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DNS64: DNS extensions for Network Address Translation from IPv6 Clients  
to IPv4 Servers  
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Abstract

DNS64 is a mechanism for synthesizing AAAA records from A records. DNS64 is used with an IPv6/IPv4 translator to enable client-server communication between an IPv6-only client and an IPv4-only server, without requiring any changes to either the IPv6 or the IPv4 node, for the class of applications that work through NATs. This document specifies DNS64, and provides suggestions on how it should be deployed in conjunction with IPv6/IPv4 translators.

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## 1. Introduction

This document specifies DNS64, a mechanism that is part of the toolbox for IPv6-IPv4 transition and co-existence. DNS64, used together with an IPv6/IPv4 translator such as stateful NAT64 [I-D.ietf-behave-v6v4-xlate-stateful], allows an IPv6-only client to initiate communications by name to an IPv4-only server.

DNS64 is a mechanism for synthesizing AAAA resource records (RRs) from A RRs. A synthetic AAAA RR created by the DNS64 from an original A RR contains the same owner name of the original A RR but it contains an IPv6 address instead of an IPv4 address. The IPv6 address is an IPv6 representation of the IPv4 address contained in the original A RR. The IPv6 representation of the IPv4 address is algorithmically generated from the IPv4 address returned in the A RR and a set of parameters configured in the DNS64 (typically, an IPv6 prefix used by IPv6 representations of IPv4 addresses and optionally other parameters).

Together with an IPv6/IPv4 translator, these two mechanisms allow an IPv6-only client to initiate communications to an IPv4-only server using the FQDN of the server.

These mechanisms are expected to play a critical role in the IPv4-IPv6 transition and co-existence. Due to IPv4 address depletion, it is likely that in the future, many IPv6-only clients will want to connect to IPv4-only servers. In the typical case, the approach only requires the deployment of IPv6/IPv4 translators that connect an IPv6-only network to an IPv4-only network, along with the deployment of one or more DNS64-enabled name servers. However, some features require performing the DNS64 function directly in the end-hosts themselves.

This document is structured as follows: section 2 provides a non-normative overview of the behaviour of DNS64. Section 3 provides a non-normative background required to understand the interaction between DNS64 and DNSSEC. The normative specification of DNS64 is provided in sections 4, 5 and 6. Section 4 defines the terminology, section 5 is the actual DNS64 specification and section 6 covers deployments issues. Section 7 is non-normative and provides a set of examples and typical deployment scenarios.

## 2. Overview

This section provides an introduction to the DNS64 mechanism.

We assume that we have one or more IPv6/IPv4 translator boxes

connecting an IPv4 network and an IPv6 network. The IPv6/IPv4 translator device provides translation services between the two networks enabling communication between IPv4-only hosts and IPv6-only hosts. (NOTE: By IPv6-only hosts we mean hosts running IPv6-only applications, hosts that can only use IPv6, as well as cases where only IPv6 connectivity is available to the client. By IPv4-only servers we mean servers running IPv4-only applications, servers that can only use IPv4, as well as cases where only IPv4 connectivity is available to the server). Each IPv6/IPv4 translator used in conjunction with DNS64 must allow communications initiated from the IPv6-only host to the IPv4-only host.

To allow an IPv6 initiator to do a standard AAAA RR DNS lookup to learn the address of the responder, DNS64 is used to synthesize a AAAA record from an A record containing a real IPv4 address of the responder, whenever the DNS64 cannot retrieve a AAAA record for the queried name. The DNS64 service appears as a regular DNS server or resolver to the IPv6 initiator. The DNS64 receives a AAAA DNS query generated by the IPv6 initiator. It first attempts a resolution for the requested AAAA records. If there are no AAAA records available for the target node (which is the normal case when the target node is an IPv4-only node), DNS64 performs a query for A records. For each A record discovered, DNS64 creates a synthetic AAAA RR from the information retrieved in the A RR.

The owner name of a synthetic AAAA RR is the same as that of the original A RR, but an IPv6 representation of the IPv4 address contained in the original A RR is included in the AAAA RR. The IPv6 representation of the IPv4 address is algorithmically generated from the IPv4 address and additional parameters configured in the DNS64. Among those parameters configured in the DNS64, there is at least one IPv6 prefix. If not explicitly mentioned, all prefixes are treated equally and the operations described in this document are performed using the prefixes available. So as to be general, we will call any of these prefixes Pref64::, and describe the operations made with the generic prefix Pref64::. The IPv6 address representing IPv4 addresses included in the AAAA RR synthesized by the DNS64 contain Pref64:: and they also embed the original IPv4 address.

The same algorithm and the same Pref64:: prefix(es) must be configured both in the DNS64 device and the IPv6/IPv4 translator(s), so that both can algorithmically generate the same IPv6 representation for a given IPv4 address. In addition, it is required that IPv6 packets addressed to an IPv6 destination address that contains the Pref64:: be delivered to an IPv6/IPv4 translator that has that particular Pref64:: configured, so they can be translated into IPv4 packets.

Once the DNS64 has synthesized the AAAA RRs, the synthetic AAAA RRs are passed back to the IPv6 initiator, which will initiate an IPv6 communication with the IPv6 address associated with the IPv4 receiver. The packet will be routed to an IPv6/IPv4 translator which will forward it to the IPv4 network.

In general, the only shared state between the DNS64 and the IPv6/IPv4 translator is the Pref64::/n and an optional set of static parameters. The Pref64::/n and the set of static parameters must be configured to be the same on both; there is no communication between the DNS64 device and IPv6/IPv4 translator functions. The mechanism to be used for configuring the parameters of the DNS64 is beyond the scope of this memo.

The prefixes to be used as Pref64::/n and their applicability are discussed in [I-D.ietf-behave-address-format]. There are two types of prefixes that can be used as Pref64::/n.

The Pref64::/n can be the Well-Known Prefix 64:FF9B::/96 reserved by [I-D.ietf-behave-address-format] for the purpose of representing IPv4 addresses in IPv6 address space.

The Pref64::/n can be a Network-Specific Prefix (NSP). An NSP is an IPv6 prefix assigned by an organization to create IPv6 representations of IPv4 addresses.

The main difference in the nature of the two types of prefixes is that the NSP is a locally assigned prefix that is under control of the organization that is providing the translation services, while the Well-Known Prefix is a prefix that has a global meaning since it has been assigned for the specific purpose of representing IPv4 addresses in IPv6 address space.

The DNS64 function can be performed in any of three places. The terms below are more formally defined in Section 4.

The first option is to locate the DNS64 function in authoritative servers for a zone. In this case, the authoritative server provides synthetic AAAA RRs for an IPv4-only host in its zone. This is one type of DNS64 server.

Another option is to locate the DNS64 function in recursive name servers serving end hosts. In this case, when an IPv6-only host queries the name server for AAAA RRs for an IPv4-only host, the name server can perform the synthesis of AAAA RRs and pass them back to the IPv6-only initiator. The main advantage of this mode is that current IPv6 nodes can use this mechanism without requiring any modification. This mode is called "DNS64 in DNS recursive resolver

mode". This is a second type of DNS64 server, and it is also one type of DNS64 resolver.

The last option is to place the DNS64 function in the end hosts, coupled to the local (stub) resolver. In this case, the stub resolver will try to obtain (real) AAAA RRs and in case they are not available, the DNS64 function will synthesize AAAA RRs for internal usage. This mode is compatible with some functions like DNSSEC validation in the end host. The main drawback of this mode is its deployability, since it requires changes in the end hosts. This mode is called "DNS64 in stub-resolver mode". This is the second type of DNS64 resolver.

### 3. Background to DNS64-DNSSEC interaction

DNSSEC ([RFC4033], [RFC4034], [RFC4035]) presents a special challenge for DNS64, because DNSSEC is designed to detect changes to DNS answers, and DNS64 may alter answers coming from an authoritative server.

A recursive resolver can be security-aware or security-oblivious. Moreover, a security-aware recursive resolver can be validating or non-validating, according to operator policy. In the cases below, the recursive resolver is also performing DNS64, and has a local policy to validate. We call this general case vDNS64, but in all the cases below the DNS64 functionality should be assumed needed.

DNSSEC includes some signaling bits that offer some indicators of what the query originator understands.

If a query arrives at a vDNS64 device with the "DNSSEC OK" (DO) bit set, the query originator is signaling that it understands DNSSEC. The DO bit does not indicate that the query originator will validate the response. It only means that the query originator can understand responses containing DNSSEC data. Conversely, if the DO bit is clear, that is evidence that the querying agent is not aware of DNSSEC.

If a query arrives at a vDNS64 device with the "Checking Disabled" (CD) bit set, it is an indication that the querying agent wants all the validation data so it can do checking itself. By local policy, vDNS64 could still validate, but it must return all data to the querying agent anyway.

Here are the possible cases:



1. A DNS64 (DNSSEC-aware or DNSSEC-oblivious) receives a query with the DO bit clear. In this case, DNSSEC is not a concern, because the querying agent does not understand DNSSEC responses. The DNS64 can do validation of the response, if dictated by its local policy.
2. A security-oblivious DNS64 receives a query with the DO bit set, and the CD bit clear or set. This is just like the case of a non-DNS64 case: the server doesn't support it, so the querying agent is out of luck.
3. A security-aware and non-validating DNS64 receives a query with the DO bit set and the CD bit clear. Such a resolver is not validating responses, likely due to local policy (see [RFC4035], section 4.2). For that reason, this case amounts to the same as the previous case, and no validation happens.
4. A security-aware and non-validating DNS64 receives a query with the DO bit set and the CD bit set. In this case, the DNS64 is supposed to pass on all the data it gets to the query initiator (see section 3.2.2 of [RFC4035]). This case will not work with DNS64, unless the validating resolver is prepared to do DNS64 itself. If the DNS64 modifies the record, the client will get the data back and try to validate it, and the data will be invalid as far as the client is concerned.
5. A security-aware and validating DNS64 resolver receives a query with the DO bit clear and CD clear. In this case, the resolver validates the data. If it fails, it returns RCODE 2 (Server failure); otherwise, it returns the answer. This is the ideal case for vDNS64. The resolver validates the data, and then synthesizes the new record and passes that to the client. The client, which is presumably not validating (else it should have set DO and CD), cannot tell that DNS64 is involved.
6. A security-aware and validating DNS64 resolver receives a query with the DO bit set and CD clear. This works like the previous case, except that the resolver should also set the "Authentic Data" (AD) bit on the response.
7. A security-aware and validating DNS64 resolver receives a query with the DO bit set and CD set. This is effectively the same as the case where a security-aware and non-validating recursive resolver receives a similar query, and the same thing will happen: the downstream validator will mark the data as invalid if DNS64 has performed synthesis. The node needs to do DNS64 itself, or else communication will fail.

#### 4. Terminology

This section provides definitions for the special terms used in the document.

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 RFC 2119 [RFC2119].

**Authoritative server:** A DNS server that can answer authoritatively a given DNS request.

**DNS64:** A logical function that synthesizes DNS resource records (e.g AAAA records containing IPv6 addresses) from DNS resource records actually contained in the DNS (e.g., A records containing IPv4 addresses).

**DNS64 recursive resolver:** A recursive resolver that provides the DNS64 functionality as part of its operation. This is the same thing as "DNS64 in recursive resolver mode".

**DNS64 resolver:** Any resolver (stub resolver or recursive resolver) that provides the DNS64 function.

**DNS64 server:** Any server providing the DNS64 function. This includes the server portion of a recursive resolver when it is providing the DNS64 function.

**IPv4-only server:** Servers running IPv4-only applications, servers that can only use IPv4, as well as cases where only IPv4 connectivity is available to the server.

**IPv6-only hosts:** Hosts running IPv6-only applications, hosts that can only use IPv6, as well as cases where only IPv6 connectivity is available to the client.

**Recursive resolver:** A DNS server that accepts requests from one resolver, and asks another server (of some description) for the answer on behalf of the first resolver. Full discussion of DNS recursion is beyond the scope of this document; see [RFC1034] and [RFC1035] for full details.

**Synthetic RR:** A DNS resource record (RR) that is not contained in the authoritative servers' zone data, but which is instead synthesized from other RRs in the same zone. An example is a synthetic AAAA record created from an A record.

IPv6/IPv4 translator: A device that translates IPv6 packets to IPv4 packets and vice-versa. It is only required that the communication initiated from the IPv6 side be supported.

For a detailed understanding of this document, the reader should also be familiar with DNS terminology from [RFC1034], [RFC1035] and current NAT terminology from [RFC4787]. Some parts of this document assume familiarity with the terminology of the DNS security extensions outlined in [RFC4035]. It is worth emphasizing that while DNS64 is a logical function separate from the DNS, it is nevertheless closely associated with that protocol. It depends on the DNS protocol, and some behavior of DNS64 will interact with regular DNS responses.

## 5. DNS64 Normative Specification

DNS64 is a logical function that synthesizes AAAA records from A records. The DNS64 function may be implemented in a stub resolver, in a recursive resolver, or in an authoritative name server. It works within those DNS functions, and appears on the network as though it were a "plain" DNS resolver or name server conforming to [RFC1034], and [RFC1035].

The implementation SHOULD support mapping of separate IPv4 address ranges to separate IPv6 prefixes for AAAA record synthesis. This allows handling of special use IPv4 addresses [RFC5735].

DNS messages contain several sections. The portion of a DNS message that is altered by DNS64 is the Answer section, which is discussed below in section Section 5.1. The resulting synthetic answer is put together with other sections, and that creates the message that is actually returned as the response to the DNS query. Assembling that response is covered below in section Section 5.4.

DNS64 also responds to PTR queries involving addresses containing any of the IPv6 prefixes it uses for synthesis of AAAA RRs.

### 5.1. Resolving AAAA queries and the answer section

When the DNS64 receives a query for RRs of type AAAA and class IN, it first attempts to retrieve non-synthetic RRs of this type and class, either by performing a query or, in the case of an authoritative server, by examining its own results. The query may be answered from a local cache, if one is available. DNS64 operation for classes other than IN is undefined, and a DNS64 MUST behave as though no DNS64 function is configured.

#### 5.1.1. The answer when there is AAAA data available

If the query results in one or more AAAA records in the answer section, the result is returned to the requesting client as per normal DNS semantics, except in the case where any of the AAAA records match a special exclusion set of prefixes, considered in Section 5.1.4. If there is (non-excluded) AAAA data available, DNS64 SHOULD NOT include synthetic AAAA RRs in the response (see Appendix A for an analysis of the motivations for and the implications of not complying with this recommendation). By default DNS64 implementations MUST NOT synthesize AAAA RRs when real AAAA RRs exist.

#### 5.1.2. The answer when there is an error

If the query results in a response with RCODE other than 0 (No error condition), then there are two possibilities. A result with RCODE=3 (Name Error) is handled according to normal DNS operation (which is normally to return the error to the client). This stage is still prior to any synthesis having happened, so a response to be returned to the client does not need any special assembly than would usually happen in DNS operation.

Any other RCODE is treated as though the RCODE were 0 (see sections Section 5.1.6 and Section 5.1.7) and the answer section were empty. This is because of the large number of different responses from deployed name servers when they receive AAAA queries without a AAAA record being available (see [RFC4074]). Note that this means, for practical purposes, that several different classes of error in the DNS are all treated as though a AAAA record is not available for that owner name.

It is important to note that, as of this writing, some servers respond with RCODE=3 to a AAAA query even if there is an A record available for that owner name. Those servers are in clear violation of the meaning of RCODE 3, and it is expected that they will decline in use as IPv6 deployment increases.

#### 5.1.3. Dealing with timeouts

If the query receives no answer before the timeout (which might be the timeout from every authoritative server, depending on whether the DNS64 is in recursive resolver mode), it is treated as RCODE=2 (Server failure).

#### 5.1.4. Special exclusion set for AAAA records

Some IPv6 addresses are not actually usable by IPv6-only hosts. If they are returned to IPv6-only querying agents as AAAA records, therefore, the goal of decreasing the number of failure modes will not be attained. Examples include AAAA records with addresses in the `::ffff:0:0/96` network, and possibly (depending on the context) AAAA records with the site's Pref::`64/n` or the Well-Known Prefix (see below for more about the Well-Known Prefix). A DNS64 implementation SHOULD provide a mechanism to specify IPv6 prefix ranges to be treated as though the AAAA containing them were an empty answer. An implementation SHOULD include the `::ffff/96` network in that range by default. Failure to provide this facility will mean that clients querying the DNS64 function may not be able to communicate with hosts that would be reachable from a dual-stack host.

When the DNS64 performs its initial AAAA query, if it receives an answer with only AAAA records containing addresses in the excluded range(s), then it MUST treat the answer as though it were an empty answer, and proceed accordingly. If it receives an answer with at least one AAAA record containing an address outside any of the excluded range(s), then it MAY build an answer section for a response including only the AAAA record(s) that do not contain any of the addresses inside the excluded ranges. That answer section is used in the assembly of a response as detailed in Section 5.4. Alternatively, it MAY treat the answer as though it were an empty answer, and proceed accordingly. It MUST NOT return the offending AAAA records as part of a response.

#### 5.1.5. Dealing with CNAME and DNAME

If the response contains a CNAME or a DNAME, then the CNAME or DNAME chain is followed until the first terminating A or AAAA record is reached. This may require the DNS64 to ask for an A record, in case the response to the original AAAA query is a CNAME or DNAME without a AAAA record to follow. The resulting AAAA or A record is treated like any other AAAA or A case, as appropriate.

When assembling the answer section, any chains of CNAME or DNAME RRs are included as part of the answer along with the synthetic AAAA (if appropriate).

#### 5.1.6. Data for the answer when performing synthesis

If the query results in no error but an empty answer section in the response, the DNS64 attempts to retrieve A records for the name in question, either by performing another query or, in the case of an authoritative server, by examining its own results. If this new A RR

query results in an empty answer or in an error, then the empty result or error is used as the basis for the answer returned to the querying client. If instead the query results in one or more A RRs, the DNS64 synthesizes AAAA RRs based on the A RRs according to the procedure outlined in Section 5.1.7. The DNS64 returns the synthesized AAAA records in the answer section, removing the A records that form the basis of the synthesis.

#### 5.1.7. Performing the synthesis

A synthetic AAAA record is created from an A record as follows:

- o The NAME field is set to the NAME field from the A record.
- o The TYPE field is set to 28 (AAAA).
- o The CLASS field is set to the original CLASS field, 1. Under this specification, DNS64 for any CLASS other than 1 is undefined.
- o The TTL field is set to the minimum of the TTL of the original A RR and the SOA RR for the queried domain. (Note that in order to obtain the TTL of the SOA RR, the DNS64 does not need to perform a new query, but it can remember the TTL from the SOA RR in the negative response to the AAAA query. If the SOA RR was not delivered with the negative response to the AAAA query, then the DNS64 SHOULD use a the minimum of the TTL of the original A RR and 600 seconds. It is possible instead to query explicitly for the SOA RR and use the result of that query, but this will increase query load and time to resolution for little additional benefit.) This is in keeping with the approach used in negative caching ([RFC2308]).
- o The RDLENGTH field is set to 16.
- o The RDATA field is set to the IPv6 representation of the IPv4 address from the RDATA field of the A record. The DNS64 MUST check each A RR against configured IPv4 address ranges and select the corresponding IPv6 prefix to use in synthesizing the AAAA RR. See Section 5.2 for discussion of the algorithms to be used in effecting the transformation.

#### 5.1.8. Querying in parallel

The DNS64 MAY perform the query for the AAAA RR and for the A RR in parallel, in order to minimize the delay.

Note: Querying in parallel will result in performing unnecessary A RR queries in the case where no AAAA RR synthesis is required. A

possible trade-off would be to perform them sequentially but with a very short interval between them, so if we obtain a fast reply, we avoid doing the additional query. (Note that this discussion is relevant only if the DNS64 function needs to perform external queries to fetch the RR. If the needed RR information is available locally, as in the case of an authoritative server, the issue is no longer relevant.)

## 5.2. Generation of the IPv6 representations of IPv4 addresses

DNS64 supports multiple algorithms for the generation of the IPv6 representation of an IPv4 address. The constraints imposed on the generation algorithms are the following:

The same algorithm to create an IPv6 address from an IPv4 address MUST be used by both a DNS64 to create the IPv6 address to be returned in the synthetic AAAA RR from the IPv4 address contained in an original A RR, and by a IPv6/IPv4 translator to create the IPv6 address to be included in the source address field of the outgoing IPv6 packets from the IPv4 address included in the source address field of the incoming IPv4 packet.

The algorithm MUST be reversible; i.e., it MUST be possible to derive the original IPv4 address from the IPv6 representation.

The input for the algorithm MUST be limited to the IPv4 address, the IPv6 prefix (denoted Pref64::) used in the IPv6 representations and optionally a set of stable parameters that are configured in the DNS64 and in the NAT64 (such as fixed string to be used as a suffix).

For each prefix Pref64::, n MUST be less than or equal to 96. If one or more Pref64:: are configured in the DNS64 through any means (such as manually configured, or other automatic means not specified in this document), the default algorithm MUST use these prefixes (and not use the Well-Known Prefix). If no prefix is available, the algorithm MUST use the Well-Known Prefix 64:FF9B::<96 defined in [I-D.ietf-behave-address-format] to represent the IPv4 unicast address range

[[anchor6: Note in document: The value 64:FF9B::<96 is proposed as the value for the Well-Known prefix and needs to be confirmed whenis published as RFC.]] [I-D.ietf-behave-address-format]

A DNS64 MUST support the algorithm for generating IPv6 representations of IPv4 addresses defined in Section 2 of [I-D.ietf-behave-address-format]. Moreover, the aforementioned

algorithm MUST be the default algorithm used by the DNS64. While the normative description of the algorithm is provided in [I-D.ietf-behave-address-format], a sample description of the algorithm and its application to different scenarios is provided in Section 7 for illustration purposes.

### 5.3. Handling other Resource Records and the Additional Section

#### 5.3.1. PTR Resource Record

If a DNS64 server receives a PTR query for a record in the IP6.ARPA domain, it MUST strip the IP6.ARPA labels from the QNAME, reverse the address portion of the QNAME according to the encoding scheme outlined in section 2.5 of [RFC3596], and examine the resulting address to see whether its prefix matches any of the locally-configured Pref64::/n or the default Well-known prefix. There are two alternatives for a DNS64 server to respond to such PTR queries. A DNS64 server MUST provide one of these, and SHOULD NOT provide both at the same time unless different IP6.ARPA zones require answers of different sorts:

1. The first option is for the DNS64 server to respond authoritatively for its prefixes. If the address prefix matches any Pref64::/n used in the site, either a NSP or the Well-Known Prefix (i.e. 64:FF9B::/96), then the DNS64 server MAY answer the query using locally-appropriate RDATA. The DNS64 server MAY use the same RDATA for all answers. Note that the requirement is to match any Pref64::/n used at the site, and not merely the locally-configured Pref64::/n. This is because end clients could ask for a PTR record matching an address received through a different (site-provided) DNS64, and if this strategy is in effect, those queries should never be sent to the global DNS. The advantage of this strategy is that it makes plain to the querying client that the prefix is one operated by the (DNS64) site, and that the answers the client is getting are generated by DNS64. The disadvantage is that any useful reverse-tree information that might be in the global DNS is unavailable to the clients querying the DNS64.
2. The second option is for the DNS64 nameserver to synthesize a CNAME mapping the IP6.ARPA namespace to the corresponding IN-ADDR.ARPA name. In this case, the DNS64 nameserver SHOULD ensure that there is RDATA at the PTR of the corresponding IN-ADDR.ARPA name, and that there is not an existing CNAME at that name. This is in order to avoid synthesizing a CNAME that makes a CNAME chain longer or that does not actually point to anything. The rest of the response would be the normal DNS processing. The CNAME can be signed on the fly if need be. The advantage of this



approach is that any useful information in the reverse tree is available to the querying client. The disadvantage is that it adds additional load to the DNS64 (because CNAMEs have to be synthesized for each PTR query that matches the Pref64::/n), and that it may require signing on the fly.

If the address prefix does not match any Pref64::/n, then the DNS64 server MUST process the query as though it were any other query; i.e. a recursive nameserver MUST attempt to resolve the query as though it were any other (non-A/AAAA) query, and an authoritative server MUST respond authoritatively or with a referral, as appropriate.

#### 5.3.2. Handling the additional section

DNS64 synthesis MUST NOT be performed on any records in the additional section of synthesized answers. The DNS64 MUST pass the additional section unchanged.

NOTE: It may appear that adding synthetic records to the additional section is desirable, because clients sometimes use the data in the additional section to proceed without having to re-query. There is in general no promise, however, that the additional section will contain all the relevant records, so any client that depends on the additional section being able to satisfy its needs (i.e. without additional queries) is necessarily broken. An IPv6-only client that needs a AAAA record, therefore, will send a query for the necessary AAAA record if it is unable to find such a record in the additional section of an answer it is consuming. For a correctly-functioning client, the effect would be no different if the additional section were empty. The alternative, of removing the A records in the additional section and replacing them with synthetic AAAA records, may cause a host behind a NAT64 to query directly a nameserver that is unaware of the NAT64 in question. The result in this case will be resolution failure anyway, only later in the resolution operation. The prohibition on synthetic data in the additional section reduces, but does not eliminate, the possibility of resolution failures due to cached DNS data from behind the DNS64. See Section 6.

#### 5.3.3. Other Resource Records

If the DNS64 is in recursive resolver mode, then considerations outlined in [I-D.ietf-dnsop-default-local-zones] may be relevant.

All other RRs MUST be returned unchanged. This includes responses to queries for A RRs.

#### 5.4. Assembling a synthesized response to a AAAA query

A DNS64 uses different pieces of data to build the response returned to the querying client.

The query that is used as the basis for synthesis results either in an error, an answer that can be used as a basis for synthesis, or an empty (authoritative) answer. If there is an empty answer, then the DNS64 responds to the original querying client with the answer the DNS64 received to the original (initiator's) query. Otherwise, the response is assembled as follows.

The header fields are set according to the usual rules for recursive or authoritative servers, depending on the role that the DNS64 is serving. The question section is copied from the original (initiator's) query. The answer section is populated according to the rules in Section 5.1.7. The authority and additional sections are copied from the response to the final query that the DNS64 performed, and used as the basis for synthesis.

The final response from the DNS64 is subject to all the standard DNS rules, including truncation [RFC1035] and EDNS0 handling [RFC2671].

#### 5.5. DNSSEC processing: DNS64 in validating resolver mode

We consider the case where a recursive resolver that is performing DNS64 also has a local policy to validate the answers according to the procedures outlined in [RFC4035] Section 5. We call this general case vDNS64.

The vDNS64 uses the presence of the DO and CD bits to make some decisions about what the query originator needs, and can react accordingly:

1. If CD is not set and DO is not set, vDNS64 SHOULD perform validation and do synthesis as needed. See the next item for rules about how to do validation and synthesis. In this case, however, vDNS64 MUST NOT set the AD bit in any response.
2. If CD is not set and DO is set, then vDNS64 SHOULD perform validation. Whenever vDNS64 performs validation, it MUST validate the negative answer for AAAA queries before proceeding to query for A records for the same name, in order to be sure that there is not a legitimate AAAA record on the Internet. Failing to observe this step would allow an attacker to use DNS64 as a mechanism to circumvent DNSSEC. If the negative response validates, and the response to the A query validates, then the vDNS64 MAY perform synthesis and SHOULD set the AD bit in the

answer to the client. This is acceptable, because [RFC4035], section 3.2.3 says that the AD bit is set by the name server side of a security-aware recursive name server if and only if it considers all the RRSsets in the Answer and Authority sections to be authentic. In this case, the name server has reason to believe the RRSets are all authentic, so it SHOULD set the AD bit. If the data does not validate, the vDNS64 MUST respond with RCODE=2 (Server failure).

A security-aware end point might take the presence of the AD bit as an indication that the data is valid, and may pass the DNS (and DNSSEC) data to an application. If the application attempts to validate the synthesized data, of course, the validation will fail. One could argue therefore that this approach is not desirable, but security aware stub resolvers must not place any reliance on data received from resolvers and validated on their behalf without certain criteria established by [RFC4035], section 4.9.3. An application that wants to perform validation on its own should use the CD bit.

3. If the CD bit is set and DO is set, then vDNS64 MAY perform validation, but MUST NOT perform synthesis. It MUST return the data to the query initiator, just like a regular recursive resolver, and depend on the client to do the validation and the synthesis itself.

The disadvantage to this approach is that an end point that is translation-oblivious but security-aware and validating will not be able to use the DNS64 functionality. In this case, the end point will not have the desired benefit of NAT64. In effect, this strategy means that any end point that wishes to do validation in a NAT64 context must be upgraded to be translation-aware as well.

## 6. Deployment notes

While DNS64 is intended to be part of a strategy for aiding IPv6 deployment in an internetworking environment with some IPv4-only and IPv6-only networks, it is important to realise that it is incompatible with some things that may be deployed in an IPv4-only or dual-stack context.

### 6.1. DNS resolvers and DNS64

Full-service resolvers that are unaware of the DNS64 function can be (mis)configured to act as mixed-mode iterative and forwarding resolvers. In a native IPv4 context, this sort of configuration may appear to work. It is impossible to make it work properly without it being aware of the DNS64 function, because it will likely at some

point obtain IPv4-only glue records and attempt to use them for resolution. The result that is returned will contain only A records, and without the ability to perform the DNS64 function the resolver will be unable to answer the necessary AAAA queries.

## 6.2. DNSSEC validators and DNS64

An existing DNSSEC validator (i.e. that is unaware of DNS64) might reject all the data that comes from DNS64 as having been tampered with (even if it did not set CD when querying). If it is necessary to have validation behind the DNS64, then the validator must know how to perform the DNS64 function itself. Alternatively, the validating host may establish a trusted connection with a DNS64, and allow the DNS64 recursive resolver to do all validation on its behalf.

## 6.3. DNS64 and multihomed and dual-stack hosts

### 6.3.1. IPv6 multihomed hosts

Synthetic AAAA records may be constructed on the basis of the network context in which they were constructed. If a host sends DNS queries to resolvers in multiple networks, it is possible that some of them will receive answers from a DNS64 without all of them being connected via a NAT64. For instance, suppose a system has two interfaces, i1 and i2. Whereas i1 is connected to the IPv4 Internet via NAT64, i2 has native IPv6 connectivity only. I1 might receive a AAAA answer from a DNS64 that is configured for a particular NAT64; the IPv6 address contained in that AAAA answer will not connect with anything via i2.

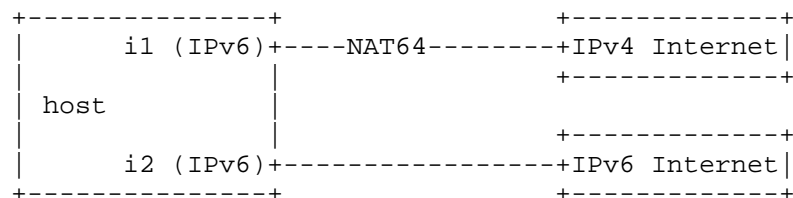


Figure 1: IPv6 multihomed hosts

This example illustrates why it is generally preferable that hosts treat DNS answers from one interface as local to that interface. The answer received on one interface will not work on the other interface. Hosts that attempt to use DNS answers globally may encounter surprising failures in these cases.

Note that the issue is not that there are two interfaces, but that there are two networks involved. The same results could be achieved

with a single interface routed to two different networks.

### 6.3.2. Accidental dual-stack DNS64 use

Similarly, suppose that i1 has IPv6 connectivity and can connect to the IPv4 Internet through NAT64, but i2 has native IPv4 connectivity. In this case, i1 could receive an IPv6 address from a synthetic AAAA that would better be reached via native IPv4. Again, it is worth emphasising that this arises because there are two networks involved.

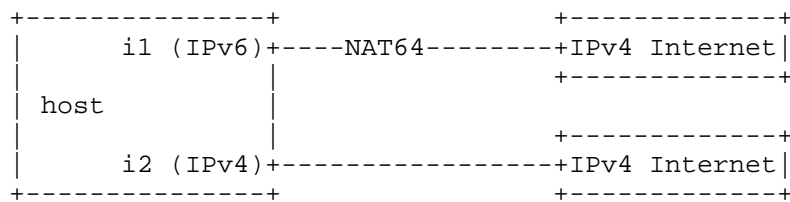


Figure 2: Accidental dual-stack DNS64 use

The default configuration of dual-stack hosts is that IPv6 is preferred over IPv4 ([RFC3484]). In that arrangement the host will often use the NAT64 when native IPv4 would be more desirable. For this reason, hosts with IPv4 connectivity to the Internet should avoid using DNS64. This can be partly resolved by ISPs when providing DNS resolvers to clients, but that is not a guarantee that the NAT64 will never be used when a native IPv4 connection should be used. There is no general-purpose mechanism to ensure that native IPv4 transit will always be preferred, because to a DNS64-oblivious host, the DNS64 looks just like an ordinary DNS server. Operators of a NAT64 should expect traffic to pass through the NAT64 even when it is not necessary.

### 6.3.3. Intentional dual-stack DNS64 use

Finally, consider the case where the IPv4 connectivity on i2 is only with a LAN, and not with the IPv4 Internet. The IPv4 Internet is only accessible using the NAT64. In this case, it is critical that the DNS64 not synthesize AAAA responses for hosts in the LAN, or else that the DNS64 be aware of hosts in the LAN and provide context-sensitive answers ("split view" DNS answers) for hosts inside the LAN. As with any split view DNS arrangement, operators must be prepared for data to leak from one context to another, and for failures to occur because nodes accessible from one context are not accessible from the other.

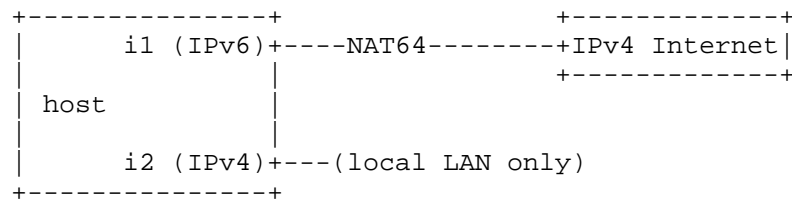


Figure 3: Intentional dual-stack DNS64 use

It is important for deployers of DNS64 to realise that, in some circumstances, making the DNS64 available to a dual-stack host will cause the host to prefer to send packets via NAT64 instead of via native IPv4, with the associated loss of performance or functionality (or both) entailed by the NAT. At the same time, some hosts are not able to learn about DNS servers provisioned on IPv6 addresses, or simply cannot send DNS packets over IPv6.

## 7. Deployment scenarios and examples

In this section we illustrate how the DNS64 behaves in different scenarios that are expected to be common. In particular we will consider the following scenarios defined in [I-D.ietf-behave-v6v4-framework]: the an-IPv6-network-to-IPv4-Internet scenario (both with DNS64 in DNS server mode and in stub-resolver mode) and the IPv6-Internet-to-an-IPv4-network setup (with DNS64 in DNS server mode only).

In all the examples below, there is a IPv6/IPv4 translator connecting the IPv6 domain to the IPv4 one. Also there is a name server that is a dual-stack node, so it can communicate with IPv6 hosts using IPv6 and with IPv4 nodes using IPv4. In addition, we assume that in the examples, the DNS64 function learns which IPv6 prefix it needs to use to map the IPv4 address space through manual configuration.

### 7.1. Example of An-IPv6-network-to-IPv4-Internet setup with DNS64 in DNS server mode

In this example, we consider an IPv6 node located in an IPv6-only site that initiates a communication to an IPv4 node located in the IPv4 Internet.

The scenario for this case is depicted in the following figure:

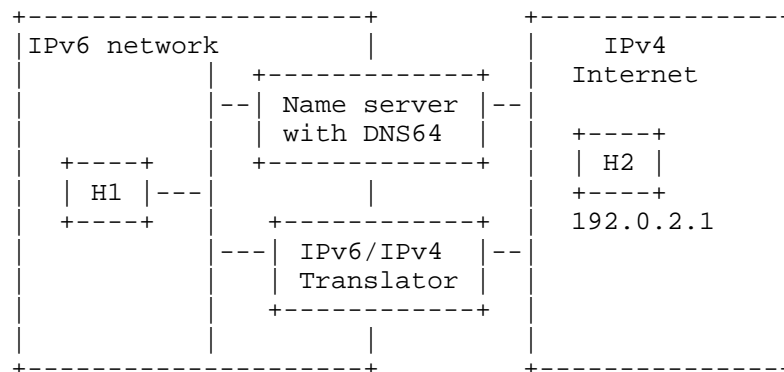


Figure 4: An-IPv6-network-to-IPv4-Internet setup with DNS64 in DNS server mode

The figure shows an IPv6 node H1 and an IPv4 node H2 with IPv4 address 192.0.2.1 and FQDN h2.example.com.

The IPv6/IPv4 Translator has an IPv4 address 203.0.113.1 assigned to its IPv4 interface and it is using the WKP 64:FF9B::/96 to create IPv6 representations of IPv4 addresses. The same prefix is configured in the DNS64 function in the local name server.

For this example, assume the typical DNS situation where IPv6 hosts have only stub resolvers, and they are configured with the IP address of a name server that they always have to query and that performs recursive lookups (henceforth called "the recursive nameserver").

The steps by which H1 establishes communication with H2 are:

1. H1 does a DNS lookup for h2.example.com. H1 does this by sending a DNS query for a AAAA record for H2 to the recursive name server. The recursive name server implements DNS64 functionality.
2. The recursive name server resolves the query, and discovers that there are no AAAA records for H2.
3. The recursive name server performs an A-record query for H2 and gets back an RRset containing a single A record with the IPv4 address 192.0.2.1. The name server then synthesizes a AAAA record. The IPv6 address in the AAAA record contains the prefix assigned to the IPv6/IPv4 Translator in the upper 96 bits and the received IPv4 address in the lower 32 bits i.e. the resulting IPv6 address is 64:FF9B::192.0.2.1.

4. H1 receives the synthetic AAAA record and sends a packet towards H2. The packet is sent to the destination address 64:FF9B::192.0.2.1.
  5. The packet is routed to the IPv6 interface of the IPv6/IPv4 translator and the subsequent communication flows by means of the IPv6/IPv4 translator mechanisms.
- 7.2. An example of an-IPv6-network-to-IPv4-Internet setup with DNS64 in stub-resolver mode

This case is depicted in the following figure:

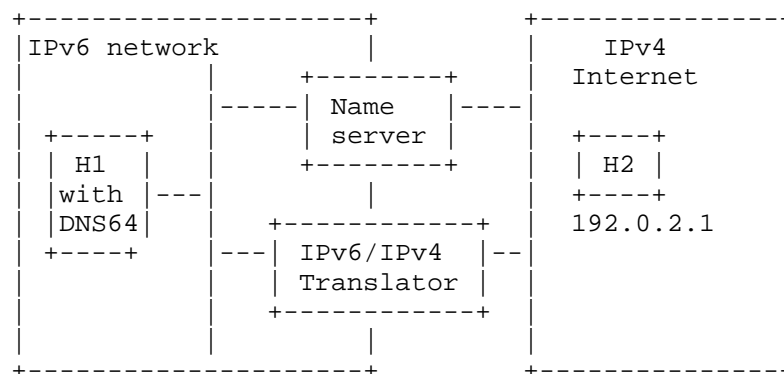


Figure 5: An-IPv6-network-to-IPv4-Internet setup with DNS64 in stub-resolver mode

The figure shows an IPv6 node H1 implementing the DNS64 function and an IPv4 node H2 with IPv4 address 192.0.2.1 and FQDN h2.example.com.

The IPv6/IPv4 Translator has an IPv4 address 203.0.113.1 assigned to its IPv4 interface and it is using the WKP 64:FF9B::/96 to create IPv6 representations of IPv4 addresses. The same prefix is configured in the DNS64 function in H1.

For this example, assume the typical DNS situation where IPv6 hosts have only stub resolvers, and they are configured with the IP address of a name server that they always have to query and that performs recursive lookups (henceforth called "the recursive nameserver"). The recursive name server does not perform the DNS64 function.

The steps by which H1 establishes communication with H2 are:



1. H1 does a DNS lookup for h2.example.com. H1 does this by sending a DNS query for a AAAA record for H2 to the recursive name server.
  2. The recursive DNS server resolves the query, and returns the answer to H1. Because there are no AAAA records in the global DNS for H2, the answer is empty.
  3. The stub resolver at H1 then queries for an A record for H2 and gets back an A record containing the IPv4 address 192.0.2.1. The DNS64 function within H1 then synthesizes a AAAA record. The IPv6 address in the AAAA record contains the prefix assigned to the IPv6/IPv4 translator in the upper 96 bits, then the received IPv4 address i.e. the resulting IPv6 address is 64:FF9B::192.0.2.1.
  4. H1 sends a packet towards H2. The packet is sent to the destination address 64:FF9B::192.0.2.1.
  5. The packet is routed to the IPv6 interface of the IPv6/IPv4 translator and the subsequent communication flows using the IPv6/IPv4 translator mechanisms.
- 7.3. Example of IPv6-Internet-to-an-IPv4-network setup DNS64 in DNS server mode

In this example, we consider an IPv6 node located in the IPv6 Internet that initiates a communication to an IPv4 node located in the IPv4 site.

In some cases, this scenario can be addressed without using any form of DNS64 function. This is so because it is possible to assign a fixed IPv6 address to each of the IPv4 nodes. Such an IPv6 address would be constructed using the address transformation algorithm defined in [I-D.ietf-behave-address-format] that takes as input the Pref64::/96 and the IPv4 address of the IPv4 node. Note that the IPv4 address can be a public or a private address; the latter does not present any additional difficulty, since an NSP must be used as Pref64::/96 (in this scenario the usage of the Well-Known prefix is not supported as discussed in [I-D.ietf-behave-address-format]). Once these IPv6 addresses have been assigned to represent the IPv4 nodes in the IPv6 Internet, real AAAA RRs containing these addresses can be published in the DNS under the site's domain. This is the recommended approach to handle this scenario, because it does not involve synthesizing AAAA records at the time of query.

However, there are some more dynamic scenarios, where synthesizing AAAA RRs in this setup may be needed. In particular, when DNS Update

[RFC2136] is used in the IPv4 site to update the A RRs for the IPv4 nodes, there are two options: One option is to modify the DNS server that receives the dynamic DNS updates. That would normally be the authoritative server for the zone. So the authoritative zone would have normal AAAA RRs that are synthesized as dynamic updates occur. The other option is modify all the authoritative servers to generate synthetic AAAA records for a zone, possibly based on additional constraints, upon the receipt of a DNS query for the AAAA RR. The first option -- in which the AAAA is synthesized when the DNS update message is received, and the data published in the relevant zone -- is recommended over the second option (i.e. the synthesis upon receipt of the AAAA DNS query). This is because it is usually easier to solve problems of misconfiguration when the DNS responses are not being generated dynamically. However, it may be the case where the primary server (that receives all the updates) cannot be upgraded for whatever reason, but where a secondary can be upgraded in order to handle the (comparatively small amount) of AAAA queries. In such case, it is possible to use the DNS64 as described next. The DNS64 behavior that we describe in this section covers the case of synthesizing the AAAA RR when the DNS query arrives.

The scenario for this case is depicted in the following figure:

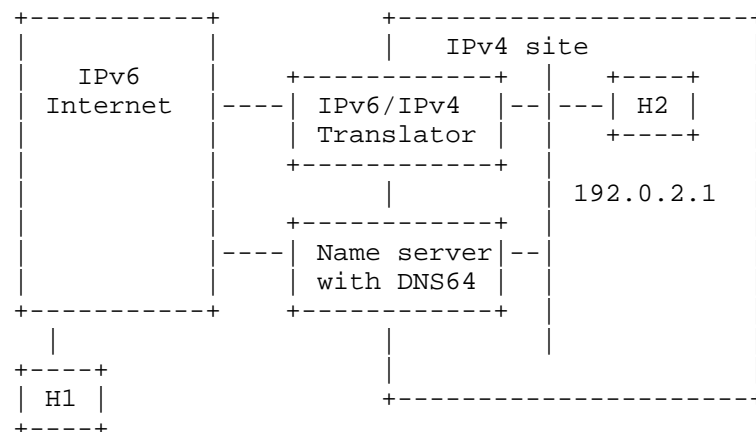


Figure 6: IPv6-Internet-to-an-IPv4-network setup DNS64 in DNS server mode

The figure shows an IPv6 node H1 and an IPv4 node H2 with IPv4 address 192.0.2.1 and FQDN h2.example.com.

The IPv6/IPv4 Translator is using a NSP 2001:DB8::/96 to create IPv6 representations of IPv4 addresses. The same prefix is configured in

the DNS64 function in the local name server. The name server that implements the DNS64 function is the authoritative name server for the local domain.

The steps by which H1 establishes communication with H2 are:

1. H1 does a DNS lookup for h2.example.com. H1 does this by sending a DNS query for a AAAA record for H2. The query is eventually forwarded to the server in the IPv4 site.
2. The local DNS server resolves the query (locally), and discovers that there are no AAAA records for H2.
3. The name server verifies that h2.example.com and its A RR are among those that the local policy defines as allowed to generate a AAAA RR from. If that is the case, the name server synthesizes a AAAA record from the A RR and the prefix 2001:DB8::/96. The IPv6 address in the AAAA record is 2001:DB8::192.0.2.1.
4. H1 receives the synthetic AAAA record and sends a packet towards H2. The packet is sent to the destination address 2001:DB8::192.0.2.1.
5. The packet is routed through the IPv6 Internet to the IPv6 interface of the IPv6/IPv4 translator and the communication flows using the IPv6/IPv4 translator mechanisms.

## 8. Security Considerations

DNS64 operates in combination with the DNS, and is therefore subject to whatever security considerations are appropriate to the DNS mode in which the DNS64 is operating (i.e. authoritative, recursive, or stub resolver mode).

DNS64 has the potential to interfere with the functioning of DNSSEC, because DNS64 modifies DNS answers, and DNSSEC is designed to detect such modification and to treat modified answers as bogus. See the discussion above in Section 3, Section 5.5, and Section 6.2.

Additionally, for the correct functioning of the translation services, the DNS64 and the NAT64 need to use the same Pref64. If an attacker manages to change the Pref64 used by the DNS64, the traffic generated by the host that receives the synthetic reply will be delivered to the altered Pref64. This can result in either a DoS attack (if resulting IPv6 addresses are not assigned to any device) or in a flooding attack (if the resulting IPv6 addresses are assigned to devices that do not wish to receive the traffic) or in

eavesdropping attack (in case the Pref64 is routed through the attacker).

## 9. IANA Considerations

This memo makes no request of IANA.

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## 11. Acknowledgements

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#### Appendix A. Motivations and Implications of synthesizing AAAA Resource Records when real AAAA Resource Records exist

The motivation for synthesizing AAAA RRs when real AAAA RRs exist is to support the following scenario:

An IPv4-only server application (e.g. web server software) is running on a dual-stack host. There may also be dual-stack server applications running on the same host. That host has fully routable IPv4 and IPv6 addresses and hence the authoritative DNS server has an A and a AAAA record.

An IPv6-only client (regardless of whether the client application is IPv6-only, the client stack is IPv6-only, or it only has an IPv6 address) wants to access the above server.

The client issues a DNS query to a DNS64 resolver.

If the DNS64 only generates a synthetic AAAA if there's no real AAAA, then the communication will fail. Even though there's a real AAAA, the only way for communication to succeed is with the translated address. So, in order to support this scenario, the administrator of a DNS64 service may want to enable the synthesis of AAAA RRs even when real AAAA RRs exist.

The implication of including synthetic AAAA RRs when real AAAA RRs exist is that translated connectivity may be preferred over native

connectivity in some cases where the DNS64 is operated in DNS server mode.

RFC3484 [RFC3484] rules use longest prefix match to select the preferred destination address to use. So, if the DNS64 resolver returns both the synthetic AAAA RRs and the real AAAA RRs, then if the DNS64 is operated by the same domain as the initiating host, and a global unicast prefix (called an NSP in [I-D.ietf-behave-address-format]) is used, then a synthetic AAAA RR is likely to be preferred.

This means that without further configuration:

In the "An IPv6 network to the IPv4 Internet" scenario, the host will prefer translated connectivity if an NSP is used. If the Well-Known Prefix defined in [I-D.ietf-behave-address-format] is used, it will probably prefer native connectivity.

In the "IPv6 Internet to an IPv4 network" scenario, it is possible to bias the selection towards the real AAAA RR if the DNS64 resolver returns the real AAAA first in the DNS reply, when an NSP is used (the Well-Known Prefix usage is not supported in this case)

In the "An IPv6 network to IPv4 network" scenario, for local destinations (i.e., target hosts inside the local site), it is likely that the NSP and the destination prefix are the same, so we can use the order of RR in the DNS reply to bias the selection through native connectivity. If the Well-Known Prefix is used, the longest prefix match rule will select native connectivity.

The problem can be solved by properly configuring the RFC3484 [RFC3484] policy table.

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Framework for IPv4/IPv6 Translation  
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Abstract

This note describes a framework for IPv4/IPv6 translation. This is in the context of replacing NAT-PT, which was deprecated by RFC 4966, and to enable networks to have IPv4 and IPv6 coexist in a somewhat rational manner while transitioning to an IPv6 network.

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## 1. Introduction

This note describes a framework for IPv4/IPv6 translation. This is in the context of replacing NAT-PT (Network Address Translation - Protocol Translation) [RFC2766], which was deprecated by [RFC4966], and to enable networks to have IPv4 and IPv6 coexist in a somewhat rational manner while transitioning to an IPv6-only network.

NAT-PT was deprecated to inform the community that NAT-PT had operational issues and was not considered a viable medium- or long-term strategy for either coexistence or transition. It wasn't intended to say that IPv4<->IPv6 translation was bad, but the way that NAT-PT did it was bad, and in particular using NAT-PT as a general-purpose solution was bad. As with the deprecation of the RIP routing protocol [RFC1923] at the time the Internet was converting to CIDR, the point was to encourage network operators to actually move away from technology with known issues.

[RFC4213] describes the IETF's view of the most sensible transition model. The IETF recommends, in short, that network operators (transit providers, service providers, enterprise networks, small and medium businesses, SOHO and residential customers, and any other kind of network that may currently be using IPv4) obtain an IPv6 prefix, turn on IPv6 routing within their networks and between themselves and any peer, upstream, or downstream neighbors, enable it on their computers, and use it in normal processing. This should be done while leaving IPv4 stable, until a point is reached that any communication that can be carried out could use either protocol equally well. At that point, the economic justification for running both becomes debatable, and network operators can justifiably turn IPv4 off. This process is comparable to that of [RFC4192], which describes how to renumber a network using the same address family without a flag day. While running stably with the older system, deploy the new. Use the coexistence period to work out such kinks as arise. When the new is also running stably, shift production to it. When network and economic conditions warrant, remove the old, which is now no longer necessary.

The question arises: what if that is infeasible due to the time available to deploy or other considerations? What if the process of moving a network and its components or customers is starting too late for contract cycles to effect IPv6 turn-up on important parts at a point where it becomes uneconomical to deploy global IPv4 addresses in new services? How does one continue to deploy new services without balkanizing the network?

This document describes translation as one of the tools networks might use to facilitate coexistence and ultimate transition.

### 1.1. Why Translation?

Besides dual-stack deployment, there are two fundamental approaches one could take to interworking between IPv4 and IPv6: tunneling and translation. One could - and in the [6NET] we did - build an overlay network that tunnels one protocol over the other. Various proposals take that model, including 6to4 [RFC3056], Teredo [RFC4380], ISATAP [RFC5214], and DS-Lite [I-D.ietf-softwire-dual-stack-lite]. The advantage of doing so is that the new is enabled to work without disturbing the old protocol, providing connectivity between users of the new protocol. There are two disadvantages to tunneling:

- o Users of the new architecture are unable to use the services of the underlying infrastructure - it is just bandwidth, and
- o It doesn't enable new protocol users to communicate with old protocol users without dual-stack hosts.

As noted, in this work, we look at Internet Protocol translation as a transition strategy. [RFC4864] forcefully makes the point that many of the reasons people use Network Address Translators are met as well by routing or protocol mechanisms that preserve the end-to-end addressability of the Internet. What it did not consider is the case in which there is an ongoing requirement to communicate with IPv4 systems, but for example configuring IPv4 routing is not in the network operator's view the most desirable strategy, or is infeasible due to a shortage of global address space. Translation enables the client of a network, whether a transit network, an access network, or an edge network, to access the services of the network and communicate with other network users regardless of their protocol usage - within limits. Like NAT-PT, IPv4/IPv6 translation under this rubric is not a long-term support strategy, but it is a medium-term coexistence strategy that can be used to facilitate a long-term program of transition.

### 1.2. Terminology

The following terminology is used in this document and other documents related to it.

An IPv4 network: A specific network that has an IPv4-only deployment. This could be an enterprise's IPv4-only network, an ISP's IPv4-only network or even an IPv4-only host. The IPv4 Internet is the set of all interconnected IPv4 networks.

An IPv6 network: A specific network that has an IPv6-only deployment. This could be an enterprise's IPv6-only network, an ISP's IPv6-only network or even an IPv6-only host. The IPv6 Internet is the set of all interconnected IPv6 networks.

DNS46: A DNS translator that translates AAAA record to A record.

DNS64: A DNS translator that translates A record to AAAA record.

Dual-Stack implementation: A Dual-Stack implementation, in this context, comprises an IPv4/IPv6 enabled end system stack, applications plus routing in the network. It implies that two application instances are capable of communicating using either IPv4 or IPv6 - they have stacks, they have addresses, and they have any necessary network support including routing.

IPv4-converted addresses: IPv6 addresses used to represent IPv4 nodes in an IPv6 network. They have an explicit mapping relationship to IPv4 addresses. Both stateless and stateful translators use IPv4-converted addresses to represent IPv4 addresses.

IPv4-only: An IPv4-only implementation, in this context, comprises an IPv4-enabled end system stack, applications directly or indirectly using that IPv4 stack, plus routing in the network. It implies that two application instances are capable of communicating using IPv4, but not IPv6 - they have an IPv4 stack, addresses, and network support including IPv4 routing and potentially IPv4/IPv4 translation, but some element is missing that prevents communication with IPv6 hosts.

IPv4-translatable addresses: IPv6 addresses to be assigned to IPv6 nodes for use with stateless translation. They have an explicit mapping relationship to IPv4 addresses. A stateless translator uses the corresponding IPv4 addresses to represent the IPv6 addresses. A stateful translator does not use this kind of addresses, since IPv6 hosts are represented by the IPv4 address pool in the translator via dynamic state.

IPv6-only: An IPv6-only implementation, in this context, comprises an IPv6-enabled end system stack, applications directly or indirectly using that IPv6 stack, plus routing in the network. It implies that two application instances are capable of communicating using IPv6, but not IPv4 - they have an IPv6 stack, addresses, and network support including routing in IPv6, but some element is missing that prevents communication with IPv4 hosts.

**Network-Specific Prefix (NSP):** From an IPv6 prefix assigned to a network operator, the operator chooses a longer prefix for use by the operator's translator(s). Hence a given IPv4 address would have different IPv6 representations in different networks that use different network-specific prefixes. A network-specific prefix is also known as a Local Internet Registry (LIR) prefix.

**State:** "State" refers to dynamic information that is stored in a network element. For example, if two systems are communicating using a TCP connection, each stores information about the connection, which is called "connection state". In this context, the term refers to dynamic correlations between IP addresses on either side of a translator, or {IP address, transport protocol, transport port number} tuples on either side of the translator. Of stateful algorithms, there are at least two major flavors depending on the kind of state they maintain:

**Hidden state:** the existence of this state is unknown outside the network element that contains it.

**Known state:** the existence of this state is known by other network elements.

**Stateful Translation:** A translation algorithm may be said to "require state in a network element" or be "stateful" if the transmission or reception of a packet creates or modifies a data structure in the relevant network element.

**Stateful Translator:** A translator that uses stateful translation for either the source or destination address. A stateful translator typically also uses a stateless translation algorithm for the other type of address.

**Stateless Translation:** A translation algorithm that is not "stateful" is "stateless". It derives its needed information algorithmically from the messages it is translating, and pre-configured information.

**Stateless Translator:** A translator that uses only stateless translation for both destination address and source address.

**Well-Known Prefix (WKP):** The IPv6 prefix defined in [I-D.ietf-behave-address-format] for use in an algorithmic mapping.

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].

### 1.3. Translation Objectives

In any translation model, there is a question of objectives. Ideally, one would like to make any system and any application running on it able to "talk with" - exchange datagrams supporting applications with - any other system running the same application regardless of whether they have an IPv4 stack and connectivity or IPv6 stack and connectivity. That was the model for NAT-PT, and the things it necessitated led to scaling and operational difficulties [RFC4966].

So the question comes back to what different kinds of connectivity can be easily supported and what kinds are harder, and what technologies are needed to at least pick the low-hanging fruit. We observe that applications today fall into two main categories:

Client/Server Application: Per [whatis.com](http://whatis.com), "'Client/server' describes the relationship between two computer programs in which one program, the client, makes a service request from another program, the server, which fulfills the request." In networking, the behavior of the applications is that connections are initiated from client software and systems to server software and systems. Examples include mail handling between an end user and his mail system (POP3, IMAP, and MUA->MTA SMTP), FTP, the web, and DNS name resolution.

Peer-to-Peer (P2P) Application: A P2P application is an application that uses the same endpoint to initiate outgoing sessions to peering hosts as well as accept incoming sessions from peering hosts. These in turn fall broadly into two categories:

Peer-to-peer infrastructure applications: Examples of "infrastructure applications" include SMTP between MTAs, Network News, and SIP. Any MTA might open an SMTP session with any other at any time; any SIP Proxy might similarly connect with any other SIP Proxy. An important characteristic of these applications is that they use ephemeral sessions - they open sessions when they are needed and close them when they are done.

Peer-to-peer file exchange applications: Examples of these include Limewire, BitTorrent, and UTorrent. These are applications that open some sessions between systems and leave them open for long periods of time, and where ephemeral sessions are important, are able to learn about the reliability of peers from history or by reputation. They use the long-term sessions to map content availability. Short-term sessions are used to exchange content. They tend to prefer to ask for



content from peers that they find reliable and available.

If the goal is the ability to open connections between systems, then one must ask who opens connections.

- o We need a technology that will enable systems that act as clients to be able to open sessions with other systems that act as servers, whether in the IPv6->IPv4 direction or the IPv4->IPv6 direction. Ideally, this is stateless; especially in a carrier infrastructure, the preponderance of accesses will be to servers, and this optimizes access to them. However, a stateful algorithm is acceptable if the complexity is minimized and a stateless algorithm cannot be constructed.
- o We also need a technology that will allow peers to connect with each other, whether in the IPv6->IPv4 direction or the IPv4->IPv6 direction. Again, it would be ideal if this was stateless, but a stateful algorithm is acceptable if the complexity is minimized and a stateless algorithm cannot be constructed.
- o In some situations, hosts are purely clients. In those situations, we do not need an algorithm to enable connections to those hosts.

The complexity arguments bring us in the direction of hidden state: if state must be shared between the application and the translator or between translation components, complexity and deployment issues are greatly magnified. The objective of the translators is to avoid, as much as possible, any software changes in hosts or applications necessary to support translation.

NAT-PT is an example of a facility with known state - at least two software components (the data plane translator and the DNS Application Layer Gateway, which may be implemented in the same or different systems) share and must coordinate translation state. A typical IPv4/IPv6 NAT implements an algorithm with hidden state. Obviously, stateless translation requires less computational overhead than stateful translation, and less memory to maintain the state, because the translation tables and their associated methods and processes exist in a stateful algorithm and don't exist in a stateless one.

#### 1.4. Transition Plan

While the design of IPv4 made it impossible for IPv6 to be compatible on the wire, the designers intended that it would coexist with IPv4 during a period of transition. The primary mode of coexistence was dual-stack operation - routers would be dual-stacked so that the

network could carry both address families, and IPv6-capable hosts could be dual-stack to maintain access to IPv4-only partners. The goal was that the preponderance of hosts and routers in the Internet would be IPv6-capable long before IPv4 address space allocation was completed. At this time, it appears the exhaustion of IPv4 address space will occur before significant IPv6 adoption.

Curran's "A Transition Plan for IPv6" [RFC5211] proposes a three-phase progression:

Preparation Phase (current): characterized by pilot use of IPv6, primarily through transition mechanisms defined in [RFC4213], and planning activities.

Transition Phase (2010 through 2011): characterized by general availability of IPv6 in provider networks which should be native IPv6; organizations should provide IPv6 connectivity for their Internet-facing servers, but should still provide IPv4-based services via a separate service name.

Post-Transition Phase (2012 and beyond): characterized by a preponderance of IPv6-based services and diminishing support for IPv4-based services.

Various timelines have been discussed, but most will agree with the pattern of the above three transition phases, also known as an "S" curve transition pattern.

In each of these phases, the coexistence problem and solution space has a different focus:

Preparation Phase: Coexistence tools are needed to facilitate early adopters by removing impediments to IPv6 deployment, and to assure that nothing is lost by adopting IPv6, in particular that the IPv6 adopter has unfettered access to the global IPv4 Internet regardless of whether they have a global IPv4 address (or any IPv4 address or stack at all). While it might appear reasonable for the cost and operational burden to be borne by the early adopter, the shared goal of promoting IPv6 adoption would argue against that model. Additionally, current IPv4 users should not be forced to retire or upgrade their equipment and the burden remains on service providers to carry and route native IPv4. This is known as the early stage of the "S" curve.

Transition Phase: During the middle stage of "S" curve, while IPv6 adoption can be expected to accelerate, there will still be a significant portion of the Internet operating IPv4-only or preferring IPv4. During this phase the norm shifts from IPv4 to

IPv6, and coexistence tools evolve to ensure interoperability between domains that may be restricted to IPv4 or IPv6.

Post-Transition Phase: This is the last stage of "S" curve. In this phase, IPv6 is ubiquitous and the burden of maintaining interoperability shifts to those who choose to maintain IPv4-only systems. While these systems should be allowed to live out their economic life cycles, the IPv4-only legacy users at the edges should bear the cost of coexistence tools, and at some point service provider networks should not be expected to carry and route native IPv4 traffic.

The choice between the terms "transition" versus "coexistence" has engendered long philosophical debate. "Transition" carries the sense that one is going somewhere, while "coexistence" seems more like one is sitting somewhere. Historically with the IETF, "transition" has been the term of choice [RFC4213][RFC5211], and the tools for interoperability have been called "transition mechanisms". There is some perception or conventional wisdom that adoption of IPv6 is being impeded by the deficiency of tools to facilitate interoperability of nodes or networks that are constrained (in some way, fully or partially) from full operation in one of the address families. In addition, it is apparent that transition will involve a period of coexistence; the only real question is how long that will last.

Thus, coexistence is an integral part of the transition plan, not in conflict with it, but there will be a balancing act. It starts out being a way for early IPv6 adopters to easily exploit the bigger IPv4 Internet, and ends up being a way for late/never adopters to hang on with IPv4 (at their own expense, with minimal impact or visibility to the Internet). One way to look at solutions is that cost incentives (both monetary cost and the operational overhead for the end user) should encourage IPv6 and discourage IPv4. That way natural market forces will keep the transition moving - especially as the legacy IPv4-only stuff ages out of use. The end goal should not be to eliminate IPv4 by fiat, but rather render it redundant through ubiquitous IPv6 deployment. IPv4 may never go away completely, but rational plans should move the costs of maintaining IPv4 to those who insist on using it after wide adoption of IPv6.

## 2. Scenarios for IPv4/IPv6 Translation

It is important to note that the choice of translation solution and the assumptions about the network where they are used impact the consequences. A translator for the general case has a number of issues that a translator for a more specific situation may not have at all.

The intention of this document is to focus on translation solutions under all kinds of situations. All IPv4/IPv6 translation cases can be easily described in terms of "interoperation between a set of systems (applications) that only communicate using IPv4 and a set of systems that only communicate using IPv6", but the differences at a detailed level make them interesting.

Based on the transition plan described in Section 1.4, there are four types of IPv4/IPv6 translation scenarios:

- a. Interoperation between an IPv6 network and the IPv4 Internet
- b. Interoperation between an IPv4 network and the IPv6 Internet
- c. Interoperation between an IPv6 network and an IPv4 network
- d. Interoperation between the IPv6 Internet and the IPv4 Internet

Each one of the above can be divided into two scenarios, depending on whether the IPv6 side or the IPv4 side initiates communication, so there are a total of eight scenarios.

Scenario 1: an IPv6 network to the IPv4 Internet

Scenario 2: the IPv4 Internet to an IPv6 network

Scenario 3: the IPv6 Internet to an IPv4 network

Scenario 4: an IPv4 network to the IPv6 Internet

Scenario 5: an IPv6 network to an IPv4 network

Scenario 6: an IPv4 network to an IPv6 network

Scenario 7: the IPv6 Internet to the IPv4 Internet

Scenario 8: the IPv4 Internet to the IPv6 Internet

We will discuss each scenario in detail in the next section.

## 2.1. Scenario 1: an IPv6 network to the IPv4 Internet

Due to the lack of IPv4 addresses or under other technical or economical constraints, the network is IPv6-only, but the hosts in the network require communicating with the global IPv4 Internet.

This is the typical scenario for what we sometimes call "green-field" deployments. One example is an enterprise network that wishes to

operate only IPv6 for operational simplicity, but still wishes to reach the content in the IPv4 Internet. The green-field enterprise scenario is different from an ISP's network in the sense that there is only one place that the enterprise can easily modify: the border between its network and the IPv4 Internet. Obviously, the IPv4 Internet operates the way it already does. But in addition, the hosts in the enterprise network are commercially available devices, personal computers with existing operating systems. This restriction drives us to a "one box" type of solution, where IPv6 can be translated into IPv4 to reach the public Internet.

Other cases that have been mentioned include wireless ISP networks and sensor networks. These bear a striking resemblance to this scenario as well, if one considers the ISP network to simply be a very special kind of enterprise network.

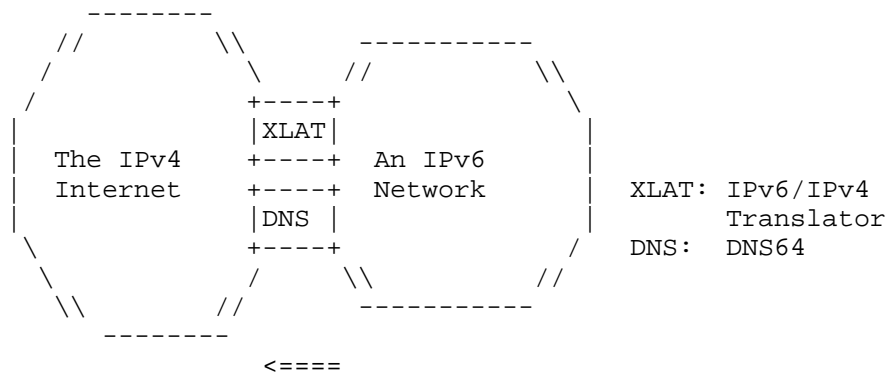


Figure 1: Scenario 1

Both stateless [I-D.ietf-behave-v6v4-xlate] and stateful [I-D.ietf-behave-v6v4-xlate-stateful] solutions can support Scenario 1.

## 2.2. Scenario 2: the IPv4 Internet to an IPv6 network

When the enterprise networks or ISP networks adopt Scenario 1, the IPv6-only users will not only want to access servers on the IPv4 Internet but also want to setup their own servers in the network which are accessible by the users on the IPv4 Internet, since the majority of the Internet users are still in the IPv4 Internet. Thus, with a translation solution for this scenario, the benefits would be clear. Not only could servers move directly to IPv6 without trudging through a difficult transition period, but they could do so without risk of losing connectivity with the IPv4-only Internet.

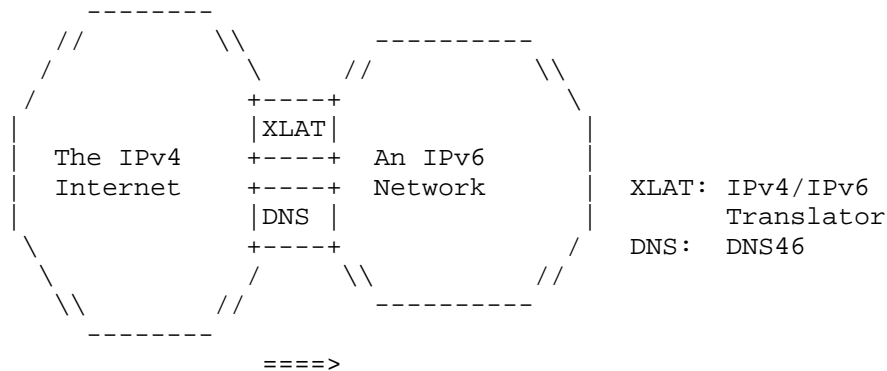


Figure 2: Scenario 2

In general, this scenario presents a hard case for translation. Stateful translation such as NAT-PT [RFC2766] can be used in this scenario, but it requires a tightly coupled DNS ALG in the translator and this technique was deprecated by the IETF [RFC4966].

The stateless translation solution [I-D.ietf-behave-v6v4-xlate] in Scenario 1 can also work in Scenario 2, since it can support IPv4-initiated communications with a subset of the IPv6 addresses (IPv4-translatable addresses) in an IPv6 network.

### 2.3. Scenario 3: the IPv6 Internet to an IPv4 network

There is a requirement for a legacy IPv4 network to provide services to IPv6 hosts.

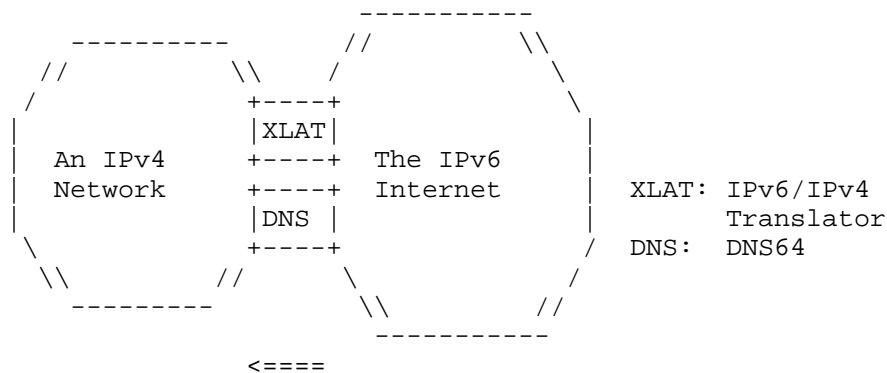


Figure 3: Scenario 3

Stateless translation will not work for this scenario, because an IPv4 network needs to communicate with all of the IPv6 Internet, not just a small subset, and stateless can only support a subset of the IPv6 addresses. However, IPv6-initiated communication can be achieved through stateful translation [I-D.ietf-behave-v6v4-xlate-stateful]. In this case, a Network Specific Prefix assigned to the translator will give the hosts unique IPv4-converted IPv6 addresses, no matter the legacy IPv4 network uses public IPv4 addresses or [RFC1918] addresses. Also there is no need to synthesizing AAAA from A records, since static AAAA records can be put in the regular DNS to represent these IPv4-only hosts as discussed in Section 7.3 of [I-D.ietf-behave-dns64].

#### 2.4. Scenario 4: an IPv4 network to the IPv6 Internet

Due to technical or economical constraints, the network is IPv4-only, and IPv4-only hosts (applications) may require communicating with the global IPv6 Internet.

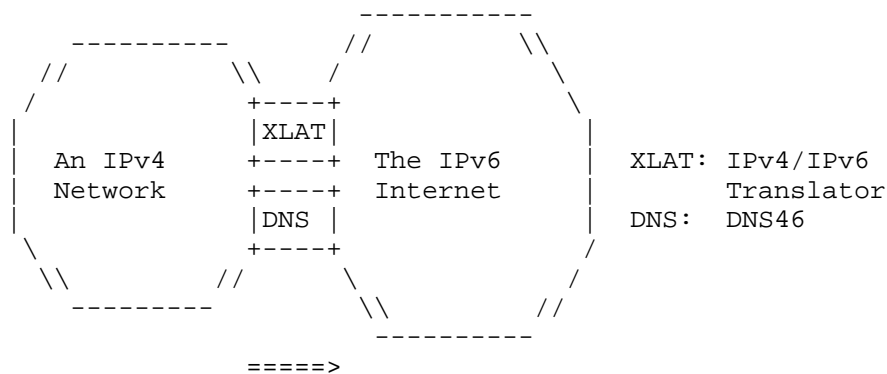


Figure 4: Scenario 4

In general, this scenario presents a hard case for translation. Stateful translation such as NAT-PT [RFC2766] can be used in this scenario, but it requires a tightly coupled DNS ALG in the translator and this technique was deprecated by the IETF [RFC4966].

From the transition phase discussion in Section 1.4, this scenario will probably only occur when we are well past the early stage of the "S" curve and the IPv4/IPv6 transition has already moved to the right direction. Therefore, in-network translation is not considered viable for this scenario and other techniques should be considered.

## 2.5. Scenario 5: an IPv6 network to an IPv4 network

In this scenario, both an IPv4 network and an IPv6 network are within the same organization.

The IPv4 addresses used are either public IPv4 addresses or [RFC1918] addresses. The IPv6 addresses used are either public IPv6 addresses or ULAs (Unique Local Addresses) [RFC4193].

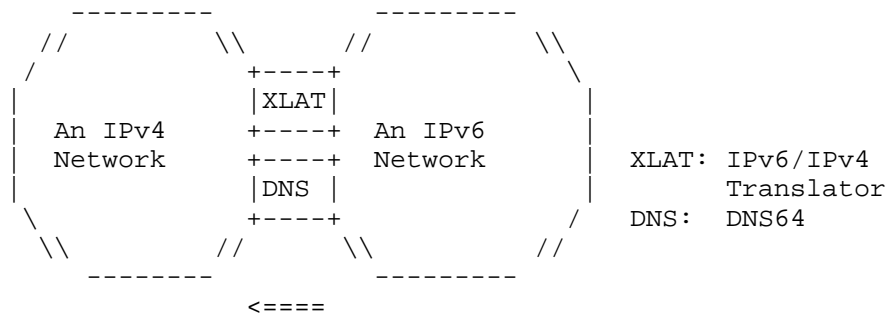


Figure 5: Scenario 5

The translation requirement from this scenario has no significant difference from scenario 1, so both the stateful and stateless translation schemes discussed in Section 2.1 apply here.

## 2.6. Scenario 6: an IPv4 network to an IPv6 network

This is another scenario when both an IPv4 network and an IPv6 network are within the same organization.

The IPv4 addresses used are either public IPv4 addresses or [RFC1918] addresses. The IPv6 addresses used are either public IPv6 addresses or ULAs (Unique Local Addresses) [RFC4193].



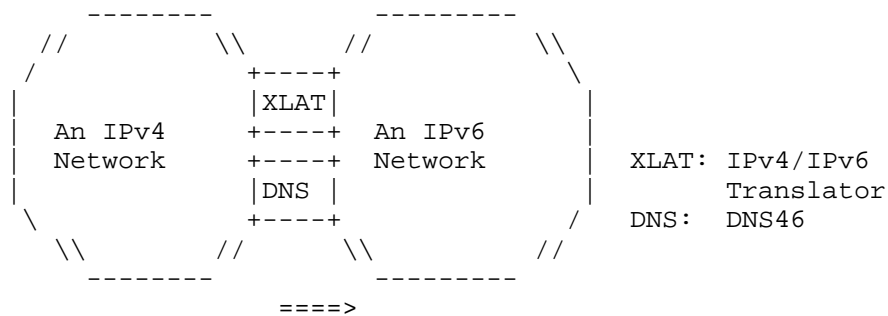


Figure 6: Scenario 6

The translation requirement from this scenario has no significant difference from scenario 2, so the translation scheme discussed in Section 2.2 applies here.

#### 2.7. Scenario 7: the IPv6 Internet to the IPv4 Internet

This seems the ideal case for in-network translation technology, where any IPv6-only host or application on the global Internet can initiate communication with any IPv4-only host or application on the global Internet.

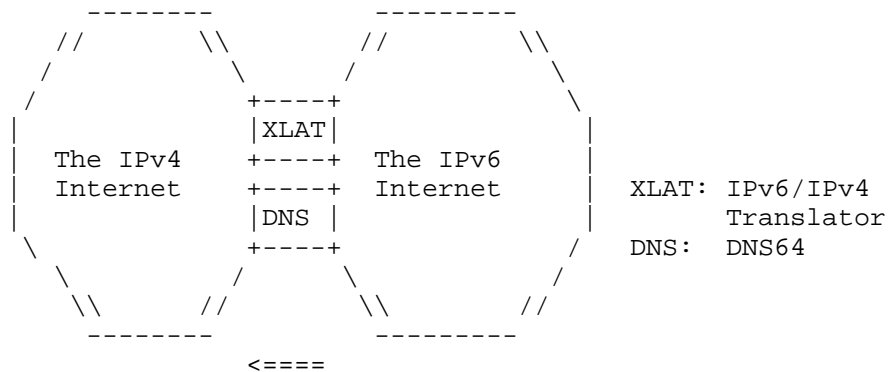


Figure 7: Scenario 7

Due to the huge difference in size between the address spaces of the IPv4 Internet and the IPv6 Internet, there is no viable translation technique to handle unlimited IPv6 address translation.

If we ever run into this scenario, fortunately, the IPv4/IPv6 transition has already passed the early stage of the "S" curve. Therefore, there is no obvious business reason to demand a translation solution as the only transition strategy.

## 2.8. Scenario 8: the IPv4 Internet to the IPv6 Internet

This case is very similar to Scenario 7. The analysis and conclusions for Scenario 7 also applies for this scenario.

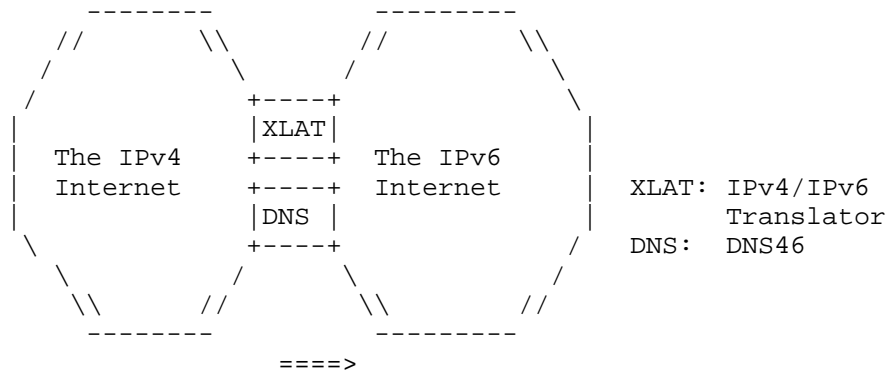


Figure 8: Scenario 8

## 3. Framework

Having laid out the preferred transition model and the options for implementing it (Section 1.1), defined terms (Section 1.2), considered the requirements (Section 1.3), considered the transition model (Section 1.4), and considered the kinds of scenarios the facility would support (Section 2), we now turn to a framework for IPv4/IPv6 translation. The framework contains the following components:

- o Address translation
- o IP and ICMP translation
- o Maintaining translation state
- o DNS64 and DNS46

- o ALGs for other application-layer protocols (e.g., FTP)

### 3.1. Translation Components

#### 3.1.1. Address Translation

When IPv6/IPv4 translation is performed, we should specify how an individual IPv6 address is translated to a corresponding IPv4 address, and vice versa, in cases where an algorithmic mapping is used. This includes the choice of IPv6 prefix and the choice of method by which the remainder of the IPv6 address is derived from an IPv4 address [I-D.ietf-behave-address-format]. The usages of the IPv6 addresses are shown in the following figures.

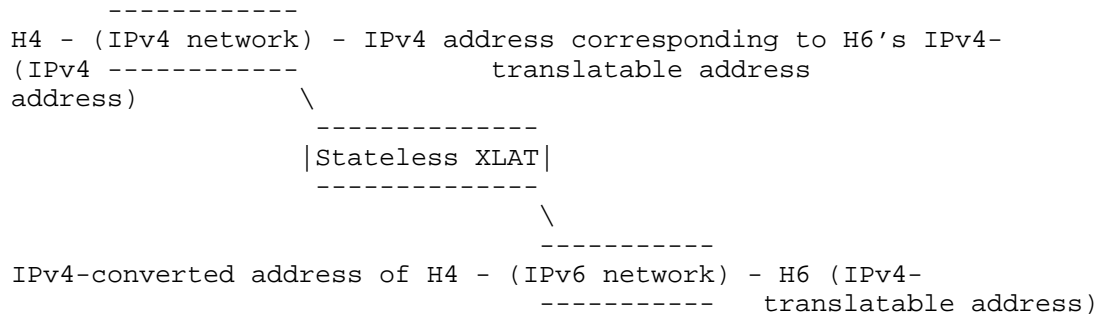


Figure 9: IPv6 address representation for stateless translation

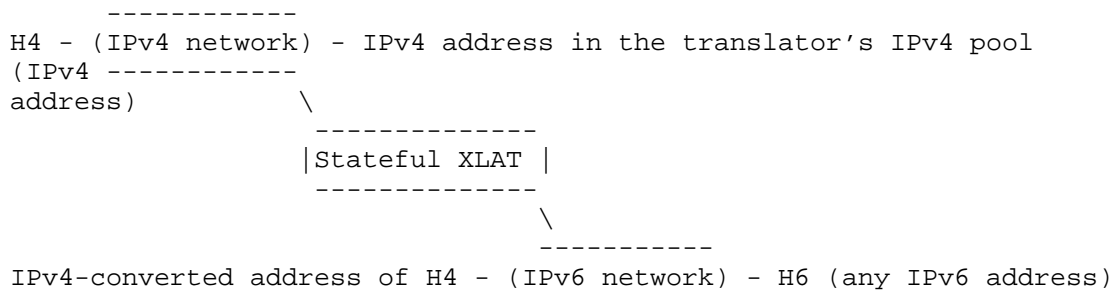


Figure 10: IPv6 address representation for stateful translation

For both stateless and stateful translation, an algorithmic mapping

table is used to translate IPv6 destination addresses (IPv4-converted addresses) to IPv4 destination addresses in IPv6 to IPv4 direction and translate IPv4 source addresses to IPv6 source addresses (IPv4-converted addresses) in IPv4 to IPv6 direction. Note that translating IPv6 source addresses to IPv4 source addresses in IPv6 to IPv4 direction and translating IPv4 destination addresses to IPv6 destination addresses in IPv4 to IPv6 direction will be different for stateless translation and stateful translation.

- o For stateless translation, the same algorithmic mapping table is used to translate IPv6 source addresses (IPv4-translatable addresses) to IPv4 source addresses in IPv6 to IPv4 direction and translate IPv4 destination addresses to IPv6 destination addresses (IPv4-translatable addresses) in IPv4 to IPv6 direction. In this case, blocks of service provider's IPv4 addresses are mapped into IPv6 and used by physical IPv6 nodes. The original IPv4 form of these blocks of service provider's IPv4 addresses are used to represent the physical IPv6 nodes in IPv4. Note that stateless translation supports both IPv6 initiated as well as IPv4 initiated communications.
- o For stateful translation, the algorithmic mapping table is not used to translate source addresses in IPv6 to IPv4 direction and destination addresses in IPv4 to IPv6 direction. Instead, a state table is used to translate IPv6 source addresses to IPv4 source addresses in IPv6 to IPv4 direction and translate IPv4 destination addresses to IPv6 destination addresses in IPv4 to IPv6 direction. In this case, blocks of the service provider's IPv4 addresses are maintained in the translator as the IPv4 address pools and are dynamically bound to specific IPv6 addresses. The original IPv4 form of these blocks of service provider's IPv4 addresses is used to represent the IPv6 address in IPv4. However, due to the dynamic binding, stateful translation in general only supports IPv6-initiated communication.

### 3.1.2. IP and ICMP Translation

The IPv4/IPv6 translator is based on the update to the Stateless IP/ICMP Translation Algorithm (SIIT) described in [RFC2765]. The algorithm translates between IPv4 and IPv6 packet headers (including ICMP headers).

The IP and ICMP translation document [I-D.ietf-behave-v6v4-xlate] discusses header translation for both stateless and stateful modes, but does not cover maintaining state in the stateful mode. In the stateless mode, translation information is carried in the address itself plus configuration in the translator, permitting both IPv4->IPv6 and IPv6->IPv4 session establishment. In the stateful

mode, translation state is maintained between IPv4 address/transport port tuples and IPv6 address/transport port tuples, enabling IPv6 systems to open sessions with IPv4 systems. The choice of operational mode is made by the operator deploying the network and is critical to the operation of the applications using it.

### 3.1.3. Maintaining Translation State

For the stateful translator, besides IP and ICMP translation, special action must be taken to maintain the translation states.

[I-D.ietf-behave-v6v4-xlate-stateful] describes a mechanism for maintaining state.

### 3.1.4. DNS64 and DNS46

DNS64 [I-D.ietf-behave-dns64] and possible future DNS46 documents describe the mechanisms by which a DNS translator is intended to operate. It is designed to operate on the basis of known address translation algorithms defined in [I-D.ietf-behave-address-format]

There are at least two possible implementations of a DNS64 and DNS46:

Static records: One could literally populate DNS with corresponding A and AAAA records. This mechanism works for scenarios 2, 3, 5 and 6.

Dynamic Translation of static records: In more general operation, the preferred behavior is an A record to be (retrieved and) translated to an AAAA record by the DNS64 if and only if no reachable AAAA record exists, or for an AAAA record to be (retrieved and) translated to an A record by the DNS46 if and only if no reachable A record exists.

### 3.1.5. ALGs for Other Applications Layer Protocols

In addition, some applications require special support. An example is FTP. FTP's active mode doesn't work well across NATs without extra support such as SOCKS [RFC1928] [RFC3089]. Across NATs, it generally uses passive mode. However, the designers of FTP wrote different and incompatible passive mode implementations for IPv4 and IPv6 networks. Hence, either they need to fix FTP, or a translator must be written for the application. Other applications may be similarly broken.

As a general rule, a simple operational recommendation will work around many application issues, which is that there should be a server in each domain or an instance of the server should have an interface in each domain. For example, an SMTP MTA may be confused

by finding an IPv6 address in its HELO when it is connected to using IPv4 (or vice versa), but would work perfectly well if it had an interface in both the IPv4 and IPv6 domains and was used as an application-layer bridge between them.

### 3.2. Operation Mode for Specific Scenarios

Currently, the proposed solutions for IPv6/IPv4 translation are classified into stateless translation and stateful translation.

#### 3.2.1. Stateless Translation

For stateless translation, the translation information is carried in the address itself plus configuration in the translators, permitting both IPv4->IPv6 and IPv6->IPv4 session initiation. Stateless translation supports end-to-end address transparency and has better scalability compared with stateful translation.  
[I-D.ietf-behave-v6v4-xlate].

The stateless translation mechanisms typically put constraints on what IPv6 addresses can be assigned to IPv6 nodes that want to communicate with IPv4 destinations using an algorithmic mapping. For Scenario 1 ("an IPv6 network to the IPv4 Internet"), it is not a serious drawback, since the address assignment policy can be applied to satisfy this requirement for the IPv6 nodes that need to communicate with the IPv4 Internet. In addition, stateless translation supports Scenario 2 ("the IPv4 Internet to an IPv6 network"), which means that not only could servers move directly to IPv6 without trudging through a difficult transition period, but they could do so without risk of losing connectivity with the IPv4-only Internet.

Stateless translation can be used for Scenarios 1, 2, 5 and 6, i.e., it supports "an IPv6 network to the IPv4 Internet", "the IPv4 Internet to an IPv6 network", "an IPv6 network to an IPv4 network" and "an IPv4 network to an IPv6 network".

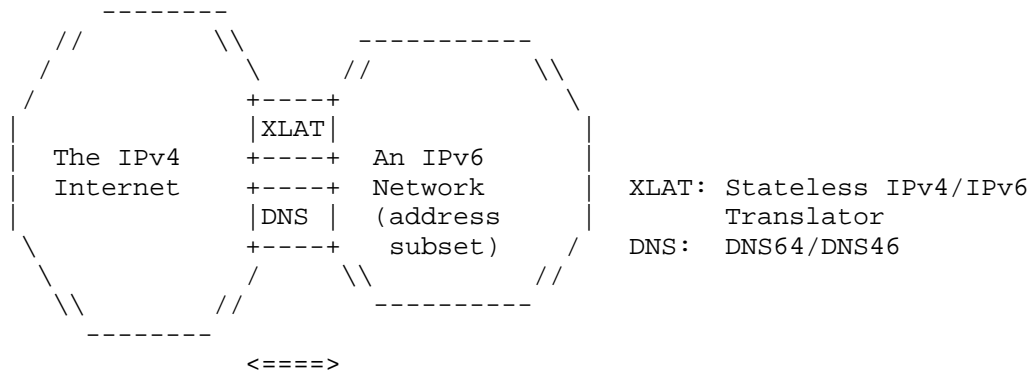


Figure 11: Stateless translation for Scenarios 1 and 2

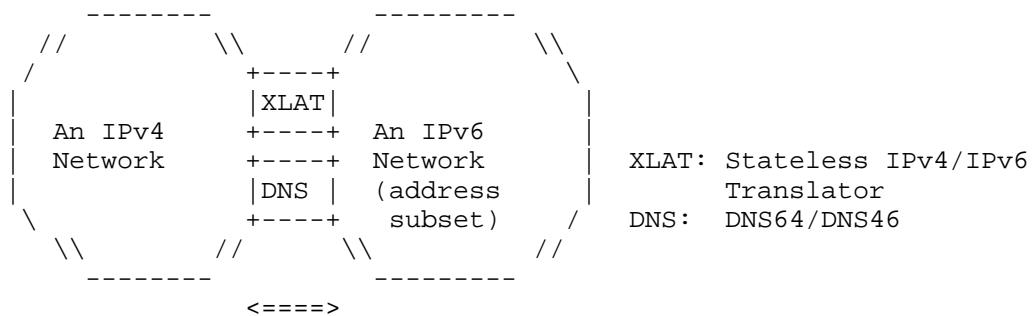


Figure 12: Stateless translation for Scenarios 5 and 6

The implementation of the stateless translator needs to refer to [I-D.ietf-behave-v6v4-xlate], and [I-D.ietf-behave-address-format].

### 3.2.2. Stateful Translation

For stateful translation, the translation state is maintained between IPv4 address/port pairs and IPv6 address/port pairs, enabling IPv6 systems to open sessions with IPv4 systems [I-D.ietf-behave-v6v4-xlate] [I-D.ietf-behave-v6v4-xlate-stateful].

Stateful translator can be used for Scenarios 1, 3 and 5, i.e., it supports "an IPv6 network to the IPv4 Internet", "the IPv6 Internet

to an IPv4 network" and "an IPv6 network to an IPv4 network".

For Scenario 1, any IPv6 addresses in an IPv6 network can use stateful translation, however it typically only supports initiation from the IPv6 side. In addition, it does not result in stable addresses of IPv6 nodes that can be used in DNS, which may cause problems for the protocols and applications that do not deal well with highly dynamic addresses.

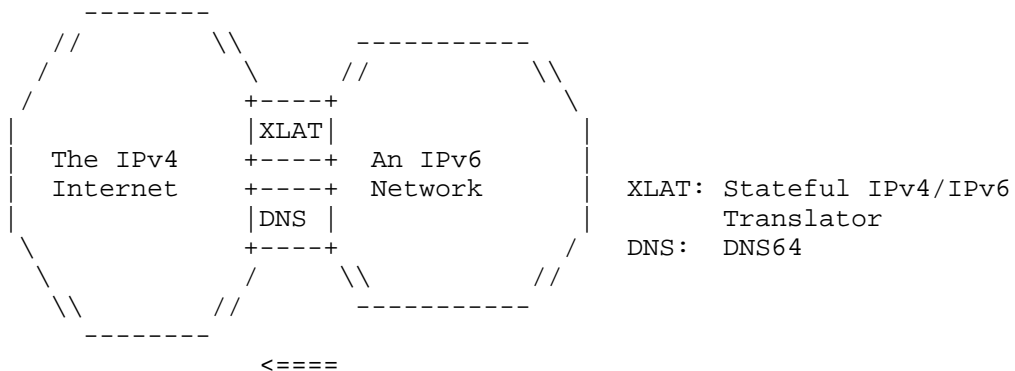
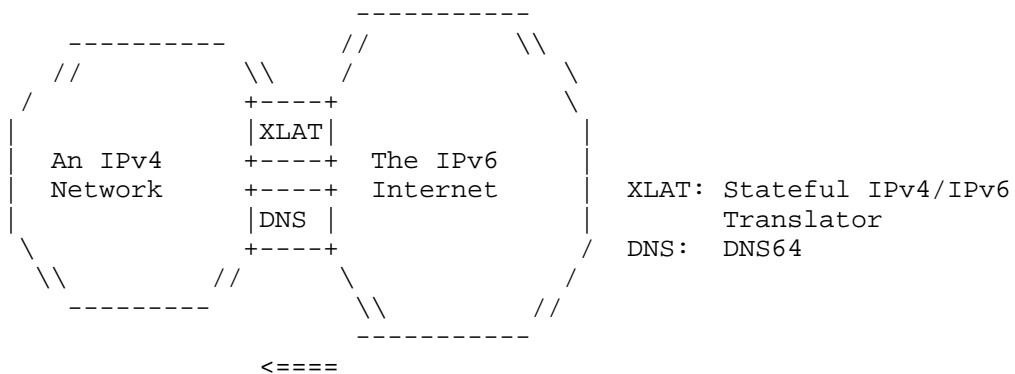


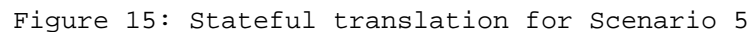
Figure 13: Stateful translation for Scenario 1

Scenario 3 handles servers using IPv4 private addresses [RFC1918] and being reached from the IPv6 Internet. This includes cases of servers that for some reason cannot be upgraded to IPv6 and don't have public IPv4 addresses and yet need to be reached by IPv6 nodes in the IPv6 Internet.





Similarly, stateful translation can also be used for Scenario 5.



### 3.3. Layout of the Related Documents

- o Framework for IPv4/IPv6 Translation (this document).
- o Address translation (the choice of IPv6 prefix and the choice of method by which the remainder of the IPv6 address is derived from an IPv4 address, part of the SIIT update) [I-D.ietf-behave-address-format].
- o IP and ICMP Translation (header translation and ICMP handling, part of the SIIT update) [I-D.ietf-behave-v6v4-xlate].
- o Xlate-stateful (stateful translation including session database and mapping table handling) [I-D.ietf-behave-v6v4-xlate-stateful].
- o DNS64 (DNS64: A to AAAA mapping and DNSSEC discussion) [I-D.ietf-behave-dns64].
- o FTP ALG [I-D.ietf-behave-ftp64].

- o Others (DNS46, Multicast, etc).

The relationship among these documents is shown in the following figure.

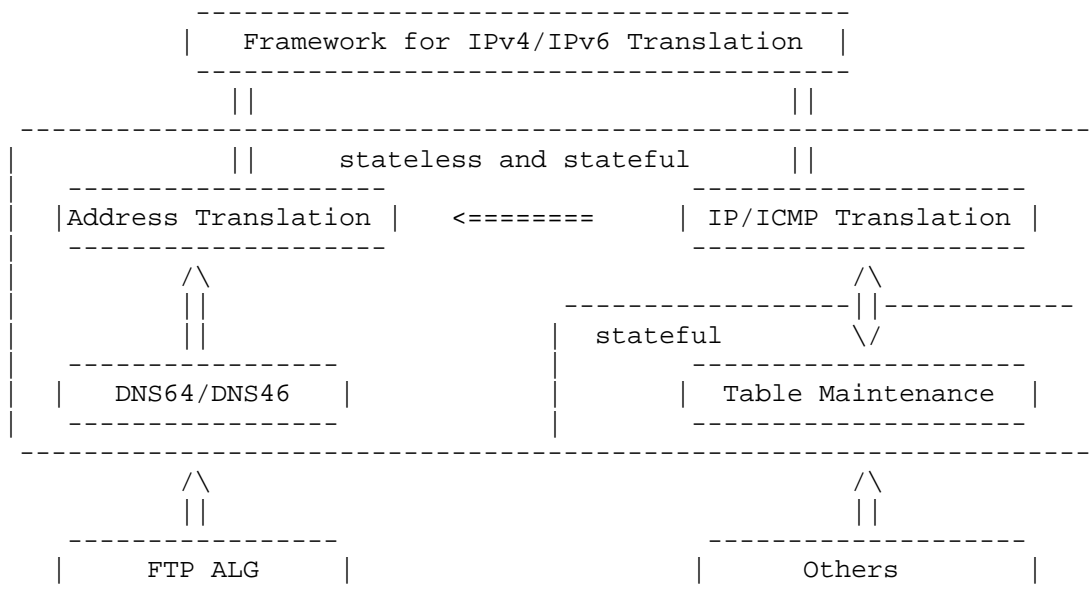


Figure 16: Document Layout

In the document layout, the IP/ICMP Translation and DNS64/DNS46 normatively refer to Address Translation. The Table Maintenance and IP/ICMP Translation normatively refer to each other.

The FTP ALG and other documents normatively refer to the Address Format, IP/ICMP Translation and Table Maintenance documents.

#### 4. Translation in Operation

Operationally, there are two ways that translation could be used - as a permanent solution making transition "the other guy's problem", and as a temporary solution for a new part of one's network while bringing up IPv6 services in the remaining parts of one's network. We obviously recommend the latter at the present stage. For the IPv4

parts of the network, [RFC4213]'s recommendation holds. Bring IPv6 up in those domains, move production to it, and then take down the now-unnecessary IPv4 service when economics warrant. This approach to transition entails the least risk.

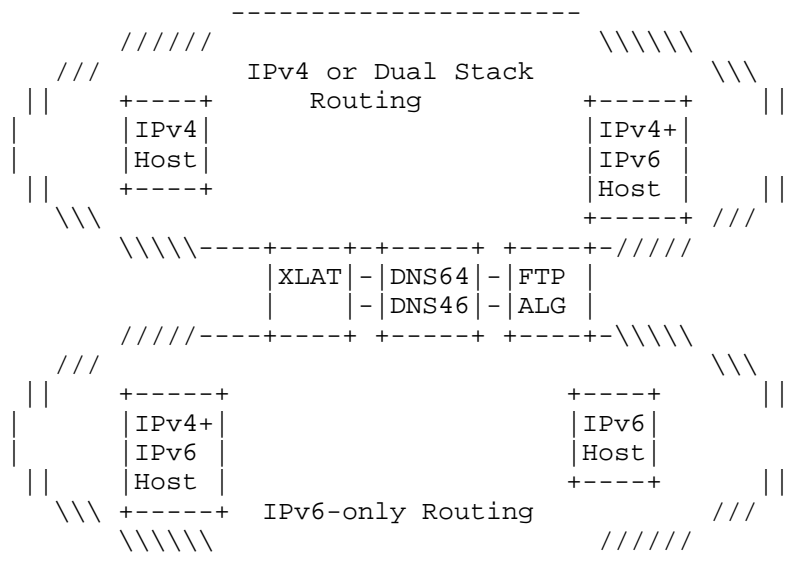


Figure 17: Translation Operational Model

Figure 17 shows that, during the coexistence phase, one expects a combination of hosts, applications, and networks. Hosts might include IPv6-only gaming devices and handsets, older computer operating systems that are IPv4-only, and modern mainline operating systems that support both. Applications might include ones that are IPv4-only and modern applications that support both IPv4 and IPv6. Networks might include dual-stack devices operating in single-stack networks, whether that stack is IPv4 or IPv6 and fully functional dual-stack networks.

## 5. Unsolved Problems

The framework does not cover all possible scenarios, and may be extended in the future to address them.

## 6. IANA Considerations

This memo requires no parameter assignment by the IANA.

Note to RFC Editor: This section will have served its purpose if it correctly tells IANA that no new assignments or registries are required, or if those assignments or registries are created during the RFC publication process. From the author's perspective, it may therefore be removed upon publication as an RFC at the RFC Editor's discretion.

## 7. Security Considerations

This document is the framework of IPv4/IPv6 translation. The security issues are addressed in individual IPv4/IPv6 translation documents, i.e. [I-D.ietf-behave-address-format], [I-D.ietf-behave-v6v4-xlate], [I-D.ietf-behave-v6v4-xlate-stateful], [I-D.ietf-behave-dns64], and [I-D.ietf-behave-ftp64].

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This is under development by a large group of people. Those who have posted to the list during the discussion include Andrew Sullivan, Andrew Yourtchenko, Bo Zhou, Brian Carpenter, Dan Wing, Dave Thaler, David Harrington, Ed Jankiewicz, Gang Chen, Hui Deng, Hiroshi Miyata, Iljitsch van Beijnum, John Schnizlein, Magnus Westerlund, Marcelo Bagnulo Braun, Margaret Wasserman, Masahito Endo, Phil Roberts, Philip Matthews, Remi Denis-Courmont and Remi Despres.

Ed Jankiewicz described the transition plan.

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September 18, 2010

IP/ICMP Translation Algorithm  
draft-ietf-behave-v6v4-xlate-23

Abstract

This document describes the Stateless IP/ICMP Translation Algorithm (SIIT), which translates between IPv4 and IPv6 packet headers (including ICMP headers). This document obsoletes RFC2765.

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## 1. Introduction and Motivation

This document is a product of the 2008-2010 effort to define a replacement for NAT-PT [RFC2766]. It is directly derivative from Erik Nordmark's "Stateless IP/ICMP Translation Algorithm (SIIT)" [RFC2765], which provides stateless translation between IPv4 [RFC0791] and IPv6 [RFC2460], and between ICMPv4 [RFC0792] and ICMPv6 [RFC4443]. This document obsoletes RFC2765 [RFC2765]. The changes from RFC2765 [RFC2765] are listed in Section 2.

Readers of this document are expected to have read and understood the framework described in [I-D.ietf-behave-v6v4-framework]. Implementations of this IPv4/IPv6 translation specification MUST also support the address translation algorithms in [I-D.ietf-behave-address-format]. Implementations MAY also support stateful translation [I-D.ietf-behave-v6v4-xlate-stateful].

### 1.1. IPv4-IPv6 Translation Model

The translation model consists of two or more network domains connected by one or more IP/ICMP translators (XLATs) as shown in Figure 1.

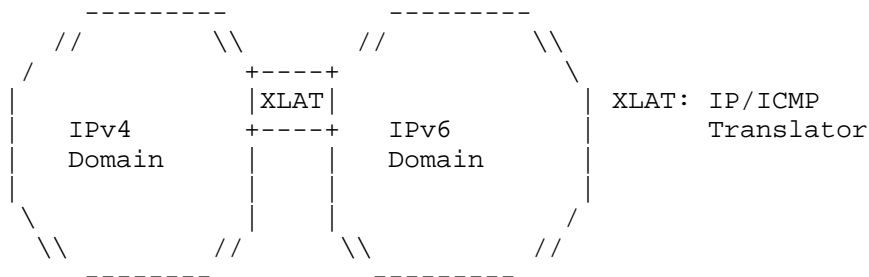


Figure 1: IPv4-IPv6 Translation Model

The scenarios of the translation model are discussed in [I-D.ietf-behave-v6v4-framework].

### 1.2. Applicability and Limitations

This document specifies the translation algorithms between IPv4 packets and IPv6 packets.

As with [RFC2765], the translating function specified in this document does not translate any IPv4 options and it does not

translate IPv6 extension headers except fragmentation header.

The issues and algorithms in the translation of datagrams containing TCP segments are described in [RFC5382].

Fragmented IPv4 UDP packets that do not contain a UDP checksum (i.e., the UDP checksum field is zero) are not of significant use in the Internet and in general will not be translated by the IP/ICMP translator. However, when the translator is configured to forward the packet without a UDP checksum, the fragmented IPv4 UDP packets will be translated.

Fragmented ICMP/ICMPv6 packets will not be translated by the IP/ICMP translator.

The IP/ICMP header translation specified in this document is consistent with requirements of multicast IP/ICMP headers. However IPv4 multicast addresses [RFC5771] cannot be mapped to IPv6 multicast addresses [RFC3307] based on the unicast mapping rule [I-D.ietf-behave-address-format].

### 1.3. Stateless vs. Stateful Mode

An IP/ICMP translator has two possible modes of operation: stateless and stateful [I-D.ietf-behave-v6v4-framework]. In both cases, we assume that a system (a node or an application) that has an IPv4 address but not an IPv6 address is communicating with a system that has an IPv6 address but no IPv4 address, or that the two systems do not have contiguous routing connectivity and hence are forced to have their communications translated.

In the stateless mode, a specific IPv6 address range will represent IPv4 systems (IPv4-converted addresses), and the IPv6 systems have addresses (IPv4-translatable addresses) that can be algorithmically mapped to a subset of the service provider's IPv4 addresses. Note that IPv4-translatable addresses is a subset of IPv4-converted addresses. In general, there is no need to concern oneself with translation tables, as the IPv4 and IPv6 counterparts are algorithmically related.

In the stateful mode, a specific IPv6 address range will represent IPv4 systems (IPv4-converted addresses), but the IPv6 systems may use any IPv6 addresses [RFC4291] except in that range. In this case, a translation table is required to bind the IPv6 systems' addresses to the IPv4 addresses maintained in the translator.

The address translation mechanisms for the stateless and the stateful translations are defined in [I-D.ietf-behave-address-format].

#### 1.4. Path MTU Discovery and Fragmentation

Due to the different sizes of the IPv4 and IPv6 header, which are 20+ octets and 40 octets respectively, handling the maximum packet size is critical for the operation of the IPv4/IPv6 translator. There are three mechanisms to handle this issue: path MTU discovery (PMTUD), fragmentation, and transport-layer negotiation such as the TCP MSS option [RFC0879]. Note that the translator **MUST** behave as a router, i.e. the translator **MUST** send a "Packet Too Big" error message or fragment the packet when the packet size exceeds the MTU of the next hop interface.

"Don't Fragment", ICMP "Packet Too Big", and packet fragmentation are discussed in Section 4 and Section 5 of this document. The reassembling of fragmented packets in the stateful translator is discussed in [I-D.ietf-behave-v6v4-xlate-stateful], since it requires state maintenance in the translator.

#### 2. Changes from RFC2765

The changes from RFC2765 are the following:

1. Redescribing the network model to map to present and projected usage. The scenarios, applicability and limitations originally presented in RFC2765 [RFC2765] are moved to framework document [I-D.ietf-behave-v6v4-framework].
2. Moving the address format to the address format document [I-D.ietf-behave-address-format], to coordinate with other documents on the topic.
3. Describing the header translation for the stateless and stateful operations. The details of the session database and mapping table handling of the stateful translation is in stateful translation document [I-D.ietf-behave-v6v4-xlate-stateful].
4. Having refined the header translation, fragmentation handling, ICMP translation and ICMP error translation in IPv4 to IPv6 direction, as well as in IPv6 to IPv4 direction.
5. Adding more discussion on transport-layer header translation.
6. Adding Section 5.1.1 for "IPv6 Fragment Processing".
7. Adding Section 6 for "Special Considerations for ICMPv6 Packet Too Big".

8. Having updated Section 8 for "Security Considerations".

9. Adding Section 10 "Stateless translation workflow example".

### 3. Conventions

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].

### 4. Translating from IPv4 to IPv6

When an IP/ICMP translator receives an IPv4 datagram addressed to a destination towards the IPv6 domain, it translates the IPv4 header of that packet into an IPv6 header. The original IPv4 header on the packet is removed and replaced by an IPv6 header and the transport checksum updated as needed, if that transport is supported by the translator. The data portion of the packet is left unchanged. The IP/ICMP translator then forwards the packet based on the IPv6 destination address.

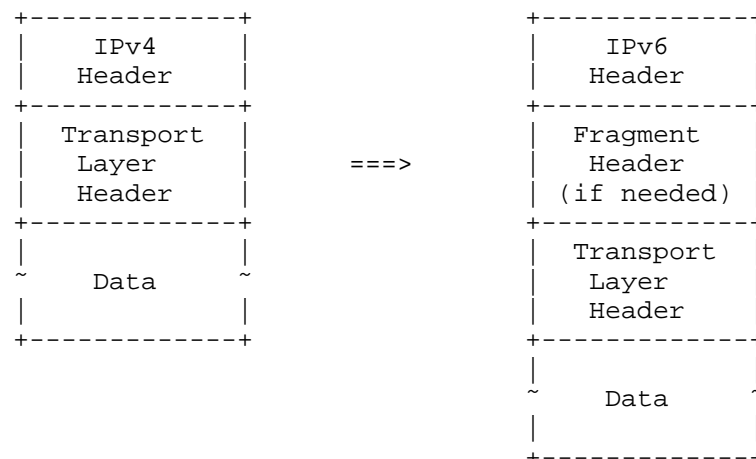


Figure 2: IPv4-to-IPv6 Translation

Path MTU discovery is mandatory in IPv6 but it is optional in IPv4. IPv6 routers never fragment a packet - only the sender can do fragmentation.

When an IPv4 node performs path MTU discovery (by setting the Don't Fragment (DF) bit in the header), path MTU discovery can operate end-

to-end, i.e., across the translator. In this case either IPv4 or IPv6 routers (including the translator) might send back ICMP "Packet Too Big" messages to the sender. When the IPv6 routers send these ICMPv6 errors they will pass through a translator that will translate the ICMPv6 error to a form that the IPv4 sender can understand. As a result, an IPv6 fragment header is only included if the IPv4 packet is already fragmented.

However, when the IPv4 sender does not set the Don't Fragment (DF) bit, the translator **MUST** ensure that the packet does not exceed the path MTU on the IPv6 side. This is done by fragmenting the IPv4 packet (with fragmentation headers) so that it fits in 1280-byte IPv6 packets, since that is the minimum IPv6 MTU. The IPv6 fragmentation header has been shown to cause operational difficulties in practice due to limited firewall fragmentation support, etc.. In an environment where the network owned/operated by the same entity that owns/operates the translator, the translator **MAY** provide a configuration function for the network administrator to adjust the threshold of the minimum IPv6 MTU to a value that reflects the real value of the minimum IPv6 MTU in the network (greater than 1280-byte). This will help reduce the chance of including the fragmentation header in the packets.

When the IPv4 sender does not set the DF bit the translator **SHOULD** always include an IPv6 fragment header to indicate that the sender allows fragmentation. The translator **MAY** provide a configuration function that allows the translator not to include the fragmentation header for the non-fragmented IPv6 packets.

The rules in Section 4.1 ensure that when packets are fragmented, either by the sender or by IPv4 routers, the low-order 16 bits of the fragment identification are carried end-to-end, ensuring that packets are correctly reassembled. In addition, the rules in Section 4.1 use the presence of an IPv6 fragment header to indicate that the sender might not be using path MTU discovery (i.e., the packet should not have the DF flag set should it later be translated back to IPv4).

Other than the special rules for handling fragments and path MTU discovery, the actual translation of the packet header consists of a simple translation as defined below. Note that ICMPv4 packets require special handling in order to translate the content of ICMPv4 error messages and also to add the ICMPv6 pseudo-header checksum.

The translator **SHOULD** make sure that the packets belonging to the same flow leave the translator in the same order in which they arrived.

#### 4.1. Translating IPv4 Headers into IPv6 Headers

If the DF flag is not set and the IPv4 packet will result in an IPv6 packet larger than 1280 bytes, the packet SHOULD be fragmented so the resulting IPv6 packet (with Fragment header added to each fragment) will be less than or equal to 1280 bytes. For example, if the packet is fragmented prior to the translation, the IPv4 packets should be fragmented so that their length, excluding the IPv4 header, is at most 1232 bytes (1280 minus 40 for the IPv6 header and 8 for the Fragment header). The translator MAY provide a configuration function for the network administrator to adjust the threshold of the minimum IPv6 MTU to a value greater than 1280-byte if the real value of the minimum IPv6 MTU in the network is known to the administrator. The resulting fragments are then translated independently using the logic described below.

If the DF bit is set and the MTU of the next-hop interface is less than the total length value of the IPv4 packet plus 20, the translator MUST send an ICMPv4 "Fragmentation Needed" error message to the IPv4 source address.

If the DF bit is set and the packet is not a fragment (i.e., the MF flag is not set and the Fragment Offset is equal to zero) then the translator SHOULD NOT add a Fragment header to the resulting packet. The IPv6 header fields are set as follows:

Version: 6

Traffic Class: By default, copied from IP Type Of Service (TOS) octet. According to [RFC2474] the semantics of the bits are identical in IPv4 and IPv6. However, in some IPv4 environments these fields might be used with the old semantics of "Type Of Service and Precedence". An implementation of a translator SHOULD support an administratively-configurable option to ignore the IPv4 TOS and always set the IPv6 traffic class (TC) to zero. In addition, if the translator is at an administrative boundary, the filtering and update considerations of [RFC2475] may be applicable.

Flow Label: 0 (all zero bits)

Payload Length: Total length value from IPv4 header, minus the size of the IPv4 header and IPv4 options, if present.

Next Header: For ICMPv4 (1) changed to ICMPv6 (58), otherwise protocol field MUST be copied from IPv4 header.



**Hop Limit:** The hop limit is derived from the TTL value in the IPv4 header. Since the translator is a router, as part of forwarding the packet it needs to decrement either the IPv4 TTL (before the translation) or the IPv6 Hop Limit (after the translation). As part of decrementing the TTL or Hop Limit the translator (as any router) MUST check for zero and send the ICMPv4 "TTL Exceeded" or ICMPv6 "Hop Limit Exceeded" error.

**Source Address:** The IPv4-converted address derived from the IPv4 source address per [I-D.ietf-behave-address-format] Section 2.1.

If the translator gets an illegal source address (e.g. 0.0.0.0, 127.0.0.1, etc.), the translator SHOULD silently drop the packet (as discussed in Section 5.3.7 of [RFC1812]).

**Destination Address:** In the stateless mode, which is to say that if the IPv4 destination address is within a range of configured IPv4 stateless translation prefix, the IPv6 destination address is the IPv4-translatable address derived from the IPv4 destination address per [I-D.ietf-behave-address-format] Section 2.1. A workflow example of stateless translation is shown in Section 10 of this document.

In the stateful mode, which is to say that if the IPv4 destination address is not within the range of any configured IPv4 stateless translation prefix, the IPv6 destination address and corresponding transport-layer destination port are derived from the Binding Information Bases (BIBs) reflecting current session state in the translator as described in [I-D.ietf-behave-v6v4-xlate-stateful].

If any IPv4 options are present in the IPv4 packet, the IPv4 options MUST be ignored and the packet translated normally; there is no attempt to translate the options. However, if an unexpired source route option is present then the packet MUST instead be discarded, and an ICMPv4 "Destination Unreachable/Source Route Failed" (Type 3/Code 5) error message SHOULD be returned to the sender.

If there is a need to add a Fragment header (the DF bit is not set or the packet is a fragment) the header fields are set as above with the following exceptions:

IPv6 fields:

Payload Length: Total length value from IPv4 header, plus 8 for the fragment header, minus the size of the IPv4 header and IPv4 options, if present.

Next Header: Fragment header (44).

Fragment header fields:

Next Header: For ICMPv4 (1) changed to ICMPv6 (58), otherwise protocol field MUST be copied from IPv4 header.

Fragment Offset: Fragment Offset copied from the IPv4 header.

M flag: More Fragments bit copied from the IPv4 header.

Identification: The low-order 16 bits copied from the Identification field in the IPv4 header. The high-order 16 bits set to zero.

#### 4.2. Translating ICMPv4 Headers into ICMPv6 Headers

All ICMPv4 messages that are to be translated require that the ICMPv6 checksum field be calculated as part of the translation since ICMPv6, unlike ICMPv4, has a pseudo-header checksum just like UDP and TCP.

In addition, all ICMPv4 packets MUST have the Type value translated and, for ICMPv4 error messages, the included IP header also MUST be translated.

The actions needed to translate various ICMPv4 messages are as follows:

ICMPv4 query messages:

Echo and Echo Reply (Type 8 and Type 0): Adjust the Type values to 128 and 129, respectively, and adjust the ICMP checksum both to take the type change into account and to include the ICMPv6 pseudo-header.

Information Request/Reply (Type 15 and Type 16): Obsoleted in ICMPv6. Silently drop.

Timestamp and Timestamp Reply (Type 13 and Type 14): Obsoleted in ICMPv6. Silently drop.

Address Mask Request/Reply (Type 17 and Type 18): Obsoleted in ICMPv6. Silently drop.

ICMP Router Advertisement (Type 9): Single hop message. Silently drop.

ICMP Router Solicitation (Type 10): Single hop message. Silently drop.

Unknown ICMPv4 types: Silently drop.

IGMP messages: While the MLD messages [RFC2710][RFC3590][RFC3810] are the logical IPv6 counterparts for the IPv4 IGMP messages all the "normal" IGMP messages are single-hop messages and SHOULD be silently dropped by the translator. Other IGMP messages might be used by multicast routing protocols and, since it would be a configuration error to try to have router adjacencies across IP/ICMP translators those packets SHOULD also be silently dropped.

ICMPv4 error messages:

Destination Unreachable (Type 3): Translate the Code field as described below, set the Type field to 1, and adjust the ICMP checksum both to take the type/code change into account and to include the ICMPv6 pseudo-header.

Translate the Code field as follows:

Code 0, 1 (Net, host unreachable): Set Code value to 0 (no route to destination).

Code 2 (Protocol unreachable): Translate to an ICMPv6 Parameter Problem (Type 4, Code value 1) and make the Pointer point to the IPv6 Next Header field.

Code 3 (Port unreachable): Set Code value to 4 (port unreachable).

Code 4 (Fragmentation needed and DF set): Translate to an ICMPv6 Packet Too Big message (Type 2) with Code value set to 0. The MTU field MUST be adjusted for the difference between the IPv4 and IPv6 header sizes, i.e.  $\text{minimum}(\text{advertised MTU}+20, \text{MTU\_of\_IPv6\_nexthop}, (\text{MTU\_of\_IPv4\_nexthop})+20)$ . Note that if the IPv4 router set the MTU field to zero, i.e., the router does not implement [RFC1191], then the translator MUST use the plateau values specified in [RFC1191] to determine a

likely path MTU and include that path MTU in the ICMPv6 packet. (Use the greatest plateau value that is less than the returned Total Length field.)

See also the requirements in Section 6.

Code 5 (Source route failed): Set Code value to 0 (No route to destination). Note that this error is unlikely since source routes are not translated.

Code 6, 7, 8: Set Code value to 0 (No route to destination).

Code 9, 10 (Communication with destination host administratively prohibited): Set Code value to 1 (Communication with destination administratively prohibited)

Code 11, 12: Set Code value to 0 (no route to destination).

Code 13 (Communication Administratively Prohibited): Set Code value to 1 (Communication with destination administratively prohibited).

Code 14 (Host Precedence Violation): Silently drop.

Code 15 (Precedence cutoff in effect): Set Code value to 1 (Communication with destination administratively prohibited).

Other Code values: Silently drop.

Redirect (Type 5): Single hop message. Silently drop.

Alternative Host Address (Type 6): Silently drop.

Source Quench (Type 4): Obsoleted in ICMPv6. Silently drop.

Time Exceeded (Type 11): Set the Type field to 3, and adjust the ICMP checksum both to take the type change into account and to include the ICMPv6 pseudo-header. The Code field is unchanged.

Parameter Problem (Type 12): Set the Type field to 4, and adjust the ICMP checksum both to take the type/code change into account and to include the ICMPv6 pseudo-header.

Translate the Code field as follows:

Code 0 (Pointer indicates the error): Set the Code value to 0 (Erroneous header field encountered) and update the pointer as defined in Figure 3 (If the Original IPv4 Pointer Value is not listed or the Translated IPv6 Pointer Value is listed as "n/a", silently drop the packet).

Code 1 (Missing a required option): Silently drop

Code 2 (Bad length): Set the Code value to 0 (Erroneous header field encountered) and update the pointer as defined in Figure 3 (If the Original IPv4 Pointer Value is not listed or the Translated IPv6 Pointer Value is listed as "n/a", silently drop the packet).

Other Code values: Silently drop

Unknown ICMPv4 types: Silently drop.

| Original IPv4 Pointer Value |                       | Translated IPv6 Pointer Value |                          |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 0                           | Version/IHL           | 0                             | Version/Traffic Class    |
| 1                           | Type Of Service       | 1                             | Traffic Class/Flow Label |
| 2,3                         | Total Length          | 4                             | Payload Length           |
| 4,5                         | Identification        | n/a                           |                          |
| 6                           | Flags/Fragment Offset | n/a                           |                          |
| 7                           | Fragment Offset       | n/a                           |                          |
| 8                           | Time to Live          | 7                             | Hop Limit                |
| 9                           | Protocol              | 6                             | Next Header              |
| 10,11                       | Header Checksum       | n/a                           |                          |
| 12-15                       | Source Address        | 8                             | Source Address           |
| 16-19                       | Destination Address   | 24                            | Destination Address      |

Figure 3: Pointer value for translating from IPv4 to IPv6

ICMP Error Payload: If the received ICMPv4 packet contains an ICMPv4 Extension [RFC4884], the translation of the ICMPv4 packet will cause the ICMPv6 packet to change length. When this occurs, the ICMPv6 Extension length attribute MUST be adjusted accordingly (e.g., longer due to the translation from IPv4 to IPv6). If the ICMPv4 Extension exceeds the maximum size of an ICMPv6 message on the outgoing interface, the ICMPv4 extension SHOULD be simply truncated. For extensions not defined in [RFC4884], the translator passes

the extensions as opaque bit strings and those containing IPv4 address literals will not have those addresses translated to IPv6 address literals; this may cause problems with processing of those ICMP extensions.

#### 4.3. Translating ICMPv4 Error Messages into ICMPv6

There are some differences between the ICMPv4 and the ICMPv6 error message formats as detailed above. The ICMP error messages containing the packet in error MUST be translated just like a normal IP packet. If the translation of this "packet in error" changes the length of the datagram, the Total Length field in the outer IPv6 header MUST be updated.

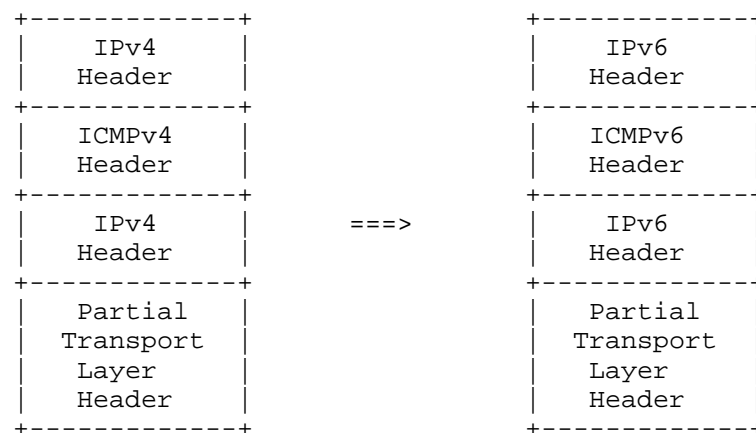


Figure 4: IPv4-to-IPv6 ICMP Error Translation

The translation of the inner IP header can be done by invoking the function that translated the outer IP headers. This process MUST stop at the first embedded header and drop the packet if it contains more.

#### 4.4. Generation of ICMPv4 Error Message

If the IPv4 packet is discarded, then the translator SHOULD be able to send back an ICMPv4 error message to the original sender of the packet, unless the discarded packet is itself an ICMPv4 message. The ICMPv4 message, if sent, has a Type value of 3 (Destination Unreachable) and a Code value of 13 (Communication Administratively Prohibited), unless otherwise specified in this document or in [I-D.ietf-behave-v6v4-xlate-stateful]. The translator SHOULD allow an administrator to configure whether the ICMPv4 error messages are sent, rate-limited, or not sent.

#### 4.5. Transport-layer Header Translation

If the address translation algorithm is not checksum neutral (Section 4.1 of [I-D.ietf-behave-address-format]), the recalculation and updating of the transport-layer headers which contain pseudo headers needs to be performed. Translators MUST do this for TCP and ICMP packets and for UDP packets that contain a UDP checksum (i.e. the UDP checksum field is not zero).

For UDP packets that do not contain a UDP checksum (i.e. the UDP checksum field is zero), the translator SHOULD provide a configuration function to allow:

1. Dropping the packet and generating a system management event specifying at least the IP addresses and port numbers of the packet.
2. Calculating an IPv6 checksum and forward the packet (which has performance implications).

A stateless translator cannot compute the UDP checksum of fragmented packets, so when a stateless translator receives the first fragment of a fragmented UDP IPv4 packet and the checksum field is zero, the translator SHOULD drop the packet and generate a system management event specifying at least the IP addresses and port numbers in the packet.

For stateful translator, the handling of fragmented UDP IPv4 packets with a zero checksum is discussed in [I-D.ietf-behave-v6v4-xlate-stateful], Section 3.1.

Other transport protocols (e.g., DCCP) are OPTIONAL to support. In order to ease debugging and troubleshooting, translators MUST forward all transport protocols as described in the "Next Header" step of Section 4.1.

#### 4.6. Knowing When to Translate

If the IP/ICMP translator also provides normal forwarding function, and the destination IPv4 address is reachable by a more specific route without translation, the translator MUST forward it without translating it. Otherwise, when an IP/ICMP translator receives an IPv4 datagram addressed to an IPv4 destination representing a host in the IPv6 domain, the packet MUST be translated to IPv6.

## 5. Translating from IPv6 to IPv4

When an IP/ICMP translator receives an IPv6 datagram addressed to a destination towards the IPv4 domain, it translates the IPv6 header of the received IPv6 packet into an IPv4 header. The original IPv6 header on the packet is removed and replaced by an IPv4 header. Since the ICMPv6 [RFC4443], TCP [RFC0793], UDP [RFC0768] and DCCP [RFC4340] headers contain checksums that cover the IP header, if the address mapping algorithm is not checksum-neutral, the checksum **MUST** be evaluated before translation and the ICMP and transport-layer headers **MUST** be updated. The data portion of the packet is left unchanged. The IP/ICMP translator then forwards the packet based on the IPv4 destination address.

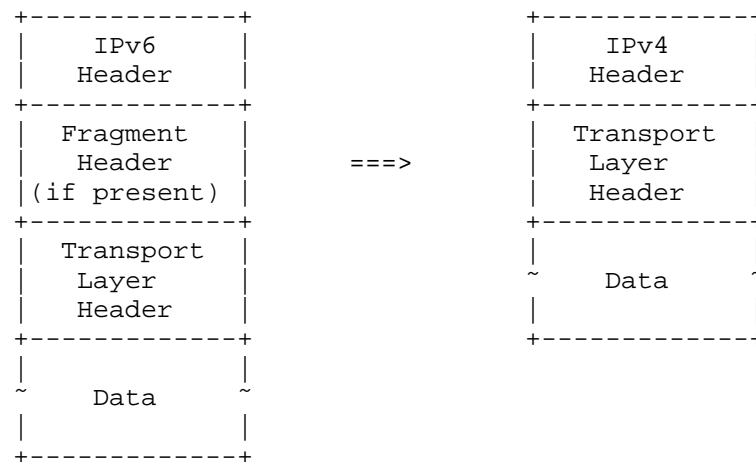


Figure 5: IPv6-to-IPv4 Translation

There are some differences between IPv6 and IPv4 in the area of fragmentation and the minimum link MTU that affect the translation. An IPv6 link has to have an MTU of 1280 bytes or greater. The corresponding limit for IPv4 is 68 bytes. Path MTU Discovery across a translator relies on ICMP Packet Too Big messages being received and processed by IPv6 hosts, including an ICMP Packet Too Big that indicates the MTU is less than the IPv6 minimum MTU. This requirement is described in Section 5 of [RFC2460] (for IPv6's 1280 octet minimum MTU) and Section 5 of [RFC1883] (for IPv6's previous 576 octet minimum MTU).

In an environment where an ICMPv4 Packet Too Big message is translated to an ICMPv6 Packet Too Big messages, and the ICMPv6 Packet Too Big message is successfully delivered to and correctly processed by the IPv6 hosts (e.g., a network owned/operated by the



same entity that owns/operates the translator), the translator can rely on IPv6 hosts sending subsequent packets to the same IPv6 destination with IPv6 fragment headers. In such an environment, when the translator receives an IPv6 packet with a fragmentation header, the translator SHOULD generate the IPv4 packet with a cleared Don't Fragment bit, and with its identification value from the IPv6 fragment header, for all of the IPv6 fragments (MF=0 or MF=1).

In an environment where an ICMPv4 Packet Too Big message are filtered (by a network firewall or by the host itself) or not correctly processed by the IPv6 hosts, the IPv6 host will never generate an IPv6 packet with the IPv6 fragment header. In such an environment, the translator SHOULD set the IPv4 Don't Fragment bit. While setting the Don't Fragment bit may create PMTUD black holes [RFC2923] if there are IPv4 links smaller than 1260 octets, this is considered safer than causing IPv4 reassembly errors [RFC4963].

Other than the special rules for handling fragments and path MTU discovery, the actual translation of the packet header consists of a simple translation as defined below. Note that ICMPv6 packets require special handling in order to translate the contents of ICMPv6 error messages and also to remove the ICMPv6 pseudo-header checksum.

The translator SHOULD make sure that the packets belonging to the same flow leave the translator in the same order in which they arrived.

#### 5.1. Translating IPv6 Headers into IPv4 Headers

If there is no IPv6 Fragment header, the IPv4 header fields are set as follows:

Version: 4

Internet Header Length: 5 (no IPv4 options)

Type of Service (TOS) Octet: By default, copied from the IPv6 Traffic Class (all 8 bits). According to [RFC2474] the semantics of the bits are identical in IPv4 and IPv6. However, in some IPv4 environments, these bits might be used with the old semantics of "Type Of Service and Precedence". An implementation of a translator SHOULD provide the ability to ignore the IPv6 traffic class and always set the IPv4 TOS Octet to a specified value. In addition, if the translator is at an administrative boundary, the filtering and update considerations of [RFC2475] may be applicable.

Total Length: Payload length value from IPv6 header, plus the size of the IPv4 header.

Identification: All zero. In order to avoid black holes caused by ICMPv4 filtering or non [RFC2460] compatible IPv6 hosts (a workaround discussed in Section 6), the translator MAY provide a function such as if the packet size is equal to or smaller than 1280 bytes and greater than 88 bytes, generate the identification value. The translator SHOULD provide a method for operators to enable or disable this function.

Flags: The More Fragments flag is set to zero. The Don't Fragments flag is set to one. In order to avoid black holes caused by ICMPv4 filtering or non [RFC2460] compatible IPv6 hosts (a workaround discussed in Section 6), the translator MAY provide a function such as if the packet size is equal to or smaller than 1280 bytes and greater than 88 bytes, the Don't Fragments (DF) flag is set to zero, otherwise the Don't Fragments (DF) flag is set to one. The translator SHOULD provide a method for operators to enable or disable this function.

Fragment Offset: All zeros.

Time to Live: Time to Live is derived from Hop Limit value in IPv6 header. Since the translator is a router, as part of forwarding the packet it needs to decrement either the IPv6 Hop Limit (before the translation) or the IPv4 TTL (after the translation). As part of decrementing the TTL or Hop Limit the translator (as any router) MUST check for zero and send the ICMPv4 "TTL Exceeded" or ICMPv6 "Hop Limit Exceeded" error.

Protocol: The IPv6-Frag (44) header is handled as discussed in Section 5.1.1. ICMPv6 (58) is changed to ICMPv4 (1), and the payload is translated as discussed in Section 5.2. The IPv6 headers HOPOPT (0), IPv6-Route (43), and IPv6-Opts (60) are skipped over during processing as they have no meaning in IPv4. For the first 'next header' that does not match one of the cases above, its next header value (which contains the transport protocol number) is copied to the protocol field in the IPv4 header. This means that all transport protocols are translated.

Note: Some translated protocols will fail at the receiver for various reasons: some are known to fail when translated (e.g., IPsec AH (51)), and others will fail checksum validation if the address translation is not checksum neutral [I-D.ietf-behave-address-format] and the translator does not update the transport protocol's checksum (because the translator doesn't support recalculating the checksum for that

transport protocol, see Section 5.5).

Header Checksum: Computed once the IPv4 header has been created.

Source Address: In the stateless mode, which is to say that if the IPv6 source address is within the range of a configured IPv6 translation prefix, the IPv4 source address is derived from the IPv6 source address per [I-D.ietf-behave-address-format] Section 2.1. Note that the original IPv6 source address is an IPv4-translatable address. A workflow example of stateless translation is shown in Appendix of this document. If the translator only supports stateless mode and if the IPv6 source address is not within the range of configured IPv6 prefix(es), the translator SHOULD drop the packet and respond with an ICMPv6 Type=1, Code=5 (Destination Unreachable, Source address failed ingress/egress policy).

In the stateful mode, which is to say that if the IPv6 source address is not within the range of any configured IPv6 stateless translation prefix, the IPv4 source address and transport-layer source port corresponding to the IPv4-related IPv6 source address and source port are derived from the Binding Information Bases (BIBs) as described in [I-D.ietf-behave-v6v4-xlate-stateful].

In stateless and stateful modes, if the translator gets an illegal source address (e.g. ::1, etc.), the translator SHOULD silently drop the packet.

Destination Address: The IPv4 destination address is derived from the IPv6 destination address of the datagram being translated per [I-D.ietf-behave-address-format] Section 2.1. Note that the original IPv6 destination address is an IPv4-converted address.

If a Routing header with a non-zero Segments Left field is present then the packet MUST NOT be translated, and an ICMPv6 "parameter problem/erroneous header field encountered" (Type 4/Code 0) error message, with the Pointer field indicating the first byte of the Segments Left field, SHOULD be returned to the sender.

#### 5.1.1. IPv6 Fragment Processing

If the IPv6 packet contains a Fragment header, the header fields are set as above with the following exceptions:

Total Length: Payload length value from IPv6 header, minus 8 for the Fragment header, plus the size of the IPv4 header.

Identification: Copied from the low-order 16-bits in the Identification field in the Fragment header.

Flags: The IPv4 More Fragments (MF) flag is copied from the M flag in the IPv6 Fragment header. The IPv4 Don't Fragments (DF) flag is cleared (set to zero) allowing this packet to be further fragmented by IPv4 routers.

Fragment Offset: Copied from the Fragment Offset field of the IPv6 Fragment header.

Protocol: For ICMPv6 (58) changed to ICMPv4 (1), otherwise skip extension headers, Next Header field copied from the last IPv6 header.

If a translated packet with DF set to 1 will be larger than the MTU of the next-hop interface, then the translator MUST drop the packet and send the ICMPv6 "Packet Too Big" (Type 2/Code 0) error message to the IPv6 host with an adjusted MTU in the ICMPv6 message.

## 5.2. Translating ICMPv6 Headers into ICMPv4 Headers

If a non-checksum neutral translation address is being used, ICMPv6 messages MUST have their ICMPv4 checksum field be updated as part of the translation since ICMPv6 (unlike ICMPv4) includes a pseudo-header in the checksum just like UDP and TCP.

In addition all ICMP packets MUST have the Type value translated and, for ICMP error messages, the included IP header also MUST be translated. Note that the IPv6 addresses in the IPv6 header may not be IPv4-translatable addresses and there will be no corresponding IPv4 addresses representing this IPv6 address. In this case, the translator can do stateful translation. A mechanism by which the translator can instead do stateless translation of this address is left for future work.

The actions needed to translate various ICMPv6 messages are:

ICMPv6 informational messages:

Echo Request and Echo Reply (Type 128 and 129): Adjust the Type values to 8 and 0, respectively, and adjust the ICMP checksum both to take the type change into account and to exclude the ICMPv6 pseudo-header.

MLD Multicast Listener Query/Report/Done (Type 130, 131, 132):  
Single hop message. Silently drop.

Neighbor Discover messages (Type 133 through 137): Single hop  
message. Silently drop.

Unknown informational messages: Silently drop.

ICMPv6 error messages:

Destination Unreachable (Type 1) Set the Type field to 3, and  
adjust the ICMP checksum both to take the type/code change into  
account and to exclude the ICMPv6 pseudo-header.

Translate the Code field as follows:

Code 0 (no route to destination): Set Code value to 1 (Host  
unreachable).

Code 1 (Communication with destination administratively  
prohibited): Set Code value to 10 (Communication with  
destination host administratively prohibited).

Code 2 (Beyond scope of source address): Set Code value to 1  
(Host unreachable). Note that this error is very unlikely  
since an IPv4-translatable source address is typically  
considered to have global scope.

Code 3 (Address unreachable): Set Code value to 1 (Host  
unreachable).

Code 4 (Port unreachable): Set Code value to 3 (Port  
unreachable).

Other Code values: Silently drop.

Packet Too Big (Type 2): Translate to an ICMPv4 Destination  
Unreachable (Type 3) with Code value equal to 4, and adjust the  
ICMPv4 checksum both to take the type change into account and  
to exclude the ICMPv6 pseudo-header. The MTU field MUST be  
adjusted for the difference between the IPv4 and IPv6 header  
sizes taking into account whether or not the packet in error  
includes a Fragment header, i.e.  $\text{minimum}(\text{advertised MTU}-20,$   
 $\text{MTU\_of\_IPv4\_nexthop}, (\text{MTU\_of\_IPv6\_nexthop})-20)$ .

See also the requirements in Section 6.

Time Exceeded (Type 3): Set the Type value to 11, and adjust the ICMPv4 checksum both to take the type change into account and to exclude the ICMPv6 pseudo-header. The Code field is unchanged.

Parameter Problem (Type 4): Translate the Type and Code field as follows, and adjust the ICMPv4 checksum both to take the type/code change into account and to exclude the ICMPv6 pseudo-header.

Translate the Code field as follows:

Code 0 (Erroneous header field encountered): Set Type 12, Code 0 and update the pointer as defined in Figure 6 (If the Original IPv6 Pointer Value is not listed or the Translated IPv4 Pointer Value is listed as "n/a", silently drop the packet).

Code 1 (Unrecognized Next Header type encountered): Translate this to an ICMPv4 protocol unreachable (Type 3, Code 2).

Code 2 (Unrecognized IPv6 option encountered): Silently drop.

Unknown error messages: Silently drop.

| Original IPv6 Pointer Value |                          | Translated IPv4 Pointer Value |                          |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 0                           | Version/Traffic Class    | 0                             | Version/IHL, Type Of Ser |
| 1                           | Traffic Class/Flow Label | 1                             | Type Of Service          |
| 2,3                         | Flow Label               | n/a                           |                          |
| 4,5                         | Payload Length           | 2                             | Total Length             |
| 6                           | Next Header              | 9                             | Protocol                 |
| 7                           | Hop Limit                | 8                             | Time to Live             |
| 8-23                        | Source Address           | 12                            | Source Address           |
| 24-39                       | Destination Address      | 16                            | Destination Address      |

Figure 6: Pointer Value for translating from IPv6 to IPv4

ICMP Error Payload: If the received ICMPv6 packet contains an ICMPv6 Extension [RFC4884], the translation of the ICMPv6 packet will cause the ICMPv4 packet to change length. When this occurs, the ICMPv6 Extension length attribute MUST be adjusted accordingly (e.g., shorter due to the translation from IPv6 to IPv4). For extensions not defined in [RFC4884], the translator passes the extensions as opaque bit strings and those containing IPv6 address literals will not have those addresses translated to IPv4 address literals; this may cause problems with processing of those ICMP extensions.

### 5.3. Translating ICMPv6 Error Messages into ICMPv4

There are some differences between the ICMPv4 and the ICMPv6 error message formats as detailed above. The ICMP error messages containing the packet in error MUST be translated just like a normal IP packet. The translation of this "packet in error" is likely to change the length of the datagram thus the Total Length field in the outer IPv4 header MUST be updated.

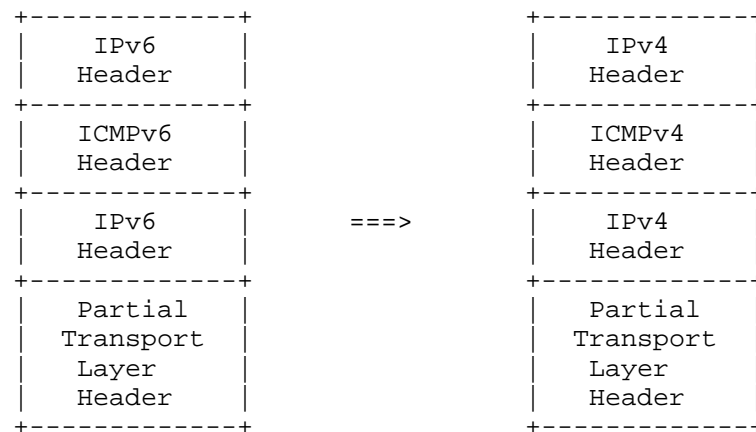


Figure 7: IPv6-to-IPv4 ICMP Error Translation

The translation of the inner IP header can be done by invoking the function that translated the outer IP headers. This process MUST stop at first embedded header and drop the packet if it contains more. Note that the IPv6 addresses in the IPv6 header may not be IPv4-translatable addresses and there will be no corresponding IPv4 addresses. In this case, the translator can do stateful translation. A mechanism by which the translator can instead do stateless translation is left for future work.

#### 5.4. Generation of ICMPv6 Error Message

If the IPv6 packet is discarded, then the translator SHOULD send back an ICMPv6 error message to the original sender of the packet, unless the discarded packet is itself an ICMPv6 message.

If the ICMPv6 error message is being sent because the IPv6 source address is not an IPv4-translatable address and the translator is stateless, the ICMPv6 message, if sent, MUST have a Type value of 1 and Code value of 5 (Source address failed ingress/egress policy). In other cases, the ICMPv6 message MUST have a Type value of 1 (Destination Unreachable) and a Code value of 1 (Communication with destination administratively prohibited), unless otherwise specified in this document or [I-D.ietf-behave-v6v4-xlate-stateful]. The translator SHOULD allow an administrator to configure whether the ICMPv6 error messages are sent, rate-limited, or not sent.

#### 5.5. Transport-layer Header Translation

If the address translation algorithm is not checksum neutral (Section 4.1 of [I-D.ietf-behave-address-format]), the recalculation and updating of the transport-layer headers which contain pseudo headers need to be performed. Translators MUST do this for TCP, UDP and ICMP.

Other transport protocols (e.g., DCCP) are OPTIONAL to support. In order to ease debugging and troubleshooting, translators MUST forward all transport protocols as described in the "Protocol" step of Section 5.1.

#### 5.6. Knowing When to Translate

If the IP/ICMP translator also provides a normal forwarding function, and the destination address is reachable by a more specific route without translation, the router MUST forward it without translating it. When an IP/ICMP translator receives an IPv6 datagram addressed to an IPv6 address representing a host in the IPv4 domain, the IPv6 packet MUST be translated to IPv4.

### 6. Special Considerations for ICMPv6 Packet Too Big

Two recent studies analyzed the behavior of IPv6-capable web servers on the Internet and found that approximately 95% responded as expected to an IPv6 Packet Too Big that indicated MTU=1280, but only 43% responded as expected to an IPv6 Packet Too Big that indicated an MTU < 1280. It is believed firewalls violating Section 4.3.1 of [RFC4890] are at fault. These failures will both cause Path MTU



Discovery (PMTUD) black holes [RFC2923]. Unfortunately the translator cannot improve the failure rate of the first case (MTU = 1280), but the translator can improve the failure rate of the second case (MTU < 1280). There are two approaches to resolving the problem with sending ICMPv6 messages indicating an MTU < 1280. It SHOULD be possible to configure a translator for either of the two approaches.

The first approach is to constrain the deployment of the IPv6/IPv4 translator by observing that four of the scenarios intended for stateless IPv6/IPv4 translators do not have IPv6 hosts on the Internet (Scenarios 1, 2, 5 and 6 described in [I-D.ietf-behave-v6v4-framework], which refer to "An IPv6 network"). In these scenarios IPv6 hosts, IPv6 host-based firewalls, and IPv6 network firewalls can be administered in compliance with Section 4.3.1 of [RFC4890] and therefore avoid the problem witnessed with IPv6 hosts on the Internet.

The second approach is necessary if the translator has IPv6 hosts, IPv6 host-based firewalls, or IPv6 network firewalls that do not (or cannot) comply with Section 5 of [RFC2460] -- such as IPv6 hosts on the Internet. This approach requires the translator to do the following:

1. in the IPv4 to IPv6 direction: if the MTU value of ICMPv4 Packet Too Big messages is less than 1280, change it to 1280. This is intended to cause the IPv6 host and IPv6 firewall to process the ICMP PTB message and generate subsequent packets to this destination with an IPv6 fragmentation header.

Note: Based on recent studies, this is effective for 95% of IPv6 hosts on the Internet.

2. in the IPv6 to IPv4 direction:
  - A. if there is a Fragment header in the IPv6 packet, the last 16 bits of its value MUST be used for the IPv4 identification value.
  - B. if there is no Fragment header in the IPv6 packet:
    - a. if the packet is less than or equal to 1280 bytes:
      - the translator SHOULD set DF to 0 and generate an IPv4 identification value.
      - To avoid the problems described in [RFC4963], it is RECOMMENDED the translator maintain 3-tuple state for

generating the IPv4 identification value.

- b. if the packet is greater than 1280 bytes, the translator SHOULD set the IPv4 DF bit to 1.

## 7. IANA Considerations

This memo adds no new IANA considerations.

Note to RFC Editor: This section will have served its purpose if it correctly tells IANA that no new assignments or registries are required, or if those assignments or registries are created during the RFC publication process. From the author's perspective, it may therefore be removed upon publication as an RFC at the RFC Editor's discretion.

## 8. Security Considerations

The use of stateless IP/ICMP translators does not introduce any new security issues beyond the security issues that are already present in the IPv4 and IPv6 protocols and in the routing protocols that are used to make the packets reach the translator.

There are potential issues that might arise by deriving an IPv4 address from an IPv6 address - particularly addresses like broadcast or loopback addresses and the non IPv4-translatable IPv6 addresses, etc. The [I-D.ietf-behave-address-format] addresses these issues.

As with network address translation of IPv4 to IPv4, the IPsec Authentication Header [RFC4302] cannot be used across an IPv6 to IPv4 translator.

As with network address translation of IPv4 to IPv4, packets with tunnel mode ESP can be translated since tunnel mode ESP does not depend on header fields prior to the ESP header. Similarly, transport mode ESP will fail with IPv6 to IPv4 translation unless checksum neutral addresses are used. In both cases, the IPsec ESP endpoints will normally detect the presence of the translator and encapsulate ESP in UDP packets [RFC3948].

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#### 10. Appendix: Stateless translation workflow example

A stateless translation workflow example is depicted in the following figure. The documentation address blocks 2001:db8::/32 [RFC3849], 192.0.2.0/24 and 198.51.100.0/24 [RFC5737] are used in this example.

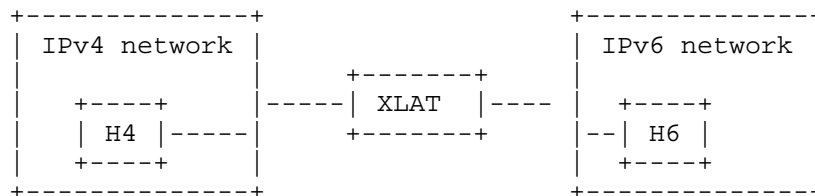


Figure 8

A translator (XLAT) connects the IPv6 network to the IPv4 network. This XLAT uses the Network Specific Prefix (NSP) 2001:db8:100::/40 defined in [I-D.ietf-behave-address-format] to represent IPv4 addresses in the IPv6 address space (IPv4-converted addresses) and to represent IPv6 addresses (IPv4-translatable addresses) in the IPv4 address space. In this example, 192.0.2.0/24 is the IPv4 block of the corresponding IPv4-translatable addresses.

Based on the address mapping rule, the IPv6 node H6 has an IPv4-translatable IPv6 address 2001:db8:1c0:2:21:: (address mapping from 192.0.2.33). The IPv4 node H4 has IPv4 address 198.51.100.2.

The IPv6 routing is configured in such a way that the IPv6 packets addressed to a destination address in 2001:db8:100::/40 are routed to the IPv6 interface of the XLAT.

The IPv4 routing is configured in such a way that the IPv4 packets addressed to a destination address in 192.0.2.0/24 are routed to the IPv4 interface of the XLAT.

### 10.1. H6 establishes communication with H4

The steps by which H6 establishes communication with H4 are:

1. H6 performs the destination address mapping, so the IPv4-converted address 2001:db8:1c6:3364:200:: is formed from 198.51.100.2 based on the address mapping algorithm [I-D.ietf-behave-address-format].
2. H6 sends a packet to H4. The packet is sent from a source address 2001:db8:1c0:2:21:: to a destination address 2001:db8:1c6:3364:200::.
3. The packet is routed to the IPv6 interface of the XLAT (since IPv6 routing is configured that way).
4. The XLAT receives the packet and performs the following actions:
  - \* The XLAT translates the IPv6 header into an IPv4 header using the IP/ICMP Translation Algorithm defined in this document.
  - \* The XLAT includes 192.0.2.33 as source address in the packet and 198.51.100.2 as destination address in the packet. Note that 192.0.2.33 and 198.51.100.2 are extracted directly from the source IPv6 address 2001:db8:1c0:2:21:: (IPv4-translatable address) and destination IPv6 address 2001:db8:1c6:3364:200:: (IPv4-converted address) of the received IPv6 packet that is being translated.
5. The XLAT sends the translated packet out its IPv4 interface and the packet arrives at H4.
6. H4 node responds by sending a packet with destination address 192.0.2.33 and source address 198.51.100.2.
7. The packet is routed to the IPv4 interface of the XLAT (since IPv4 routing is configured that way). The XLAT performs the following operations:
  - \* The XLAT translates the IPv4 header into an IPv6 header using the IP/ICMP Translation Algorithm defined in this document.
  - \* The XLAT includes 2001:db8:1c0:2:21:: as destination address in the packet and 2001:db8:1c6:3364:200:: as source address in the packet. Note that 2001:db8:1c0:2:21:: and 2001:db8:1c6:3364:200:: are formed directly from the destination IPv4 address 192.0.2.33 and source IPv4 address 198.51.100.2 of the received IPv4 packet that is being translated.

8. The translated packet is sent out the IPv6 interface to H6.

The packet exchange between H6 and H4 continues until the session is finished.

#### 10.2. H4 establishes communication with H6

The steps by which H4 establishes communication with H6 are:

1. H4 performs the destination address mapping, so 192.0.2.33 is formed from IPv4-translatable address 2001:db8:1c0:2:21:: based on the address mapping algorithm [I-D.ietf-behave-address-format].
2. H4 sends a packet to H6. The packet is sent from a source address 198.51.100.2 to a destination address 192.0.2.33.
3. The packet is routed to the IPv4 interface of the XLAT (since IPv4 routing is configured that way).
4. The XLAT receives the packet and performs the following actions:
  - \* The XLAT translates the IPv4 header into an IPv6 header using the IP/ICMP Translation Algorithm defined in this document.
  - \* The XLAT includes 2001:db8:1c6:3364:200:: as source address in the packet and 2001:db8:1c0:2:21:: as destination address in the packet. Note that 2001:db8:1c6:3364:200:: (IPv4-converted address) and 2001:db8:1c0:2:21:: (IPv4-translatable address) are obtained directly from the source IPv4 address 198.51.100.2 and destination IPv4 address 192.0.2.33 of the received IPv4 packet that is being translated.
5. The XLAT sends the translated packet out its IPv6 interface and the packet arrives at H6.
6. H6 node responds by sending a packet with destination address 2001:db8:1c6:3364:200:: and source address 2001:db8:1c0:2:21::.
7. The packet is routed to the IPv6 interface of the XLAT (since IPv6 routing is configured that way). The XLAT performs the following operations:
  - \* The XLAT translates the IPv6 header into an IPv4 header using the IP/ICMP Translation Algorithm defined in this document.
  - \* The XLAT includes 198.51.100.2 as destination address in the packet and 192.0.2.33 as source address in the packet. Note

that 198.51.100.2 and 192.0.2.33 are formed directly from the destination IPv6 address 2001:db8:1c6:3364:200:: and source IPv6 address 2001:db8:1c0:2:21:: of the received IPv6 packet that is being translated.

8. The translated packet is sent out the IPv4 interface to H4.

The packet exchange between H4 and H6 continues until the session finished.

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Stateful NAT64: Network Address and Protocol Translation from IPv6  
Clients to IPv4 Servers  
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Abstract

This document describes stateful NAT64 translation, which allows IPv6-only clients to contact IPv4 servers using unicast UDP, TCP, or ICMP. The public IPv4 address can be shared among several IPv6-only clients. When the stateful NAT64 is used in conjunction with DNS64 no changes are usually required in the IPv6 client or the IPv4 server.

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## 1. Introduction

This document specifies stateful NAT64, a mechanism for IPv4-IPv6 transition and co-existence. Together with DNS64 [I-D.ietf-behave-dns64], these two mechanisms allow an IPv6-only client to initiate communications to an IPv4-only server. They also enable peer-to-peer communication between an IPv4 and an IPv6 node, where the communication can be initiated by either end using existing, NAT-traversal, peer-to-peer communication techniques, such as ICE [RFC5245]. Stateful NAT64 also supports IPv4-initiated communications to a subset of the IPv6 hosts through statically configured bindings in the stateful NAT64.

Stateful NAT64 is a mechanism for translating IPv6 packets to IPv4 packets and vice-versa. The translation is done by translating the packet headers according to the IP/ICMP Translation Algorithm defined in [I-D.ietf-behave-v6v4-xlate]. The IPv4 addresses of IPv4 hosts are algorithmically translated to and from IPv6 addresses by using the algorithm defined in [I-D.ietf-behave-address-format] and a prefix assigned to the stateful NAT64 for this specific purpose. The IPv6 addresses of IPv6 hosts are translated to and from IPv4 addresses by installing mappings in the normal NAPT manner [RFC3022]. The current specification only defines how stateful NAT64 translates unicast packets carrying TCP, UDP and ICMP traffic. Multicast packets and other protocols, including SCTP, DCCP and IPsec are out of the scope of this specification.

DNS64 is a mechanism for synthesizing AAAA resource records (RR) from A RR. The IPv6 address contained in the synthetic AAAA RR is algorithmically generated from the IPv4 address and the IPv6 prefix assigned to a NAT64 device by using the same algorithm defined in [I-D.ietf-behave-address-format].

Together, these two mechanisms allow an IPv6-only client (i.e. either a host with only IPv6 stack, or a host with both IPv4 and IPv6 stack, but only with IPv6 connectivity or a host running an IPv6 only application) to initiate communications to an IPv4-only server (analogous meaning to the IPv6-only host above).

These mechanisms are expected to play a critical role in the IPv4-IPv6 transition and co-existence. Due to IPv4 address depletion, it is likely that in the future, the new clients will be IPv6-only and they will want to connect to the existent IPv4-only servers. The stateful NAT64 and DNS64 mechanisms are easily deployable, since they require no changes to either the IPv6 client nor the IPv4 server. For basic functionality, the approach only requires the deployment of the stateful NAT64 function in the devices connecting an IPv6-only network to the IPv4-only network, along with the deployment of a few

DNS64-enabled name servers accessible to the IPv6-only hosts. An analysis of the application scenarios can be found in [I-D.ietf-behave-v6v4-framework].

For brevity, in the rest of the document, we will refer to the stateful NAT64 either as stateful NAT64 or simply as NAT64.

### 1.1. Features of stateful NAT64

The features of NAT64 are:

- o NAT64 is compliant with the recommendations for how NATs should handle UDP [RFC4787], TCP [RFC5382], and ICMP [RFC5508]. As such, NAT64 only supports Endpoint-Independent mappings and supports both Endpoint-Independent and Address-Dependent Filtering. Because of the compliance with the aforementioned requirements, NAT64 is compatible with current NAT traversal techniques, such as ICE [RFC5245] and compatible with other non-IETF-standard NAT traversal techniques.
- o In the absence of any state in NAT64, only IPv6 nodes can initiate sessions to IPv4 nodes. This works for roughly the same class of applications that work through IPv4-to-IPv4 NATs.
- o Depending on the filtering policy used (Endpoint-Independent, or Address-Dependent), IPv4-nodes might be able to initiate sessions to a given IPv6 node, if the NAT64 somehow has an appropriate mapping (i.e., state) for an IPv6 node, via one of the following mechanisms:
  - \* The IPv6 node has recently initiated a session to the same or another IPv4 node. This is also the case if the IPv6 node has used a NAT-traversal technique (such as ICE) .
  - \* If a statically configured mapping exists for the IPv6 node.
- o IPv4 address sharing: NAT64 allows multiple IPv6-only nodes to share an IPv4 address to access the IPv4 Internet. This helps with IPv4 forthcoming exhaustion.
- o As currently defined in this NAT64 specification, only TCP/UDP/ICMP are supported. Support for other protocols such as other transport protocols and IPsec are to be defined in separate documents.

## 1.2. Overview

This section provides a non-normative introduction to NAT64. This is achieved by describing the NAT64 behavior involving a simple setup, that involves a single NAT64 device, a single DNS64 and a simple network topology. The goal of this description is to provide the reader with a general view of NAT64. It is not the goal of this section to describe all possible configurations nor to provide a normative specification of the NAT64 behavior. So, for the sake of clarity, only TCP and UDP are described in this overview; the details of ICMP, fragmentation, and other aspects of translation are purposefully avoided in this overview. The normative specification of NAT64 is provided in Section 3.

The NAT64 mechanism is implemented in a device which has (at least) two interfaces, an IPv4 interface connected to the IPv4 network, and an IPv6 interface connected to the IPv6 network. Packets generated in the IPv6 network for a receiver located in the IPv4 network will be routed within the IPv6 network towards the NAT64 device. The NAT64 will translate them and forward them as IPv4 packets through the IPv4 network to the IPv4 receiver. The reverse takes place for packets generated by hosts connected to the IPv4 network for an IPv6 receiver. NAT64, however, is not symmetric. In order to be able to perform IPv6-IPv4 translation, NAT64 requires state, binding an IPv6 address and TCP/UDP port (hereafter called an IPv6 transport address) to an IPv4 address and TCP/UDP port (hereafter called an IPv4 transport address).

Such binding state is either statically configured in the NAT64 or it is created when the first packet flowing from the IPv6 network to the IPv4 network is translated. After the binding state has been created, packets flowing in both directions on that particular flow are translated. The result is that, in the general case, NAT64 only supports communications initiated by the IPv6-only node towards an IPv4-only node. Some additional mechanisms (like ICE) or static binding configuration, can be used to provide support for communications initiated by an IPv4-only node to an IPv6-only node.

### 1.2.1. Stateful NAT64 solution elements

In this section we describe the different elements involved in the NAT64 approach.

The main component of the proposed solution is the translator itself. The translator has essentially two main parts, the address translation mechanism and the protocol translation mechanism.

Protocol translation from IPv4 packet header to IPv6 packet header



and vice-versa is performed according to the IP/ICMP Translation Algorithm [I-D.ietf-behave-v6v4-xlate].

Address translation maps IPv6 transport addresses to IPv4 transport addresses and vice-versa. In order to create these mappings the NAT64 has two pools of addresses: an IPv6 address pool (to represent IPv4 addresses in the IPv6 network) and an IPv4 address pool (to represent IPv6 addresses in the IPv4 network).

The IPv6 address pool is one or more IPv6 prefixes assigned to the translator itself. Hereafter we will call the IPv6 address pool as Pref64::/n; in the case there are more than one prefix assigned to the NAT64, the comments made about Pref64::/n apply to each of them. Pref64::/n will be used by the NAT64 to construct IPv4-Converted IPv6 addresses as defined in [I-D.ietf-behave-address-format]. Due to the abundance of IPv6 address space, it is possible to assign one or more Pref64::/n, each of them being equal to or even bigger than the size of the whole IPv4 address space. This allows each IPv4 address to be mapped into a different IPv6 address by simply concatenating a Pref64::/n with the IPv4 address being mapped and a suffix. The provisioning of the Pref64::/n as well as the address format are defined in [I-D.ietf-behave-address-format].

The IPv4 address pool is a set of IPv4 addresses, normally a prefix assigned by the local administrator. Since IPv4 address space is a scarce resource, the IPv4 address pool is small and typically not sufficient to establish permanent one-to-one mappings with IPv6 addresses. So, except for the static/manually created ones, mappings using the IPv4 address pool will be created and released dynamically. Moreover, because of the IPv4 address scarcity, the usual practice for NAT64 is likely to be the binding of IPv6 transport addresses into IPv4 transport addresses, instead of IPv6 addresses into IPv4 addresses directly, enabling a higher utilization of the limited IPv4 address pool. This implies that NAT64 performs both address and port translation.

Because of the dynamic nature of the IPv6 to IPv4 address mapping and the static nature of the IPv4 to IPv6 address mapping, it is far simpler to allow communications initiated from the IPv6 side toward an IPv4 node, whose address is algorithmically mapped into an IPv6 address, than communications initiated from IPv4-only nodes to an IPv6 node in which case an IPv4 address needs to be associated with the IPv6 node's address dynamically.

Using a mechanisms such as DNS64, an IPv6 client obtains an IPv6 address that embeds the IPv4 address of the IPv4 server, and sends a packet to that IPv6 address. The packets are intercepted by the NAT64 device, which associates an IPv4 transport address of its IPv4

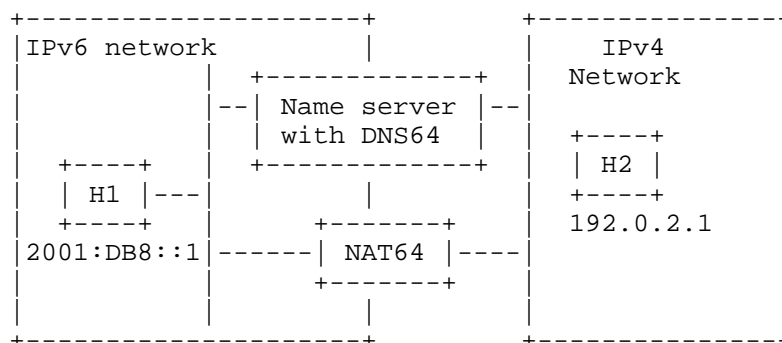
pool to the IPv6 transport address of the initiator, creating binding state, so that reply packets can be translated and forwarded back to the initiator. The binding state is kept while packets are flowing. Once the flow stops, and based on a timer, the IPv4 transport address is returned to the IPv4 address pool so that it can be reused for other communications.

To allow an IPv6 initiator to do a DNS lookup to learn the address of the responder, DNS64 [I-D.ietf-behave-dns64] is used to synthesize AAAA RRs from the A RRs. The IPv6 addresses contained in the synthetic AAAA RRs contain a Pref64::/n assigned to the NAT64 and the IPv4 address of the responder. The synthetic AAAA RRs are passed back to the IPv6 initiator, which will initiate an IPv6 communication with an IPv6 address associated to the IPv4 receiver. The packet will be routed to the NAT64 device, which will create the IPv6 to IPv4 address mapping as described before.

### 1.2.2. Stateful NAT64 Behaviour Walkthrough

In this section we provide a simple example of the NAT64 behaviour. We consider an IPv6 node located in an IPv6-only site that initiates a TCP connection to an IPv4-only node located in the IPv4 network.

The scenario for this case is depicted in the following figure:



The figure above shows an IPv6 node H1 with an IPv6 address 2001:DB8::1 and an IPv4 node H2 with IPv4 address 192.0.2.1. H2 has h2.example.com as FQDN.

A NAT64 connects the IPv6 network to the IPv4 network. This NAT64 uses the Well-Known Prefix 64:FF9B::/96 defined in [I-D.ietf-behave-address-format] to represent IPv4 addresses in the IPv6 address space and a single IPv4 address 203.0.113.1 assigned to its IPv4 interface. The routing is configured in such a way that the

IPv6 packets addressed to a destination address in 64:FF9B::/96 are routed to the IPv6 interface of the NAT64 device.

Also shown is a local name server with DNS64 functionality. The local name server uses the Well-Known prefix 64:FF9B::/96 to create the IPv6 addresses in the synthetic RRs.

For this example, assume the typical DNS situation where IPv6 hosts have only stub resolvers and the local name server does the recursive lookups.

The steps by which H1 establishes communication with H2 are:

1. H1 performs a DNS query for h2.example.com and receives the synthetic AAAA RR from the local name server that implements the DNS64 functionality. The AAAA record contains an IPv6 address formed by the Well-Known Prefix and the IPv4 address of H2 (i.e. 64:FF9B::192.0.2.1).
2. H1 sends a TCP SYN packet to H2. The packet is sent from a source transport address of (2001:DB8::1,1500) to a destination transport address of (64:FF9B::192.0.2.1,80), where the ports are set by H1.
3. The packet is routed to the IPv6 interface of the NAT64 (since IPv6 routing is configured that way).
4. The NAT64 receives the packet and performs the following actions:
  - \* The NAT64 selects an unused port (e.g. 2000) on its IPv4 address 203.0.113.1 and creates the mapping entry (2001:DB8::1,1500) <--> (203.0.113.1,2000)
  - \* The NAT64 translates the IPv6 header into an IPv4 header using the IP/ICMP Translation Algorithm [I-D.ietf-behave-v6v4-xlate].
  - \* The NAT64 includes (203.0.113.1,2000) as source transport address in the packet and (192.0.2.1,80) as destination transport address in the packet. Note that 192.0.2.1 is extracted directly from the destination IPv6 address of the received IPv6 packet that is being translated. The destination port 80 of the translated packet is the same as the destination port of the received IPv6 packet.
5. The NAT64 sends the translated packet out its IPv4 interface and the packet arrives at H2.

6. H2 node responds by sending a TCP SYN+ACK packet with destination transport address (203.0.113.1,2000) and source transport address (192.0.2.1,80).
7. Since the IPv4 address 203.0.113.1 is assigned to the IPv4 interface of the NAT64 device, the packet is routed to the NAT64 device, which will look for an existing mapping containing (203.0.113.1,2000). Since the mapping (2001:DB8::1,1500) <--> (203.0.113.1,2000) exists, the NAT64 performs the following operations:
  - \* The NAT64 translates the IPv4 header into an IPv6 header using the IP/ICMP Translation Algorithm [I-D.ietf-behave-v6v4-xlate].
  - \* The NAT64 includes (2001:DB8::1,1500) as destination transport address in the packet and (64:FF9B::192.0.2.1,80) as source transport address in the packet. Note that 192.0.2.1 is extracted directly from the source IPv4 address of the received IPv4 packet that is being translated. The source port 80 of the translated packet is the same as the source port of the received IPv4 packet.
8. The translated packet is sent out the IPv6 interface to H1.

The packet exchange between H1 and H2 continues and packets are translated in the different directions as previously described.

It is important to note that the translation still works if the IPv6 initiator H1 learns the IPv6 representation of H2's IPv4 address (i.e., 64:FF9B::192.0.2.1) through some scheme other than a DNS look-up. This is because the DNS64 processing does NOT result in any state installed in the NAT64 and because the mapping of the IPv4 address into an IPv6 address is the result of concatenating the Well-Known Prefix to the original IPv4 address.

### 1.2.3. Filtering

NAT64 may do filtering, which means that it only allows a packet in through an interface under certain circumstances. The NAT64 can filter IPv6 packets based on the administrative rules to create entries in the binding and session tables. The filtering can be flexible and general but the idea of the filtering is to provide the administrators necessary control to avoid DoS attacks that would result in exhaustion of the NAT64's IPv4 address, port, memory and CPU resources. Filtering techniques of incoming IPv6 packets are not specific to the NAT64 and therefore are not described in this specification.

Filtering of IPv4 packets on the other hand is tightly coupled to the NAT64 state and therefore is described in this specification. In this document, we consider that the NAT64 may do no filtering, or it may filter incoming IPv4 packets.

NAT64 filtering of incoming IPv4 packets is consistent with the recommendations of [RFC4787], and the ones of [RFC5382]. Because of that, the NAT64 as specified in this document, supports both Endpoint-Independent Filtering and Address-Dependent Filtering, both for TCP and UDP as well as filtering of ICMP packets.

If a NAT64 performs Endpoint-Independent Filtering of incoming IPv4 packets, then an incoming IPv4 packet is dropped unless the NAT64 has state for the destination transport address of the incoming IPv4 packet.

If a NAT64 performs Address-Dependent Filtering of incoming IPv4 packets, then an incoming IPv4 packet is dropped unless the NAT64 has state involving the destination transport address of the IPv4 incoming packet and the particular source IP address of the incoming IPv4 packet.

## 2. Terminology

This section provides a definitive reference for all the terms used in this document.

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 RFC 2119 [RFC2119].

The following additional terms are used in this document:

3-Tuple: The tuple (source IP address, destination IP address, ICMP Identifier). A 3-tuple uniquely identifies an ICMP Query session. When an ICMP Query session flows through a NAT64, each session has two different 3-tuples: one with IPv4 addresses and one with IPv6 addresses.

5-Tuple: The tuple (source IP address, source port, destination IP address, destination port, transport protocol). A 5-tuple uniquely identifies a UDP/TCP session. When a UDP/TCP session flows through a NAT64, each session has two different 5-tuples: one with IPv4 addresses and one with IPv6 addresses.

**BIB:** Binding Information Base. A table of bindings kept by a NAT64. Each NAT64 has a BIB for each translated protocol. An implementation compliant to this document would have a BIB for TCP, one for UDP and one for ICMP Queries. Additional BIBs would be added to support other protocols, such as SCTP.

**Endpoint-Independent Mapping:** In NAT64, using the same mapping for all the sessions involving a given IPv6 transport address of an IPv6 host (irrespective of the transport address of the IPv4 host involved in the communication). Endpoint-independent Mapping is important for peer-to-peer communication. See [RFC4787] for the definition of the different types of mappings in IPv4-to-IPv4 NATs.

**Filtering, Endpoint-Independent:** The NAT64 only filters incoming IPv4 packets destined to a transport address for which there is no state in the NAT64, regardless of the source IPv4 transport address. The NAT forwards any packets destined to any transport address for which it has state. In other words, having state for a given transport address is sufficient to allow any packets back to the internal endpoint. See [RFC4787] for the definition of the different types of filtering in IPv4-to-IPv4 NATs.

**Filtering, Address-Dependent:** The NAT64 filters incoming IPv4 packets destined to a transport address for which there is no state (similar to the Endpoint-Independent Filtering). Additionally, the NAT64 will filter out incoming IPv4 packets coming from a given IPv4 address X and destined for a transport address that it has state for if the NAT64 has not sent packets to X previously (independently of the port used by X). In other words, for receiving packets from a specific IPv4 endpoint, it is necessary for the IPv6 endpoint to send packets first to that specific IPv4 endpoint's IP address.

**Hairpinning:** Having a packet do a "U-turn" inside a NAT and come back out the same side as it arrived on. If the destination IPv6 address and its embedded IPv4 address are both assigned to the NAT64 itself, then the packet is being sent to another IPv6 host connected to the same NAT64. Such a packet is called a 'hairpin packet'. A NAT64 that forwards hairpin packets, back to the IPv6 host are defined as supporting "hairpinning". Hairpinning support is important for peer-to-peer applications, as there are cases when two different hosts on the same side of a NAT can only communicate using sessions that hairpin through the NAT. Hairpin packets can be either TCP or UDP. More detailed explanation of hairpinning and examples for the UDP case can be found in [RFC4787].

ICMP Query packet: ICMP packets that are not ICMP error messages. For ICMPv6, ICMPv6 Query Messages are the ICMPv6 Informational messages as defined in [RFC4443]. For ICMPv4, ICMPv4 Query messages are all ICMPv4 messages that are not ICMPv4 error messages.

Mapping or Binding: A mapping between an IPv6 transport address and a IPv4 transport address or a mapping between an (IPv6 address, ICMPv6 Identifier) pair and an (IPv4 address, ICMPv4 Identifier) pair. Used to translate the addresses and ports/ICMP Identifiers of packets flowing between the IPv6 host and the IPv4 host. In NAT64, the IPv4 address and port/ICMPv4 Identifier is always one assigned to the NAT64 itself, while the IPv6 address and port/ICMPv6 Identifier belongs to some IPv6 host.

Session: The flow of packets between two different hosts. This may be TCP, UDP or ICMP Queries. In NAT64, typically one host is an IPv4 host, and the other one is an IPv6 host. However, due to hairpinning, both hosts might be IPv6 hosts.

Session table: A table of sessions kept by a NAT64. Each NAT64 has three session tables, one for TCP, one for UDP and one for ICMP Queries.

Stateful NAT64: A function that has per-flow state which translates IPv6 packets to IPv4 packets and vice-versa, for TCP, UDP, and ICMP. The NAT64 uses binding state to perform the translation between IPv6 and IPv4 addresses. In this document we also refer to stateful NAT64 simply as NAT64.

Stateful NAT64 device: The device where the NAT64 function is executed. In this document we also refer to stateful NAT64 device simply as NAT64 device.

Transport Address: The combination of an IPv6 or IPv4 address and a port. Typically written as (IP address, port)- e.g. (192.0.2.15, 8001).

Tuple: Refers to either a 3-Tuple or a 5-tuple as defined above.

For a detailed understanding of this document, the reader should also be familiar with NAT terminology [RFC4787].

### 3. Stateful NAT64 Normative Specification

A NAT64 is a device with at least one IPv6 interface and at least one IPv4 interface. Each NAT64 device MUST have at least one unicast /n

IPv6 prefix assigned to it, denoted Pref64::/n. Additional considerations about the Pref64::/n are presented in Section 3.5.4. A NAT64 MUST have one or more unicast IPv4 addresses assigned to it.

A NAT64 uses the following conceptual dynamic data structures:

- o UDP Binding Information Base
- o UDP Session Table
- o TCP Binding Information Base
- o TCP Session Table
- o ICMP Query Binding Information Base
- o ICMP Query Session Table

These tables contain information needed for the NAT64 processing. The actual division of the information into six tables is done in order to ease the description of the NAT64 behaviour. NAT64 implementations are free to use different data structures but they MUST store all the required information and the externally visible outcome MUST be the same as the one described in this document.

The notation used is the following: upper case letters are IPv4 addresses; upper case letters with a prime(') are IPv6 addresses; lower case letters are ports; IPv6 prefixes of length n are indicated by "P::/n", mappings are indicated as "(X,x) <--> (Y',y)".

### 3.1. Binding Information Bases

A NAT64 has three Binding Information Bases (BIBs): one for TCP, one for UDP and one for ICMP Queries. In the case of UDP and TCP BIBs, each BIB entry specifies a mapping between an IPv6 transport address and an IPv4 transport address:

$$(X',x) <--> (T,t)$$

where X' is some IPv6 address, T is an IPv4 address, and x and t are ports. T will always be one of the IPv4 addresses assigned to the NAT64. The BIB has then two columns: the BIB IPv6 transport address and the BIB IPv4 transport address. A given IPv6 or IPv4 transport address can appear in at most one entry in a BIB: for example, (2001:db8::17, 49832) can appear in at most one TCP and at most one UDP BIB entry. TCP and UDP have separate BIBs because the port number space for TCP and UDP are distinct. If the BIBs are implemented as specified in this document, it results in Endpoint-Independent



Mappings in the NAT64. The information in the BIBs is also used to implement Endpoint-Independent Filtering. (Address-Dependent Filtering is implemented using the session tables described below.)

In the case of the ICMP Query BIB, each ICMP Query BIB entry specifies a mapping between an (IPv6 address, ICMPv6 Identifier) pair and an (IPv4 address, ICMPv4 Identifier) pair.

$$(X', i1) \leftrightarrow (T, i2)$$

where  $X'$  is some IPv6 address,  $T$  is an IPv4 address,  $i1$  is an ICMPv6 Identifier and  $i2$  is an ICMPv4 Identifier.  $T$  will always be one of the IPv4 addresses assigned to the NAT64. A given (IPv6 or IPv4 address, ICMPv6 or ICMPv4 Identifier) pair can appear in at most one entry in the ICMP Query BIB.

Entries in any of the three BIBs can be created dynamically as the result of the flow of packets as described in Section 3.5 but they can also be created manually by an administrator. NAT64 implementations SHOULD support manually configured BIB entries for any of the three BIBs. Dynamically-created entries are deleted from the corresponding BIB when the last session associated with the BIB entry is removed from the session table. Manually-configured BIB entries are not deleted when there is no corresponding session table entry and can only be deleted by the administrator.

### 3.2. Session Tables

A NAT64 also has three session tables: one for TCP sessions, one for UDP sessions, and one for ICMP Query sessions. Each entry keeps information on the state of the corresponding session. In the TCP and UDP session tables, each entry specifies a mapping between a pair of IPv6 transport addresses and a pair of IPv4 transport addresses:

$$(X', x), (Y', y) \leftrightarrow (T, t), (Z, z)$$

where  $X'$  and  $Y'$  are IPv6 addresses,  $T$  and  $Z$  are IPv4 addresses, and  $x$ ,  $y$ ,  $z$  and  $t$  are ports.  $T$  will always be one of the IPv4 addresses assigned to the NAT64.  $Y'$  is always the IPv6 representation of the IPv4 address  $Z$ , so  $Y'$  is obtained from  $Z$  using the algorithm applied by the NAT64 to create IPv6 representations of IPv4 addresses.  $y$  will always be equal to  $z$ .

For each TCP or UDP Session Table Entry (STE), there are then five columns. The terminology used for the session table entry columns is from the perspective of an incoming IPv6 packet being translated into an outgoing IPv4 packet. The columns are::

The STE source IPv6 transport address,  $(X',x)$  in the example above,

The STE destination IPv6 transport address,  $(Y',y)$  in the example above,

The STE source IPv4 transport address,  $(T,t)$  in the example above, and,

The STE destination IPv4 transport address,  $(Z,z)$  in the example above.

The STE lifetime.

In the ICMP query session table, each entry specifies a mapping between a 3-tuple of IPv6 source address, IPv6 destination address and ICMPv6 Identifier and a 3-tuple of IPv4 source address, IPv4 destination address and ICMPv4 Identifier:

$$(X',Y',i1) \leftrightarrow (T,Z,i2)$$

where  $X'$  and  $Y'$  are IPv6 addresses,  $T$  and  $Z$  are IPv4 addresses,  $i1$  is an ICMPv6 Identifier and  $i2$  is an ICMPv4 Identifier.  $T$  will always be one of the IPv4 addresses assigned to the NAT64.  $Y'$  is always the IPv6 representation of the IPv4 address  $Z$ , so  $Y'$  is obtained from  $Z$  using the algorithm applied by the NAT64 to create IPv6 representations of IPv4 addresses.

For each ICMP Query Session Table Entry (STE), there are then seven columns:

The STE source IPv6 address,  $X'$  in the example above,

The STE destination IPv6 address,  $Y'$  in the example above,

The STE ICMPv6 Identifier,  $i1$  in the example above,

The STE source IPv4 address,  $T$  in the example above,

The STE destination IPv4 address,  $Z$  in the example above, and,

The STE ICMPv4 Identifier,  $i2$  in the example above.

The STE lifetime.

### 3.3. Packet Processing Overview

The NAT64 uses the session state information to determine when the session is completed, and also uses session information for Address-Dependent Filtering. A session can be uniquely identified by either an incoming tuple or an outgoing tuple.

For each TCP or UDP session, there is a corresponding BIB entry, uniquely specified by either the source IPv6 transport address (in the IPv6 --> IPv4 direction) or the destination IPv4 transport address (in the IPv4 --> IPv6 direction). For each ICMP Query session, there is a corresponding BIB entry, uniquely specified by either the source IPv6 address and ICMPv6 Identifier (in the IPv6 --> IPv4 direction) or the destination IPv4 address and the ICMPv4 Identifier (in the IPv4 --> IPv6 direction). However, for all the BIBs, a single BIB entry can have multiple corresponding sessions. When the last corresponding session is deleted, if the BIB entry was dynamically created, the BIB entry is deleted.

The NAT64 will receive packets through its interfaces. These packets can be either IPv6 packets or IPv4 packets and they may carry TCP traffic, UDP traffic or ICMP traffic. The processing of the packets will be described next. In the case that the processing is common to all the aforementioned types of packets, we will refer to the packet as the incoming IP packet in general. In case that the processing is specific to IPv6 packets, we will refer to the incoming IPv6 packet and similarly to the IPv4 packets.

The processing of an incoming IP packet takes the following steps:

1. Determining the incoming tuple
2. Filtering and updating binding and session information
3. Computing the outgoing tuple
4. Translating the packet
5. Handling hairpinning

The details of these steps are specified in the following subsections.

This breakdown of the NAT64 behavior into processing steps is done for ease of presentation. A NAT64 MAY perform the steps in a different order, or MAY perform different steps, but the externally visible outcome MUST be the same as the one described in this document.

### 3.4. Determining the Incoming tuple

This step associates an incoming tuple with every incoming IP packet for use in subsequent steps. In the case of TCP, UDP and ICMP error packets, the tuple is a 5-tuple consisting of source IP address, source port, destination IP address, destination port, transport protocol. In case of ICMP Queries, the tuple is a 3-tuple consisting of the source IP address, destination IP address and ICMP Identifier.

If the incoming IP packet contains a complete (un-fragmented) UDP or TCP protocol packet, then the 5-tuple is computed by extracting the appropriate fields from the received packet.

If the incoming packet is a complete (un-fragmented) ICMP query message (i.e., an ICMPv4 Query message or an ICMPv6 Informational message), the 3-tuple is the source IP address, the destination IP address and the ICMP Identifier.

If the incoming IP packet contains a complete (un-fragmented) ICMP error message containing a UDP or a TCP packet, then the incoming 5-tuple is computed by extracting the appropriate fields from the IP packet embedded inside the ICMP error message. However, the role of source and destination is swapped when doing this: the embedded source IP address becomes the destination IP address in the incoming 5-tuple, the embedded source port becomes the destination port in the incoming 5-tuple, etc. If it is not possible to determine the incoming 5-tuple (perhaps because not enough of the embedded packet is reproduced inside the ICMP message), then the incoming IP packet MUST be silently discarded.

If the incoming IP packet contains a complete (un-fragmented) ICMP error message containing an ICMP error message, then the packet is silently discarded.

If the incoming IP packet contains a complete (un-fragmented) ICMP error message containing an ICMP Query message, then the incoming 3-tuple is computed by extracting the appropriate fields from the IP packet embedded inside the ICMP error message. However, the role of source and destination is swapped when doing this: the embedded source IP address becomes the destination IP address in the incoming 3-tuple, the embedded destination IP address becomes the source address in the incoming 3-tuple and the embedded ICMP Identifier is used as the ICMP Identifier of the incoming 3-tuple. If it is not possible to determine the incoming 3-tuple (perhaps because not enough of the embedded packet is reproduced inside the ICMP message), then the incoming IP packet MUST be silently discarded.

If the incoming IP packet contains a fragment, then more processing

may be needed. This specification leaves open the exact details of how a NAT64 handles incoming IP packets containing fragments, and simply requires that the external behavior of the NAT64 is compliant with the following conditions:

The NAT64 MUST handle fragments. In particular, NAT64 MUST handle fragments arriving out-of-order, conditioned on the following:

- \* The NAT64 MUST limit the amount of resources devoted to the storage of fragmented packets in order to protect from DoS attacks.
- \* As long as the NAT64 has available resources, the NAT64 MUST allow the fragments to arrive over a time interval. The time interval SHOULD be configurable and the default value MUST be of at least FRAGMENT\_MIN.
- \* The NAT64 MAY require that the UDP, TCP, or ICMP header be completely contained within the fragment that contains fragment offset equal to zero.

For incoming packets carrying TCP or UDP fragments with non-null checksum, NAT64 MAY elect to queue the fragments as they arrive and translate all fragments at the same time. In this case, the incoming tuple is determined as documented above to the unfragmented packets. Alternatively, a NAT64 MAY translate the fragments as they arrive, by storing information that allows it to compute the 5-tuple for fragments other than the first. In the latter case, subsequent fragments may arrive before the first and the rules about how the NAT64 handles (out-of-order) fragments described in the bulleted list above apply.

For incoming IPv4 packets carrying UDP packets with null checksum, if the NAT64 has enough resources, the NAT64 MUST reassemble the packets and MUST calculate the checksum. If the NAT64 does not have enough resources, then it MUST silently discard the packets.

Implementers of NAT64 should be aware that there are a number of well-known attacks against IP fragmentation; see [RFC1858] and [RFC3128]. Implementers should also be aware of additional issues with reassembling packets at high rates, described in [RFC4963].

If the incoming packet is an IPv6 packet that contains a protocol other than TCP, UDP or ICMPv6 in the last Next Header, then the packet SHOULD be discarded and, if the security policy permits, the NAT64 SHOULD send an ICMPv6 Destination Unreachable error message with Code 3 (Destination Unreachable) to the source address of the received packet. NOTE: This behaviour may be updated by future

documents that define how other protocols such as SCTP or DCCP are processed by NAT64.

If the incoming packet is an IPv4 packet that contains a protocol other than TCP, UDP or ICMPv4, then the packet SHOULD be discarded and, if the security policy permits, the NAT64 SHOULD send an ICMPv4 Destination Unreachable error message with Code 2 (Protocol Unreachable) to the source address of the received packet. NOTE: This behaviour may be updated by future documents that define how other protocols such as SCTP or DCCP are processed by NAT64.

### 3.5. Filtering and Updating Binding and Session Information

This step updates binding and session information stored in the appropriate tables. This step may also filter incoming packets, if desired.

The details of this step depend on the protocol i.e. UDP, TCP or ICMP. The behaviour for UDP is described in Section 3.5.1, for TCP is described in Section 3.5.2 and for ICMP Queries is described in Section 3.5.3. For the case of ICMP error messages, they do not affect in any way neither the BIBs nor the session tables, so, there is no processing resulting from these messages in this section. ICMP error message processing continues in Section 3.6.

Irrespective of the transport protocol used, the NAT64 MUST silently discard all incoming IPv6 packets containing a source address that contains the Pref64::/n. This is required in order to prevent hairpinning loops as described in Section 5. In addition, the NAT64 MUST only process incoming IPv6 packets that contain a destination address that contains Pref64::/n. Likewise, the NAT64 MUST only process incoming IPv4 packets that contain a destination address that belong to the IPv4 pool assigned to the NAT64.

#### 3.5.1. UDP Session Handling

The following state information is stored for a UDP session:

Binding:  $(X',x), (Y',y) \leftrightarrow (T,t), (Z,z)$

Lifetime: a timer that tracks the remaining lifetime of the UDP session. When the timer expires, the UDP session is deleted. If all the UDP sessions corresponding to a dynamically created UDP BIB entry are deleted, then the UDP BIB entry is also deleted.

An IPv6 incoming packet with an incoming tuple with source transport address  $(X',x)$  and destination transport address  $(Y',y)$  is processed as follows:

The NAT64 searches for a UDP BIB entry that contains the BIB IPv6 transport address that matches the IPv6 source transport address (X',x). If such an entry does not exist, the NAT64 tries to create a new entry (if resources and policy permit). The source IPv6 transport address of the packet (X',x) is used as BIB IPv6 transport address, and the BIB IPv4 transport address is set to (T,t) which is allocated using the rules defined in Section 3.5.1.1. The result is a BIB entry as follows: (X',x) <--> (T,t).

The NAT64 searches for the session table entry corresponding to the incoming 5-tuple. If no such entry is found, the NAT64 tries to create a new entry (if resources and policy permit). The information included in the session table is as follows:

- \* The STE source IPv6 transport address is set to (X',x), the source IPv6 transport addresses contained in the received IPv6 packet,
- \* The STE destination IPv6 transport address is set to (Y',y), the destination IPv6 transport addresses contained in the received IPv6 packet,
- \* The STE source IPv4 transport address is extracted from the corresponding UDP BIB entry i.e. it is set to (T,t),
- \* The STE destination IPv4 transport is set to (Z(Y'),y), y being the same port as the STE destination IPv6 transport address and Z(Y') being algorithmically generated from the IPv6 destination address (i.e. Y') using the reverse algorithm (see Section 3.5.4).

The result is a Session table entry as follows: (X',x),(Y',y) <--> (T,t),(Z(Y'),y)

The NAT64 sets (or resets) the timer in the Session Table Entry to the maximum session lifetime. The maximum session lifetime MAY be configurable and the default SHOULD be at least UDP\_DEFAULT. The maximum session lifetime MUST NOT be less than UDP\_MIN. The packet is translated and forwarded as described in the following sections.

An IPv4 incoming packet, with an incoming tuple with source IPv4 transport address (W,w) and destination IPv4 transport address (T,t) is processed as follows:

The NAT64 searches for a UDP BIB entry that contains the BIB IPv4 transport address matching (T,t), (i.e., the IPv4 destination

transport address in the incoming IPv4 packet). If such an entry does not exist, the packet MUST be dropped. An ICMP error message with type of 3 (Destination Unreachable) MAY be sent to the original sender of the packet.

If the NAT64 applies Address-Dependent Filters on its IPv4 interface, then the NAT64 checks to see if the incoming packet is allowed according to the Address-Dependent Filtering rule. To do this, it searches for a session table entry with an STE source IPv4 transport address equal to (T,t), (i.e., the destination IPv4 transport address in the incoming packet) and STE destination IPv4 address equal to W, (i.e., the source IPv4 address in the incoming packet). If such an entry is found (there may be more than one), packet processing continues. Otherwise, the packet is discarded. If the packet is discarded, then an ICMP error message MAY be sent to the original sender of the packet. The ICMP error message, if sent, has a type of 3 (Destination Unreachable) and a code of 13 (Communication Administratively Prohibited).

In case the packet is not discarded in the previous processing (either because the NAT64 is not filtering or because the packet is compliant with the Address-Dependent Filtering rule), then the NAT64 searches for the session table entry containing the STE source IPv4 transport address equal to (T,t) and the STE destination IPv4 transport address equal to (W,w). If no such entry is found, the NAT64 tries to create a new entry (if resources and policy permit). In case a new UDP session table entry is created, it contains the following information:

- \* The STE source IPv6 transport address is extracted from the corresponding UDP BIB entry.
- \* The STE destination IPv6 transport address is set to (Y'(W),w), w being the same port w than the source IPv4 transport address and Y'(W) being the IPv6 representation of W, generated using the algorithm described in Section 3.5.4.
- \* The STE source IPv4 transport address is set to (T,t) the destination IPv4 transport addresses contained in the received IPv4 packet.
- \* The STE destination IPv4 transport is set to (W,w), the source IPv4 transport addresses contained in the received IPv4 packet.

The NAT64 sets (or resets) the timer in the Session Table Entry to the maximum session lifetime. The maximum session lifetime MAY be configurable and the default SHOULD be at least UDP\_DEFAULT. The maximum session lifetime MUST NOT be less than UDP\_MIN. The



packet is translated and forwarded as described in the following sections.

#### 3.5.1.1. Rules for Allocation of IPv4 Transport Addresses for UDP

When a new UDP BIB entry is created for a source transport address of (S',s), then the NAT64 allocates an IPv4 transport address for this BIB entry as follows:

If there exists some other BIB entry containing S' as the IPv6 address and mapping it to some IPv4 address T, then the NAT64 SHOULD use T as the IPv4 address. Otherwise, use any IPv4 address of the IPv4 pool assigned to the NAT64 to be used for translation.

If the port s is in the Well-Known port range 0-1023, and the NAT64 has an available port t in the same port range, then the NAT64 SHOULD allocate the port t. If the NAT64 does not have a port available in the same range, the NAT64 MAY assign a port t from other range where it has an available port. (This behavior is recommended in REQ 3-a of [RFC4787].)

If the port s is in the range 1024-65535, and the NAT64 has an available port t in the same port range, then the NAT64 SHOULD allocate the port t. If the NAT64 does not have a port available in the same range, the NAT64 MAY assign a port t from other range where it has an available port. (this behavior is recommended in REQ 3-a of [RFC4787])

The NAT64 SHOULD preserve the port parity (odd/even), as per Section 4.2.2 of [RFC4787]).

In all cases, the allocated IPv4 transport address (T,t) MUST NOT be in use in another entry in the same BIB, but MAY be in use in the other BIB (referring to the UDP and TCP BIBs).

If it is not possible to allocate an appropriate IPv4 transport address or create a BIB entry, then the packet is discarded. The NAT64 SHOULD send an ICMPv6 Destination Unreachable/Address unreachable (Code 3) message.

#### 3.5.2. TCP Session Handling

In this section we describe how the TCP BIB and Session table are populated. We do so by defining the state machine of the NAT64 uses for TCP. We first describe the states and the information contained in them and then we describe the actual state machine and state transitions.

### 3.5.2.1. State definition

The following state information is stored for a TCP session:

Binding:  $(X',x),(Y',y) \leftrightarrow (T,t),(Z,z)$

Lifetime: a timer that tracks the remaining lifetime of the TCP session. When the timer expires, the TCP session is deleted. If all the TCP sessions corresponding to a TCP BIB entry are deleted, then the dynamically created TCP BIB entry is also deleted.

Because the TCP session inactivity lifetime is set to at least 2 hours and 4 min (as per [RFC5382]), it is important that each TCP session table entry corresponds to an existent TCP session. In order to do that, for each TCP session established through it, it tracks the corresponding state machine as follows.

The states are the following ones:

CLOSED: Analogous to [RFC0793], CLOSED is a fictional state because it represents the state when there is no state for this particular 5-tuple, and therefore, no connection.

V4 INIT: An IPv4 packet containing a TCP SYN was received by the NAT64, implying that a TCP connection is being initiated from the IPv4 side. The NAT64 is now waiting for a matching IPv6 packet containing the TCP SYN in the opposite direction.

V6 INIT: An IPv6 packet containing a TCP SYN was received, translated and forwarded by the NAT64, implying that a TCP connection is being initiated from the IPv6 side. The NAT64 is now waiting for a matching IPv4 packet containing the TCP SYN in the opposite direction.

ESTABLISHED: Represents an open connection, with data able to flow in both directions.

V4 FIN RCV: An IPv4 packet containing a TCP FIN was received by the NAT64, data can still flow in the connection, and the NAT64 is waiting for a matching TCP FIN in the opposite direction.

V6 FIN RCV: An IPv6 packet containing a TCP FIN was received by the NAT64, data can still flow in the connection, and the NAT64 is waiting for a matching TCP FIN in the opposite direction.

V6 FIN + V4 FIN RCV: Both an IPv4 packet containing a TCP FIN and an IPv6 packet containing a TCP FIN for this connection were received by the NAT64. The NAT64 keeps the connection state alive

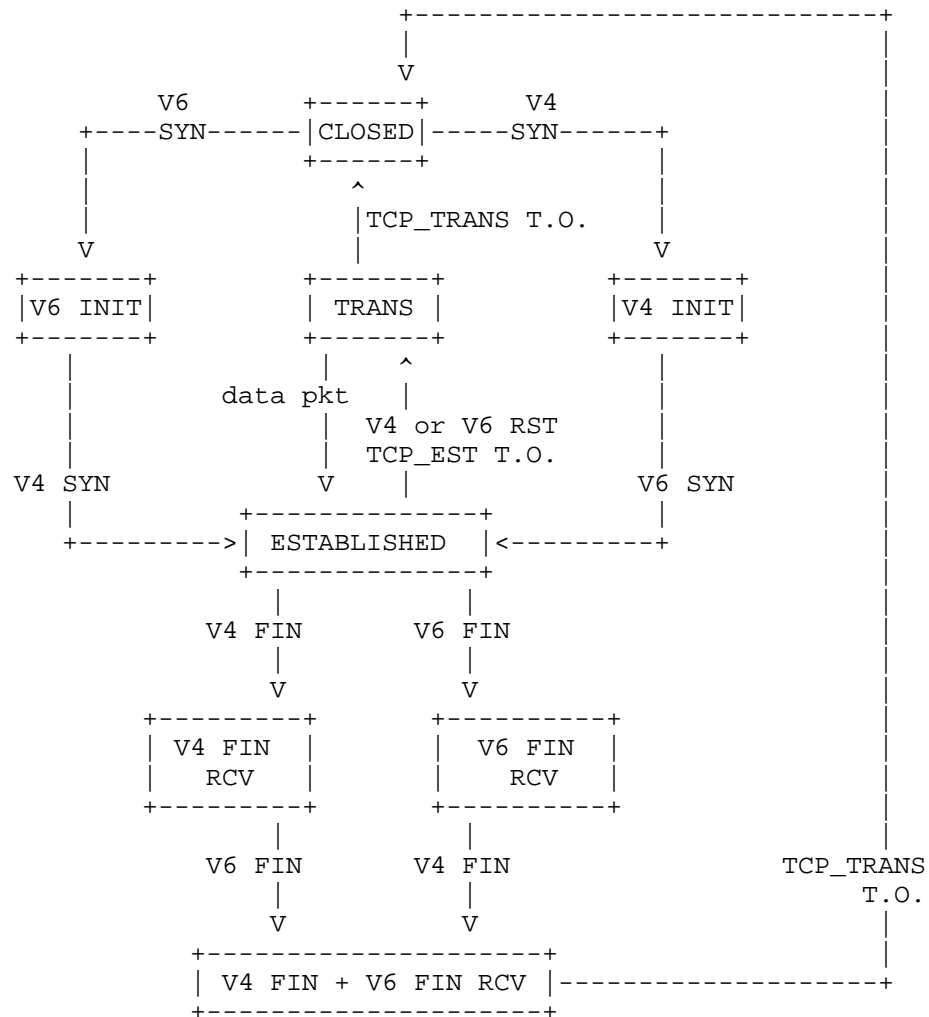
and forwards packets in both directions for a short period of time to allow remaining packets (in particular the ACKs) to be delivered.

TRANS: The lifetime of the state for the connection is set to TCP\_TRANS minutes either because a packet containing a TCP RST was received by the NAT64 for this connection or simply because the lifetime of the connection has decreased and there are only TCP\_TRANS minutes left. The NAT64 will keep the state for the connection for TCP\_TRANS min. and if no other data packets for that connection are received, the state for this connection is then terminated.

### 3.5.2.2. State machine for TCP processing in the NAT64

The state machine used by the NAT64 for the TCP session processing is depicted next. The described state machine handles all TCP segments received through the IPv6 and IPv4 interface. There is one state machine per TCP connection that is potentially established through the NAT64. After bootstrapping of the NAT64 device, all TCP sessions are in CLOSED state. As we mention above, the CLOSED state is a fictional state when is no state for that particular connection in the NAT64. It should be noted that there is one state machine per connection, so only packets belonging to a given connection are inputs to the state machine associated to that connection. In other words, when in the state machine below we state that a packet is received, it is implicit that the incoming 5-tuple of the data packet matches to the one of the state machine.

A TCP segment with the SYN flag set that is received through the IPv6 interface is called a V6 SYN, similarly, V4 SYN, V4 FIN, V6 FIN, V6 FIN + V4 FIN, V6 RST and V4 RST.



We next describe the state information and the transitions.

### \*\*\* CLOSED \*\*\*

If a V6 SYN is received with an incoming tuple with source transport address (X',x) and destination transport address (Y',y) (this is the case of a TCP connection initiated from the IPv6 side), the processing is as follows:

1. The NAT64 searches for a TCP BIB entry that matches the IPv6 source transport address (X',x).

If such an entry does not exist, the NAT64 tries to create a new BIB entry (if resources and policy permit). The BIB IPv6 transport address is set to (X',x) (i.e., the source IPv6 transport address of the packet). The BIB IPv4 transport address is set to an IPv4 transport address allocated using the rules defined in Section 3.5.2.3. The processing of the packet continues as described in bullet 2.

If the entry already exists, then the processing continues as described in bullet 2.

2. Then the NAT64 tries to create a new TCP session entry in the TCP session table (if resources and policy permit). The information included in the session table is as follows:

The STE source IPv6 transport address is set to (X',x) (i.e. the source transport address contained in the received V6 SYN packet,

The STE destination IPv6 transport address is set to (Y',y) (i.e. the destination transport address contained in the received V6 SYN packet.

The STE source IPv4 transport address is set to the BIB IPv4 transport address of the corresponding TCP BIB entry.

The STE destination IPv4 transport address contains the port y (i.e., the same port as the IPv6 destination transport address) and the IPv4 address that is algorithmically generated from the IPv6 destination address (i.e. Y') using the reverse algorithm as specified in Section 3.5.4.

The lifetime of the TCP session table entry is set to at least to TCP\_TRANS (the transitory connection idle timeout as defined in [RFC5382]).

3. The state of the session is moved to V6 INIT.
4. The NAT64 translates and forwards the packet as described in the following sections.

If a V4 SYN packet is received with an incoming tuple with source IPv4 transport address (Y,y) and destination IPv4 transport address (X,x) (this is the case of a TCP connection initiated from the IPv4 side), the processing is as follows:

If the security policy requires silently dropping externally initiated TCP connections, then the packet is silently discarded, else,

If the destination transport address contained in the incoming V4 SYN (i.e., X,x) is not in use in the TCP BIB, then:

The NAT64 tries to create a new session table entry in the TCP session table (if resources and policy permit), containing the following information:

- + The STE source IPv4 transport address is set to (X,x) (i.e. the destination transport address contained in the V4 SYN)
- + The STE destination IPv4 transport address is set to (Y,y) (i.e. the source transport address contained in the V4 SYN)
- + The STE transport IPv6 source address is left unspecified and may be populated by other protocols out of the scope of this specification.
- + The STE destination IPv6 transport address contains the port y (i.e. the same port as the STE destination IPv4 transport address) and the IPv6 representation of Y (i.e. the IPv4 address of the STE destination IPv4 transport address), generated using the algorithm described in Section 3.5.4.

The state is moved to V4 INIT.

The lifetime of the STE entry is set to TCP\_INCOMING\_SYN as per [RFC5382] and the packet is stored. The result is that the NAT64 will not drop the packet based on the filtering, nor create a BIB entry. Instead, the NAT64 will only create the session table entry and store the packet. The motivation for this is to support simultaneous open of TCP connections.

If the destination transport address contained in the incoming V4 SYN (i.e., X,x) is in use in the TCP BIB, then:

The NAT64 tries to create a new session table entry in the TCP session table (if resources and policy permit), containing the following information:

- + The STE source IPv4 transport address is set to (X,x) (i.e. the destination transport address contained in the V4 SYN)
- + The STE destination IPv4 transport address is set to (Y,y) (i.e. the source transport address contained in the V4 SYN)

- + The STE transport IPv6 source address is set to the IPv6 transport address contained in the corresponding TCP BIB entry.
- + The STE destination IPv6 transport address contains the port y (i.e. the same port as the STE destination IPv4 transport address) and the IPv6 representation of Y (i.e. the IPv4 address of the STE destination IPv4 transport address), generated using the algorithm described in Section 3.5.4.

The state is moved to V4 INIT.

If the NAT64 is performing Address-Dependent Filtering, the lifetime of the STE entry is set to TCP\_INCOMING\_SYN as per [RFC5382] and the packet is stored. The motivation for creating the session table entry and storing the packet (instead of simply dropping the packet based on the filtering) is to support simultaneous open of TCP connections.

If the NAT64 is not performing Address-Dependent Filtering, the lifetime of the STE is set to at least to TCP\_TRANS (the transitory connection idle timeout as defined in [RFC5382]) and it translates and forwards the packet as described in the following sections.

For any other packet belonging to this connection:

If there is a corresponding entry in the TCP BIB other packets SHOULD be translated and forwarded if the security policy allows to do so. The state remains unchanged.

If there is no corresponding entry in the TCP BIB the packet is silently discarded.

\*\*\* V4 INIT \*\*\*

If a V6 SYN is received with incoming tuple with source transport address (X',x) and destination transport address (Y',y). The lifetime of the TCP session table entry is set to at least to the maximum session lifetime. The value for the maximum session lifetime MAY be configurable but it MUST NOT be less than TCP\_EST (the established connection idle timeout as defined in [RFC5382]). The default value for the maximum session lifetime SHOULD be set to TCP\_EST. The packet is translated and forwarded. The state is moved to ESTABLISHED.

If the lifetime expires, an ICMP Port Unreachable error (Type 3, Code 3) containing the IPv4 SYN packet stored is sent back to the source

of the v4 SYN, the session table entry is deleted and, the state is moved to CLOSED.

For any other packet, other packets SHOULD be translated and forwarded if the security policy allows to do so. The state remains unchanged.

\*\*\* V6 INIT \*\*\*

If a V4 SYN is received (with or without the ACK flag set), with an incoming tuple with source IPv4 transport address (Y,y) and destination IPv4 transport address (X,x), then the state is moved to ESTABLISHED. The lifetime of the TCP session table entry is set to at least to the maximum session lifetime. The value for the maximum session lifetime MAY be configurable but it MUST NOT be less than TCP\_EST (the established connection idle timeout as defined in [RFC5382]). The default value for the maximum session lifetime SHOULD be set to TCP\_EST. The packet is translated and forwarded.

If the lifetime expires, the session table entry is deleted and the state is moved to CLOSED.

If a V6 SYN packet is received, the packet is translated and forwarded. The lifetime of the TCP session table entry is set to at least to TCP\_TRANS. The state remains unchanged.

For any other packet, other packets SHOULD be translated and forwarded if the security policy allows to do so. The state remains unchanged.

\*\*\* ESTABLISHED \*\*\*

If a V4 FIN packet is received, the packet is translated and forwarded. The state is moved to V4 FIN RCV.

If a V6 FIN packet is received, the packet is translated and forwarded. The state is moved to V6 FIN RCV.

If a V4 RST or a V6 RST packet is received, the packet is translated and forwarded. The lifetime is set to TCP\_TRANS and the state is moved to TRANS. (Since the NAT64 is uncertain whether the peer will accept the RST packet, instead of moving the state to CLOSED, it moves to TRANS, which has a shorter lifetime. If no other packets are received for this connection during the short timer, the NAT64 assumes that the peer has accepted the RST packet and moves to CLOSED. If packets keep flowing, the NAT64 assumes that the peer has not accepted the RST packet and moves back to the ESTABLISHED state. This is described below in the TRANS state processing description.)



If any other packet is received, the packet is translated and forwarded. The lifetime of the TCP session table entry is set to at least to the maximum session lifetime. The value for the maximum session lifetime MAY be configurable but it MUST NOT be less than TCP\_EST (the established connection idle timeout as defined in [RFC5382]). The default value for the maximum session lifetime SHOULD be set to TCP\_EST. The state remains unchanged as ESTABLISHED.

If the lifetime expires then the NAT64 SHOULD send a probe packet (as defined next) to at least one of the endpoints of the TCP connection. The probe packet is a TCP segment for the connection with no data. The sequence number and the acknowledgment number are set to zero. All flags but the ACK flag are reset. The state is moved to TRANS.

Upon the reception of this probe packet, the endpoint will reply with an ACK containing the expected sequence number for that connection. It should be noted that, for an active connection, each of these probe packets will generate one packet from each end involved in the connection, since the reply of the first point to the probe packet will generate a reply from the other endpoint.

\*\*\* V4 FIN RCV \*\*\*

If a V6 FIN packet is received, the packet is translated and forwarded. The lifetime is set to TCP\_TRANS. The state is moved to V6 FIN + V4 FIN RCV.

If any packet other than the V6 FIN is received, the packet is translated and forwarded. The lifetime of the TCP session table entry is set to at least to the maximum session lifetime. The value for the maximum session lifetime MAY be configurable but it MUST NOT be less than TCP\_EST (the established connection idle timeout as defined in [RFC5382]). The default value for the maximum session lifetime SHOULD be set to TCP\_EST. The state remains unchanged as V4 FIN RCV.

If the lifetime expires, the session table entry is deleted and the state is moved to CLOSED.

\*\*\* V6 FIN RCV \*\*\*

If a V4 FIN packet is received, the packet is translated and forwarded. The lifetime is set to TCT\_TRANS. The state is moved to V6 FIN + V4 FIN RCV.

If any packet other than the V4 FIN is received, the packet is translated and forwarded. The lifetime of the TCP session table

entry is set to at least to the maximum session lifetime. The value for the maximum session lifetime MAY be configurable but it MUST NOT be less than TCP\_EST (the established connection idle timeout as defined in [RFC5382]). The default value for the maximum session lifetime SHOULD be set to TCP\_EST. The state remains unchanged as V6 FIN RCV.

If the lifetime expires, the session table entry is deleted and the state is moved to CLOSED.

\*\*\* V6 FIN + V4 FIN RCV \*\*\*

All packets are translated and forwarded.

If the lifetime expires, the session table entry is deleted and the state is moved to CLOSED.

\*\*\* TRANS \*\*\*

If a packet other than a RST packet is received, the lifetime of the TCP session table entry is set to at least to the maximum session lifetime. The value for the maximum session lifetime MAY be configurable but it MUST NOT be less than TCP\_EST (the established connection idle timeout as defined in [RFC5382]). The default value for the maximum session lifetime SHOULD be set to TCP\_EST. The state is moved to ESTABLISHED.

If the lifetime expires, the session table entry is deleted and the state is moved to CLOSED.

#### 3.5.2.3. Rules for allocation of IPv4 transport addresses for TCP

When a new TCP BIB entry is created for a source transport address of (S',s), then the NAT64 allocates an IPv4 transport address for this BIB entry as follows:

If there exists some other BIB entry containing S' as the IPv6 address and mapping it to some IPv4 address T, then T SHOULD be used as the IPv4 address. Otherwise, use any IPv4 address of the IPv4 pool assigned to the NAT64 to be used for translation.

If the port s is in the Well-Known port range 0-1023, and the NAT64 has an available port t in the same port range, then the NAT64 SHOULD allocate the port t. If the NAT64 does not have a port available in the same range, the NAT64 MAY assign a port t from another range where it has an available port.

If the port *s* is in the range 1024-65535, and the NAT64 has an available port *t* in the same port range, then the NAT64 SHOULD allocate the port *t*. If the NAT64 does not have a port available in the same range, the NAT64 MAY assign a port *t* from another range where it has an available port.

In all cases, the allocated IPv4 transport address (*T,t*) MUST NOT be in use in another entry in the same BIB, but MAY be in use in the other BIB (referring to the UDP and TCP BIBs).

If it is not possible to allocate an appropriate IPv4 transport address or create a BIB entry, then the packet is discarded. The NAT64 SHOULD send an ICMPv6 Destination Unreachable/Address unreachable (Code 3) message.

### 3.5.3. ICMP Query Session Handling

The following state information is stored for an ICMP Query session in the ICMP Query session table:

Binding: (*X',Y',i1*) <--> (*T,Z,i2*)

Lifetime: a timer that tracks the remaining lifetime of the ICMP Query session. When the timer expires, the session is deleted. If all the ICMP Query sessions corresponding to a dynamically created ICMP Query BIB entry are deleted, then the ICMP Query BIB entry is also deleted.

An incoming ICMPv6 Informational packet with IPv6 source address *X'*, IPv6 destination address *Y'* and ICMPv6 Identifier *i1*, is processed as follows:

If the local security policy determines that ICMPv6 Informational packets are to be filtered, the packet is silently discarded. Else, the NAT64 searches for an ICMP Query BIB entry that matches the (*X',i1*) pair. If such entry does not exist, the NAT64 tries to create a new entry (if resources and policy permit) with the following data:

- \* The BIB IPv6 address is set to *X'* (i.e. the source IPv6 address of the IPv6 packet).
- \* The BIB ICMPv6 Identifier is set to *i1* (i.e. the ICMPv6 Identifier).
- \* If there exists another BIB entry containing the same IPv6 address *X'* and mapping it to an IPv4 address *T*, then use *T* as the BIB IPv4 address for this new entry. Otherwise, use any

IPv4 address assigned to the IPv4 interface.

- \* As the BIB ICMPv4 Identifier use any available value i.e. any identifier value for which no other entry exists with the same (IPv4 address, ICMPv4 Identifier) pair.

The NAT64 searches for an ICMP query session table entry corresponding to the incoming 3-tuple (X',Y',i1). If no such entry is found, the NAT64 tries to create a new entry (if resources and policy permit). The information included in the new session table entry is as follows:

- \* The STE IPv6 source address is set to X' (i.e. the address contained in the received IPv6 packet),
- \* The STE IPv6 destination address is set to Y' (i.e. the address contained in the received IPv6 packet),
- \* The STE ICMPv6 Identifier is set to i1 (i.e. the identifier contained in the received IPv6 packet),
- \* The STE IPv4 source address is set to the IPv4 address contained in the corresponding BIB entry,
- \* The STE ICMPv4 Identifier is set to the IPv4 identifier contained in the corresponding BIB entry,
- \* The STE IPv4 destination address is algorithmically generated from Y' using the reverse algorithm as specified in Section 3.5.4.

The NAT64 sets (or resets) the timer in the session table entry to the maximum session lifetime. By default, the maximum session lifetime is ICMP\_DEFAULT. The maximum lifetime value SHOULD be configurable. The packet is translated and forwarded as described in the following sections.

An incoming ICMPv4 Query packet with source IPv4 address Y, destination IPv4 address X and ICMPv4 Identifier i2 is processed as follows:

The NAT64 searches for an ICMP Query BIB entry that contains X as IPv4 address and i2 as the ICMPv4 Identifier. If such an entry does not exist, the packet is dropped. An ICMP error message MAY be sent to the original sender of the packet. The ICMP error message, if sent, has a type of 3 (Destination Unreachable).

If the NAT64 filters on its IPv4 interface, then the NAT64 checks to see if the incoming packet is allowed according to the Address-Dependent Filtering rule. To do this, it searches for a session table entry with an STE source IPv4 address equal to X, an STE ICMPv4 Identifier equal to i2 and a STE destination IPv4 address equal to Y. If such an entry is found (there may be more than one), packet processing continues. Otherwise, the packet is discarded. If the packet is discarded, then an ICMP error message MAY be sent to the original sender of the packet. The ICMP error message, if sent, has a type of 3 (Destination Unreachable) and a code of 13 (Communication Administratively Prohibited).

In case the packet is not discarded in the previous processing steps (either because the NAT64 is not filtering or because the packet is compliant with the Address-dependent Filtering rule), then the NAT64 searches for a session table entry with an STE source IPv4 address equal to X, an STE ICMPv4 Identifier equal to i2 and a STE destination IPv4 address equal to Y. If no such entry is found, the NAT64 tries to create a new entry (if resources and policy permit) with the following information:

- \* The STE source IPv4 address is set to X,
- \* The STE ICMPv4 Identifier is set to i2,
- \* The STE destination IPv4 address is set to Y,
- \* The STE source IPv6 address is set to the IPv6 address of the corresponding BIB entry,
- \* The STE ICMPv6 Identifier is set to the ICMPv6 Identifier of the corresponding BIB entry, and,
- \* The STE destination IPv6 address is set to the IPv6 representation of the IPv4 address of Y, generated using the algorithm described in Section 3.5.4.
- \* The NAT64 sets (or resets) the timer in the session table entry to the maximum session lifetime. By default, the maximum session lifetime is ICMP\_DEFAULT. The maximum lifetime value SHOULD be configurable. The packet is translated and forwarded as described in the following sections.

#### 3.5.4. Generation of the IPv6 Representations of IPv4 Addresses

NAT64 supports multiple algorithms for the generation of the IPv6 representation of an IPv4 address and vice-versa. The constraints imposed on the generation algorithms are the following:

The algorithm MUST be reversible, i.e. it MUST be possible to derive the original IPv4 address from the IPv6 representation.

The input for the algorithm MUST be limited to the IPv4 address, the IPv6 prefix (denoted Pref64::/n) used in the IPv6 representations and optionally a set of stable parameters that are configured in the NAT64 (such as fixed string to be used as a suffix).

If we note n the length of the prefix Pref64::/n, then n MUST be less or equal than 96. If a Pref64::/n is configured through any means in the NAT64 (such as manually configured, or other automatic means not specified in this document), the default algorithm MUST use this prefix. If no prefix is available, the algorithm SHOULD use the Well-Known Prefix (64:FF9B::/96) defined in [I-D.ietf-behave-address-format]

NAT64 MUST support the algorithm for generating IPv6 representations of IPv4 addresses defined in Section 2.1 of [I-D.ietf-behave-address-format]. The aforementioned algorithm SHOULD be used as default algorithm.

### 3.6. Computing the Outgoing Tuple

This step computes the outgoing tuple by translating the IP addresses and port numbers or ICMP Identifier in the incoming tuple.

In the text below, a reference to a BIB means either the TCP BIB, the UDP BIB or the ICMP Query BIB as appropriate.

NOTE: Not all addresses are translated using the BIB. BIB entries are used to translate IPv6 source transport addresses to IPv4 source transport addresses, and IPv4 destination transport addresses to IPv6 destination transport addresses. They are NOT used to translate IPv6 destination transport addresses to IPv4 destination transport addresses, nor to translate IPv4 source transport addresses to IPv6 source transport addresses. The latter cases are handled applying the algorithmic transformation described in Section 3.5.4. This distinction is important; without it, hairpinning doesn't work correctly.

#### 3.6.1. Computing the Outgoing 5-tuple for TCP, UDP and for ICMP Error messages containing a TCP or UDP packets.

The transport protocol in the outgoing 5-tuple is always the same as that in the incoming 5-tuple.

When translating in the IPv6 --> IPv4 direction, let the source and

destination transport addresses in the incoming 5-tuple be  $(S',s)$  and  $(D',d)$  respectively. The outgoing source transport address is computed as follows: if the BIB contains a entry  $(S',s) \leftrightarrow (T,t)$ , then the outgoing source transport address is  $(T,t)$ .

The outgoing destination address is computed algorithmically from  $D'$  using the address transformation described in Section 3.5.4.

When translating in the IPv4  $\rightarrow$  IPv6 direction, let the source and destination transport addresses in the incoming 5-tuple be  $(S,s)$  and  $(D,d)$  respectively. The outgoing source transport address is computed as follows:

The outgoing source transport address is generated from  $S$  using the address transformation algorithm described in Section 3.5.4.

The BIB table is searched for an entry  $(X',x) \leftrightarrow (D,d)$ , and if one is found, the outgoing destination transport address is set to  $(X',x)$ .

### 3.6.2. Computing the Outgoing 3-tuple for ICMP Query Messages and for ICMP Error messages containing an ICMP Query.

When translating in the IPv6  $\rightarrow$  IPv4 direction, let the source and destination addresses in the incoming 3-tuple be  $S'$  and  $D'$  respectively and the ICMPv6 Identifier be  $i1$ . The outgoing source address is computed as follows: the BIB contains an entry  $(S',i1) \leftrightarrow (T,i2)$ , then the outgoing source address is  $T$  and the ICMPv4 Identifier is  $i2$ .

The outgoing IPv4 destination address is computed algorithmically from  $D'$  using the address transformation described in Section 3.5.4.

When translating in the IPv4  $\rightarrow$  IPv6 direction, let the source and destination addresses in the incoming 3-tuple be  $S$  and  $D$  respectively and the ICMPv4 Identifier is  $i2$ . The outgoing source address is generated from  $S$  using the address transformation algorithm described in Section 3.5.4. The BIB is searched for an entry containing  $(X',i1) \leftrightarrow (D,i2)$  and if found the outgoing destination address is  $X'$  and the outgoing ICMPv6 Identifier is  $i1$ .

### 3.7. Translating the Packet

This step translates the packet from IPv6 to IPv4 or vice-versa.

The translation of the packet is as specified in Section 3 and Section 4 of the IP/ICMP Translation Algorithm [I-D.ietf-behave-v6v4-xlate], with the following modifications:

- o When translating an IP header (Sections 3.1 and 4.1), the source and destination IP address fields are set to the source and destination IP addresses from the outgoing tuple as determined in Section 3.6.
- o When the protocol following the IP header is TCP or UDP, then the source and destination ports are modified to the source and destination ports from the outgoing 5-tuple. In addition, the TCP or UDP checksum must also be updated to reflect the translated addresses and ports; note that the TCP and UDP checksum covers the pseudo-header which contains the source and destination IP addresses. An algorithm for efficiently updating these checksums is described in [RFC3022].
- o When the protocol following the IP header is ICMP and it is an ICMP Query message, the ICMP Identifier is set to the one from the outgoing 3-tuple as determined in Section 3.6.2.
- o When the protocol following the IP header is ICMP and it is an ICMP error message, the source and destination transport addresses in the embedded packet are set to the destination and source transport addresses from the outgoing 5-tuple (note the swap of source and destination).

The size of outgoing packets as well and the potential need for fragmentation is done according to the behavior defined in the IP/ICMP Translation Algorithm [I-D.ietf-behave-v6v4-xlate]

### 3.8. Handling Hairpinning

If the destination IP address of the translated packet is an IPv4 address assigned to the NAT64 itself then the packet is a hairpin packet. Hairpin packets are processed as follows:

- o The outgoing 5-tuple becomes the incoming 5-tuple, and,
- o the packet is treated as if it was received on the outgoing interface.
- o Processing of the packet continues at step 2 - Filtering and updating binding and session information described in Section 3.5.

## 4. Protocol Constants

UDP\_MIN 2 minutes (as defined in [RFC4787])

UDP\_DEFAULT 5 minutes (as defined in [RFC4787])



TCP\_TRANS 4 minutes (as defined in [RFC5382])

TCP\_EST 2 hours (the minimum lifetime for an established TCP session defined in [RFC5382] is 2 hrs and 4 minutes, which is achieved adding the 2 hours with this timer and the 4 minutes with the TCP\_TRANS timer)

TCP\_INCOMING\_SYN 6 seconds (as defined in [RFC5382])

FRAGMENT\_MIN 2 seconds

ICMP\_DEFAULT 60 seconds (as defined in [RFC5508])

## 5. Security Considerations

### 5.1. Implications on end-to-end security

Any protocols that protect IP header information are essentially incompatible with NAT64. This implies that end-to-end IPsec verification will fail when AH is used (both transport and tunnel mode) and when ESP is used in transport mode. This is inherent in any network-layer translation mechanism. End-to-end IPsec protection can be restored, using UDP encapsulation as described in [RFC3948]. The actual extensions to support IPsec are out of the scope of this document.

### 5.2. Filtering

NAT64 creates binding state using packets flowing from the IPv6 side to the IPv4 side. In accordance with the procedures defined in this document following the guidelines defined in [RFC4787] a NAT64 MUST offer "Endpoint-Independent Mapping". This means:

for any IPv6 packet with source (S'l,s1) and destination (Pref64::D1,d1) that creates an external mapping to (S1,s1v4), (D1,d1), for any subsequent packet from (S'l,s1) to (Pref64::D2,d2) that creates an external mapping to (S2,s2v4), (D2,d2), within a given binding timer window,

(S1,s1v4) = (S2,s2v4) for all values of D2,d2

Implementations MAY also provide support for "Address-Dependent Mapping" as also defined in this document and following the guidelines defined in [RFC4787].

The security properties however are determined by which packets the NAT64 filter allows in and which it does not. The security

properties are determined by the filtering behavior and filtering configuration in the filtering portions of the NAT64, not by the address mapping behavior. For example,

Without filtering - When "Endpoint-Independent Mapping" is used in NAT64, once a binding is created in the IPv6 ---> IPv4 direction, packets from any node on the IPv4 side destined to the IPv6 transport address will traverse the NAT64 gateway and be forwarded to the IPv6 transport address that created the binding. However,

With filtering - When "Endpoint-Independent Mapping" is used in NAT64, once a binding is created in the IPv6 ---> IPv4 direction, packets from any node on the IPv4 side destined to the IPv6 transport address will first be processed against the filtering rules. If the source IPv4 address is permitted, the packets will be forwarded to the IPv6 transport address. If the source IPv4 address is explicitly denied -- or the default policy is to deny all addresses not explicitly permitted -- then the packet will be discarded. A dynamic filter may be employed where by the filter will only allow packets from the IPv4 address to which the original packet that created the binding was sent. This means that only the IPv4 addresses to which the IPv6 host has initiated connections will be able to reach the IPv6 transport address, and no others. This essentially narrows the effective operation of the NAT64 device to an "Address-Dependent Mapping" behavior, though not by its mapping behavior, but instead by its filtering behavior.

As currently specified, the NAT64 only requires filtering traffic based on the 5-tuple. In some cases (e.g., statically configured mappings), this may make it easy for an attacker to guess. An attacker need not be able to guess other fields, e.g. the TCP sequence number, to get a packet through the NAT64. While such traffic might be dropped by the final destination, it does not provide additional mitigations against bandwidth/CPU attacks targeting the internal network. To avoid this type of abuse, a NAT64 MAY keep track of the sequence number of TCP packets in order to verify that proper sequencing of exchanged segments, in particular, those of the SYNs and the FINs.

### 5.3. Attacks on NAT64

The NAT64 device itself is a potential victim of different types of attacks. In particular, the NAT64 can be a victim of DoS attacks. The NAT64 device has a limited number of resources that can be consumed by attackers creating a DoS attack. The NAT64 has a limited number of IPv4 addresses that it uses to create the bindings. Even though the NAT64 performs address and port translation, it is

possible for an attacker to consume all the IPv4 transport addresses by sending IPv6 packets with different source IPv6 transport addresses. This attack can only be launched from the IPv6 side, since IPv4 packets are not used to create binding state. DoS attacks can also affect other limited resources available in the NAT64 such as memory or link capacity. For instance, it is possible for an attacker to launch a DoS attack on the memory of the NAT64 device by sending fragments that the NAT64 will store for a given period. If the number of fragments is high enough, the memory of the NAT64 could be exhausted. Similarly, A DoS attack against the NAT64 can be crafted by sending either V4 or V6 SYN packets that consume memory in the form of session and/or binding table entries. In the case of IPv4 SYNs the situation is aggravated by the requirement to also store the data packets for a given amount of time, requiring more memory from the NAT64 device. NAT64 devices MUST implement proper protection against such attacks, for instance allocating a limited amount of memory for fragmented packet storage as specified in Section 3.4.

Another consideration related to NAT64 resource depletion refers to the preservation of binding state. Attackers may try to keep a binding state alive forever by sending periodic packets that refresh the state. In order to allow the NAT64 to defend against such attacks, the NAT64 MAY choose not to extend the session entry lifetime for a specific entry upon the reception of packets for that entry through the external interface. As described in the Framework document [I-D.ietf-behave-v6v4-framework], the NAT64 can be deployed in multiple scenarios, some of which the Internet side is the IPv6 one and some of which the Internet side is the IPv4 one. It is then important to properly set which is the Internet side of the NAT64 in each specific configuration.

#### 5.4. Avoiding hairpinning loops

If an IPv6-only client can guess the IPv4 binding address that will be created, it can use the IPv6 representation of it as source address for creating this binding. Then any packet sent to the binding's IPv4 address could loop in the NAT64. This is prevented in the current specification by filtering incoming packets containing `Pref64::/n` in the source address as described next.

Consider the following example:

Suppose that the IPv4 pool is 192.0.2.0/24

Then the IPv6-only client sends this to NAT64:

Source: [Pref64::192.0.2.1]:500

Destination: whatever

The NAT64 allocates 192.0.2.1:500 as IPv4 binding address. Now anything sent to 192.0.2.1:500, be it a hairpinned IPv6 packet or an IPv4 packet, could loop.

It is not hard to guess the IPv4 address that will be allocated. First the attacker creates a binding and use (for example) STUN to learn its external IPv4 address. New bindings will always have this address. Then it uses a source port in the range 1-1023. This will increase the chances to 1/512 (since range and parity are preserved by NAT64 in UDP).

In order to address this vulnerability, the NAT64 MUST drop IPv6 packets whose source address is in Pref64::/n as defined in Section 3.5.

## 6. IANA Considerations

This document contains no actions for IANA.

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Framework for IPv4/IPv6 Multicast Translation  
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Abstract

This draft describes how IPv4/IPv6 multicast translation may be used in various scenarios and attempts to be a framework for possible solutions. This can be seen as a companion document to the document "Framework for IPv4/IPv6 Translation" by Baker et al. When considering scenarios and solutions for unicast translation, one should also see how they may be extended to provide multicast translation.

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## 1. Introduction

There will be a long period of time where IPv4 and IPv6 systems and networks need to coexist. There are various solutions for how this can be done for unicast, some of which are based on translation. The document [RFC6144] discusses the needs and provides a framework for unicast translation for various scenarios. Here we discuss the need for multicast translation for those scenarios.

For unicast the problem is basically how two hosts can communicate when they are not able to use the same IP protocol. For multicast we can restrict ourselves to looking at how a single source can efficiently send to multiple receivers. When using a single IP protocol one builds a multicast distribution tree from the source to the receivers, and independent of the number of receivers, one sends each data packet only once on each link. We wish to maintain the same characteristics when there are different IP protocols used. That is, when the nodes of the tree (source, receivers and routers) cannot all use the same IP protocol. In general there may be multiple sources sending to a multicast group, but that can be thought of as separate trees, one per source. We will focus on the case where the source and the receivers cannot all use the same IP protocol. If the issue is the network in between, encapsulation may be a better alternative. Note that if the source supports both IPv4 and IPv6, then one alternative could be for the source to send two streams. This need not be the same host. There could be two different hosts, and in different locations/networks, sending the same content.

## 2. Translation scenarios

We will consider six different translation scenarios. For each of the scenarios we will look at how host in one network can receive multicast from a source in another network. For unicast one might consider the following six scenarios as described in [RFC6144]:

Scenario 1: An IPv6 network to the IPv4 Internet

Scenario 2: The IPv4 Internet to an IPv6 network

Scenario 3: The IPv6 Internet to an IPv4 network

Scenario 4: An IPv4 network to the IPv6 Internet

Scenario 5: An IPv6 network to an IPv4 network

Scenario 6: An IPv4 network to an IPv6 network

We have intentionally left out how one might connect the entire IPv4 Internet with the entire IPv6 Internet. In these scenarios one would look at how a host in one network initiates a uni- or bi-directional flow to another network. The initiator needs to somehow know which address to send the initial packet to, and the initial packet gets translated before reaching its destination.

For unicast translation it is quite natural to talk about networks and the Internet. For multicast this is not so clear, since there is limited use of multicast on the Internet. Certain parts of the Internet, e.g. academic and research networks and the links connecting them do carry multicast though. Also, the challenges and ideas described here regarding the Internet, also applies in other cases where there are multiple connected networks exchanging multicast.

For multicast one generally need a receiver to signal the group (and sometimes also the source) it wants to receive from. The signalling generally goes hop-by-hop towards the source to build multicast forwarding state that later is used to forward multicast in the reverse direction. This means that for the receiving host to receive multicast, it must first somehow know which group (and possibly source) it should signal that it wants to receive. These signals would then probably go hop-by-hop to a translator, and then the translated signalling would go hop-by-hop from the translator to the source. Note that this description is correct for SSM (source-specific multicast), but is in reality more complex for ASM (any-source multicast). An analogy to unicast might perhaps be TCP streaming where a SYN is sent from the host that wants to receive the

stream to the source of the stream. Then the application data flows in the reverse direction of the initial signal. Hence we argue that the above unicast scenarios correspond to the following multicast scenarios, respectively:

Scenario 1: An IPv6 network receiving multicast from the IPv4 Internet

Scenario 2: The IPv4 Internet receiving multicast from an IPv6 network

Scenario 3: The IPv6 Internet receiving multicast from an IPv4 network

Scenario 4: An IPv4 network receiving multicast from the IPv6 Internet

Scenario 5: An IPv6 network receiving multicast from an IPv4 network

Scenario 6: An IPv4 network receiving multicast from an IPv6 network

#### 2.1. Scenario 1: An IPv6 network receiving multicast from the IPv4 Internet

Here we have a network, say ISP or enterprise, that for some reason is IPv6-only, but the hosts in the IPv6-only network should be able to receive multicast from sources in the IPv4 internet. The unicast equivalent is "IPv6 network to the IPv4 Internet".

This is simple because the global IPv4 address space can be embedded into IPv6 [RFC6052]. Unicast addresses according to the unicast translation in use. For multicast one may embed all IPv4 multicast addresses inside a single IPv6 multicast prefix. Or one may have multiple embeddings to allow for appropriate mapping of scopes and ASM versus SSM. Using this embedding, the IPv6 host (or an application running on the host) can send IPv6 MLD reports for IPv6 groups (and if SSM, also sources) that specify which IPv4 source and groups that it wants to receive. The usual IPv6 state (including MLD and possibly PIM) needs to be created. If PIM is involved we need to use RPF to set up the tree and accept data, so the source addresses must be routed towards some translation device. This is likely to be the same device that would do the unicast translation. The translation device can in this case be completely stateless. There is some multicast state, but that is similar to the state in a multicast router when translation is not performed. Basically if the translator receives MLD or PIM messages asking for a specific group (or source and group), it uses these mappings to find out which IPv4 group (or source and group) it needs to send IGMP or PIM messages

for. This is no different than multicast in general, except for the translation. Whenever the translator receives data from the IPv4 source, it checks if it has anyone interested in the respective IPv6 group (or source and group), and if so, translates and forwards the data packets.

IPv6 applications need to somehow learn which IPv6 group (or source and group) to join. This is further discussed in Section 3.4.

## 2.2. Scenario 2: The IPv4 Internet receiving multicast from an IPv6 network

Here we will consider an IPv6 network connected to the IPv4 internet, and how any IPv4 host may receive multicast from a source in the IPv6 network. The unicast equivalent is "the IPv4 Internet to an IPv6 network".

This is difficult since the IPv6 multicast address space cannot be embedded into IPv4. Indeed this case has many similarities with how IPv4 networks can receive from the IPv6 Internet. See scenario (4), Section 2.4. However, in this case, all IPv4 hosts on the Internet should use the same mapping, and it might make sense to have additional requirements on the IPv6 network, rather than to add requirements for the IPv4 Internet.

One solution here might be for the IPv6 source application to somehow register with the translator to set up a mapping and receive an IPv4 address. The application could then possibly send SDP that includes both its IPv6 source and group, and the IPv4 source and group it got from the translator. Of course the signalling could also be done by manually adding a static mapping to the translator and specifying that address to the application. If instead we were to do signalling on the IPv4 side, then an IPv4 receiver would probably need a mechanism for finding an IPv4 address of the translator for a given IPv6 group. The IPv4 address could perhaps be embedded in the IPv6 group address? Or with say SDP there could be a way of specifying the IPv4 translator address. The IPv4 host could then communicate with the translator to establish a mapping (unless one exists) and learn which IPv4 group to join.

The best alternative might be to restrict the IPv6 multicast groups that should be accessible on the IPv4 internet to a certain IPv6 prefix. This may allow stateless translation. This could also be used in the reverse direction, for an IPv6 host to receive from an IPv4 source. Or in other words, the same mapping can be used in both directions. This has similarities with IVI [I-D.xli-behave-ivi], [RFC6145], [RFC6052] and also [I-D.venaas-behave-mcast46]. By using IVI source addresses (IPv4-translatable addresses) and a similar

technique for multicast addresses, the correct IPv4 source and group addresses can be derived from those. This method has many benefits, the main issue is that it cannot work for arbitrary IPv6 multicast addresses.

### 2.3. Scenario 3: The IPv6 Internet receiving multicast from an IPv4 network

We here consider the case where the Internet is IPv6, but there is some network of perhaps legacy IPv4 hosts that is IPv4-only. We want any IPv6 host on the Internet to be able to receive multicast from an IPv4 source. The unicast equivalent is "the IPv6 Internet to an IPv4 network".

This scenario can be solved using the same techniques as in Scenario 1, Section 2.1. There may however be differences regarding exactly which mappings are used and how applications may become aware of them. To obtain full benefit of multicast, all IPv6 hosts need to use the same mappings.

### 2.4. Scenario 4: An IPv4 network receiving multicast from the IPv6 Internet

Here we consider how an IPv4-only host in an IPv4 network may receive from an IPv6 multicast sender on the Internet. The unicast equivalent is "an IPv4 network to the IPv6 Internet".

For dual-stack hosts in an IPv4 network one should consider tunneling. This is difficult since we cannot embed the entire IPv6 space into IPv4. One might consider some of the techniques from scenario (2), Section 2.2. That scenario is however much easier since one may restrict which IPv6 groups are used and there is a limited number of sources.

For unicast one might use a DNS-ALG for this, where the ALG would instantiate translator mappings as needed. This is the technique used in NAT-PT [RFC2766], which was deprecated by [RFC4966].

However, for multicast one generally does not use DNS. One could consider doing the same with an ALG for some other protocol. E.g. translate addresses in SDP files when they pass the translator, or in any other protocol that might transfer multicast addresses. This would be very complicated and not recommended.

Rather than using an ALG that translates addresses in application protocol payload, one could consider new signalling mechanisms for more explicit signalling. The additional signalling could be either on the IPv6 or the IPv4 side. It may however not be a good idea to

require additional behavior by host and applications on the IPv6 Internet to accomodate legacy IPv4 networks. Also, since one may not be able to provide unique IPv4 multicast addresses for all the IPv6 multicast groups that are in use, it makes more sense that the mappings are done locally in each of the IPv4 networks, where IPv4 multicast addresses might be assigned on-demand. An IPv4 receiver might somehow request an IPv4 mapping for an IPv6 group (and possibly source). This creates a mapping in the translator so that when the IPv4 receiver joins the IPv4 group, the translator knows which IPv6 group (and possibly source) to translate it into. Of course the signalling could also be done manually by adding a static mapping to the translator and somehow specifying the right IPv4 address to the application.

#### 2.5. Scenario 5: An IPv6 network receiving multicast from an IPv4 network

In this scenario we consider IPv4 and IPv6 networks belonging to the same organization. The unicast equivalent is "an IPv6 network to an IPv4 network".

We would like any IPv6 host to receive from any IPv4 sources. Here one can use the same techniques as for an IPv6 network receiving from the IPv4 internet. It is really a special case of scenario (1), Section 2.1.

The fact that the number of hosts are limited and that there is common management might simplify things. Due to the limited scale, one could perhaps just manually configure all the static mappings needed in the translator and manually create the necessary announcements or in some cases have the applications create the necessary announcements. But it might be better to use a stateless approach where IPv4 unicast and multicast addresses are embedded into IPv6. Like IVI [I-D.xli-behave-ivi], or [I-D.venaas-behave-mcast46].

#### 2.6. Scenario 6: An IPv4 network receiving multicast from an IPv6 network

In this scenario we consider IPv4 and IPv6 networks belonging to the same organization. The unicast equivalent is "an IPv4 network to an IPv6 network".

We would like any IPv4 host to receive from any IPv6 source. This can be seen as special cases of either scenario (2), Section 2.2 or scenario (4), Section 2.4, where any of those techniques might apply. However, as discussed in scenario (5) Section 2.5 where we looked at how to do multicast in the reverse direction; the limited number of hosts and common management might allow us to just use static mappings



or a stateless approach by restricting which IPv6 addresses are used. By using these techniques one may be able to create mappings that can be used for multicast in both directions, combining this scenario with scenario (5).

### 3. Framework

Having considered some possible scenarios for where and how we may use multicast translation, we will now consider some general issues and the different components of such solutions.

#### 3.1. Addressing

When doing stateless translation, one need to somehow encode IPv4 addresses inside IPv6 addresses so that there is a well defined way for the translator to transform an IPv6 address into IPv4. This can be done with techniques like IVI [I-D.xli-behave-ivi] and [I-D.venaas-behave-mcast46].

There are two types of addressing schemes related to the IPv4/IPv6 multicast translation. The source addressing and the group addressing.

##### 3.1.1. Source addressing

Source addressing issues is the same as in the unicast IPv4/IPv6 translation defined in [RFC6052]. The IPv4-mapped address is used for representing IPv4 in IPv6 and the IPv4-translatable address is used for representing IPv6 in IPv4 when the stateless translator is used. The multicast RPF relies on the source address to build the distribution tree. Therefore, depending on the operation mode of the IPv4/IPv6 translator and receiving directions, the IPv4-mapped or the IPv4-translatable addresses will be used.

##### 3.1.2. Group addressing

Group addressing issue is unique to the IPv4/IPv6 multicast translation. The entire IPv4 group addresses can be uniquely represented by the IPv6 group addresses, while the entire IPv6 group addresses cannot be uniquely represented by the IPv6 group addresses. Therefore, special group address mapping rule between IPv4 group addresses and IPv6 group addresses should be defined for the IPv4/IPv6 multicast translation.

#### 3.2. Routing

The actual translation of multicast packets may not be very complicated, in particular if it can be stateless. For the multicast to actually go through the translator we need to have routes for the multicast source addresses involved, so that multicast packets both on their way to and from the translator satisfy RPF checks. These routes are also needed for protocols like PIM-SM to establish a multicast tree, since RPF is used to determine where to send join

messages. To go into more detail we need to look at different scenarios like SSM (Source-Specific Multicast) and ASM (Any-Source Multicast), and PIM versus IGMP/MLD.

### 3.2.1. Translation with PIM and SSM

When doing SSM, a receiver specifies both source and group addresses. If the receiver is to receive translated packets, it must do an IGMP/MLD join for the source and group address that the data packets will have after translation. We will later look at how it may learn those addresses. For the source address it joins, the unicast routing (or it may be an alternate topology specific to multicast), must point towards the translator. With this in place, PIM should build a tree hop-by-hop from the last-hop router to the translator. The translator then maps the source and group addresses in the PIM join to the source and group the data packets have before translation. The translator then does a PIM join for that source and group. Provided the routing is correct, this will then build a tree all the way to the source. Finally when these joins reach the source, any data sent by the source will follow this path to the translator, get translated, and then continue to the receiver.

### 3.2.2. Translation with PIM and ASM

Let us first consider PIM Sparse Mode. In this case a receiver just joins a group. If this group is to be received via the translator we need to send joins towards the translator, but initially PIM will send joins towards the RP (Rendezvous-Point) for the group. The most efficient solution is probably to make sure that the translator is configured as an RP for all groups that one may receive through it. That is, for the groups it translates to. E.g. if IPv4 groups are embedded into an IPv6 multicast prefix, then the translator could be an RP for that specific prefix. The translator may then translate the group and join towards the group address that is used before translation. Note that if the translator also is an RP for the addresses used before translation, it should know which sources exist and join each of these. If it is not an RP, it needs to join towards the RP. If the translator did not know the sources, it may join each of the sources as soon as it receives from them (that is, switching to Shortest Path Trees). When the translator receives data, it translates it and then sends the translated data. This then follows the joins for the translated groups to the receivers. When the last-hop routers start receiving, they will probably (this is usually the default behavior) switch to SPTs (Shortest Path Trees). These trees also need to go to the translator and would probably follow the same path as the previously built shared tree. One might argue here that switching to the SPT has no benefit if it is the same path anyway. Also with shared trees, RPF is not an issue, so the translated source

addresses don't need to be routed towards the translator.

At the end of the previous paragraph we pointed out that there is no benefit in switching to shortest path trees if they have to go via the translator anyway. A possibility here could be to use Bidirectional PIM where there is no source specific state and data always go through the RP. It is possible to use Bidir just for those groups that are translated, and then make the translator the RP.

### 3.2.3. Translation with IGMP/MLD

For translation taking place close to the edge, e.g. a home gateway, one may consider just using IGMP and MLD, and no PIM. In that case the translator should for any received MLD reports for IPv6 groups that correspond to translated IPv4 groups, map those into IGMP reports that it sends out on the IPv4 side. And vice versa for data in the other direction. Note that a translator implementation could also choose to do this in just one direction. For SSM it would also need to translate the source addresses.

## 3.3. Translation in operation

Currently, the proposed solutions for IPv6/IPv4 translation are classified into stateless translation and stateful translation.

### 3.3.1. Stateless Translation

For stateless translation, the translation information is carried in the address itself, permitting both IPv4->IPv6 and IPv6-<IPv4 sessions establishment. The stateless translation supports end-to-end address transparency and has better scalability compared with the stateful translation. See [RFC6145] and [I-D.xli-behave-ivil].

Stateless translation can be used for Scenarios 1, 2, 5 and 6, i.e. it supports "An IPv6 network receiving multicast from the IPv4 Internet", "the IPv4 Internet receiving multicast from an IPv6 network", "An IPv6 network receiving multicast from an IPv4 network" and "An IPv4 network receiving multicast from an IPv6 network".

In the stateless translation, an IPv6 network uses the IPv4-translatable addresses, while the IPv4 Internet or an IPv4 network can be represented by IPv4-mapped addresses.

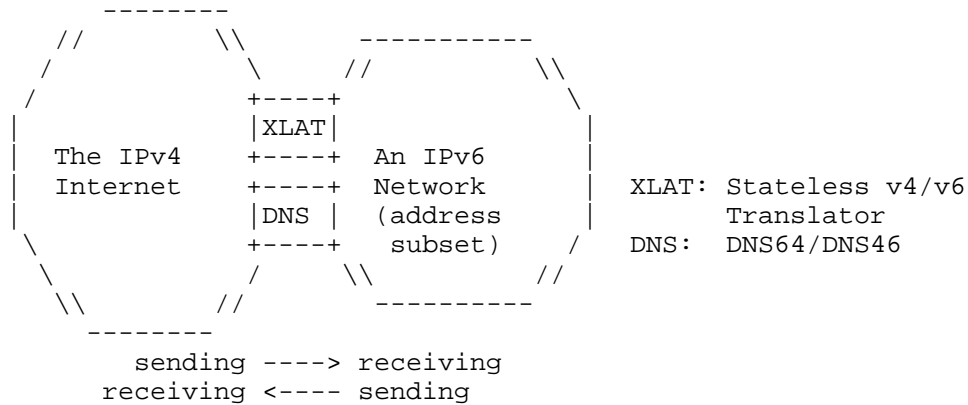


Figure 1: Stateless translation for Scenarios 1 and 2

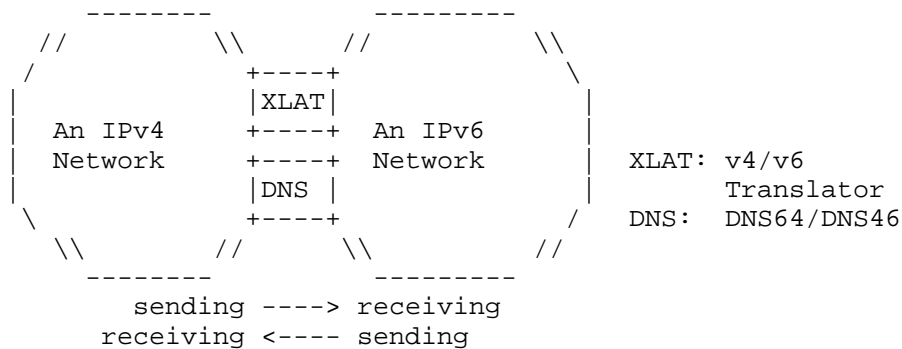


Figure 2: Stateless translator for Scenarios 5 and 6

### 3.3.2. Stateful Translation

For stateful translation, the translation state is maintained between IPv4 address/port pairs and IPv6 address/port pairs, enabling IPv6 systems to open sessions with IPv4 systems. See [RFC6145] and [RFC6146].

Stateful translator can be used for Scenarios 1, 3 and 5, i.e. it supports "An IPv6 network receiving multicast from the IPv4 Internet", "The IPv6 Internet receiving multicast from an IPv4 network" and "An IPv6 network receiving multicast from an IPv4 network".

In the stateful translation, an IPv6 network or the IPv6 Internet use any IPv6 addresses, while the IPv4 Internet or an IPv4 network can be represented by IPv4-mapped addresses.

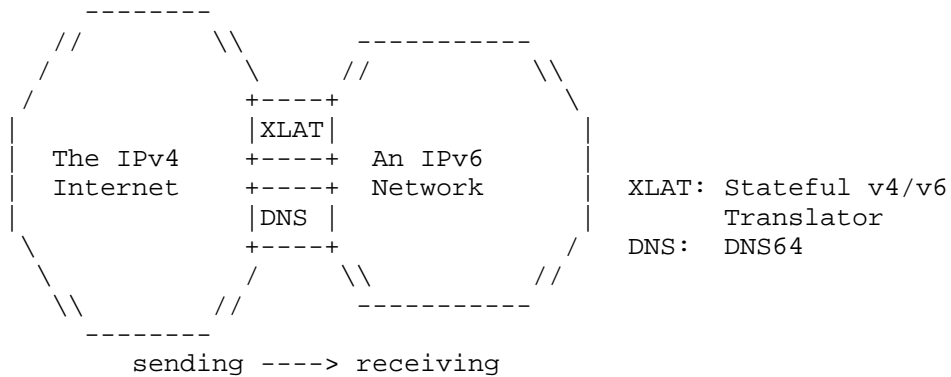


Figure 3: Stateful translator for Scenario 1

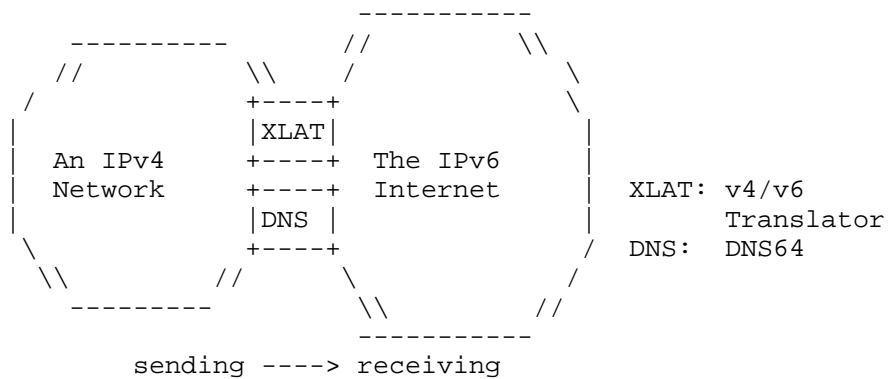


Figure 4: Stateful translator for Scenario 3

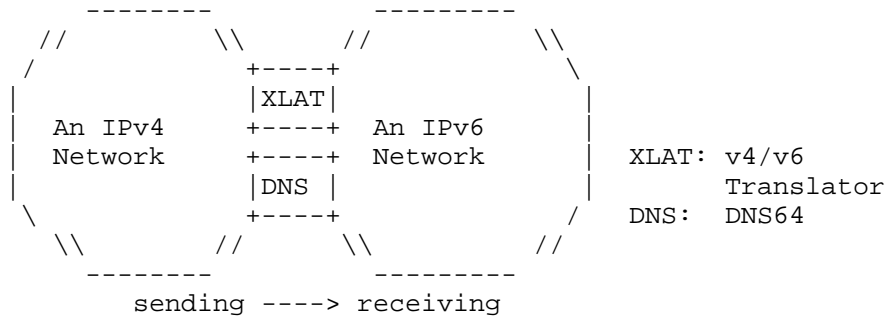


Figure 5: Stateful translator for Scenario 5

### 3.4. Application layer issues

The main application layer issue is perhaps how the applications learn what groups (or sources and groups) to join. For unicast, applications may often obtain addresses via DNS and a DNS-ALG. For multicast, DNS is usually not used, and there are a wide range of different ways applications learn addresses. It can be through configuration or user input, it can be URLs on a web page, it can be SDP files (via SAP or from web page or mail etc), or also via protocols like RTSP/SIP. It is no easy task to handle all of these possible methods using ALGs.

SDP is maybe the most common way for applications to learn which multicast addresses (and other parameters) to use in order to receive a multicast session. Inside the SDP files it is common to use literal IP addresses, but it is also possible to specify domain names. Applications would then query the DNS for the addresses, and a DNS-ALG could perform the necessary translation. There is however a problem with this.

Here is a typical SDP taken from RFC 2327:

```
v=0
o=mhandley 2890844526 2890842807 IN IP4 126.16.64.4
s=SDP Seminar
i=A Seminar on the session description protocol
u=http://www.cs.ucl.ac.uk/staff/M.Handley/sdp.03.ps
e=mjh@isi.edu (Mark Handley)
c=IN IP4 224.2.17.12/127
t=2873397496 2873404696
a=recvonly
m=audio 49170 RTP/AVP 0
m=video 51372 RTP/AVP 31
m=application 32416 udp wb
a=orient:portrait
```

The line of interest here is "c=IN IP4 224.2.17.12/127". It is legal to use a domain name, this line would then become e.g. "c=IN IP4 mcast.example.com/127". The problem here is that the application is told to use IPv4. It will expect the name to resolve to an IPv4 address, and may ignore any IPv6 replies. One could argue that it would be incorrect to use IPv6, since IPv4 is specified. For DNS to solve our problem, we would need a new IP neutral SDP syntax, and applications would need to be updated to support it.

An alternative to rewriting addresses in the network is to make the applications aware of the translation and mappings in use. One approach could be for the source to create say SDP that includes both the original and the translated addresses. This may require use of techniques like CCAP [I-D.boucadair-mmusic-ccap] for specifying both IPv4 and IPv6 multicast addresses, allowing the receiver to choose which one to use. The other alternative would be for the receiving application to be aware of the translation and the mapping in use. This means that the receiving application can receive the original SDP, but then apply the mapping to those addresses.

As we just discussed, it may be useful for applications to perform the mappings. The next question is how they may learn those mappings. The easiest would be if there was a standard way used for all mappings, e.g. a well-known IPv6 prefix for embedding IPv4 addresses. But that does not work in all scenarios. There could be a way for applications to learn which prefix to use, see [I-D.wing-behave-learn-prefix]. But note that there may be different multicast prefixes depending on whether we are doing SSM or ASM and scope. In addition we need the unicast prefix for the multicast source addresses. Alternatively one could imagine applications requesting mappings for specific addresses on demand from the translator. The translator could have static mappings, or install



mappings as requested by applications.

An alternative to making applications aware of the translation and rewriting addresses as needed, could be to do translation in the API or stack, so that e.g. an application joins an IPv4 group, the API or stack rewrites that into IPv6 and sends the necessary MLD reports. When IPv6 packets arrive, the API/stack can rewrite those packets back to IPv4. This could allow legacy IPv4 applications to run on a dual-stack node (or IPv6-only with translation in the API) to receive IPv4 packets through an IPv6-only network. But in this case it might be better to just use tunneling.

### 3.5. Further Work

There are some special cases and scenarios that should be added to this document. One is addressing. Are there certain types of IPv6 multicast addresses that could make translation easier? What happens if there are multiple translators? And also more details on translation in the host, e.g. bump-in-the-stack or bump-in-the-API.

The document layout of the IPv4/IPv6 multicast translation should be presented in this document.

#### 4. IANA Considerations

This document requires no IANA assignments.

## 5. Security Considerations

This requires more thought, but the author is not aware of any obvious security issues specific to multicast translation.

## 6. Acknowledgements

Dan Wing provided early feedback that helped shape this document.  
Dave Thaler also provided good feedback that unfortunately still has not been addressed in this document. See Section 3.5.

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Redundancy Requirements and Framework for Stateful Network Address  
Translators (NAT)  
draft-xu-behave-stateful-nat-standby-06

Abstract

This document defines a set of requirements and a framework for ensuring redundancy for stateful Network Address Translators (NAT), including NAT44, NAT64 and NAT46.

Requirements Language

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 RFC 2119 [RFC2119].

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## 1. Introduction

Network Address Translation (NAT) has been used as an efficient way to share the same IPv4 address among several hosts. Recently, due to IPv4 address shortage, several proposals have been elaborated to rely on Carrier Grade NAT (CGN, a.k.a.- LSN for Large Scale NAT) (e.g., [I-D.shirasaki-nat444-isp-shared-addr], [I-D.ietf-softwire-dual-stack-lite] and [I-D.ietf-behave-v6v4-xlate-stateful]). In such models, CGN function (which may be embedded in a router or be deployed in standalone devices) is deployed within large-scale networks, such as ISP networks or enterprise ones, where a large number of customers are located. These customers within a network which is served by a single CGN device may experience service degradation due to the presence of the single point of failure or loss of state information. Therefore, redundancy capabilities of the CGN devices are strongly desired in order to deliver highly available services to customers. Failure detection and repair time must be therefore shortened.

This document describes a framework of redundancy for stateful NAT including: NAT44 including DS-Lite, NAT64 and NAT46.

The main purpose of this document is to analyze means to ensure high availability in environments where carrier grade NAT44, NAT64 and NAT46 are deployed. Some engineering recommendations are provided for the selection of the IPv6 prefix to build IPv4-Embedded IPv6 addresses [I-D.ietf-behave-address-format] and the routing configuration.

Except dealing with the exceptional failures (e.g., power outage, OS crash-down or link failure, etc.), the redundancy mechanism described in this document can also be used for planned maintenance operations (i.e., graceful shutdown of the Primary NAT due to maintenance needs).

Unless otherwise mentioned, NAT and CGN terms throughout this document, pertain to stateful NAT and stateful CGN. Stateless NAT is out of the scope of this document.

## 2. Terminology and Acronyms

### 2.1. Acronyms

|         |                                  |
|---------|----------------------------------|
| CGN     | Carrier Grade NAT                |
| LSN     | Large Scale NAT                  |
| DS-Lite | Dual Stack Lite                  |
| AFTR    | Address Family Transition Router |
| NAT     | Network Address Translation      |
| ISP     | Internet Service Provider        |

## 2.2. Terminology

This document makes use of the terms defined in [RFC2663]. Below are provided terms specific to this document:

- o CGN (Carrier Grade NAT) or LSN (Large Scale NAT): a NAT device placed within a large-scale network (e.g., ISP network, enterprise network, or campus network). CGN may be placed at the boundary between the large-scale private network and the public Internet, between a private network and a large-scale public network or between two heterogeneous IP realms (i.e., IPv4 and IPv6).
- o CGN internal address realm (internal realm for short): a realm internal to the CGN.

For NAT44, the internal realm refers to the private networks.

For NAT64, the internal realm means IPv6 network or IPv6 Internet.

For NAT46, the internal realm refers to IPv4 network or IPv4 Internet.

For DS-Lite, the internal address realm is assumed to be private IPv4 addresses even if the transport mode used to convey exchanged traffic is IPv6. A DS-Lite CGN device (a.k.a., Address Family Transition Router) is a special NAT44 function which uses the IPv6 address as a means to de-multiplex users sharing the same IPv4 address [I-D.ietf-software-dual-stack-lite].

- o The hosts located in the internal realm are called internal hosts, and the addresses used in the internal realm are called internal addresses.
- o CGN external address realm (external realm for short): a realm external to the CGN.

For NAT44, the external realm refers to the IPv4 Internet.

For NAT64, the external realm means the IPv4 Internet or IPv4 network.

For NAT46, the external realm refers to the IPv6 Internet or IPv6 network.

- o The hosts located in the external realm are called external hosts, and the addresses used in the external realm are called external addresses.
- o Internal address pool: an address pool used for assigning internal addresses to represent the external hosts in the internal realm. This address pool is specific to NAT46 and NAT64.

For NAT46, the CGN will allocate one internal address (which is an IPv4 address) from the pool to an external IPv6 host and map the external IPv6 host's IPv6 address to this IPv4 address.

For NAT64, the CGN internal address pool is the Prefix64 [I-D.ietf-behave-address-format]. Prefix64 is used for synthesizing internal IPv6 addresses to represent external IPv4 hosts in the internal realm.

- o External address pool: an address pool used by the CGN for assigning external addresses to the internal hosts.

For NAT44 and NAT64, the external address pool contains a set of public IPv4 addresses.

For NAT46, the external IPv6 address pool is the Prefix64. Prefix64 is used by the CGN for synthesizing the external IPv6 addresses to represent internal IPv4 hosts in the external realm.

- o CPE (Customer Premises Equipment): a device which is used to interconnect the customer premise with the service provider's network.

### 3. Reference Architecture

In a typical operational scenario, as illustrated in Figure 1, two NAT devices are deployed for redundancy purposes. This is the reference architecture for the mechanisms we describe in this memo. Note that these mechanisms are also suitable in scenarios where more than two NAT devices are used.

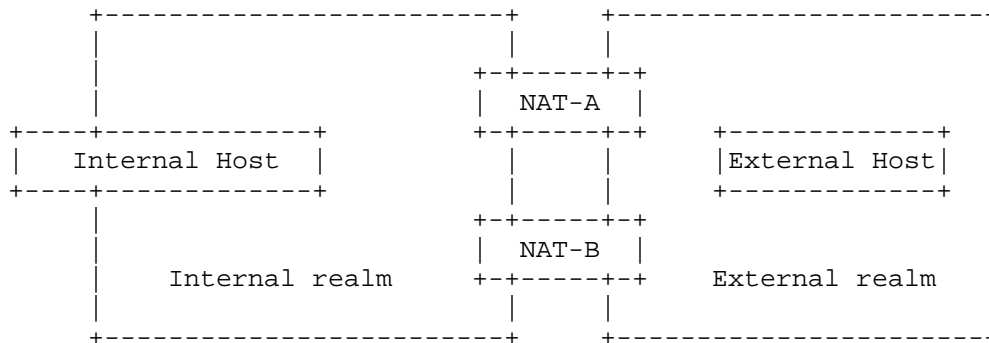


Figure 1: General Scenario of Dual NAT Routers

The redundancy mechanisms for NAT44, NAT46 and NAT64 are almost identical. In all cases, the NAT device or the immediate router of the NAT device announces the reachability of the NAT device to the external realm. The slight difference is the NAT reachability information. For example, NAT64 announces an IPv6 route for the Prefix64; NAT44 announces an IPv4 default route; DS-Lite AFTR announces an IPv6 route pointing to itself; and NAT46 announces a route for its internal address pool. This difference does not affect the general redundancy mechanisms, so the mechanisms described in this memo can be applied to NAT44, NAT64 and NAT46 devices.

#### 4. Dynamic and Static States

The NAT states mentioned in this document only mean those NAT states which are created dynamically by outgoing packets, rather than those static NAT states which are configured manually or with automatic means such as UPnP or PCP. For those static NAT states (a.k.a., port forwarding entries), they are essentially part of the configuration data.

Port forwarding entries SHOULD be stored in permanent storage whatever the deployed redundancy mode.

#### 5. Overview of Redundancy Mechanisms

The fundamental principle of NAT redundancy is to make two or more NAT devices function as a redundancy group, and select one as the Primary NAT and the other(s) as the Backup NAT through a dedicated election procedure or manual configuration.

In the nominal regime, traffic exchanged between one host in the

internal realm and another host in the external realm is handled by the Primary NAT. Once the Primary NAT is out of service, the Backup NAT with the highest priority (if several Backup NAT devices are deployed) takes over and provides the NAT services to the internal hosts. This Backup NAT is then identified as new Primary NAT. Once the former Primary NAT became operational, it could either preempt the role of Primary NAT or stay as a candidate in the redundancy group. This is part of administrative policies and out of scope of this memo.

In order to implement the aforementioned procedure, means to detect and to notify the failure of the Primary NAT to the redundancy group SHOULD be activated.

To ensure a coherent behavior when NAT device fails, this document assumes that both Primary and Backup NAT devices are managed by the same administrative domain. Thus, consistent configuration policies SHOULD be enforced in all devices. Note that the election process MUST be deterministic and does not lead to ambiguous situation where two or more NAT devices become Primary NAT. Moreover, the failover SHOULD be quick to ensure service continuity and keep end-users from perceiving service unavailability.

Three redundancy modes are described hereafter: the cold standby, the hot standby and the partial hot standby modes:

1. The cold standby mode is simple. The NAT states are not replicated from the Primary NAT to the Backup NAT. When the Primary NAT fails, all the existing established sessions will be flushed out. The internal hosts are required to re-establish sessions to the external hosts;
2. The hot standby mode keeps established sessions while failover happens. NAT states are replicated from the Primary NAT to the Backup NAT. When the Primary NAT fails, the Backup NAT will take over all the existing established sessions. The internal hosts are not required to re-establish sessions to the external hosts.
3. The partial hot standby mode is a flavor of the hot standby mode described above. It is used to avoid replicating NAT states of trivial sessions (e.g., short lifetime sessions) while achieving hot standby for significant sessions (e.g., critical protocols or applications, long lifetime sessions etc.). Criteria for sessions to be replicated on backup NATs SHOULD be explicitly configured on the NAT devices of a redundancy group.

The following sections provide more information about the cold standby and the hot standby modes.

## 6. Cold Standby Mode

### 6.1. Internal Realm

The internal addresses used to represent the external hosts in the internal realm SHOULD be retained after the NAT failover. The following assesses how this requirement is met in each NAT flavor:

- o For NAT44 and DS-Lite, the external hosts' internal addresses (i.e., the addresses used to represent the external hosts in the internal realm) are unchanged (i.e., not NAT-ed). Therefore, the above requirement is met without additional work.
- o For NAT64, the NAT devices belonging to a redundancy group SHOULD be configured with an identical Prefix64. Since the NAT64 uses stateless address translation for the external hosts, using the same Prefix64 in the Backup NAT can guarantee the internal hosts to see the same internal addresses for the external hosts.
- o For NAT46, NAT devices in a redundancy group SHOULD be configured with an identical IPv4 address pool. A subset of translation state information SHOULD be synchronized among these NAT devices through a dedicated state synchronization protocol such as [I-D.xu-behave-nat-state-sync]. This translation state ensures that the Backup NAT, once taking over as a Primary NAT, will assign the same IPv4 addresses to the external IPv6 hosts for the internal IPv4 hosts.

### 6.2. External Realm

Each NAT device in a NAT redundancy group is configured with a different external address pool. A route to that external pool is then announced into the external realm by the NAT device or the NAT immediate router.

- o For NAT44, DS-Lite and NAT64: NAT devices SHOULD be configured with different external IPv4 address pools. These address pools are not overlapped. Otherwise, when the Primary NAT fails and the Backup NAT takes over the Primary NAT, a NAT collision may happen. For example, assuming a Primary NAT NAT-ed internal host Host-A to IPv4-A. IPv4-A is an address which belongs to the external address pool. If the Backup NAT after taking over the primary NAT was configured with the same pool, the Backup NAT MAY assign the same IPv4-A to another internal host Host-B. So, Host-B may receive datagrams originally targeted for Host-A. This might cause confusion to Host-B. In addition, by using different external address pools on each NAT device, incoming datagrams of a given session from the external hosts are ensured to always



traverse through the Backup NAT device after the Primary NAT failover happens.

- o For NAT46, the issue occurred in NAT44 and NAT64 cases will not happen. NAT46 relies on stateless address translation for the internal hosts. The Primary and Backup NAT SHOULD use the same external Prefix64, hence the external hosts can use the Backup NAT46 to reach the internal hosts. In Cold Standby mechanism, the Primary and Backup NAT MAY use different Prefix64s. In contrast, the Primary and Backup NAT in Hot Standby mechanism MUST use an identical Prefix64.

### 6.3. NAT Reachability Announcement

In order to force the IP datagrams from the internal realm to always traverse through the Primary NAT to the external realm, the Primary NAT SHOULD announce into the internal realm a route towards the external realm.

- o For NAT44, the Primary NAT announces an IPv4 default route into the internal realm.
- o For DS-Lite, the Primary NAT announces a host route into the internal realm.
- o For NAT64, the Primary NAT announces a route for the Prefix64 into the internal realm.
- o For NAT46, the Primary NAT announces a route for the internal address pool into the internal realm (If the internal address pool can be aggregated to one prefix).

The Primary NAT SHOULD attempt to withdraw its previously announced routes when it ceases the Primary role due to pre-configured conditions, e.g.- it loses the IP connectivity to the external realm.

When the Primary NAT fails and the Backup NAT takes over, datagrams from the internal hosts destined for the external realm SHOULD pass through the Backup NAT. Hence, when the Backup NAT is manually configured to switch over to become the Primary NAT, the Backup NAT (or associated router) SHOULD announce the same route into the internal realm, but the routing cost of this route MUST be set to a higher value than the route announced by the Primary NAT.

Alternatively, the Primary NAT announces several more specific routes into the internal realm while the Backup NAT announces an aggregate route. Taken the NAT46 as an example, assuming the internal address pool is 10.0.0.0/8, the Primary NAT announces two more specific

routes to 10.0.0.0/9 and 10.128.0.0/9 respectively while the Backup NAT announces an aggregate route to 10.0.0.0/8. In case the Primary NAT and the Backup NAT are automatically elected through a dedicated election process, the Backup NAT would be elected as a new Primary NAT once the old Primary one fails, so it is not necessary for the Backup NAT to make the above route announcements until it is elected as a new Primary NAT.

In order for the external hosts to traverse through the NAT to reach the internal hosts, the Primary and Backup NAT SHOULD announce a route of its own external address pool into the external realm.

## 7. Hot Standby Mode

### 7.1. Internal Realm

The procedure is identical to Section 6.1.

### 7.2. External Realm

To preserve the established sessions during the failover and to keep the internal addresses unchanged for the external hosts, the external addresses for the internal hosts MUST also be preserved. To preserve the external address of the internal host after NAT-ed, the NAT devices in a redundancy group MUST use an identical external address pool. In addition, they MUST assign the same external address (or address/port pair) to a given internal host.

- o For NAT46, the Primary NAT and Backup NAT MUST use an identical Prefix64.
- o For NAT44, DS-Lite and NAT64, the NAT devices in a redundancy group MUST use the same external address pool and the translation states on the Primary NAT device MUST be synchronized to the Backup NAT(s) in a timely fashion.

### 7.3. NAT Reachability Announcement

In order to force IP datagrams between the internal realm and the external realm always traverse through the Primary NAT, the Primary NAT (or its associated router) SHOULD announce into the internal realm a route towards the external realm and announce into the external realm a route towards the external address pool.

Once the connectivity to either the external realm or the internal realm is lost, the Primary NAT device itself or a third party SHOULD attempt to withdraw the above routes. If the Primary NAT and the

Backup NAT are specified manually, the Backup NAT device (or its associated router) SHOULD also announce those routes, but with higher enough cost or larger granularity, so as to prepare for the failover.

When the Primary NAT fails, the datagrams towards the external realm will pass through the Backup NAT device. In case the Primary NAT and the Backup are automatically elected through a dedicated election procedure, the Backup NAT would be elected as a new Primary NAT when the old Primary NAT device fails. Consequently, it is not necessary for the Backup NAT to make the above route announcement until it is elected as a new Primary NAT.

## 8. IANA Considerations

This document makes no request of IANA.

Note to RFC Editor: this section may be removed on publication as an RFC.

## 9. Security Considerations

TBD.

## 10. Acknowledgements

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## Appendix A. State Synchronization Protocol Considerations

[I-D.xu-behave-nat-state-sync] defines a candidate solution to NAT state synchronization by using Server Cache Synchronization Protocol

(SCSP) [RFC2334]. For more information about the proposed solution, refer to [I-D.xu-behave-nat-state-sync].

[[Note: What to do with this section?]]

## Appendix B. Election Protocol Considerations

[[Note: What to do with this section?]]

An election process and associated protocol(s) can be used to automatically elect one NAT device among a NAT redundancy group as the Primary NAT and the others as Backup NATs. Once the Primary NAT fails, the Backup NAT with the highest priority SHOULD take over the Primary NAT role after a short delay. The election protocol is also used to track the connectivity to the external realm and the internal realm. Once connections to the external realm or the internal realm lost, the NAT device is not qualified to be the Primary NAT and it will withdraw the route towards the external realm announced previously. In the case of hot standby, it SHOULD also withdraw the route towards the external address pool.

As an implementation example, VRRP [RFC5798] can be used as the automatic election protocol. In addition, an interface tracking mechanism can also be used to adjust the priority to influence the election results.

If two NAT devices are directly connected via an Ethernet network, VRRP can run directly on the Ethernet interfaces. Otherwise, some extra configuration or protocol changes need to be implemented. One option is to create conditions for VRRP to run among these devices. For example, to create a VPLS [RFC4761][RFC4762] instance and enable IP functions and run VRRP on those VLAN interfaces which are bound to that VPLS instance. If enabling IP on those interfaces is not supported, the following trick to realize the same goal, but at a cost of consuming two physical interfaces on each NAT router: create a VPLS instance among a set of NAT devices, and on each of them one Ethernet interface is bound to that VPLS instance, and another IP-enabled Ethernet interface is locally connected with that interface. Then VRRP can run on those IP enabled Ethernet interfaces which are all connected to that VPLS instance. Another option is to extend VRRP so that VRRP neighbors can be specified manually and VRRP messages can be exchanged directly among VRRP neighbors in unicast.

VRRP is only an implementation example of the election process. Other protocols MAY be used to manage the roles of Primary and Backup.

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