

Randomized and Changing MAC Address

draft-ietf-mac-address-randomization-09

IETF 118 – MADINAS WG

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Introduction and goals (reminder)

- Privacy, an increasing concern
 - Layer-2 globally unique identifiers (MAC addresses) have been assigned to devices and are transmitted in the clear in, for instance, beacons, probe requests, or after association
 - MAC addresses can easily be intercepted and used to track location or behavior
- Several projects in IETF, IEEE 802 and among mobile OS vendors to deal with plain-text, unique, permanent MAC addresses
 - Assigning a random MAC address to a device per connection, per SSID, after some time period
 - Area of extensive research (see reference Martin et al (2017) in draft for more comprehensive list of research in this area, or IEEE 802.11 RCM TIG final report in 11-19/1442r9, also in draft)
- Goal of this draft: document Current State of Affairs regarding MAC address randomization

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A taxonomy of MAC address selection policies

- Per-Vendor OUI MAC address (PVOM)
 - This form of MAC address selection is the historical default
- Per-Device Generated MAC address (PDGM)
 - This form of MAC address is randomly generated by the device, usually upon first boot. The resulting MAC address is stored in non-volatile storage and is used for the rest of the device lifetime
- Per-Boot Generated MAC address (PBGM)
 - This form of MAC address is randomly generated by the device, each time the device is booted
 - *Not* stored in non-volatile storage, does not persist across power cycles
- Per-Network Generated MAC address (PNGM)
 - This form of MAC address is generated each time a new network connection is created, stored and indexed per SSID
- Per-Period Generated MAC address (PPGM)
 - This form of MAC address is generated periodically
- Per-Session Generated MAC address (PSGM)
 - This form of MAC address is generated on a per session basis

OS current practices

Android 10+	iOS 14+
The randomized MAC address is bound to the SSID	The randomized MAC address is bound to the BSSID
The randomized MAC address is stable across reconnections for the same network	The randomized MAC address is stable across reconnections for the same network
The randomized MAC address does not get re-randomized when the device forgets a WiFi network	The randomized MAC address is reset when the device forgets a WiFi network
MAC address randomization is enabled by default for all the new WiFi networks. But if the device previously connected to a WiFi network identifying itself with the real MAC address, no randomized MAC address will be used (unless manually enabled)	MAC address randomization is enabled by default for all the new WiFi networks

OS current practices

OS	Linux	Android 10	Windows 10	iOS 14+
Random per net.	Y	Y	Y	Y
Random per connec.	Y	N	N	N
Random daily	N	N	Y	N
SSID config.	Y	N	N	N
Random. for scan	Y	Y	Y	Y
Random. for scan by default	N	Y	N	Y

****Starting in Android 12, Android uses non-persistent randomization in the following situations: (i) a network suggestion app specifies that non-persistent randomization be used for the network (through an API); or (ii) the network is an open network that hasn't encountered a captive portal and an internal config option is set to do so (by default it is not)**



Changelog and Next Steps

- Several comments received during WGLC
 - Mobile OS practices included in the document as a snapshot (in addition to the pointer to the “live” github content)
 - Sections 7 and 8 exchanged
 - Additional text added
 - Various fixes
- Document ready to go to IETF LC