Problem Statement with Aggregate Header Limit

draft-liu-spring-aggregate-header-limit-problem

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Background

Aggregate Header Limit (AHL)
- [RFC8883] the total header size that a router is able to process due to it’s processing limit
- related with the device’s buffer size ( for devices designed with parsing buffer )
- packet may be dropped or sent to slow path if the limit is exceeded

Total packet header chain size is increasing greatly in IPv6/SRv6
- IOAM: IOAM data fields in HBH/DOH
- Alternate-Marking: AltMark Option in HBH/DOH
- network slicing: NRP Option in HBH
- SR service programming: Metadata in SRH TLV
- BSID: a new SID list to the original packet
- other potential extension requirements, e.g, detnet

| SID List | SRH TLV | HBH TLV | DOH TLV |
Potential Problems

- Combination of different functions would make total header size even bigger.

- The operator's network usually consists of different versions of devices from multiple vendors, which often have different processing limits and different behaviors after limit exceeding, difficult to manage.

- Path calculation without the awareness of AHLs of the nodes and the prediction on which features would be enabled, may result in a path with nodes with lower AHLs than required.

- Packet encapsulation triggered by function enablement, on the headend/intermediate node, packets may be encapsulated with larger header size than the downstream nodes able to process.

Aggregate Header Limits of the nodes/path need to be aware.
Use cases with AHL

Centralized Controller

- Input
  - an SR path is required from S to D
  - the AHLs of the nodes in the network
  - per-hop IOAM and network slicing (using NRP-ID in HBH) would be enabled on this path

- Output
  - an segment list between S to D, leaving out the space for HBH header with options for IOAM and NRP-ID

Headend/intermediate nodes

- Input
  - function enablement on certain SR path requires increasing the size of packet header that needs to be processed
  - the AHLs of the downstream endpoint nodes are not sufficient

- Output
  - not to enable the function on the path and log an error
How to obtain AHL

Existing mechanism

- [RFC8883]: an ICMPv6 Destination Unreachable error with code for "Headers too long", when a node discards a packet due to aggregate header limit exceeding
- May not work well when
  - there’re a large amount of paths: the burden of sending and receiving ICMP messages increases
  - the paths are dynamic: the segment lists may change over time, more difficult to get the AHL in advance

Possible options

- IGP signaling
  - similar mechanisms like IGP-MSD
  - AHLs of all the nodes in the domain can be obtained easily, regardless of the amount or type of the paths
- For the controller
  - via BGP-LS or other south-north mechanisms
Next Steps

- Welcome feedback and comments!
Thank You!