3). As described in the DSO specification [RFC8490], a Client MUST silently ignore unrecognized Additional TLVs in mDNS messages, and MUST NOT discard mDNS messages that include unrecognized Additional TLVs.

A Client may discontinue listening for mDNS messages on a particular multicast link by sending a DSO message containing an mDNS Link Data Discontinue TLV (Section 8.2). The Discovery Relay MUST discontinue forwarding mDNS messages when the Link Data Discontinue request is received. However, messages from that link that had previously been

queued may arrive after the Client has discontinued its listening. The Client should silently discard such messages. The Discovery Relay does not respond to the Link Data Discontinue message other than to discontinue forwarding mDNS messages from the specified links.

## 6. Traffic from Clients to Relays

Like mDNS traffic from relays, each mDNS message sent by a Client to a Discovery Relay is communicated in an Encapsulated mDNS Message TLV (Section 8.4) within a DSO message. Each message MUST contain exactly one Link Identifier TLV (Section 8.3). The Discovery Relay will transmit the mDNS message to the mDNS port and multicast address on the link specified in the message using the specified IP address family.

Although the communication between Clients and Relays uses the DNS stream protocol and DNS Stateless Operations, there is no case in which a Client would legitimately send a DNS query (or anything else other than a DSO message) to a Relay. Therefore, if a Relay receives any message other than a DSO message, it MUST immediately abort that DSO session with a TCP reset (RST).

When defining this behavior, the working group considered making it possible to specify more than one link identifier in an mDNSMessage TLV. A superficial evaluation of this suggested that this might be a useful optimization, since when a query is issued, it will often be issued to all links. However, on many link types, like Wi-Fi, multicast traffic is expensive [I-D.ietf-mboned-ieee802-mcast-problems] and should be generated frugally, so providing convenient ways to generate additional multicast traffic was determined to be an unwise optimization. In addition, because of the way mDNS handles retries, it will almost never be the case that the exact same message will be sent on more than one link. Therefore, the complexity that this optimization adds is not justified by the potential benefit, and this idea has been abandoned.

## 7. Discovery Proxy Behavior

Discovery Proxies treat multicast links for which Discovery Relay service is being used as if they were virtual interfaces; in other words, a Discovery Proxy serving multiple remote multicast links using multiple remote Discovery Relays behaves the same as a Discovery Proxy serving multiple local multicast links using multiple local physical network interfaces. In this section we refer to multicast links served directly by the Discovery Proxy as locally-connected links, and multicast links served through the Discovery Relay as relay-connected links. A relay-connected link can be thought of as similar to a link that a Discovery Proxy connects to using a USB Ethernet interface, just with a very long USB cable (that runs over TCP).

When a Discovery Proxy receives a DNS query from a DNS client via unicast, it will generate corresponding mDNS query messages on the relevant multicast link(s) for which it is acting as a proxy. For locally-connected link(s), those query messages will be sent directly. For relay-connected link(s), the query messages will be sent through the Discovery Relay that is being used to serve that multicast link.

Responses from devices on locally-connected links are processed normally. Responses from devices on relay-connected links are received by the Discovery Relay, encapsulated, and forwarded to the Client; the Client then processes these messages using the link-identifying information included in the encapsulation.

In principle it could be the case that some device is capable of performing service discovery using Multicast DNS, but not using traditional unicast DNS. Responding to mDNS queries received from the Discovery Relay could address this use case. However, continued reliance on multicast is counter to the goals of the current work in service discovery, and to benefit from wide-area service discovery such client devices should be updated to support service discovery using unicast queries.

## 8. DSO TLVs

This document defines a modest number of new DSO TLVs.

### 8.1. mDNS Link Data Request

The mDNS Link Data Request TLV conveys a link identifier from which a Client is requesting that a Discovery Relay forward mDNS traffic. The link identifier comes from the provisioning configuration (see Section 9). The DSO-TYPE for this TLV is TBD-R. DSO-LENGTH is always 5. DSO-DATA is the 8-bit address family followed by the link identifier, a 32-bit unsigned integer in network (big endian) byte order, as described in Section 9. An address family value of 1 indicates IPv4 and 2 indicates IPv6, as recorded in the IANA Registry of Address Family Numbers [AdFam].

The mDNS Link Data Request TLV can only be used as a primary TLV, and requires an acknowledgement.

At most one mDNS Link Data Request TLV may appear in a DSO message. To request multiple link subscriptions, multiple separate DSO messages are sent, each containing a single mDNS Link Data Request TLV.

A Client MUST NOT request a link if it already has an active subscription to that link on the same DSO connection. If a Discovery Relay receives a duplicate link subscription request, it MUST immediately abort that DSO session with a TCP reset (RST).

### 8.2. mDNS Link Data Discontinue

The mDNS Link Data Discontinue TLV is used by Clients to unsubscribe to mDNS messages on the specified multicast link. DSO-TYPE is TBD-D. DSO-LENGTH is always 5. DSO-DATA is the 8-bit address family followed by the 32-bit link identifier, a 32-bit unsigned integer in network (big endian) byte order, as described in Section 9.

The mDNS Link Data Discontinue TLV can only be used as a DSO unidirectional message TLV, and is not acknowledged.

At most one mDNS Link Data Discontinue TLV may appear in a DSO message. To unsubscribe from multiple links, multiple separate DSO messages are sent, each containing a single mDNS Link Data Discontinue TLV.

### 8.3. Link Identifier

This option is used both in DSO messages from Discovery Relays to Clients that contain received mDNS messages, and from Clients to Discovery Relays that contain mDNS messages to be transmitted on the multicast link. In the former case, it indicates the multicast link on which the message was received; in the latter case, it indicates the multicast link on which the message should be transmitted. DSO-TYPE is TBD-L. DSO-LENGTH is always 5. DSO-DATA is the 8-bit address family followed by the link identifier, a 32-bit unsigned integer in network (big endian) byte order, as described in Section 9.

The Link Identifier TLV can only be used as an additional TLV. The Link Identifier TLV can only appear at most once in a Discovery Relay DSO message.

### 8.4. Encapsulated mDNS Message

The Encapsulated mDNS Message TLV is used to communicate an mDNS message that a Relay is forwarding from a multicast link to a Client, or that a Client is sending to a Relay for transmission on a multicast link. Only the application-layer payload of the mDNS message is carried in the DSO "Encapsulated mDNS Message" TLV, i.e., just the DNS message itself, beginning with the DNS Message ID, not the IP or UDP headers. The DSO-TYPE for this TLV is TBD-M. DSO-LENGTH is the length of the encapsulated mDNS message. DSO-DATA is the content of the encapsulated mDNS message.

The Encapsulated mDNS Message TLV can only be used as a DSO unidirectional message TLV, and is not acknowledged.

### 8.5. IP Source

The IP Source TLV is used to report the IP source address and port from which an mDNS message was received. This TLV is present in DSO messages from Discovery Relays to Clients that contain encapsulated mDNS messages. DSO-TYPE is TBD-S. DSO-LENGTH is either 6, for an IPv4 address, or 18, for an IPv6 address. DSO-DATA is the two-byte source port, followed by the 4- or 16-byte IP Address. Both port and address are in the canonical byte order (i.e., the same representation as used in the UDP and IP packet headers, with no byte swapping).

The IP Source TLV can only be used as an additional TLV. The IP Source TLV can only appear at most once in a Discovery Relay DSO message.

### 8.6. Link State Request

The Link State Request TLV requests that the Discovery Relay report link changes. When the relay is reporting link changes and a new link becomes available, it sends a Link Available message to the Client. When a link becomes unavailable, it sends a Link Unavailable message to the Client. If there are links available when the request is received, then for each such link the relay immediately sends a Link Available Message to the Client. DSO-TYPE is TBD-P. DSO-LENGTH is 0.

The mDNS Link State Request TLV can only be used as a primary TLV, and requires an acknowledgement. The acknowledgment does not contain a Link Available TLV: it is just a response to the Link State Request message.

### 8.7. Link State Discontinue

The Link State Discontinue TLV requests that the Discovery Relay stop reporting on the availability of links supported by the relay. This cancels the effect of a Link State Request TLV. DSO-TYPE is TBD-Q. DSO-LENGTH is 0.

The mDNS Link State Discontinue TLV can only be used as a DSO unidirectional message TLV, and is not acknowledged.

### 8.8. Link Available

The Link Available TLV is used by Discovery Relays to indicate to Clients that a new link has become available. The format is the same as the Link Identifier TLV. DSO-TYPE is TBD-V. The Link Available TLV may be accompanied by one or more Link Prefix TLVs which indicate IP prefixes the Relay knows to be present on the link.

The mDNS Link Available TLV can only be used as a DSO unidirectional message TLV, and is not acknowledged.

### 8.9. Link Unavailable

The Link Unavailable TLV is used by Discovery Relays to indicate to Clients that an existing link has become unavailable. The format is the same as the Link Identifier TLV. DSO-TYPE is TBD-U.

The mDNS Link Unavailable TLV can only be used as a DSO unidirectional message TLV, and is not acknowledged.

### 8.10. Link Prefix

The Link Prefix TLV represents an IP address or prefix configured on a link. The length is 17 for an IPv6 address or prefix, and 5 for an IPv4 address or prefix. The TLV consists of a prefix length, between 0 and 32 for IPv4 or between 0 and 128 for IPv6, represented as a single byte. This is followed by the IP address, either four or sixteen bytes. DSO-TYPE is TBD-K.

The Link Prefix TLV can only be used as a secondary TLV.

## 9. Provisioning

In order for a Discovery Proxy to use Discovery Relays, it must be configured with sufficient information to identify multicast links on which service discovery is to be supported and, if it is not running on a host that is directly connected to those multicast links, connect to Discovery Relays supporting those multicast links.

A Discovery Relay must be configured both with a set of multicast links to which the host on which it is running is connected, on which mDNS relay service is to be provided, and also with a list of one or more Clients authorized to use it.

On a network supporting DNS Service Discovery using Discovery Relays, more than one different Discovery Relay implementation may be present. While it may be that only a single Discovery Proxy is present, that implementation will need to be able to be configured to interoperate with all of the Discovery Relays that are present. Consequently, it is necessary that a standard set of configuration parameters be defined for both Discovery Proxies and Discovery Relays.

DNS Service Discovery generally operates within a constrained set of links, not across the entire internet. This section assumes that what will be configured will be a limited set of links operated by a single entity or small set of cooperating entities, among which services present on each link should be available to users on that link and every other link. This could be, for example, a home network, a small office network, or even a network covering an entire building or small set of buildings. The set of Discovery Proxies and Discovery Relays within such a network will be referred to in this section as a 'Discovery Domain'.

Depending on the context, several different candidates for configuration of Discovery Proxies and Discovery Relays may be applicable. The simplest such mechanism is a manual configuration file, but regardless of provisioning mechanism, certain configuration information needs to be communicated to the devices, as outlined below.

In the example we provide here, we only refer to configuring of IP addresses, private keys and certificates. It is also possible to use FQDNs to identify servers; this then allows for the use of DANE ([RFC8310] Section 8.2) or PKIX authentication [RFC6125]. Which method is used is to some extent up to the implementation, but at a minimum, it should be possible to associate an IP address with a self-signed certificate, and it should be possible to validate both

self-signed and PKIX-authenticated certificates, with PKIX, DANE or a pre-configured trust anchor.

### 9.1. Provisioned Objects

Three types of objects must be described in order for Discovery Proxies and Discovery Relays to be provisioned: Discovery Proxies, Multicast Links, and Discovery Relays. "Human-readable" below means actual words or proper names that will make sense to an untrained human being. "Machine-readable" means a name that will be used by machines to identify the entity to which the name refers. Each entity must have a machine-readable name and may have a human-readable name. No two entities can have the same human-readable name. Similarly, no two entities can have the same machine-readable name.

### 9.1.1. Multicast Link

The description of a multicast link consists of:

**link-identifier** A 32-bit identifier that uniquely identifies that link within the Discovery Domain. Each link **MUST** have exactly one such identifier. Link Identifiers do not have any special semantics, and are not intended to be human-readable.

**ldh-name** A fully-qualified domain name for the multicast link that is used to form an LDH domain name as described in section 5.3 of the Discovery Proxy specification [RFC8766]. This name is used to identify the link during provisioning, and must be present.

**hr-name** A human-readable user-friendly fully-qualified domain name for the multicast link. This name **MUST** be unique within the Discovery Domain. Each multicast link **MUST** have exactly one such name. The hr-name **MAY** be the same as the ldh-name. (The hr-name is allowed to contain spaces, punctuation and rich text, but it is not required to do so.)

The ldh-name and hr-name can be used to form the LDH and human-readable domain names as described in [RFC8766], section 5.3.

Note that the ldh-name and hr-name can be used in two different ways.

On a small home network with little or no human administrative configuration, link names may be directly visible to the user. For example, a search in 'home.arpa' on a small home network may discover services on both ethernet.home.arpa and wi-fi.home.arpa. In the case of a home user who has one Ethernet-connected printer and one Wi-Fi-connected printer, discovering that they have one printer on ethernet.home.arpa and another on wi-fi.home.arpa is understandable and meaningful.

On a large corporate network with hundreds of Wi-Fi access points, the individual link names of the hundreds of multicast links are less likely to be useful to end users. In these cases, Discovery Broker functionality [I-D.sctl-discovery-broker] may be used to translate the many link names to something more meaningful to users. For example, in a building with 50 Wi-Fi access points, each with their own link names, services on all the different physical links may be presented to the user as appearing in 'headquarters.example.com'. In this case, the individual link names can be thought of similar to MAC addresses or IPv6 addresses. They are used internally by the software as unique identifiers, but generally are not exposed to end users.

### 9.1.2. Discovery Proxy

The description of a Discovery Proxy consists of:

`name` a machine-readable name used to reference this Discovery Proxy in provisioning.

`hr-name` an optional human-readable name which can appear in provisioning, monitoring and debugging systems. Must be unique within a Discovery Domain.

`certificate` a certificate that identifies the Discovery Proxy. This certificate can be shared across services on the Discovery Proxy Host. The public key in the certificate is used both to uniquely identify the Discovery Proxy and to authenticate connections from it. The certificate should be signed by its own private key.

`private-key` the private key corresponding to the public key in the certificate.

`source-ip-addresses` a list of IP addresses that may be used by the Discovery Proxy when connecting to Discovery Relays. These addresses should be addresses that are configured on the Discovery Proxy Host. They should not be temporary addresses. All such addresses must be reachable within the Discovery Domain.

`public-ip-addresses` a list of IP addresses that a Discovery Proxy listens on to receive requests from clients. This is not used for interoperation with Discovery Relays, but is mentioned here for completeness: the list of addresses listened on for incoming client requests may differ from the 'source-ip-addresses' list of addresses used for issuing outbound connection requests to Discovery Relays. If any of these addresses are reachable from outside of the Discovery Domain, services in that domain will be discoverable outside of the domain.

`multicast links` a list of multicast links on which this Discovery Proxy is expected to provide service

The private key should never be distributed to other hosts; all of the other information describing a Discovery Proxy can be safely shared with Discovery Relays.

In some configurations it may make sense for the Discovery Relay not to have a list of links, but simply to support the set of all links available on relays to which the Discovery Proxy is configured to communicate.

### 9.1.3. Discovery Relay

The description of a Discovery Relay consists of:

`name` a required machine-readable identifier used to reference the relay

`hr-name` an optional human-readable name which can appear in provisioning, monitoring and debugging systems. Must be unique within a Discovery Domain.

`certificate` a certificate that identifies the Discovery Relay. This certificate can be shared across services on the Discovery Relay Host. Indeed, if a Discovery Proxy and Discovery Relay are running on the same host, the same certificate can be used for both. The public key in the certificate uniquely identifies the Discovery Relay and is used by a Discovery Relay Client (e.g., a Discovery Proxy) to verify that it is talking to the intended Discovery Relay after a TLS connection has been established. The certificate must either be signed by its own key, or have a signature chain that can be validated using PKIX authentication [RFC6125].

`private-key` the private key corresponding to the public key in the certificate.

`listen-tuple` a list of IP address/port tuples that may be used to connect to the Discovery Relay. The relay may be configured to listen on all addresses on a single port, but this is not required, so the port as well as the address must be specified.

`multicast links` a list of multicast links to which this relay is physically connected.

The private key should never be distributed to other hosts; all of the other information describing a Discovery Relay can be safely shared with Discovery Proxies.

In some cases a Relay may not be configured with a static list of links, but may simply discover links by monitoring the set of available interfaces on the host on which the Relay is running. In that case, the relay could be configured to identify links based on the names of network interfaces, or based on the set of available prefixes seen on those interfaces. The details of this sort of configuration are not specified in this document.

## 9.2. Configuration Files

For this discussion, we assume the simplest possible means of configuring Discovery Proxies and Discovery Relays: the configuration file. Any environment where changes will happen on a regular basis will either require some automatic means of generating these configuration files as the network topology changes, or will need to use a more automatic method for configuration, such as HNCP [RFC7788].

There are many different ways to organize configuration files. This discussion assumes that multicast links, relays and proxies will be specified as objects, as described above, perhaps in a master file, and then the specific configuration of each proxy or relay will reference the set of objects in the master file, referencing objects by name. This approach is not required, but is simply shown as an example. In addition, the private keys for each proxy or relay must appear only in that proxy or relay's configuration file.

The master file contains a list of Discovery Relays, Discovery Proxies and Multicast Links. Each object has a name and all the other data associated with it. We do not formally specify the format of the file, but it might look something like this:

```
Relay upstairs
certificate xxx
listen-tuple 192.0.2.1 1917
listen-tuple fd00::1 1917
link upstairs-wifi
link upstairs-wired
client-allow-list main

Relay downstairs
certificate yyy
listen-tuple 192.51.100.1 2088
listen-tuple fd00::2 2088
link downstairs-wifi
link downstairs-wired
client-allow-list main

Proxy main
certificate zzz
address 203.1.113.1

Link upstairs-wifi
id 1
hr-name Upstairs Wifi

Link upstairs-wired
id 2
hr-name Upstairs Wired

Link downstairs-wifi
id 3
hr-name Downstairs Wifi

Link downstairs-wired
id 4
hr-name Downstairs Wired
```

### 9.3. Discovery Proxy Private Configuration

The Discovery Proxy configuration contains enough information to identify which Discovery Proxy is being configured, enumerate the list of multicast links it is intended to serve, and provide keying information it can use to authenticate to Discovery Relays. It may also contain custom information about the port and/or IP address(es) on which it will respond to DNS queries.

An example configuration, following the convention used in this section, might look something like this:

```
Proxy main
  private-key zzz
  subscribe upstairs-wifi
  subscribe downstairs-wifi
  subscribe upstairs-wired
  subscribe downstairs-wired
```

When combined with the master file, this configuration is sufficient for the Discovery Proxy to identify and connect to the Discovery Relays that serve the links it is configured to support.

### 9.4. Discovery Relay Private Configuration

The Discovery Relay configuration just needs to tell the Discovery Relay what name to use to find its configuration in the master file, and what the private key is corresponding to its certificate (public key) in the master file. For example:

```
Relay Downstairs
  private-key yyy
```

## 10. Security Considerations

Part of the purpose of the Multicast DNS Discovery Relay protocol is to place a simple relay, analogous to a BOOTP relay, into routers and similar devices that may not be updated frequently. The BOOTP [RFC0951] protocol has been around since 1985, and continues to be useful today. The BOOTP protocol uses no encryption, and in many enterprise networks this is considered acceptable. In contrast, the Discovery Relay protocol requires TLS 1.3. A concern is that after 20 or 30 years, TLS 1.3, or some of the encryption algorithms it uses, may become obsolete, rendering devices that require it unusable. Our assessment is that TLS 1.3 probably will be around for many years to come. TLS 1.0 [RFC2246] was used for about a decade, and similarly TLS 1.2 [RFC5246] was also used for about a decade. We expect TLS 1.3 [RFC8446] to have at least that lifespan. In addition, recent IETF efforts are pushing for better software update practices for devices like routers, for other security reasons, making it likely that in ten years time it will be less common to be using routers that haven't had a software update for ten years. However, authors of encryption specifications and libraries should be aware of the potential backwards compatibility issues if an encryption algorithm becomes deprecated. This specification RECOMMENDS that if an encryption algorithm becomes deprecated, then rather than remove that encryption algorithm entirely, encryption libraries should disable that encryption algorithm by default, but leave the code present with an option for client software to enable it in special cases, such as a recent Client talking to an ancient Discovery Relay. Using no encryption, like BOOTP, would eliminate this backwards compatibility concern, but we feel that in such a future hypothetical scenario, using even a weak encryption algorithm still makes passive eavesdropping and tampering harder, and is preferable to using no encryption at all.

## 11. IANA Considerations

The IANA is kindly requested to update the DSO Type Codes Registry [RFC8490] by allocating codes for each of the TBD type codes listed in the following table, and by updating this document, here and in Section 8. Each type code should list this document as its reference document.

DSO-TYPE	Status	Name
TBD-R	Standard	Link Data Request
TBD-D	Standard	Link Data Discontinue
TBD-L	Standard	Link Identifier
TBD-M	Standard	Encapsulated mDNS Message
TBD-S	Standard	IP Source
TBD-P	Standard	Link State Request
TBD-Q	Standard	Link State Discontinue
TBD-V	Standard	Link Available
TBD-U	Standard	Link Unavailable
TBD-K	Standard	Link Prefix

DSO Type Codes to be allocated

## 12. Acknowledgments

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DNS Push Notifications  
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Abstract

The Domain Name System (DNS) was designed to return matching records efficiently for queries for data that are relatively static. When those records change frequently, DNS is still efficient at returning the updated results when polled, as long as the polling rate is not too high. But there exists no mechanism for a client to be asynchronously notified when these changes occur. This document defines a mechanism for a client to be notified of such changes to DNS records, called DNS Push Notifications.

Status of This Memo

This Internet-Draft is submitted in full conformance with the provisions of BCP 78 and BCP 79.

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## 1. Introduction

Domain Name System (DNS) records may be updated using DNS Update [RFC2136]. Other mechanisms such as a Discovery Proxy [DisProx] can also generate changes to a DNS zone. This document specifies a protocol for DNS clients to subscribe to receive asynchronous notifications of changes to RRsets of interest. It is immediately relevant in the case of DNS Service Discovery [RFC6763] but is not limited to that use case, and provides a general DNS mechanism for DNS record change notifications. Familiarity with the DNS protocol and DNS packet formats is assumed [RFC1034] [RFC1035] [RFC6895].

### 1.1. 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. These words may also appear in this document in lower case as plain English words, absent their normative meanings.

### 1.2. Fatal Errors

Certain invalid situations are described in this specification, like a server sending a Push Notification subscription request to a client, or a client sending a Push Notification response to a server. These should never occur with a correctly implemented client and server, and if they do occur then they indicate a serious implementation error. In these extreme cases there is no reasonable expectation of a graceful recovery, and the recipient detecting the error should respond by unilaterally aborting the session without regard for data loss. Such cases are addressed by having an engineer investigate the cause of the failure and fixing the problem in the software.

Where this specification says "forcibly abort", it means sending a TCP RST to terminate the TCP connection, and the TLS session running over that TCP connection. In the BSD Sockets API, this is achieved by setting the `SO_LINGER` option to zero before closing the socket.

## 2. Motivation

As the domain name system continues to adapt to new uses and changes in deployment, polling has the potential to burden DNS servers at many levels throughout the network. Other network protocols have successfully deployed a publish/subscribe model following the Observer design pattern [obs]. XMPP Publish-Subscribe [XEP0060] and Atom [RFC4287] are examples. While DNS servers are generally highly tuned and capable of a high rate of query/response traffic, adding a publish/subscribe model for tracking changes to DNS records can deliver more timely notification of changes with reduced CPU usage and lower network traffic.

Multicast DNS [RFC6762] implementations always listen on a well known link-local IP multicast group address, and changes are sent to that multicast group address for all group members to receive. Therefore, Multicast DNS already has asynchronous change notification capability. When DNS Service Discovery [RFC6763] is used across a wide area network using Unicast DNS (possibly facilitated via a Discovery Proxy [DisProx]) it would be beneficial to have an equivalent capability for Unicast DNS, to allow clients to learn about DNS record changes in a timely manner without polling.

The DNS Long-Lived Queries (LLQ) mechanism [LLQ] is an existing deployed solution to provide asynchronous change notifications, used by Apple's Back to My Mac [RFC6281] service introduced in Mac OS X 10.5 Leopard in 2007. Back to My Mac was designed in an era when the data center operations staff asserted that it was impossible for a server to handle large numbers of mostly-idle TCP connections, so LLQ was defined as a UDP-based protocol, effectively replicating much of TCP's connection state management logic in user space, and creating its own imitation of existing TCP features like the three-way handshake, flow control, and reliability.

This document builds on experience gained with the LLQ protocol, with an improved design. Instead of using UDP, this specification uses DNS Stateful Operations (DSO) [RFC8490] running over TLS over TCP, and therefore doesn't need to reinvent existing TCP functionality. Using TCP also gives long-lived low-traffic connections better longevity through NAT gateways without depending on the gateway to support NAT Port Mapping Protocol (NAT-PMP) [RFC6886] or Port Control Protocol (PCP) [RFC6887], or resorting to excessive keepalive traffic.

### 3. Overview

A DNS Push Notification client subscribes for Push Notifications for a particular RRset by connecting to the appropriate Push Notification server for that RRset, and sending DSO message(s) indicating the RRset(s) of interest. When the client loses interest in receiving further updates to these records, it unsubscribes.

The DNS Push Notification server for a DNS zone is any server capable of generating the correct change notifications for a name. It may be a primary, secondary, or stealth name server [RFC7719].

The "\_dns-push-tls.\_tcp.<zone>" SRV record for a zone MAY reference the same target host and port as that zone's "\_dns-update-tls.\_tcp.<zone>" SRV record. When the same target host and port is offered for both DNS Updates and DNS Push Notifications, a client MAY use a single DSO session to that server for both DNS Updates and DNS Push Notification Subscriptions. DNS Updates and DNS Push Notifications may be handled on different ports on the same target host, in which case they are not considered to be the "same server" for the purposes of this specification, and communications with these two ports are handled independently. Supporting DNS Updates and DNS Push Notifications on the same server is OPTIONAL. A DNS Push Notification server is not required to support DNS Update.

Standard DNS Queries MAY be sent over a DNS Push Notification (i.e., DSO) session. For any zone for which the server is authoritative, it MUST respond authoritatively for queries for names falling within that zone (e.g., the "\_dns-push-tls.\_tcp.<zone>" SRV record) both for normal DNS queries and for DNS Push Notification subscriptions. For names for which the server is acting as a recursive resolver (e.g., when the server is the local recursive resolver) for any query for which it supports DNS Push Notification subscriptions, it MUST also support standard queries.

DNS Push Notifications impose less load on the responding server than rapid polling would, but Push Notifications do still have a cost, so DNS Push Notification clients MUST NOT recklessly create an excessive number of Push Notification subscriptions. Specifically:

(a) A subscription should only be active when there is a valid reason to need live data (for example, an on-screen display is currently showing the results to the user) and the subscription SHOULD be cancelled as soon as the need for that data ends (for example, when the user dismisses that display). In the case of a device like a smartphone which, after some period of inactivity, goes to sleep or otherwise darkens its screen, it should cancel its subscriptions when darkening the screen (since the user cannot see any changes on the

display anyway) and reinstate its subscriptions when re-awakening from display sleep.

(b) A DNS Push Notification client SHOULD NOT routinely keep a DNS Push Notification subscription active 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, just to keep a list in memory up to date so that if the user does choose to bring up an on-screen display of that data, it can be displayed really fast. DNS Push Notifications are designed to be fast enough that there is no need to pre-load a "warm" list in memory just in case it might be needed later.

Generally, as described in the DNS Stateful Operations specification [RFC8490], a client must not keep a DSO session to a server open indefinitely if it has no subscriptions (or other operations) active on that session. A client may close a DSO session immediately it becomes idle, and then if needed in the future, open a new session when required. Alternatively, a client may speculatively keep an idle DSO session open for some time, subject to the constraint that it must not keep a session open that has been idle for more than the session's idle timeout (15 seconds by default) [RFC8490].

Note that a DSO session that has an active DNS Push Notification subscription is not considered idle, even if there is no traffic flowing for an extended period of time. In this case the DSO inactivity timeout does not apply, because the session is not inactive, but the keepalive interval does still apply, to ensure generation of sufficient messages to maintain state in middleboxes (such as NAT gateways or firewalls) and for the client and server to periodically verify that they still have connectivity to each other. This is described in Section 6.2 of the DSO specification [RFC8490].

#### 4. State Considerations

Each DNS Push Notification server is capable of handling some finite number of Push Notification subscriptions. This number will vary from server to server and is based on physical machine characteristics, network bandwidth, and operating system resource allocation. After a client establishes a session to a DNS server, each subscription is individually accepted or rejected. Servers may employ various techniques to limit subscriptions to a manageable level. Correspondingly, the client is free to establish simultaneous sessions to alternate DNS servers that support DNS Push Notifications for the zone and distribute subscriptions at the client's discretion. In this way, both clients and servers can react to resource constraints.

## 5. Transport

Other DNS operations like DNS Update [RFC2136] MAY use either User Datagram Protocol (UDP) [RFC0768] or Transmission Control Protocol (TCP) [RFC0793] as the transport protocol, in keeping with the historical precedent that DNS queries must first be sent over UDP [RFC1123]. This requirement to use UDP has subsequently been relaxed [RFC7766].

In keeping with the more recent precedent, DNS Push Notification is defined only for TCP. DNS Push Notification clients MUST use DNS Stateful Operations [RFC8490] running over TLS over TCP [RFC7858].

Connection setup over TCP ensures return reachability and alleviates concerns of state overload at the server, which is a potential problem with connectionless protocols, which can be more vulnerable to being exploited by attackers using spoofed source addresses. All subscribers are guaranteed to be reachable by the server by virtue of the TCP three-way handshake. Flooding attacks are possible with any protocol, and a benefit of TCP is that there are already established industry best practices to guard against SYN flooding and similar attacks [SYN] [RFC4953].

Use of TCP also allows DNS Push Notifications to take advantage of current and future developments in TCP, such as Multipath TCP (MPTCP) [RFC6824], TCP Fast Open (TFO) [RFC7413], the TCP RACK fast loss detection algorithm [I-D.ietf-tcpm-rack], and so on.

Transport Layer Security (TLS) [RFC8446] is well understood, and used by many application-layer protocols running over TCP. TLS is designed to prevent eavesdropping, tampering, and message forgery. TLS is REQUIRED for every connection between a client subscriber and server in this protocol specification. Additional security measures such as client authentication during TLS negotiation may also be employed to increase the trust relationship between client and server.

## 6. Protocol Operation

The DNS Push Notification protocol is a session-oriented protocol, and makes use of DNS Stateful Operations (DSO) [RFC8490].

For details of the DSO message format refer to the DNS Stateful Operations specification [RFC8490]. Those details are not repeated here.

DNS Push Notification clients and servers **MUST** support DSO. A single server can support DNS Queries, DNS Updates, and DNS Push Notifications (using DSO) on the same TCP port.

A DNS Push Notification exchange begins with the client discovering the appropriate server, using the procedure described in Section 6.1, and then making a TLS/TCP connection to it.

A typical DNS Push Notification client will immediately issue a DSO Keepalive operation to request a session timeout and/or keepalive interval longer than the 15-second default values, but this is not required. A DNS Push Notification client **MAY** issue other requests on the session first, and only issue a DSO Keepalive operation later if it determines that to be necessary. Sending either a DSO Keepalive operation or a Push Notification subscription request over the TLS/TCP connection to the server signals the client's support of DSO and serves to establish a DSO session.

In accordance with the current set of active subscriptions, the server sends relevant asynchronous Push Notifications to the client. Note that a client **MUST** be prepared to receive (and silently ignore) Push Notifications for subscriptions it has previously removed, since there is no way to prevent the situation where a Push Notification is in flight from server to client while the client's UNSUBSCRIBE message cancelling that subscription is simultaneously in flight from client to server.

## 6.1. Discovery

The first step in establishing a DNS Push Notification subscription is to discover an appropriate DNS server that supports DNS Push Notifications for the desired zone.

The client begins by opening a DSO Session to its normal configured DNS recursive resolver and requesting a Push Notification subscription. This connection is made to TCP port 853, the default port for DNS-over-TLS [RFC7858]. If the request for a Push Notification subscription is successful, and the recursive resolver doesn't already have an active subscription for that name, type, and class, then the recursive resolver will make a corresponding Push Notification subscription on the client's behalf. Results received are relayed to the client. This is closely analogous to how a client sends a normal DNS query to its configured DNS recursive resolver which, if it doesn't already have appropriate answer(s) in its cache, issues an upstream query to satisfy the request.

In many contexts, the recursive resolver will be able to handle Push Notifications for all names that the client may need to follow. Use of VPN tunnels and Private DNS [RFC8499] can create some additional complexity in the client software here; the techniques to handle VPN tunnels and Private DNS for DNS Push Notifications are the same as those already used to handle this for normal DNS queries.

If the recursive resolver does not support DNS over TLS, or supports DNS over TLS but is not listening on TCP port 853, or supports DNS over TLS on TCP port 853 but does not support DSO on that port, then the DSO Session establishment will fail [RFC8490].

If the recursive resolver does support DSO but not Push Notification subscriptions, then it will return the DSO error code DSOTYPENI (11).

In some cases, the recursive resolver may support DSO and Push Notification subscriptions, but may not be able to subscribe for Push Notifications for a particular name. In this case, the recursive resolver should return SERVFAIL to the client. This includes being unable to establish a connection to the zone's DNS Push Notification server or establishing a connection but receiving a non success response code. In some cases, where the client has a pre-established trust relationship with the owner of the zone (that is not handled via the usual mechanisms for VPN software) the client may handle these failures by contacting the zone's DNS Push server directly.

In any of the cases described above where the client fails to establish a DNS Push Notification subscription via its configured recursive resolver, the client should proceed to discover the

appropriate server for direct communication. The client MUST also determine which TCP port on the server is listening for connections, which need not be (and often is not) the typical TCP port 53 used for conventional DNS, or TCP port 853 used for DNS over TLS.

The discovery algorithm described here is an iterative algorithm, which starts with the full name of the record to which the client wishes to subscribe. Successive SOA queries are then issued, trimming one label each time, until the closest enclosing authoritative server is discovered. There is also an optimization to enable the client to take a "short cut" directly to the SOA record of the closest enclosing authoritative server in many cases.

1. The client begins the discovery by sending a DNS query to its local resolver, with record type SOA [RFC1035] for the record name to which it wishes to subscribe. As an example, suppose the client wishes to subscribe to PTR records with the name `_ipp._tcp.headoffice.example.com` (to discover Internet Printing Protocol (IPP) printers [RFC8010] [RFC8011] being advertised in the head office of Example Company.). The client begins by sending an SOA query for `_ipp._tcp.headoffice.example.com` to the local recursive resolver. The goal is to determine the server authoritative for the name `_ipp._tcp.headoffice.example.com`. The closest enclosing DNS zone containing the name `_ipp._tcp.headoffice.example.com` could be `example.com`, or `headoffice.example.com`, or `_tcp.headoffice.example.com`, or even `_ipp._tcp.headoffice.example.com`. The client does not know in advance where the closest enclosing zone cut occurs, which is why it uses the iterative procedure described here to discover this information.
2. If the requested SOA record exists, it will be returned in the Answer section with a NOERROR response code, and the client has succeeded in discovering the information it needs. (This language is not placing any new requirements on DNS recursive resolvers. This text merely describes the existing operation of the DNS protocol [RFC1034] [RFC1035].)
3. If the requested SOA record does not exist, the client will get back a NOERROR/NODATA response or an NXDOMAIN/Name Error response. In either case, the local resolver would normally include the SOA record for the closest enclosing zone of the requested name in the Authority Section. If the SOA record is received in the Authority Section, then the client has succeeded in discovering the information it needs. (This language is not placing any new requirements on DNS recursive resolvers. This text merely describes the existing

operation of the DNS protocol regarding negative responses [RFC2308].)

4. If the client receives a response containing no SOA record, then it proceeds with the iterative approach. The client strips the leading label from the current query name, and if the resulting name has at least two labels in it, the client sends an SOA query for that new name, and processing continues at step 2 above, repeating the iterative search until either an SOA is received, or the query name consists of a single label, i.e., a Top Level Domain (TLD). In the case of a single-label name (TLD), this is a network configuration error, which should not happen, and the client gives up. The client may retry the operation at a later time, of the client's choosing, such after a change in network attachment.
5. Once the SOA is known (either by virtue of being seen in the Answer Section, or in the Authority Section), the client sends a DNS query with type SRV [RFC2782] for the record name "\_dns-push-tls.\_tcp.<zone>", where <zone> is the owner name of the discovered SOA record.
6. If the zone in question is set up to offer DNS Push Notifications then this SRV record MUST exist. (If this SRV record does not exist then the zone is not correctly configured for DNS Push Notifications as specified in this document.) The SRV "target" contains the name of the server providing DNS Push Notifications for the zone. The port number on which to contact the server is in the SRV record "port" field. The address(es) of the target host MAY be included in the Additional Section, however, the address records SHOULD be authenticated before use as described below in Section 7.2 and in the specification for using DANE TLSA Records with SRV Records [RFC7673], if applicable.
7. More than one SRV record may be returned. In this case, the "priority" and "weight" values in the returned SRV records are used to determine the order in which to contact the servers for subscription requests. As described in the SRV specification [RFC2782], the server with the lowest "priority" is first contacted. If more than one server has the same "priority", the "weight" indicates the weighted probability that the client should contact that server. Higher weights have higher probabilities of being selected. If a server is not willing to accept a subscription request, or is not reachable within a reasonable time, as determined by the client, then a subsequent server is to be contacted.

Each time a client makes a new DNS Push Notification subscription, it SHOULD repeat the discovery process in order to determine the preferred DNS server for that subscription at that time. If a client already has a DSO session with that DNS server the client SHOULD reuse that existing DSO session for the new subscription, otherwise, a new DSO session is established. The client MUST respect the DNS TTL values on records it receives while performing the discovery process and store them in its local cache with this lifetime (as it will generally be do anyway for all DNS queries it performs). This means that, as long as the DNS TTL values on the authoritative records are set to reasonable values, repeated application of the discovery process can be completed nearly instantaneously by the client, using only locally-stored cached data.

## 6.2. DNS Push Notification SUBSCRIBE

After connecting, and requesting a longer idle timeout and/or keepalive interval if necessary, a DNS Push Notification client then indicates its desire to receive DNS Push Notifications for a given domain name by sending a SUBSCRIBE request to the server. A SUBSCRIBE request is encoded in a DSO message [RFC8490]. This specification defines a primary DSO TLV for DNS Push Notification SUBSCRIBE Requests (tentatively DSO Type Code 0x40).

DSO messages with the SUBSCRIBE TLV as the Primary TLV are permitted in TLS early data, provided that the precautions described in Section 7.3 are followed.

The entity that initiates a SUBSCRIBE request is by definition the client. A server MUST NOT send a SUBSCRIBE request over an existing session from a client. If a server does send a SUBSCRIBE request over a DSO session initiated by a client, this is a fatal error and the client MUST forcibly abort the connection immediately.

Each SUBSCRIBE request generates exactly one SUBSCRIBE response from the server. The entity that initiates a SUBSCRIBE response is by definition the server. A client MUST NOT send a SUBSCRIBE response. If a client does send a SUBSCRIBE response, this is a fatal error and the server MUST forcibly abort the connection immediately.

### 6.2.1. SUBSCRIBE Request

A SUBSCRIBE request begins with the standard DSO 12-byte header [RFC8490], followed by the SUBSCRIBE primary TLV. A SUBSCRIBE request is illustrated in Figure 1.

The MESSAGE ID field MUST be set to a unique value, that the client is not using for any other active operation on this DSO session. For the purposes here, a MESSAGE ID is in use on this session if the client has used it in a request for which it has not yet received a response, or if the client has used it for a subscription which it has not yet cancelled using UNSUBSCRIBE. In the SUBSCRIBE response the server MUST echo back the MESSAGE ID value unchanged.

The other header fields MUST be set as described in the DSO specification [RFC8490]. The DNS OPCODE field contains the OPCODE value for DNS Stateful Operations (6). The four count fields must be zero, and the corresponding four sections must be empty (i.e., absent).

The DSO-TYPE is SUBSCRIBE (tentatively 0x40).

The DSO-LENGTH is the length of the DSO-DATA that follows, which specifies the name, type, and class of the record(s) being sought.

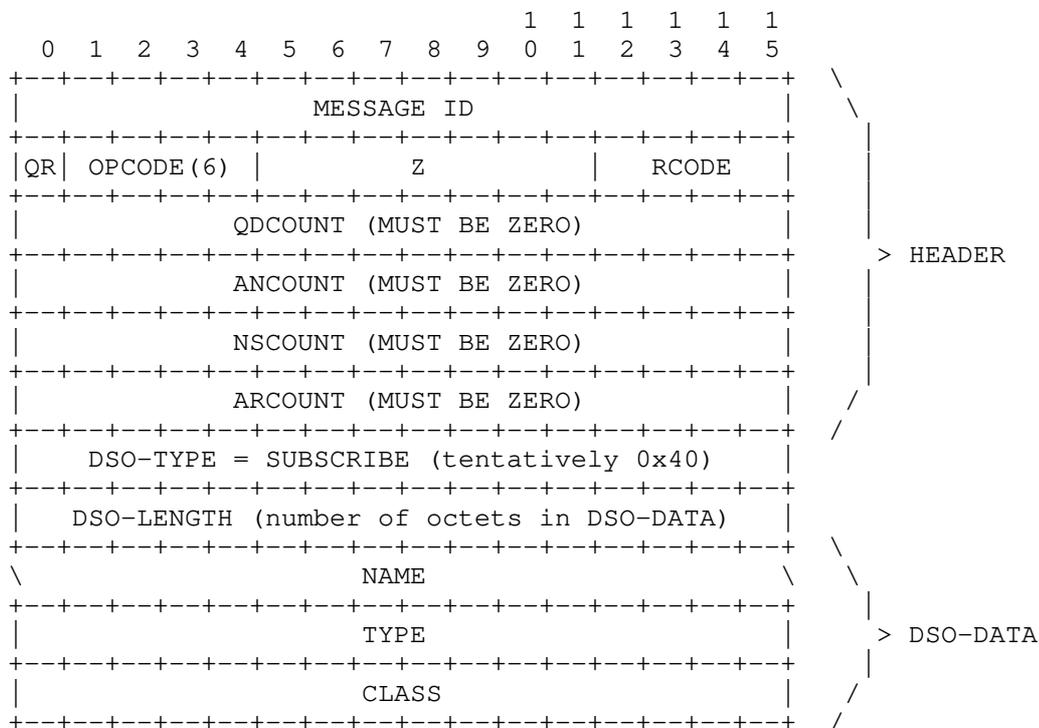


Figure 1: SUBSCRIBE Request

The DSO-DATA for a SUBSCRIBE request MUST contain exactly one NAME, TYPE, and CLASS. Since SUBSCRIBE requests are sent over TCP, multiple SUBSCRIBE DSO request messages can be concatenated in a single TCP stream and packed efficiently into TCP segments.

If accepted, the subscription will stay in effect until the client cancels the subscription using UNSUBSCRIBE or until the DSO session between the client and the server is closed.

SUBSCRIBE requests on a given session MUST be unique. A client MUST NOT send a SUBSCRIBE message that duplicates the NAME, TYPE and CLASS of an existing active subscription on that DSO session. For the purpose of this matching, the established DNS case-insensitivity for US-ASCII letters [RFC0020] applies (e.g., "example.com" and "Example.com" are the same). If a server receives such a duplicate SUBSCRIBE message, this is a fatal error and the server MUST forcibly abort the connection immediately.

DNS wildcarding is not supported. That is, a wildcard ("\*") in a SUBSCRIBE message matches only a literal wildcard character ("\*") in the zone, and nothing else.

Aliasing is not supported. That is, a CNAME in a SUBSCRIBE message matches only a literal CNAME record in the zone, and no other records with the same owner name.

A client may SUBSCRIBE to records that are unknown to the server at the time of the request (providing that the name falls within one of the zone(s) the server is responsible for) and this is not an error. The server MUST NOT return NXDOMAIN in this case. The server MUST accept these requests and send Push Notifications if and when matching records are found in the future.

If neither TYPE nor CLASS are ANY (255) then this is a specific subscription to changes for the given NAME, TYPE and CLASS. If one or both of TYPE or CLASS are ANY (255) then this subscription matches any type and/or any class, as appropriate.

NOTE: A little-known quirk of DNS is that in DNS QUERY requests, QTYPE and QCLASS 255 mean "ANY" not "ALL". They indicate that the server should respond with ANY matching records of its choosing, not necessarily ALL matching records. This can lead to some surprising and unexpected results, where a query returns some valid answers but not all of them, and makes QTYPE = 255 (ANY) queries less useful than people sometimes imagine.

When used in conjunction with SUBSCRIBE, TYPE and CLASS 255 should be interpreted to mean "ALL", not "ANY". After accepting a subscription where one or both of TYPE or CLASS are 255, the server MUST send Push Notification Updates for ALL record changes that match the subscription, not just some of them.



In the SUBSCRIBE response the RCODE indicates whether or not the subscription was accepted. Supported RCODEs are as follows:

Mnemonic	Value	Description
NOERROR	0	SUBSCRIBE successful.
FORMERR	1	Server failed to process request due to a malformed request.
SERVFAIL	2	Server failed to process request due to a problem with the server.
NOTIMP	4	Server does not implement DSO.
REFUSED	5	Server refuses to process request for policy or security reasons.
NOTAUTH	9	Server is not authoritative for the requested name.
DSOTYPENI	11	SUBSCRIBE operation not supported.

Table 1: SUBSCRIBE Response codes

This document specifies only these RCODE values for SUBSCRIBE Responses. Servers sending SUBSCRIBE Responses SHOULD use one of these values. Note that NXDOMAIN is not a valid RCODE in response to a SUBSCRIBE Request. However, future circumstances may create situations where other RCODE values are appropriate in SUBSCRIBE Responses, so clients MUST be prepared to accept SUBSCRIBE Responses with any other RCODE value.

If the server sends a nonzero RCODE in the SUBSCRIBE response, that means:

- a. the client is (at least partially) misconfigured, or
- b. the server resources are exhausted, or
- c. there is some other unknown failure on the server.

In any case, the client shouldn't retry the subscription to this server right away. If multiple SRV records were returned as described in Section 6.1, Paragraph 7, a subsequent server MAY be tried immediately.

If the client has other successful subscriptions to this server, these subscriptions remain even though additional subscriptions may be refused. Neither the client nor the server are required to close the connection, although, either end may choose to do so.

If the server sends a nonzero RCODE then it SHOULD append a Retry Delay TLV [RFC8490] to the response specifying a delay before the

client attempts this operation again. Recommended values for the delay for different RCODE values are given below. These recommended values apply both to the default values a server should place in the Retry Delay TLV, and the default values a client should assume if the server provides no Retry Delay TLV.

For RCODE = 1 (FORMERR) the delay may be any value selected by the implementer. A value of five minutes is RECOMMENDED, to reduce the risk of high load from defective clients.

For RCODE = 2 (SERVFAIL) the delay should be chosen according to the level of server overload and the anticipated duration of that overload. By default, a value of one minute is RECOMMENDED. If a more serious server failure occurs, the delay may be longer in accordance with the specific problem encountered.

For RCODE = 4 (NOTIMP), which occurs on a server that doesn't implement DNS Stateful Operations [RFC8490], it is unlikely that the server will begin supporting DSO in the next few minutes, so the retry delay SHOULD be one hour. Note that in such a case, a server that doesn't implement DSO is unlikely to place a Retry Delay TLV in its response, so this recommended value in particular applies to what a client should assume by default.

For RCODE = 5 (REFUSED), which occurs on a server that implements DNS Push Notifications, but is currently configured to disallow DNS Push Notifications, the retry delay may be any value selected by the implementer and/or configured by the operator.

If the server being queried is listed in a "\_dns-push-tls.\_tcp.<zone>" SRV record for the zone, then this is a misconfiguration, since this server is being advertised as supporting DNS Push Notifications for this zone, but the server itself is not currently configured to perform that task. Since it is possible that the misconfiguration may be repaired at any time, the retry delay should not be set too high. By default, a value of 5 minutes is RECOMMENDED.

For RCODE = 9 (NOTAUTH), which occurs on a server that implements DNS Push Notifications, but is not configured to be authoritative for the requested name, the retry delay may be any value selected by the implementer and/or configured by the operator.

If the server being queried is listed in a "\_dns-push-tls.\_tcp.<zone>" SRV record for the zone, then this is a misconfiguration, since this server is being advertised as supporting DNS Push Notifications for this zone, but the server itself is not currently configured to perform that task. Since it

is possible that the misconfiguration may be repaired at any time, the retry delay should not be set too high. By default, a value of 5 minutes is RECOMMENDED.

For RCODE = 11 (DSOTYPENI), which occurs on a server that implements DSO but doesn't implement DNS Push Notifications, it is unlikely that the server will begin supporting DNS Push Notifications in the next few minutes, so the retry delay SHOULD be one hour.

For other RCODE values, the retry delay should be set by the server as appropriate for that error condition. By default, a value of 5 minutes is RECOMMENDED.

For RCODE = 9 (NOTAUTH), the time delay applies to requests for other names falling within the same zone. Requests for names falling within other zones are not subject to the delay. For all other RCODEs the time delay applies to all subsequent requests to this server.

After sending an error response the server MAY allow the session to remain open, or MAY send a DNS Push Notification Retry Delay Operation TLV instructing the client to close the session, as described in the DSO specification [RFC8490]. Clients MUST correctly handle both cases.

### 6.3. DNS Push Notification Updates

Once a subscription has been successfully established, the server generates PUSH messages to send to the client as appropriate. In the case that the answer set was already non-empty at the moment the subscription was established, an initial PUSH message will be sent immediately following the SUBSCRIBE Response. Subsequent changes to the answer set are then communicated to the client in subsequent PUSH messages.

A client **MUST NOT** send a PUSH message. If a client does send a PUSH message, or a PUSH message is sent with the QR bit set indicating that it is a response, this is a fatal error and the receiver **MUST** forcibly abort the connection immediately.

#### 6.3.1. PUSH Message

A PUSH unidirectional message begins with the standard DSO 12-byte header [RFC8490], followed by the PUSH primary TLV. A PUSH message is illustrated in Figure 3.

In accordance with the definition of DSO unidirectional messages, the MESSAGE ID field **MUST** be zero. There is no client response to a PUSH message.

The other header fields **MUST** be set as described in the DSO specification [RFC8490]. The DNS OPCODE field contains the OPCODE value for DNS Stateful Operations (6). The four count fields must be zero, and the corresponding four sections must be empty (i.e., absent).

The DSO-TYPE is PUSH (tentatively 0x41).

The DSO-LENGTH is the length of the DSO-DATA that follows, which specifies the changes being communicated.

The DSO-DATA contains one or more change notifications. A PUSH Message **MUST** contain at least one change notification. If a PUSH Message is received that contains no change notifications, this is a fatal error, and the client **MUST** forcibly abort the connection immediately.

The change notification records are formatted similarly to how DNS Resource Records are conventionally expressed in DNS messages, as illustrated in Figure 3, and are interpreted as described below.

The TTL field holds an unsigned 32-bit integer [RFC2181]. If the TTL is in the range 0 to 2,147,483,647 seconds (0 to  $2^{31} - 1$ , or 0x7FFFFFFF), then a new DNS Resource Record with the given name, type, class and RDATA is added. Type and class MUST NOT be 255 (ANY). If either type or class are 255 (ANY) this is a fatal error, and the client MUST forcibly abort the connection immediately. A TTL of 0 means that this record should be retained for as long as the subscription is active, and should be discarded immediately the moment the subscription is cancelled.

If the TTL has the value 0xFFFFFFFF, then the DNS Resource Record with the given name, type, class and RDATA is removed. Type and class MUST NOT be 255 (ANY). If either type or class are 255 (ANY) this is a fatal error, and the client MUST forcibly abort the connection immediately.

If the TTL has the value 0xFFFFFFF0, then this is a 'collective' remove notification. For collective remove notifications RDLEN MUST be zero and consequently the RDATA MUST be empty. If a change notification is received where TTL = 0xFFFFFFF0 and RDLEN is not zero, this is a fatal error, and the client MUST forcibly abort the connection immediately.

There are three types of collective remove notification:

For collective remove notifications, if CLASS is not 255 (ANY) and TYPE is not 255 (ANY) then for the given name this removes all records of the specified type in the specified class.

For collective remove notifications, if CLASS is not 255 (ANY) and TYPE is 255 (ANY) then for the given name this removes all records of all types in the specified class.

For collective remove notifications, if CLASS is 255 (ANY), then for the given name this removes all records of all types in all classes. In this case TYPE MUST be set to zero on transmission, and MUST be silently ignored on reception.

## Summary of change notification types:

Remove all RRsets from a name, in all classes  
TTL = 0xFFFFFFFFE, RDLEN = 0, CLASS = 255 (ANY)

Remove all RRsets from a name, in given class:  
TTL = 0xFFFFFFFFE, RDLEN = 0, CLASS gives class, TYPE = 255 (ANY)

Remove specified RRset from a name, in given class:  
TTL = 0xFFFFFFFFE, RDLEN = 0  
CLASS and TYPE specify the RRset being removed

Remove an individual RR from a name:  
TTL = 0xFFFFFFFF  
CLASS, TYPE, RDLEN and RDATA specify the RR being removed

Add individual RR to a name  
TTL >= 0 and TTL <= 0x7FFFFFFF  
CLASS, TYPE, RDLEN, RDATA and TTL specify the RR being added

Note that it is valid for the RDATA of an added or removed DNS Resource Record to be empty (zero length). For example, an Address Prefix List Resource Record [RFC3123] may have empty RDATA. Therefore, a change notification with RDLEN = 0 does not automatically indicate a remove notification. If RDLEN = 0 and TTL is in the range 0 - 0x7FFFFFFF, this change notification signals the addition of a record with the given name, type, class, and empty RDATA. If RDLEN = 0 and TTL = 0xFFFFFFFF, this change notification signals the removal specifically of that single record with the given name, type, class, and empty RDATA.

If the TTL is any value other than 0xFFFFFFFF, 0xFFFFFFFFE, or a value in the range 0 - 0x7FFFFFFF, then the receiver SHOULD silently ignore this particular change notification record. The connection is not terminated and other valid change notification records within this PUSH message are processed as usual.

For efficiency, when generating a PUSH message, a server SHOULD include as many change notifications as it has immediately available to send, rather than sending each change notification as a separate DSO message. Once it has exhausted the list of change notifications immediately available to send, a server SHOULD then send the PUSH message immediately, rather than waiting to see if additional change notifications become available.

For efficiency, when generating a PUSH message, a server SHOULD use standard DNS name compression, with offsets relative to the beginning of the DNS message [RFC1035]. When multiple change notifications in a single PUSH message have the same owner name, this name compression can yield significant savings. Name compression should be performed as specified in Section 18.14 of the Multicast DNS specification [RFC6762], namely, owner names should always be compressed, and names appearing within RDATA should be compressed for only the RR types listed below:

NS, CNAME, PTR, DNAME, SOA, MX, AFSDDB, RT, KX, RP, PX, SRV, NSEC

Servers may generate PUSH messages up to a maximum DNS message length of 16,382 bytes, counting from the start of the DSO 12-byte header. Including the two-byte length prefix that is used to frame DNS over a byte stream like TLS, this makes a total of 16,384 bytes. Servers MUST NOT generate PUSH messages larger than this. Where the immediately available change notifications are sufficient to exceed a DNS message length of 16,382 bytes, the change notifications MUST be communicated in separate PUSH messages of up to 16,382 bytes each. DNS name compression becomes less effective for messages larger than 16,384 bytes, so little efficiency benefit is gained by sending messages larger than this.

If a client receives a PUSH message with a DNS message length larger than 16,382 bytes, this is a fatal error, and the client MUST forcibly abort the connection immediately.



SUBSCRIBE request. For collective removals, at least one of the records being removed must match an active subscription. If a matching active subscription on that session is not found, then that particular addition/removal record is silently ignored. Processing of other additions and removal records in this message is not affected. The DSO session is not closed. This is to allow for the unavoidable race condition where a client sends an outbound UNSUBSCRIBE while inbound PUSH messages for that subscription from the server are still in flight.

In the case where a single change affects more than one active subscription, only one PUSH message is sent. For example, a PUSH message adding a given record may match both a SUBSCRIBE request with the same TYPE and a different SUBSCRIBE request with TYPE = 255 (ANY). It is not the case that two PUSH messages are sent because the new record matches two active subscriptions.

The server SHOULD encode change notifications in the most efficient manner possible. For example, when three AAAA records are removed from a given name, and no other AAAA records exist for that name, the server SHOULD send a "remove an RRset from a name" PUSH message, not three separate "remove an individual RR from a name" PUSH messages. Similarly, when both an SRV and a TXT record are removed from a given name, and no other records of any kind exist for that name, the server SHOULD send a "remove all RRsets from a name" PUSH message, not two separate "remove an RRset from a name" PUSH messages.

A server SHOULD combine multiple change notifications in a single PUSH message when possible, even if those change notifications apply to different subscriptions. Conceptually, a PUSH message is a session-level mechanism, not a subscription-level mechanism.

The TTL of an added record is stored by the client. While the subscription is active, the TTL is not decremented, because a change to the TTL would produce a new update. For as long as a relevant subscription remains active, the client SHOULD assume that when a record goes away the server will notify it of that fact. Consequently, a client does not have to poll to verify that the record is still there. Once a subscription is cancelled (individually, or as a result of the DSO session being closed) record aging for records covered by the subscription resumes and records are removed from the local cache when their TTL reaches zero.

#### 6.4. DNS Push Notification UNSUBSCRIBE

To cancel an individual subscription without closing the entire DSO session, the client sends an UNSUBSCRIBE message over the established DSO session to the server.

The entity that initiates an UNSUBSCRIBE message is by definition the client. A server MUST NOT send an UNSUBSCRIBE message over an existing session from a client. If a server does send an UNSUBSCRIBE message over a DSO session initiated by a client, or an UNSUBSCRIBE message is sent with the QR bit set indicating that it is a response, this is a fatal error and the receiver MUST forcibly abort the connection immediately.

##### 6.4.1. UNSUBSCRIBE Message

An UNSUBSCRIBE unidirectional message begins with the standard DSO 12-byte header [RFC8490], followed by the UNSUBSCRIBE primary TLV. An UNSUBSCRIBE message is illustrated in Figure 4.

In accordance with the definition of DSO unidirectional messages, the MESSAGE ID field MUST be zero. There is no server response to an UNSUBSCRIBE message.

The other header fields MUST be set as described in the DSO specification [RFC8490]. The DNS OPCODE field contains the OPCODE value for DNS Stateful Operations (6). The four count fields must be zero, and the corresponding four sections must be empty (i.e., absent).

The DSO-TYPE is UNSUBSCRIBE (tentatively 0x42).

The DSO-LENGTH field contains the value 2, the length of the 2-octet MESSAGE ID contained in the DSO-DATA.

The DSO-DATA contains the value previously given in the MESSAGE ID field of an active SUBSCRIBE request. This is how the server knows which SUBSCRIBE request is being cancelled. After receipt of the UNSUBSCRIBE message, the SUBSCRIBE request is no longer active.

It is allowable for the client to issue an UNSUBSCRIBE message for a previous SUBSCRIBE request for which the client has not yet received a SUBSCRIBE response. This is to allow for the case where a client starts and stops a subscription in less than the round-trip time to the server. The client is NOT required to wait for the SUBSCRIBE response before issuing the UNSUBSCRIBE message.

Consequently, it is possible for a server to receive an UNSUBSCRIBE message that does not match any currently active subscription. This can occur when a client sends a SUBSCRIBE request, which subsequently fails and returns an error code, but the client sent an UNSUBSCRIBE message before it became aware that the SUBSCRIBE request had failed. Because of this, servers MUST silently ignore UNSUBSCRIBE messages that do not match any currently active subscription.

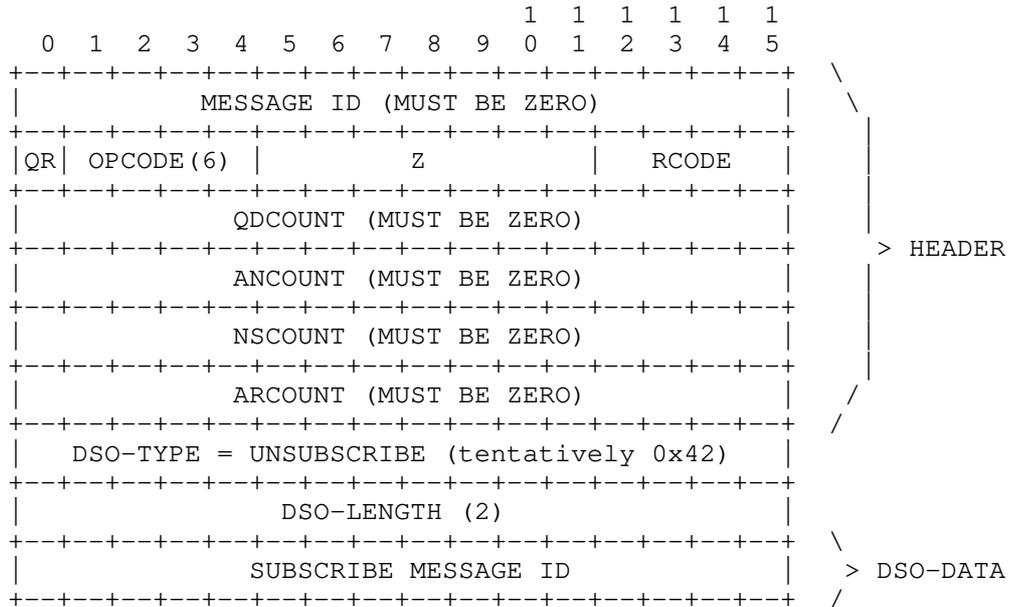


Figure 4: UNSUBSCRIBE Message

### 6.5. DNS Push Notification RECONFIRM

Sometimes, particularly when used with a Discovery Proxy [DisProx], a DNS Zone may contain stale data. When a client encounters data that it believes may be stale (e.g., an SRV record referencing a target host+port that is not responding to connection requests) the client can send a RECONFIRM message to ask the server to re-verify that the data is still valid. For a Discovery Proxy, this causes it to issue new Multicast DNS queries to ascertain whether the target device is still present. How the Discovery Proxy causes these new Multicast DNS queries to be issued depends on the details of the underlying Multicast DNS implementation being used. For example, a Discovery Proxy built on Apple's dns\_sd.h API [SD-API] responds to a DNS Push Notification RECONFIRM message by calling the underlying API's `DNSServiceReconfirmRecord()` routine.

For other types of DNS server, the RECONFIRM operation is currently undefined, and SHOULD result in a NOERROR response, but otherwise need not cause any action to occur.

Frequent use of RECONFIRM operations may be a sign of network unreliability, or some kind of misconfiguration, so RECONFIRM operations MAY be logged or otherwise communicated to a human administrator to assist in detecting and remedying such network problems.

If, after receiving a valid RECONFIRM message, the server determines that the disputed records are in fact no longer valid, then subsequent DNS PUSH Messages will be generated to inform interested clients. Thus, one client discovering that a previously-advertised device (like a network printer) is no longer present has the side effect of informing all other interested clients that the device in question is now gone.

The entity that initiates a RECONFIRM message is by definition the client. A server MUST NOT send a RECONFIRM message over an existing session from a client. If a server does send a RECONFIRM message over a DSO session initiated by a client, or a RECONFIRM message is sent with the QR bit set indicating that it is a response, this is a fatal error and the receiver MUST forcibly abort the connection immediately.

### 6.5.1. RECONFIRM Message

A RECONFIRM unidirectional message begins with the standard DSO 12-byte header [RFC8490], followed by the RECONFIRM primary TLV. A RECONFIRM message is illustrated in Figure 5.

In accordance with the definition of DSO unidirectional messages, the MESSAGE ID field MUST be zero. There is no server response to a RECONFIRM message.

The other header fields MUST be set as described in the DSO specification [RFC8490]. The DNS OPCODE field contains the OPCODE value for DNS Stateful Operations (6). The four count fields must be zero, and the corresponding four sections must be empty (i.e., absent).

The DSO-TYPE is RECONFIRM (tentatively 0x43).

The DSO-LENGTH is the length of the data that follows, which specifies the name, type, class, and content of the record being disputed.

The DSO-DATA for a RECONFIRM message MUST contain exactly one record. The DSO-DATA for a RECONFIRM message has no count field to specify more than one record. Since RECONFIRM messages are sent over TCP, multiple RECONFIRM messages can be concatenated in a single TCP stream and packed efficiently into TCP segments.

TYPE MUST NOT be the value ANY (255) and CLASS MUST NOT be the value ANY (255).

DNS wildcarding is not supported. That is, a wildcard ("\*") in a RECONFIRM message matches only a literal wildcard character ("\*") in the zone, and nothing else.

Aliasing is not supported. That is, a CNAME in a RECONFIRM message matches only a literal CNAME record in the zone, and no other records with the same owner name.

Note that there is no RDLEN field, since the length of the RDATA can be inferred from DSO-LENGTH, so an additional RDLEN field would be redundant.

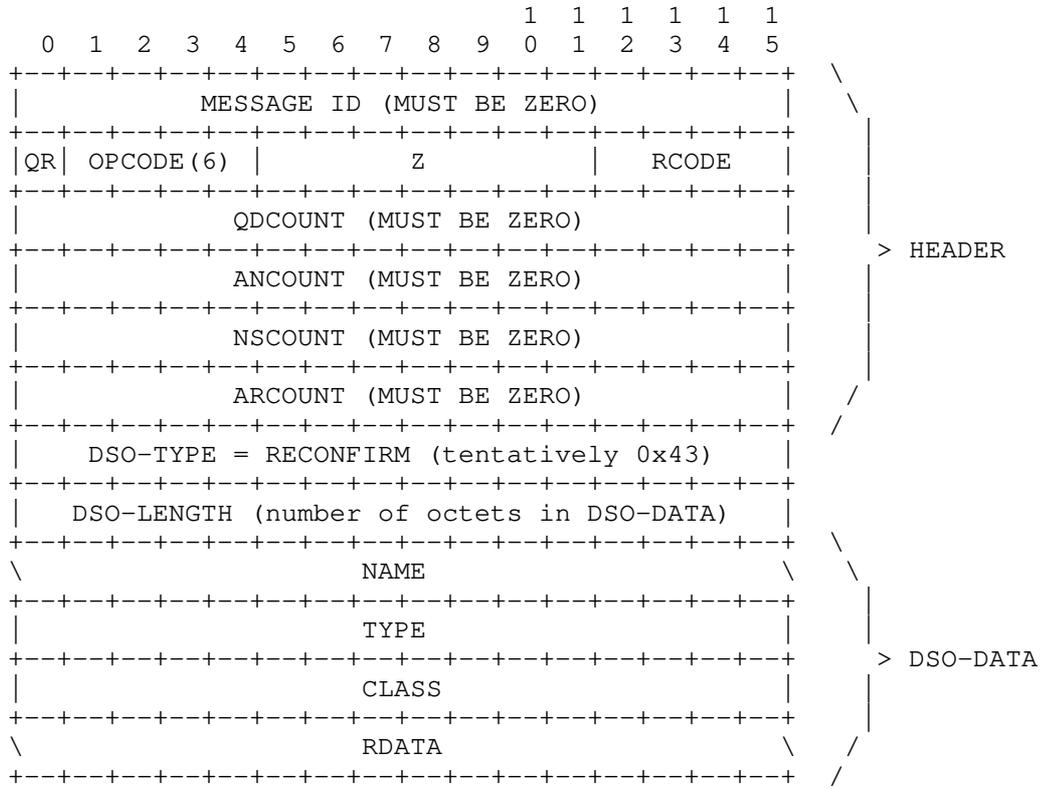


Figure 5: RECONFIRM Message

## 6.6. DNS Stateful Operations TLV Context Summary

This document defines four new DSO TLVs. As recommended in Section 8.2 of the DNS Stateful Operations specification [RFC8490], the valid contexts of these new TLV types are summarized below.

The client TLV contexts are:

C-P: Client request message, primary TLV  
 C-U: Client unidirectional message, primary TLV  
 C-A: Client request or unidirectional message, additional TLV  
 CRP: Response back to client, primary TLV  
 CRA: Response back to client, additional TLV

TLV Type	C-P	C-U	C-A	CRP	CRA
SUBSCRIBE PUSH	X				
UNSUBSCRIBE RECONFIRM		X	X		

Table 2: DSO TLV Client Context Summary

The server TLV contexts are:

S-P: Server request message, primary TLV  
 S-U: Server unidirectional message, primary TLV  
 S-A: Server request or unidirectional message, additional TLV  
 SRP: Response back to server, primary TLV  
 SRA: Response back to server, additional TLV

TLV Type	S-P	S-U	S-A	SRP	SRA
SUBSCRIBE PUSH		X			
UNSUBSCRIBE RECONFIRM					

Table 3: DSO TLV Server Context Summary

### 6.7. Client-Initiated Termination

An individual subscription is terminated by sending an UNSUBSCRIBE TLV for that specific subscription, or all subscriptions can be cancelled at once by the client closing the DSO session. When a client terminates an individual subscription (via UNSUBSCRIBE) or all subscriptions on that DSO session (by ending the session) it is signaling to the server that it is no longer interested in receiving those particular updates. It is informing the server that the server may release any state information it has been keeping with regards to these particular subscriptions.

After terminating its last subscription on a session via UNSUBSCRIBE, a client MAY close the session immediately, or it may keep it open if it anticipates performing further operations on that session in the future. If a client wishes to keep an idle session open, it MUST respect the maximum idle time required by the server [RFC8490].

If a client plans to terminate one or more subscriptions on a session and doesn't intend to keep that session open, then as an efficiency optimization it MAY instead choose to simply close the session, which implicitly terminates all subscriptions on that session. This may occur because the client computer is being shut down, is going to sleep, the application requiring the subscriptions has terminated, or simply because the last active subscription on that session has been cancelled.

When closing a session, a client should perform an orderly close of the TLS session. Typical APIs will provide a session close method that will send a TLS close\_notify alert (see Section 6.1 of the TLS 1.3 specification [RFC8446]). This instructs the recipient that the sender will not send any more data over the session. After sending the TLS close\_notify alert the client MUST gracefully close the underlying connection using a TCP FIN, so that the TLS close\_notify is reliably delivered. The mechanisms for gracefully closing a TCP connection with a TCP FIN vary depending on the networking API. For example, in the BSD Sockets API, sending a TCP FIN is achieved by calling "shutdown(s, SHUT\_WR)" and keeping the socket open until all remaining data has been read from it.

If the session is forcibly closed at the TCP level by sending a RST from either end of the connection, data may be lost.

## 6.8. Client Fallback to Polling

There are cases where a client may exhaust all avenues for establishing a DNS Push Notification subscription without success. This can happen if the client's configured recursive resolver does not support DNS over TLS, or supports DNS over TLS but is not listening on TCP port 853, or supports DNS over TLS on TCP port 853 but does not support DSO on that port, or for some other reason is unable to provide a DNS Push Notification subscription. In this case the client will attempt to communicate directly with an appropriate server, and it may be that the zone apex discovery fails, or there is no "\_dns-push-tls.\_tcp.<zone>" SRV record, or server indicated in the SRV record is misconfigured, or is unresponsive for some other reason.

Regardless of the reason for the failure, after being unable to establish the desired DNS Push Notification subscription, it is likely that the client will still wish to know the answer it seeks, even if that answer cannot be obtained with the timely change notifications provided by DNS Push Notifications. In such cases it is likely that the client will obtain the answer it seeks via a conventional DNS query instead, repeated at some interval to detect when the answer RRset changes.

In the case where a client responds to its failure to establish a DNS Push Notification subscription by falling back to polling with conventional DNS queries instead, the polling rate should be controlled to avoid placing excessive burden on the server. The interval between successive DNS queries for the same name, type and class SHOULD be at least the minimum of: 900 seconds (15 minutes), or two seconds more than the TTL of the answer RRset.

The reason that for TTLs shorter than 898 seconds the query should not be reissued until two seconds *after* the answer RRset has expired is to ensure that the answer RRset has also expired from the cache on the client's configured recursive resolver. Otherwise (particularly if the clocks on the client and the recursive resolver do not run at precisely the same rate) there's a risk of a race condition where the client queries its configured recursive resolver just as the answer RRset has one second remaining in the recursive resolver's cache. The client would then receive a reply telling it that the answer RRset has one second remaining, and then the client would then re-query the recursive resolver again one second later when the answer RRset actually expires, and only then would the recursive resolver issue a new query to fetch new fresh data from the authoritative server. Waiting until the answer RRset has definitely expired from the the cache on the client's configured recursive

resolver avoids this race condition and unnecessary additional queries it causes.

Each time a client is about to reissue its query to discover changes to the answer RRset, it should first make a new attempt to establish a DNS Push Notification subscription, using previously cached DNS answers as appropriate. After a temporary misconfiguration has been remedied, this allows a client that is polling to return to using DNS Push Notifications for asynchronous notification of changes.

## 7. Security Considerations

The Strict Privacy Usage Profile for DNS over TLS is REQUIRED for DNS Push Notifications [RFC8310]. Cleartext connections for DNS Push Notifications are not permissible. Since this is a new protocol, transition mechanisms from the Opportunistic Privacy profile are unnecessary.

Also, see Section 9 of the DNS over (D)TLS Usage Profiles document [RFC8310] for additional recommendations for various versions of TLS usage.

As a consequence of requiring TLS, client certificate authentication and verification may also be enforced by the server for stronger client-server security or end-to-end security. However, recommendations for security in particular deployment scenarios are outside the scope of this document.

DNSSEC is RECOMMENDED for the authentication of DNS Push Notification servers. TLS alone does not provide complete security. TLS certificate verification can provide reasonable assurance that the client is really talking to the server associated with the desired host name, but since the desired host name is learned via a DNS SRV query, if the SRV query is subverted then the client may have a secure connection to a rogue server. DNSSEC can provide added confidence that the SRV query has not been subverted.

## 7.1. Security Services

It is the goal of using TLS to provide the following security services:

**Confidentiality:** All application-layer communication is encrypted with the goal that no party should be able to decrypt it except the intended receiver.

**Data integrity protection:** Any changes made to the communication in transit are detectable by the receiver.

**Authentication:** An end-point of the TLS communication is authenticated as the intended entity to communicate with.

**Anti-replay protection:** TLS provides for the detection of and prevention against messages sent previously over a TLS connection (such as DNS Push Notifications). If prior messages are re-sent at a later time as a form of a man-in-the-middle attack then the receiver will detect this and reject the replayed messages.

Deployment recommendations on the appropriate key lengths and cypher suites are beyond the scope of this document. Please refer to TLS Recommendations [BCP195] for the best current practices. Keep in mind that best practices only exist for a snapshot in time and recommendations will continue to change. Updated versions or errata may exist for these recommendations.

## 7.2. TLS Name Authentication

As described in Section 6.1, the client discovers the DNS Push Notification server using an SRV lookup for the record name "\_dns-push-tls.\_tcp.<zone>". The server connection endpoint SHOULD then be authenticated using DANE TLSA records for the associated SRV record. This associates the target's name and port number with a trusted TLS certificate [RFC7673]. This procedure uses the TLS Server Name Indication (SNI) extension [RFC6066] to inform the server of the name the client has authenticated through the use of TLSA records. Therefore, if the SRV record passes DNSSEC validation and a TLSA record matching the target name is useable, an SNI extension must be used for the target name to ensure the client is connecting to the server it has authenticated. If the target name does not have a usable TLSA record, then the use of the SNI extension is optional. See Usage Profiles for DNS over TLS and DNS over DTLS [RFC8310] for more information on authenticating domain names.

### 7.3. TLS Early Data

DSO messages with the SUBSCRIBE TLV as the Primary TLV are permitted in TLS early data. Using TLS early data can save one network round trip, and can result in the client obtaining results faster.

However, there are some factors to consider before using TLS early data.

TLS Early Data is not forward secret. In cases where forward secrecy of DNS Push Notification subscriptions is required, the client should not use TLS Early Data.

With TLS early data there are no guarantees of non-replay between connections. If packets are duplicated and delayed in the network, the later arrivals could be mistaken for new subscription requests. Generally this is not a major concern, since the amount of state generated on the server for these spurious subscriptions is small and short-lived, since the TCP connection will not complete the three-way handshake. Servers MAY choose to implement rate-limiting measures that are activated when the server detects an excessive number of spurious subscription requests.

For further guidance please see discussion of zero round-trip data (Section 2.3, Section 8, and Appendix E.5) in the TLS 1.3 specification, [RFC8446].

### 7.4. TLS Session Resumption

TLS Session Resumption [RFC8446] is permissible on DNS Push Notification servers. However, closing the TLS connection terminates the DSO session. When the TLS session is resumed, the DNS Push Notification server will not have any subscription state and will proceed as with any other new DSO session. Use of TLS Session Resumption may allow a TLS connection to be set up more quickly, but the client will still have to recreate any desired subscriptions.

## 8. IANA Considerations

This document defines a new service name, only applicable for the TCP protocol, to be recorded in the IANA Service Type Registry [RFC6335][SRVTYPE].

Name	Port	Value	Definition
DNS Push Notification Service Type	None	"_dns-push-tls._tcp"	Section 6.1

Table 4: IANA Service Type Assignments

This document defines four new DNS Stateful Operation TLV types to be recorded in the IANA DSO Type Code Registry [RFC8490][DSOTYPE].

Name	Value	Early Data	Status	Definition
SUBSCRIBE	TBA (0x40)	OK	Standards Track	Section 6.2
PUSH	TBA (0x41)	NO	Standards Track	Section 6.3
UNSUBSCRIBE	TBA (0x42)	NO	Standards Track	Section 6.4
RECONFIRM	TBA (0x43)	NO	Standards Track	Section 6.5

Table 5: IANA DSO TLV Type Code Assignments

This document defines no new DNS OPCODEs or RCODEs.

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Service Registration Protocol for DNS-Based Service Discovery  
draft-ietf-dnssd-srp-25

## Abstract

The Service Registration Protocol for DNS-Based Service Discovery uses the standard DNS Update mechanism to enable DNS-Based Service Discovery using only unicast packets. This makes it possible to deploy DNS Service Discovery without multicast, which greatly improves scalability and improves performance on networks where multicast service is not an optimal choice, particularly IEEE 802.11 (Wi-Fi) and IEEE 802.15.4 networks. DNS-SD Service registration uses public keys and SIG(0) to allow services to defend their registrations.

## About This Document

This note is to be removed before publishing as an RFC.

The latest revision of this draft can be found at <https://dnssd-wg.github.io/draft-ietf-dnssd-srp/draft-ietf-dnssd-srp.html>. Status information for this document may be found at <https://datatracker.ietf.org/doc/draft-ietf-dnssd-srp/>.

Discussion of this document takes place on the DNS-SD Working Group mailing list (<mailto:dnssd@ietf.org>), which is archived at <https://mailarchive.ietf.org/arch/browse/dnssd/>. Subscribe at <https://www.ietf.org/mailman/listinfo/dnssd/>.

Source for this draft and an issue tracker can be found at <https://github.com/dnssd-wg/draft-ietf-dnssd-srp>.

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## 1. Introduction

DNS-Based Service Discovery [RFC6763] is a component of Zero Configuration Networking [RFC6760] [ZC] [ROADMAP].

This document describes an enhancement to DNS-Based Service Discovery [RFC6763] (DNS-SD) that allows servers to register the services they offer using the DNS protocol rather than using Multicast DNS [RFC6762] (mDNS). There is already a large installed base of DNS-SD clients that can discover services using the DNS protocol (e.g. Android, Windows, Linux, Apple).

This document is intended for three audiences: implementors of software that provides services that should be advertised using DNS-SD, implementors of DNS servers that will be used in contexts where DNS-SD registration is needed, and administrators of networks where DNS-SD service is required. The document is expected to provide sufficient information to allow interoperable implementation of the registration protocol.

DNS-Based Service Discovery (DNS-SD) allows services to advertise the fact that they provide service, and to provide the information required to access that service. DNS-SD clients can then discover the set of services of a particular type that are available. They can then select a service from among those that are available and obtain the information required to use it. Although DNS Service Discovery (DNS-SD) using the DNS protocol (as opposed to mDNS) can be more efficient and versatile, it is not common in practice, because of the difficulties associated with updating authoritative DNS services with service information.

Existing practice for updating DNS zones is to either manually enter new data, or else use DNS Update [RFC2136]. Unfortunately DNS Update requires either that the authoritative DNS server automatically trust updates, or else that the DNS Update requestor have some kind of shared secret or public key that is known to the DNS server and can be used to authenticate the update. Furthermore, DNS Update can be a fairly chatty process, requiring multiple round trips with different conditional predicates to complete the update process.

The Service Registration Protocol (SRP) adds a set of default heuristics for processing DNS updates that eliminates the need for DNS update conditional predicates: instead, the SRP registrar (a DNS server that supports SRP updates) has a set of default predicates that are applied to the update, and the update either succeeds entirely, or fails in a way that allows the requestor to know what went wrong and construct a new update.

SRP also adds a feature called First-Come, First-Served (FCFS) Naming, which allows the requestor to claim a name that is not yet in use, and, using SIG(0) [RFC2931], to authenticate both the initial claim and subsequent updates. This prevents name conflicts, since a second SRP requestor attempting to claim the same name will not possess the SIG(0) key used by the first requestor to claim it, and so its claim will be rejected and the second requestor will have to choose a new name.

It is important to understand that "authenticate" here just means that we can tell that an update came from the same source as the original registration. We have not established trust. This has important implications for what we can and can't do with data the client sends us. You will notice as you read this document that we only support adding a very restricted set of records, and the content of those records is further constrained.

The reason for this is precisely that we have not established trust. So we can only publish information that we feel safe in publishing even though we do not have any basis for trusting the requestor. We reason that mDNS [RFC6762] allows arbitrary hosts on a single IP link to advertise services [RFC6763], relying on whatever service is advertised to provide authentication as a part of its protocol rather than in the service advertisement.

This is considered reasonably safe because it requires physical presence on the network in order to advertise. An off-network mDNS attack is simply not possible. Our goal with this specification is to impose similar constraints. Because of this you will see in Section 3.3.1 that a very restricted set of records with a very restricted set of relationships are allowed. You will also see in Section 6.1 that we give advice on how to prevent off-network attacks.

This leads us to the disappointing observation that this protocol is not a mechanism for adding arbitrary information to DNS zones. We have not evaluated the security properties of adding, for example, an SOA record, an MX record, or a CNAME record, and so these are forbidden. A future protocol specification might include analyses for other records, and extend the set of records that can be registered here. Or it might require establishment of trust, and add an authorization model to the authentication model we now have. But this is work for a future document.

Finally, SRP adds the concept of a 'lease,' similar to leases in Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol [RFC8415]. The SRP registration itself has a lease which may be on the order of an hour; if the requestor does not renew the lease before it has elapsed, the

registration is removed. The claim on the name can have a longer lease, so that another requestor cannot claim the name, even though the registration has expired.

The Service Registration Protocol for DNS-SD (SRP), specified in this document, provides a reasonably secure mechanism for publishing this information. Once published, these services can be readily discovered by DNS-SD clients using standard DNS lookups.

The DNS-SD specification ([RFC6763], Section 10, Populating the DNS with Information), briefly discusses ways that servers can publish their information in the DNS namespace. In the case of mDNS, it allows servers to publish their information on the local link, using names in the ".local" namespace, which makes their services directly discoverable by peers attached to that same local link.

RFC6763 also allows clients to discover services using the DNS protocol [RFC1035]. This can be done by having a system administrator manually configure service information in the DNS, but manually populating DNS authoritative server databases is costly and potentially error-prone, and requires a knowledgeable network administrator. Consequently, although all DNS-SD client implementations of which we are aware support DNS-SD using DNS queries, in practice it is used much less frequently than mDNS.

The Discovery Proxy [RFC8766] provides one way to automatically populate the DNS namespace, but is only appropriate on networks where services are easily advertised using mDNS. This document describes a solution more suitable for networks where multicast is inefficient, or where sleepy devices are common, by supporting both offering of services, and discovery of services, using unicast.

## 2. Conventions and Terminology Used in This Document

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.

## 3. Service Registration Protocol

Services that implement SRP use DNS Update [RFC2136] [RFC3007] to publish service information in the DNS. Two variants exist, one for full-featured hosts, and one for devices designed for "Constrained-Node Networks" [RFC7228]. An SRP registrar is most likely an authoritative DNS server, or else is updating an authoritative DNS server. There is no requirement that the server that is receiving

SRP updates be the same server that is answering queries that return records that have been registered.

### 3.1. Protocol Variants

#### 3.1.1. Full-featured Hosts

Full-featured hosts either are configured manually with a registration domain, or discover the default registration domain as described in Section 11 of [RFC6763]. If this process does not produce a default registration domain, the Service Registration protocol is not discoverable on the local network using this mechanism. Other discovery mechanisms are possible, but are out of scope for this document.

Manual configuration of the registration domain can be done either by querying the list of available registration domains ("r.\_dns-sd.\_udp") and allowing the user to select one from the UI, or by any other means appropriate to the particular use case being addressed. Full-featured devices construct the names of the SRV, TXT, and PTR records describing their service(s) as subdomains of the chosen service registration domain. For these names they then discover the zone apex of the closest enclosing DNS zone using SOA queries Section 6.1 of [RFC8765]. Having discovered the enclosing DNS zone, they query for the "\_dnssd-srv.\_tcp.<zone>" SRV record to discover the server to which they can send SRP updates. Hosts that support SRP Updates using TLS use the "\_dnssd-srv-tls.\_tcp.<zone>" SRV record instead.

Examples of full-featured hosts include devices such as home computers, laptops, powered peripherals with network connections such as printers, home routers, and even battery-operated devices such as mobile phones that have long battery lives.

#### 3.1.2. Constrained Hosts

For devices designed for Constrained-Node Networks [RFC7228] some simplifications are available. Instead of being configured with (or discovering) the service registration domain, the special-use domain name (see [RFC6761]) "default.service.arpa" is used. The details of how SRP registrar(s) are discovered will be specific to the constrained network, and therefore we do not suggest a specific mechanism here.

SRP requestors on constrained networks are expected to receive from the network a list of SRP registrars with which to register. It is the responsibility of a Constrained-Node Network supporting SRP to provide one or more registrar addresses. It is the responsibility of

the registrar supporting a Constrained-Node Network to handle the updates appropriately. In some network environments, updates may be accepted directly into a local "default.service.arpa" zone, which has only local visibility. In other network environments, updates for names ending in "default.service.arpa" may be rewritten by the registrar to names with broader visibility.

### 3.1.3. Why two variants?

The reason for these different variants is that low-power devices that typically use Constrained-Node Networks may have very limited battery storage. The series of DNS lookups required to discover an SRP registrar and then communicate with it will increase the energy required to advertise a service; for low-power devices, the additional flexibility this provides does not justify the additional use of energy. It is also fairly typical of such networks that some network service information is obtained as part of the process of joining the network, and so this can be relied upon to provide nodes with the information they need.

Networks that are not constrained networks can have more complicated topologies at the IP layer. Nodes connected to such networks can be assumed to be able to do DNS-SD service registration domain discovery. Such networks are generally able to provide registration domain discovery and routing. This creates the possibility of off-network spoofing, where a device from a foreign network registers a service on the local network in order to attack devices on the local network. To prevent such spoofing, TCP is required for such networks.

## 3.2. Protocol Details

We will discuss several parts to this process: how to know what to publish, how to know where to publish it (under what name), how to publish it, and how to secure its publication. In Section 5, we specify how to maintain the information once published.

### 3.2.1. What to publish

SRP Updates are sent by SRP requestors to SRP registrars. Three types of instructions appear in an SRP update: Service Discovery instructions, Service Description instructions, and Host Description instructions. These instructions are made up of DNS Update RRs that are either adds or deletes. The types of records that are added, updated and removed in each of these instructions, as well as the constraints that apply to them, are described in Section 3.3. An SRP Update is a DNS Update message that is constructed so as to meet the constraints described in that section. The following is a brief

overview of what is included in a typical SRP Update:

- \* PTR Resource Record (RR) for services, which map from a generic service type (or subtype) name to a specific Service Instance Name.
- \* For any Service Instance Name ([RFC6763], Section 4.1), an SRV RR, one or more TXT RRs, and a KEY RR. Although in principle DNS-SD Service Description records can include other record types with the same Service Instance Name, in practice they rarely do. SRP does not permit other record types. The KEY RR is used to support FCFS naming, and has no specific meaning for DNS-SD lookups. SRV records for all services described in an SRP update point to the same hostname.
- \* There is never more than one hostname in a single SRP update. The hostname has one or more address RRs (AAAA or A) and a KEY RR (used for FCFS naming). Depending on the use case, an SRP requestor may be required to suppress some addresses that would not be usable by hosts discovering the service through the SRP registrar. The exact address record suppression behavior required may vary for different types of SRP requestors. An example of such advice can be found in Section 5.5.2 of [RFC8766].

[RFC6763] describes the details of what each of these types of RR mean, with the exception of the KEY RR, which is defined in [RFC2539]. These RFCs should be considered the definitive source for information about what to publish; the reason for summarizing this here is to provide the reader with enough information about what will be published that the service registration process can be understood at a high level without first learning the full details of DNS-SD. Also, the "Service Instance Name" is an important aspect of FCFS naming, which we describe later on in this document.

### 3.2.2. Where to publish it

Multicast DNS uses a single namespace, ".local", which is valid on the local link. This convenience is not available for DNS-SD using the DNS protocol: services must exist in some specific DNS namespace that is chosen either by the network operator, or automatically.

As described above, full-featured devices are responsible for knowing the domain in which to register their services. Such devices MAY optionally support configuration of a registration domain by the operator of the device. However, such devices MUST support registration domain discovery as described in Section 11 of [RFC6763], "Discovery of Browsing and Registration Domains".

Devices made for Constrained-Node Networks register in the special use domain name [RFC6761] "default.service.arpa", and let the SRP registrar handle rewriting that to a different domain if necessary.

### 3.2.3. How to publish it

It is possible to issue a DNS Update that does several things at once; this means that it's possible to do all the work of adding a PTR resource record to the PTR RRset on the Service Name, and creating or updating the Service Instance Name and Host Description, in a single transaction.

An SRP Update takes advantage of this: it is implemented as a single DNS Update message that contains a service's Service Discovery records, Service Description records, and Host Description records.

Updates done according to this specification are somewhat different than regular DNS Updates as defined in [RFC2136]. The [RFC2136] update process can involve many update attempts: you might first attempt to add a name if it doesn't exist; if that fails, then in a second message you might update the name if it does exist but matches certain preconditions. Because the registration protocol uses a single transaction, some of this adaptability is lost.

In order to allow updates to happen in a single transaction, SRP Updates do not include update prerequisites. The requirements specified in Section 3.3 are implicit in the processing of SRP Updates, and so there is no need for the SRP requestor to put in any explicit prerequisites.

#### 3.2.3.1. How the DNS-SD Service Registration process differs from DNS Update as specified in RFC2136

DNS-SD Service Registration is based on standard RFC2136 DNS Update, with some differences:

- \* It implements first-come first-served name allocation, protected using SIG(0) [RFC2931].
- \* It enforces policy about what updates are allowed.
- \* It optionally performs rewriting of "default.service.arpa" to some other domain.
- \* It optionally performs automatic population of the address-to-name reverse mapping domains.
- \* An SRP registrar is not required to implement general DNS Update prerequisite processing.
- \* Constrained-Node SRP requestors are allowed to send updates to the generic domain "default.service.arpa."

### 3.2.3.2. Retransmission Strategy

The DNS protocol, including DNS updates, can operate over UDP or TCP. When using UDP, reliable transmission must be guaranteed by retransmitting if a DNS UDP message is not acknowledged in a reasonable interval. Section 4.2.1 of [RFC1035] provides some guidance on this topic, as does Section 1 of [RFC1536]. Section 3.1.3 of [RFC8085] also provides useful guidance that is particularly relevant to DNS.

### 3.2.3.3. Successive Updates

Service Registration Protocol does not require that every update contain the same information. When an SRP requestor needs to send more than one SRP update to the SRP registrar, it MUST send these sequentially: until an earlier update has been successfully acknowledged, the requestor MUST NOT begin sending a subsequent update.

### 3.2.4. How to secure it

DNS update as described in [RFC2136] is secured using Secret Key Transaction Signatures, [RFC8945], which uses a secret key shared between the DNS Update requestor (which issues the update) and the server (which authenticates it). This model does not work for automatic service registration.

The goal of securing the DNS-SD Registration Protocol is to provide the best possible security given the constraint that service registration has to be automatic. It is possible to layer more operational security on top of what we describe here, but FCFS naming is already an improvement over the security of mDNS.

#### 3.2.4.1. First-Come First-Served Naming

First-Come First-Serve naming provides a limited degree of security: a server that registers its service using DNS-SD Registration protocol is given ownership of a name for an extended period of time based on a lease specific to the key used to authenticate the DNS Update, which may be longer than the lease associated with the registered records. As long as the registration service remembers the name and the key used to register that name, no other server can add or update the information associated with that. If the server fails to renew its service registration before the KEY lease (Section 4 of [I-D.ietf-dnssd-update-lease]) expires, its name is no longer protected. FCFS naming is used to protect both the Service Description and the Host Description.

### 3.2.5. SRP Requestor Behavior

#### 3.2.5.1. Public/Private key pair generation and storage

The requestor generates a public/private key pair (See Section 6.6). This key pair **MUST** be stored in stable storage; if there is no writable stable storage on the SRP requestor, the SRP requestor **MUST** be pre-configured with a public/private key pair in read-only storage that can be used. This key pair **MUST** be unique to the device. A device with rewritable storage **SHOULD** retain this key indefinitely. When the device changes ownership, it may be appropriate for the former owner to erase the old key pair, which would then require the new owner to install a new one. Therefore, the SRP requestor on the device **SHOULD** provide a mechanism to erase the key, for example as the result of a "factory reset," and to generate a new key.

The policy described here for managing keys assumes that the keys are only used for SRP. If a key that is used for SRP is also used for other purposes, the policy described here is likely to be insufficient. The policy stated here is **NOT RECOMMENDED** in such a situation: a policy appropriate to the full set of uses for the key must be chosen. Specifying such a policy is out of scope for this document.

When sending DNS updates, the requestor includes a KEY record containing the public portion of the key in each Host Description Instruction and each Service Description Instruction. Each KEY record **MUST** contain the same public key. The update is signed using SIG(0), using the private key that corresponds to the public key in the KEY record. The lifetimes of the records in the update is set using the EDNS(0) Update Lease option [I-D.ietf-dnssd-update-lease].

The format of the KEY resource record in the SRP Update is defined in [RFC3445]. Because the KEY RR used in TSIG is not a zone-signing key, the flags field in the KEY RR **MUST** be all zeroes.

The KEY record in Service Description updates **MAY** be omitted for brevity; if it is omitted, the SRP registrar **MUST** behave as if the same KEY record that is given for the Host Description is also given for each Service Description for which no KEY record is provided. Omitted KEY records are not used when computing the SIG(0) signature.

### 3.2.5.2. Name Conflict Handling

Both Host Description RR adds and Service Description RR adds can have names that result in name conflicts. Service Discovery record adds cannot have name conflicts. If any Host Description or Service Description record is found by the SRP registrar to have a conflict with an existing name, the registrar will respond to the SRP Update with a YXDomain RCODE (Section 2.2 of [RFC2136]). In this case, the requestor MUST choose a new name or give up.

There is no specific requirement for how this is done; typically, however, the requestor will append a number to the preferred name. This number could be sequentially increasing, or could be chosen randomly. One existing implementation attempts several sequential numbers before choosing randomly. So for instance, it might try host.default.service.arpa, then host-1.default.service.arpa, then host-2.default.service.arpa, then host-31773.default.service.arpa.

### 3.2.5.3. Record Lifetimes

The lifetime of the DNS-SD PTR, SRV, A, AAAA and TXT records [RFC6763] uses the LEASE field of the Update Lease option, and is typically set to two hours. This means that if a device is disconnected from the network, it does not appear in the user interfaces of devices looking for services of that type for too long.

The lifetime of the KEY records is set using the KEY-LEASE field of the Update Lease Option, and SHOULD be set to a much longer time, typically 14 days. The result of this is that even though a device may be temporarily unplugged, disappearing from the network for a few days, it makes a claim on its name that lasts much longer.

This means that even if a device is unplugged from the network for a few days, and its services are not available for that time, no other device can come along and claim its name the moment it disappears from the network. In the event that a device is unplugged from the network and permanently discarded, then its name is eventually cleaned up and made available for re-use.

### 3.2.5.4. Compression in SRV records

Although [RFC2782] requires that the target name in the SRV record not be compressed, an SRP requestor MAY compress the target in the SRV record. The motivation for not compressing in [RFC2782] is not stated, but is assumed to be because a caching resolver that does not understand the format of the SRV record might store it as binary data and thus return an invalid pointer in response to a query. This does not apply in the case of SRP: an SRP registrar needs to understand

SRV records in order to validate the SRP Update. Compression of the target can save space in the SRP Update, so we want clients to be able to assume that the registrar will handle this. Therefore, SRP registrars MUST support compression of SRV RR targets.

Note that this does not update [RFC2782]: DNS servers still MUST NOT compress SRV record targets. The requirement to accept compressed SRV records in updates only applies to SRP registrars, and SRP registrars that are also DNS servers still MUST NOT compress SRV record targets in DNS responses. We note also that [RFC6762] recommends that SRV records be compressed in mDNS messages, so [RFC2782] does not apply to mDNS messages.

In addition, we note that an implementor of an SRP requestor might update existing code that creates SRV records or compresses DNS messages so that it compresses the target of an SRV record. Care must be taken if such code is used both in requestors and in DNS servers that the code only compresses in the case where a requestor is generating an SRP update.

### 3.2.5.5. Removing published services

#### 3.2.5.5.1. Removing all published services

To remove all the services registered to a particular host, the SRP requestor transmits an SRP update for that host with an Update Lease option that has a LEASE value of zero. If the registration is to be permanently removed, KEY-LEASE SHOULD also be zero. Otherwise, it SHOULD be set to the same value it had previously; this holds the name in reserve for when the SRP requestor is once again able to provide the service.

SRP requestors are normally expected to remove all service instances when removing a host. However, in some cases an SRP requestor may not have retained sufficient state to know that some service instance is pointing to a host that it is removing. This method of removing services is intended for the case where the requestor is going offline and does not want its services advertised. Therefore, it is sufficient for the requestor to send the Host Description Instruction (Section 3.3.1.3).

To support this, when removing services based on the lease time being zero, an SRP registrar MUST remove all service instances pointing to a host when a host is removed, even if the SRP requestor doesn't list them explicitly. If the KEY lease time is nonzero, the SRP registrar MUST NOT delete the KEY records for these SRP requestors.

### 3.2.5.5.2. Removing some published services

In some use cases a requestor may need to remove some specific service, without removing its other services. This can be accomplished in one of two ways. To simply remove a specific service, the requestor sends a valid SRP Update where the Service Discovery Instruction (Section 3.3.1.1) contains a single Delete an RR from an RRset ([RFC2136], Section 2.5.4) update that deletes the PTR record whose target is the service instance name. The Service Description Instruction (Section 3.3.1.2) in this case contains a single Delete all RRsets from a Name ([RFC2136], Section 2.5.3) update to the service instance name.

The second alternative is used when some service is being replaced by a different service with a different service instance name. In this case, the old service is deleted as in the first alternative. The new service is added, just as it would be in an update that wasn't deleting the old service. Because both the removal of the old service and the add of the new service consist of a valid Service Discovery Instruction and a valid Service Description Instruction, the update as a whole is a valid SRP Update, and will result in the old service being removed and the new one added, or, to put it differently, in the old service being replaced by the new service.

It is perhaps worth noting that if a service is being updated without the service instance name changing, that will look very much like the second alternative above. The difference is that because the target for the PTR record in the Service Discovery Instruction is the same for both the Delete An RR From An RRset update and the Add To An RRSet update, there is no way to tell whether they were intended to be one or two Instructions. The same would be true of the Service Description Instruction.

Whichever of these two alternatives is used, the host lease will be updated with the lease time provided in the SRP update. In neither of these cases is it permissible to delete the host. All services must point to a host. If a host is to be deleted, this must be done using the method described in Section 3.2.5.5.1, which deletes the host and all services that have that host as their target.

## 3.3. Validation and Processing of SRP Updates

### 3.3.1. Validation of DNS Update Add and Delete RRs

The SRP registrar first validates that the DNS Update is a syntactically and semantically valid DNS Update according to the rules specified in [RFC2136].

SRP Updates consist of a set of `_instructions_` that together add or remove one or more services. Each instruction consists of some combination of delete updates and add updates. When an instruction contains a delete and an add, the delete **MUST** precede the add.

The SRP registrar checks each instruction in the SRP Update to see that it is either a Service Discovery Instruction, a Service Description Instruction, or a Host Description Instruction. Order matters in DNS updates. Specifically, deletes must precede adds for records that the deletes would affect; otherwise the add will have no effect. This is the only ordering constraint; aside from this constraint, updates may appear in whatever order is convenient when constructing the update.

Because the SRP Update is a DNS update, it **MUST** contain a single question that indicates the zone to be updated. Every delete and update in an SRP Update **MUST** be within the zone that is specified for the SRP Update.

#### 3.3.1.1. Service Discovery Instruction

An instruction is a Service Discovery Instruction if it contains

- \* exactly one "Add to an RRSet" ([RFC2136], Section 2.5.1) or exactly one "Delete an RR from an RRSet" ([RFC2136], Section 2.5.4) RR update,
- \* which updates a PTR RR,
- \* the target of which is a Service Instance Name
- \* for which name a Service Description Instruction is present in the SRP Update, and:
  - if the RR Update is an "Add to an RRSet" instruction, that Service Description Instruction contains an "Add to an RRset" RR update for the SRV RR describing that service and no other "Delete from an RRset" instructions for that Service Instance Name; or
  - if the RR Update is a "Delete an RR from an RRSet" instruction, that Service Description Instruction contains a "Delete from an RRset" RR update and no other "Add to an RRset" instructions for that Service Instance Name.
- \* and contains no other add or delete RR updates for the same name as the PTR RR Update.

Note that there can be more than one Service Discovery Instruction for the same name if the SRP requestor is advertising more than one service of the same type, or is changing the target of a PTR RR. This is also true for SRP subtypes (Section 7.1 of [RFC6763]). For each such PTR RR add or delete, the above constraints must be met.

### 3.3.1.2. Service Description Instruction

An instruction is a Service Description Instruction if, for the appropriate Service Instance Name, the following are true:

- \* It contains exactly one "Delete all RRsets from a name" update for the service instance name ([RFC2136], Section 2.5.3),
- \* It contains zero or one "Add to an RRset" SRV RR,
- \* It contains zero or one "Add to an RRset" KEY RR that, if present, contains the public key corresponding to the private key that was used to sign the message (if present, the KEY MUST match the KEY RR given in the Host Description),
- \* It contains zero or more "Add to an RRset" TXT RRs,
- \* If there is one "Add to an RRset" SRV update, there MUST be at least one "Add to an RRset" TXT update.
- \* The target of the SRV RR Add, if present points to a hostname for which there is a Host Description Instruction in the SRP Update, or
- \* If there is no "Add to an RRset" SRV RR, then either:
  - the name to which the "Delete all RRsets from a name" applies does not exist, or
  - there is an existing KEY RR on that name, which matches the key with which the SRP Update was signed.
- \* No other resource records on the Service Instance Name are modified.

An SRP registrar MUST correctly handle compressed names in the SRV target.

### 3.3.1.3. Host Description Instruction

An instruction is a Host Description Instruction if, for the appropriate hostname, it contains

- \* exactly one "Delete all RRsets from a name" RR,
- \* one or more "Add to an RRset" RRs of type A and/or AAAA,
- \* exactly one "Add to an RRset" RR that adds a KEY RR that contains the public key corresponding to the private key that was used to sign the message,
- \* Host Description Instructions do not modify any other resource records.

A and/or AAAA records that are not of sufficient scope to be validly published in a DNS zone MAY be ignored by the SRP registrar, which could result in a host description effectively containing zero reachable addresses even when it contains one or more addresses.

For example, if a link-scope address or IPv4 autoconfiguration address is provided by the SRP requestor, the SRP registrar could not publish this in a DNS zone. However, in some situations, the registrar might make the records available through a mechanism such as an advertising proxy only on the specific link from which the SRP update originated; in such a situation, locally-scoped records are still valid.

### 3.3.2. Valid SRP Update Requirements

An SRP Update MUST contain exactly one Host Description Instruction. In addition, there MUST NOT be any Service Description Instruction to which no Service Discovery Instruction points. A DNS Update that contains any additional adds or deletes that cannot be identified as Service Discovery, Service Description or Host Description Instructions is not an SRP Update. A DNS update that contains any prerequisites is not an SRP Update.

An SRP Update MUST include an EDNS(0) Update Lease option [I-D.ietf-dnssd-update-lease]. The LEASE time specified in the Update Lease option MUST be less than or equal to the KEY-LEASE time. A DNS update that does not include the Update Lease option, or that includes a KEY-LEASE value that is less than the LEASE value, is not an SRP update.

When an SRP registrar receives a DNS Update that is not an SRP update, it MAY process the update as regular RFC2136 updates, including access control checks and constraint checks, if supported. Otherwise the SRP registrar MUST reject the DNS Update with the Refused RCODE.

If the definitions of each of these instructions are followed carefully and the update requirements are validated correctly, many DNS Updates that look very much like SRP Updates nevertheless will fail to validate. For example, a DNS update that contains an Add to an RRset instruction for a Service Name and an Add to an RRset instruction for a Service Instance Name, where the PTR record added to the Service Name does not reference the Service Instance Name, is not a valid SRP Update message, but may be a valid RFC2136 update.

### 3.3.3. FCFS Name And Signature Validation

Assuming that a DNS Update message has been validated with these conditions and is a valid SRP Update, the SRP registrar checks that the name in the Host Description Instruction exists. If so, then the registrar checks to see if the KEY record on that name is the same as the KEY record in the Host Description Instruction. The registrar performs the same check for the KEY records in any Service

Description Instructions. For KEY records that were omitted from Service Description Instructions, the KEY from the Host Description Instruction is used. If any existing KEY record corresponding to a KEY record in the SRP Update does not match the KEY record in the SRP Update (whether provided or taken from the Host Description Instruction), then the SRP registrar MUST reject the SRP Update with the YXDomain RCODE.

Otherwise, the SRP registrar validates the SRP Update using SIG(0) against the public key in the KEY record of the Host Description Instruction. If the validation fails, the registrar MUST reject the SRP Update with the Refused RCODE. Otherwise, the SRP Update is considered valid and authentic, and is processed according to the method described in RFC2136.

KEY record updates omitted from Service Description Instruction are processed as if they had been explicitly present: every Service Description that is updated MUST, after the SRP Update has been applied, have a KEY RR, and it must be the same KEY RR that is present in the Host Description to which the Service Description refers.

[RFC3445] states that the flags field in the KEY RR MUST be zero except for bit 7, which can be one in the case of a zone key. However, the SRP registrar MUST NOT validate the flags field.

#### 3.3.4. Handling of Service Subtypes

SRP registrars MUST treat the update instructions for a service type and all its subtypes as atomic. That is, when a service and its subtypes are being updated, whatever information appears in the SRP Update is the entirety of information about that service and its subtypes. If any subtype appeared in a previous update but does not appear in the current update, then the SRP registrar MUST remove that subtype.

Similarly, there is no mechanism for deleting subtypes. A delete of a service deletes all of its subtypes. To delete an individual subtype, an SRP Update must be constructed that contains the service type and all subtypes for that service except for the one to be deleted.

### 3.3.5. SRP Update response

The status that is returned depends on the result of processing the update, and can be either NoError, ServFail, Refused or YXDomain: all other possible outcomes will already have been accounted for when applying the constraints that qualify the update as an SRP Update. The meanings of these responses are explained in Section 2.2 of [RFC2136].

In the case of a response other than NoError, Section 3.8 of [RFC2136] specifies that the server is permitted to respond either with no RRs or to copy the RRs sent by the client into the response. The SRP Requestor MUST NOT attempt to validate any RRs that are included in the response. It is possible that a future SRP extension may include per-RR indications as to why the update failed, but at present this is not specified, so if a client were to attempt to validate the RRs in the response, it might reject such a response, since it would contain RRs, but probably not a set of RRs identical to what was sent in the SRP Update.

### 3.3.6. Optional Behavior

The SRP registrar MAY add a Reverse Mapping (Section 3.5 of [RFC1035], Section 2.5 of [RFC3596]) that corresponds to the Host Description. This is not required because the Reverse Mapping serves no protocol function, but it may be useful for debugging, e.g. in annotating network packet traces or logs. In order for the registrar to do a reverse mapping update, it must be authoritative for the zone that would need to be updated, or have credentials to do the update. The SRP requestor MAY also do a reverse mapping update if it has credentials to do so.

The SRP registrar MAY apply additional criteria when accepting updates. In some networks, it may be possible to do out-of-band registration of keys, and only accept updates from pre-registered keys. In this case, an update for a key that has not been registered SHOULD be rejected with the Refused RCODE.

There are at least two benefits to doing this rather than simply using normal SIG(0) DNS updates. First, the same registration protocol can be used in both cases, so both use cases can be addressed by the same SRP requestor implementation. Second, the registration protocol includes maintenance functionality not present with normal DNS updates.

Note that the semantics of using SRP in this way are different than for typical RFC2136 implementations: the KEY used to sign the SRP Update only allows the SRP requestor to update records that refer to its Host Description. RFC2136 implementations do not normally provide a way to enforce a constraint of this type.

The SRP registrar could also have a dictionary of names or name patterns that are not permitted. If such a list is used, updates for Service Instance Names that match entries in the dictionary are rejected with a Refused RCODE.

#### 4. TTL Consistency

All RRs within an RRset are required to have the same TTL (Clarifications to the DNS Specification [RFC2181], Section 5.2). In order to avoid inconsistencies, SRP places restrictions on TTLs sent by requestors and requires that SRP registrars enforce consistency.

Requestors sending SRP Updates MUST use consistent TTLs in all RRs within the SRP Update.

SRP registrars MUST check that the TTLs for all RRs within the SRP Update are the same. If they are not, the SRP update MUST be rejected with a Refused RCODE.

Additionally, when adding RRs to an RRset, for example when processing Service Discovery records, the SRP registrar MUST use the same TTL on all RRs in the RRset. How this consistency is enforced is up to the implementation.

TTLs sent in SRP Updates are advisory: they indicate the SRP requestor's guess as to what a good TTL would be. SRP registrars may override these TTLs. SRP registrars SHOULD ensure that TTLs are reasonable: neither too long nor too short. The TTL SHOULD NOT ever be longer than the lease time (Section 5.1). Shorter TTLs will result in more frequent data refreshes; this increases latency on the DNS-SD client side, increases load on any caching resolvers and on the authoritative server, and also increases network load, which may be an issue for constrained networks. Longer TTLs will increase the likelihood that data in caches will be stale. TTL minimums and maximums SHOULD be configurable by the operator of the SRP registrar.

#### 5. Maintenance

### 5.1. Cleaning up stale data

Because the DNS-SD registration protocol is automatic, and not managed by humans, some additional bookkeeping is required. When an update is constructed by the SRP requestor, it MUST include an EDNS(0) Update Lease Option [I-D.ietf-dnssd-update-lease]. The Update Lease Option contains two lease times: the Lease Time and the KEY Lease Time.

These leases are promises, similar to DHCP leases [RFC2131], from the SRP requestor that it will send a new update for the service registration before the lease time expires. The Lease time is chosen to represent the time after the update during which the registered records other than the KEY record can be assumed to be valid. The KEY lease time represents the time after the update during which the KEY record can be assumed to be valid.

The reasoning behind the different lease times is discussed in the section on FCFS naming (Section 3.2.4.1). SRP registrars may be configured with limits for these values. A default limit of two hours for the Lease and 14 days for the SIG(0) KEY are currently thought to be good choices. Constrained devices with limited battery that wake infrequently are likely to request longer leases; registrars that support such devices may need to set higher limits. SRP requestors that are going to continue to use names on which they hold leases SHOULD update well before the lease ends, in case the registrar is unavailable or under heavy load.

The lease time applies specifically to the host. All service instances, and all service entries for such service instances, depend on the host. When the lease on a host expires, the host and all services that reference it MUST be removed at the same time it is never valid for a service instance to remain when the host it references has been removed. If the KEY record for the host is to remain, the KEY record for any services that reference it MUST also remain. However, the service PTR record MUST be removed, since it has no key associated with it, and since it is never valid to have a service PTR record for which there is no service instance on the target of the PTR record.

SRP registrars MUST also track a lease time per service instance. The reason for doing this is that a requestor may re-register a host with a different set of services, and not remember that some different service instance had previously been registered. In this case, when that service instance lease expires, the SRP registrar MUST remove the service instance (although the KEY record for the service instance SHOULD be retained until the KEY lease on that service expires). This is beneficial because otherwise if the SRP requestor continues to renew the host, but never mentions the stale service again, the stale service will continue to be advertised.

The SRP registrar MUST include an EDNS(0) Update Lease option in the response if the lease time proposed by the requestor has been shortened or lengthened by the registrar. The requestor MUST check for the EDNS(0) Update Lease option in the response and MUST use the lease times from that option in place of the options that it sent to the registrar when deciding when to renew its registration. The times may be shorter or longer than those specified in the SRP Update; the SRP requestor must honor them in either case.

SRP requestors SHOULD assume that each lease ends N seconds after the update was first transmitted, where N is the lease duration. SRP Registrars SHOULD assume that each lease ends N seconds after the update that was successfully processed was received. Because the registrar will always receive the update after the SRP requestor sent it, this avoids the possibility of misunderstandings.

SRP registrars MUST reject updates that do not include an EDNS(0) Update Lease option. DNS authoritative servers that allow both SRP and non-SRP DNS updates MAY accept updates that don't include leases, but SHOULD differentiate between SRP Updates and other updates, and MUST reject updates that would otherwise be SRP Updates if they do not include leases.

Lease times have a completely different function than TTLs. On an authoritative DNS server, the TTL on a resource record is a constant: whenever that RR is served in a DNS response, the TTL value sent in the answer is the same. The lease time is never sent as a TTL; its sole purpose is to determine when the authoritative DNS server will delete stale records. It is not an error to send a DNS response with a TTL of 'n' when the remaining time on the lease is less than 'n'.

## 6. Security Considerations

## 6.1. Source Validation

SRP Updates have no authorization semantics other than FCFS. This means that if an attacker from outside of the administrative domain of the SRP registrar knows the registrar's IP address, it can in principle send updates to the registrar that will be processed successfully. SRP Registrars SHOULD therefore be configured to reject updates from source addresses outside of the administrative domain of the registrar.

For TCP updates, the initial SYN-SYN+ACK handshake prevents updates being forged by an off-network attacker. In order to ensure that this handshake happens, SRP registrars relying on three-way-handshake validation MUST NOT accept TCP Fast Open [RFC7413] payloads. If the network infrastructure allows it, an SRP registrar MAY accept TCP Fast Open payloads if all such packets are validated along the path, and the network is able to reject this type of spoofing at all ingress points.

For UDP updates from constrained devices, spoofing would have to be prevented with appropriate source address filtration on routers [RFC2827]. This would ordinarily be accomplished by measures such as are described in Section 4.5 of [RFC7084]. For example, a stub router [I-D.ietf-snac-simple] for a constrained network might only accept UDP updates from source addresses known to be on-link on that stub network, and might further validate that the UDP update was actually received on the stub network interface and not the interface connected to the adjacent infrastructure link.

## 6.2. Other DNS updates

Note that these rules only apply to the validation of SRP Updates. A server that accepts updates from SRP requestors may also accept other DNS updates, and those DNS updates may be validated using different rules. However, in the case of a DNS server that accepts SRP updates, the intersection of the SRP Update rules and whatever other update rules are present must be considered very carefully.

For example, a normal, authenticated DNS update to any RR that was added using SRP, but that is authenticated using a different key, could be used to override a promise made by the SRP registrar to an SRP requestor, by replacing all or part of the service registration information with information provided by an authenticated DNS update requestor. An implementation that allows both kinds of updates SHOULD NOT allow DNS Update requestors that are using different authentication and authorization credentials to update records added by SRP requestors.

### 6.3. Risks of allowing arbitrary names to be registered in SRP updates

It is possible to set up SRP updates for a zone that is used for non-DNSSD services. For example, imagine that you set up SRP service for example.com. SRP hosts can now register names like "www" or "mail" or "smtp" in this domain. In addition, SRP updates using FCFS naming can insert names that are obscene or offensive into the zone. There is no simple solution to these problems. We have two recommendations to address this problem, however:

- \* Do not provide SRP service in organization-level zones. Use subdomains of the organizational domain for DNS service discovery. This does not prevent registering names as mentioned above, but does ensure that genuinely important names are not accidentally reserved for SRP clients. So for example, the zone "dnssd.example.com" could be used instead of "example.com" for SRP updates. Because of the way that DNS browsing domains are discovered, there is no need for the DNSSD discovery zone that is updated by SRP to have a user-friendly or important-sounding name.
- \* Configure a dictionary of names that are prohibited. Dictionaries of common obscene and offensive names are no doubt available, and can be augmented with a list of typical "special" names like "www", "mail", "smtp" and so on. Lists of names are generally available, or can be constructed manually.

### 6.4. Security of local service discovery

Local links can be protected by managed services such as RA Guard [RFC6105], but multicast services like DHCP [RFC2131], DHCPv6 [RFC8415] and IPv6 Neighbor Discovery [RFC4861] are in most cases not authenticated and can't be controlled on unmanaged networks, such as home networks and small-office networks where no network management staff are present. In such situations, the SRP service has comparatively fewer potential security exposures and hence is not the weak link. This is discussed in more detail in Section 3.2.4.

The fundamental protection for networks of this type is the user's choice of what devices to add to the network. Work is being done in other working groups and standards bodies to improve the state of the art for network on-boarding and device isolation (e.g., [RFC8520] provides a means for constraining what behaviors are allowed for a device in an automatic way), but such work is out of scope for this document.

### 6.5. SRP Registrar Authentication

This specification does not provide a mechanism for validating responses from SRP Registrars to SRP requestors. In principle, a KEY RR could be used by a non-constrained SRP requestor to validate responses from the registrar, but this is not required, nor do we specify a mechanism for determining which key to use.

In addition, for DNS-over-TLS connections, out-of-band key pinning as described in [RFC7858], Section 4.2 could be used for authentication of the SRP registrar, e.g. to prevent man-in-the-middle attacks. However the use of such keys is impractical for an unmanaged service registration protocol, and hence is out of scope for this document.

### 6.6. Required Signature Algorithm

For validation, SRP registrars MUST implement the ECDSA<sub>P256</sub>SHA256 signature algorithm. SRP registrars SHOULD implement the algorithms specified in [RFC8624], Section 3.1, in the validation column of the table, that are numbered 13 or higher and have a "MUST", "RECOMMENDED", or "MAY" designation in the validation column of the table. SRP requestors MUST NOT assume that any algorithm numbered lower than 13 is available for use in validating SIG(0) signatures.

## 7. Privacy Considerations

Because DNS-SD SRP Updates can be sent off-link, the privacy implications of SRP are different than for multicast DNS responses. Host implementations that are using TCP SHOULD also use TLS if available. SRP Registrar implementations MUST offer TLS support. The use of TLS with DNS is described in [RFC7858]. Because there is no mechanism for sharing keys, validation of DNS-over-TLS keys is not possible; DNS-over-TLS is used only as described in [RFC7858], Section 4.1

Hosts that implement TLS support SHOULD NOT fall back to TCP; since SRP registrars are required to support TLS, it is entirely up to the host implementation whether to use it.

Public keys can be used as identifiers to track hosts. SRP registrars MAY elect not to return KEY records for queries for SRP registrations. To avoid DNSSEC validation failures, an SRP registrar that signs the zone for DNSSEC but refuses to return a KEY record MUST NOT store the KEY record in the zone itself. Because the KEY record isn't in the zone, the nonexistence of the KEY record can be validated. If the zone is not signed, the server MAY instead return a negative non-error response (either NXDOMAIN or no data).

## 8. Domain Name Reservation Considerations

This section specifies considerations for systems involved in domain name resolution when resolving queries for names ending with `'service.arpa.'`. Each item in this section addresses some aspect of the DNS or the process of resolving domain names that would be affected by this special-use allocation. Detailed explanations of these items can be found in Section 5 of [RFC6761].

### 8.1. Users

The current proposed use for `'service.arpa'` does not require special knowledge on the part of the user. While the `'default.service.arpa.'` subdomain is used as a generic name for registration, users are not expected to see this name in user interfaces. In the event that it does show up in a user interface, it is just a domain name, and requires no special treatment by the user. Users are not expected to see this name in user interfaces, although it's certainly possible that they might. If they do, they are not expected to treat it specially.

### 8.2. Application Software

Application software does not need to handle subdomains of `'service.arpa'` specially. `'service.arpa'` SHOULD NOT be treated as more trustworthy than any other insecure DNS domain, simply because it is locally-served (or for any other reason). It is not possible to register a PKI certificate for a subdomain of `'service.arpa.'` because it is a locally-served domain name. So no such subdomain can be considered as uniquely identifying a particular host, as would be required for such a PKI cert to be issued. If a subdomain of `'service.arpa.'` is returned by an API or entered in an input field of an application, PKI authentication of the endpoint being identified by the name will not be possible. Alternative methods and practices for authenticating such endpoints are out of scope for this document.

### 8.3. Name Resolution APIs and Libraries

Name resolution APIs and libraries MUST NOT recognize names that end in `'service.arpa.'` as special and MUST NOT treat them as having special significance, except that it may be necessary that such APIs not bypass the locally configured recursive resolvers.

One or more IP addresses for recursive DNS servers will usually be supplied to the client through router advertisements or DHCP. For an administrative domain that uses subdomains of 'service.arpa.', the recursive resolvers provided by that domain will be able to answer queries for subdomains of 'service.arpa.'; other (non-local) resolvers will not, or they will provide answers that are not correct within that administrative domain.

A host that is configured to use a resolver other than one that has been provided by the local network may be unable to resolve, or may receive incorrect results for, subdomains of 'service.arpa.'. In order to avoid this, it is permissible that hosts use the resolvers that are locally provided for resolving 'service.arpa.', even when they are configured to use other resolvers.

#### 8.4. Caching DNS Servers

There are three considerations for caching DNS servers that follow this specification:

1. For correctness, recursive resolvers at sites using 'service.arpa.' must in practice transparently support DNSSEC queries: queries for DNSSEC records and queries with the DNSSEC OK (DO) bit set (Section 3.2.1 of [RFC4035]). DNSSEC validation is a Best Current Practice [RFC9364]: although validation is not required, a caching recursive resolver that does not validate answers that can be validated may cache invalid data. This, in turn, would prevent validating stub resolvers from successfully validating answers. Hence, as a practical matter, recursive resolvers at sites using 'service.arpa' should do DNSSEC validation.
2. Unless configured otherwise, recursive resolvers and DNS proxies MUST behave as described in Locally Served Zones, Section 3 of [RFC6303]. That is, queries for 'service.arpa.' and subdomains of 'service.arpa.' MUST NOT be forwarded, with one important exception: a query for a DS record with the DO bit set MUST return the correct answer for that question, including correct information in the authority section that proves that the record is nonexistent.

So, for example, a query for the NS record for 'service.arpa.' MUST NOT result in that query being forwarded to an upstream cache nor to the authoritative DNS server for '.arpa.'. However, as necessary to provide accurate authority information, a query for the DS record MUST result in forwarding whatever queries are necessary; typically, this will just be a query for the DS record, since the necessary authority information will be included in the authority section of the response if the DO bit is set.

#### 8.5. Authoritative DNS Servers

No special processing of 'service.arpa.' is required for authoritative DNS server implementations. It is possible that an authoritative DNS server might attempt to check the authoritative servers for 'service.arpa.' for a delegation beneath that name before answering authoritatively for such a delegated name. In such a case, because the name always has only local significance, there will be no such delegation in the 'service.arpa.' zone, and so the server would refuse to answer authoritatively for such a zone. A server that implements this sort of check MUST be configurable so that either it does not do this check for the 'service.arpa.' domain or it ignores the results of the check.

#### 8.6. DNS Server Operators

DNS server operators MAY configure an authoritative server for 'service.arpa.' for use with SRP. The operator for the DNS servers authoritative for 'service.arpa.' in the global DNS will configure any such servers as described in Section 9.

#### 8.7. DNS Registries/Registrars

'service.arpa.' is a subdomain of the 'arpa' top-level domain, which is operated by IANA under the authority of the Internet Architecture Board according to the rules established in [RFC3172]. There are no other DNS registrars for '.arpa'.

#### 9. Delegation of 'service.arpa.'

In order to be fully functional, the owner of the 'arpa.' zone must add a delegation of 'service.arpa.' in the '.arpa.' zone [RFC3172]. This delegation is to be set up as was done for 'home.arpa', as a result of the specification in Section 7 of [RFC8375]. This is currently the responsibility of the IAB [IAB-ARPA]

#### 10. IANA Considerations

10.1. Registration and Delegation of 'service.arpa' as a Special-Use Domain Name

IANA is requested to record the domain name 'service.arpa.' in the Special-Use Domain Names registry [SUDN]. IANA is requested, with the approval of IAB, to implement the delegation requested in Section 9.

IANA is further requested to add a new entry to the "Transport-Independent Locally-Served Zones" subregistry of the "Locally-Served DNS Zones" registry [LSDZ]. The entry will be for the domain 'service.arpa.' with the description "DNS-SD Service Registration Protocol Special-Use Domain", listing this document as the reference.

10.2. Subdomains of 'service.arpa.'

This document only makes use of the 'default.service.arpa' subdomain of 'service.arpa.' Other subdomains are reserved for future use by DNS-SD or related work. The IANA is requested to create a registry, the "service.arpa Subdomain" registry. The IETF shall have change control for this registry. New entries may be added either as a result of Standards Action Section 4.9 of [RFC8126] or with IESG approval Section 4.10 of [RFC8126], provided that a specification exists Section 4.6 of [RFC8126].

The IANA shall group the "service.arpa Subdomain" registry with the "Locally-Served DNS Zones" registry. The registry shall be a table with three columns: the subdomain name (expressed as a fully-qualified domain name), a brief description of how it is used, and a reference to the document that describes its use in detail.

This registry shall begin as the following table:

Subdomain Name	Description	reference
default.service.arpa.	Default domain for SRP updates	[THIS DOCUMENT]

Table 1

10.3. Service Name registrations

IANA is requested to add two new entries to the Service Names and Port Numbers registry. The following sections contain tables with the fields required by Section 8.1.1 of [RFC6335].

## 10.4. 'dnssd-srp' Service Name

Field Name	Value
Service Name	dnssd-srp
Transport Protocol	TCP
Assignee	IESG <iesg@ietf.org>
Contact	IETF Chair <chair@ietf.org>
Description	DNS-SD Service Registration
Reference	this document
Port Number	None
Service Code	None

Table 2

## 10.5. 'dnssd-srp-tls' Service Name

Field Name	Value
Service Name	dnssd-srp-tls
Transport Protocol	TCP
Assignee	IESG
Contact	IETF Chair
Description	DNS-SD Service Registration (TLS)
Reference	this document
Port Number	None
Service Code	None

Table 3

## 10.6. Anycast Address

IANA is requested to allocate an IPv6 Anycast address from the IPv6 Special-Purpose Address Registry, similar to the Port Control Protocol anycast address, 2001:1::1. The value TBD is to be replaced with the actual allocation in the table that follows. The purpose of this allocation is to provide a fixed anycast address that can be commonly used as a destination for SRP updates when no SRP registrar is explicitly configured. The values for the registry are:

Attribute	value
Address Block	2001:1::TBD/128
Name	DNS-SD Service Registration Protocol Anycast Address
RFC	[this document]
Allocation Date	[date of allocation]
Termination Date	N/A
Source	True
Destination	True
Forwardable	True
Global	True
Reserved-by-protocol	False

Table 4

## 11. Implementation Status

[Note to the RFC Editor: please remove this section prior to publication.]

This section records the status of known implementations of the protocol defined by this specification at the time of posting of this Internet-Draft, and is based on a proposal described in RFC 7942. The description of implementations in this section is intended to assist the IETF in its decision processes in progressing drafts to RFCs. Please note that the listing of any individual implementation

here does not imply endorsement by the IETF. Furthermore, no effort has been spent to verify the information presented here that was supplied by IETF contributors. This is not intended as, and must not be construed to be, a catalog of available implementations or their features. Readers are advised to note that other implementations may exist.

According to RFC 7942, "this will allow reviewers and working groups to assign due consideration to documents that have the benefit of running code, which may serve as evidence of valuable experimentation and feedback that have made the implemented protocols more mature. It is up to the individual working groups to use this information as they see fit".

There are two known independent implementations of SRP requestors:

- \* SRP Client for OpenThread:  
<https://github.com/openthread/openthread/pull/6038>
- \* mDNSResponder open source project: <https://github.com/Abhayakara/mdnsresponder>

There are two related implementations of an SRP registrar. One acts as a DNS Update proxy, taking an SRP Update and applying it to the specified DNS zone using DNS update. The other acts as an Advertising Proxy [AP]. Both are included in the mDNSResponder open source project mentioned above.

## 12. Acknowledgments

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## 13. Normative References

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#### Appendix A. Testing using standard RFC2136-compliant DNS servers

It may be useful to set up an authoritative DNS server for testing that does not implement SRP. This can be done by configuring the server to listen on the anycast address, or advertising it in the `_dnssd-srp.tcp.<zone>` SRV and `_dnssd-srp-tls.tcp.<zone>` record. It must be configured to be authoritative for "default.service.arpa", and to accept updates from hosts on local networks for names under "default.service.arpa" without authentication, since such servers will not have support for FCFS authentication (Section 3.2.4.1).

An authoritative DNS server configured in this way will be able to successfully accept and process SRP Updates from requestors that send SRP updates. However, no prerequisites will be applied, and this means that the test server will accept internally inconsistent SRP Updates, and will not stop two SRP Updates, sent by different services, that claim the same name(s), from overwriting each other.

Since SRP Updates are signed with keys, validation of the SIG(0) algorithm used by the requestor can be done by manually installing the requestor's public key on the DNS server that will be receiving the updates. The key can then be used to authenticate the SRP update, and can be used as a requirement for the update. An example configuration for testing SRP using BIND 9 is given in Appendix C.

#### Appendix B. How to allow SRP requestors to update standard RFC2136-compliant servers

Ordinarily SRP Updates will fail when sent to an RFC 2136-compliant server that does not implement SRP because the zone being updated is "default.service.arpa", and no DNS server that is not an SRP registrar would normally be configured to be authoritative for "default.service.arpa". Therefore, a requestor that sends an SRP Update can tell that the receiving server does not support SRP, but does support RFC2136, because the RCODE will either be NotZone, NotAuth or Refused, or because there is no response to the update request (when using the anycast address)

In this case a requestor MAY attempt to register itself using regular RFC2136 DNS updates. To do so, it must discover the default registration zone and the DNS server designated to receive updates for that zone, as described earlier, using the `_dns-update._udp` SRV record. It can then send the update to the port and host pointed to by the SRV record, and is expected to use appropriate prerequisites to avoid overwriting competing records. Such updates are out of scope for SRP, and a requestor that implements SRP MUST first attempt to use SRP to register itself, and only attempt to use RFC2136 backwards compatibility if that fails. Although the owner name for the SRV record specifies the UDP protocol for updates, it is also possible to use TCP, and TCP SHOULD be required to prevent spoofing.

#### Appendix C. Sample BIND9 configuration for default.service.arpa.

```
zone "default.service.arpa." {
    type primary;
    file "/etc/bind/primary/service.db";
    allow-update { key demo.default.service.arpa.; };
};
```

Figure 1: Zone Configuration in named.conf

```

$ORIGIN .
$TTL 57600 ; 16 hours
default.service.arpa IN SOA                ns3.default.service.arpa.
                                           postmaster.default.service.arpa. (
                                           2951053287 ; serial
                                           3600      ; refresh (1 hour)
                                           1800      ; retry (30 minutes)
                                           604800   ; expire (1 week)
                                           3600      ; minimum (1 hour)
)
                                           NS                 ns3.default.service.arpa.
                                           SRV 0 0 53 ns3.default.service.arpa.
$ORIGIN default.service.arpa.
$TTL 3600 ; 1 hour
_ipp.s._tcp PTR demo._ipp.s._tcp
$ORIGIN _ipp.s._tcp.default.service.arpa.
demo TXT "0"
SRV 0 0 9992 demo.default.service.arpa.
$ORIGIN _udp.default.service.arpa.
$TTL 3600 ; 1 hour
_dns-update PTR ns3.default.service.arpa.
$ORIGIN _tcp.default.service.arpa.
_dns.sr.p PTR ns3.default.service.arpa.
$ORIGIN default.service.arpa.
$TTL 300 ; 5 minutes
ns3 AAAA 2001:db8:0:1::1
$TTL 3600 ; 1 hour
demo AAAA 2001:db8:0:2::1
KEY 0 3 13 (
    qweEmaq0FAWok5//ftuQtZgiZoiFSUsm0srWREdywQU
    9dpvtOhrdKWUuPT3uEFF5TZU6B4q1z1I662GdaUwqg==
); alg = ECDSAP256SHA256 ; key id = 15008
AAAA ::1

```

Figure 2: Example Zone file

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```

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