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RADIUS proxy failure and ongoing EAP conversations

Problem Statement



- EAP state machine starts between authenticator and supplicant (EAP-Req/Identity + EAP-Resp/Identity)
- supplicant waits for AAA server's response
- authenticator gets no reply: either AAA server or intermediate proxy don't react
- at some point, authenticator gives up and sends EAP-Failure
- supplicant displays funny error messages to user, like: “Most likely, your password is wrong”

User notification?



- Need to consider: disclosing AAA server state information can be considered security risk
- If not: how to convey information to user?
- Possibility 1
 - Proxy to send Access-Reject with EAP-Failure and Reply-Message == “AAA Server down, come back later”)
 - problematic as stated in EAP over RADIUS RFC
- Possibility 2
 - last working proxy “hijacks” EAP conversation, first sends EAP-Req/EAP-Notification, gets EAP-Resp/Notification then sends EAP-Failure



Thank you!

Questions?