Additional Policies for the Partial Reliability Extension of the Stream Control Transmission Protocol
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Abstract

This document defines two additional policies for the Partial Reliability Extension of the Stream Control Transmission Protocol (PR-SCTP) allowing to limit the number of retransmissions or to prioritize user messages for more efficient send buffer usage.

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1. Introduction

The SCTP Partial Reliability Extension (PR-SCTP) defined in [RFC3758] provides a generic method for senders to abandon user messages. The decision to abandon a user message is sender side only and the exact condition is called a PR-SCTP policy. [RFC3758] also defines one particular PR-SCTP policy, called Timed Reliability. This allows the sender to specify a timeout for a user message after which the SCTP stack abandons the user message.

This document specifies the following two additional PR-SCTP policies:

Limited Retransmission Policy: Allows to limit the number of retransmissions.

Priority Policy: Allows to discard lower priority messages if space for higher priority messages is needed in the send buffer.

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2. 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].

3. Additional PR-SCTP Policies

This section defines two new PR-SCTP policies, one in each subsection.

Please note that it is REQUIRED to implement [RFC3758], if you want to implement these additional policies. However, these additional policies are OPTIONAL when implementing [RFC3758].

3.1. Limited Retransmissions Policy

Using the Limited Retransmission Policy allows the sender of a user message to specify an upper limit for the number of retransmissions for each DATA chunk of the given user messages. The sender MUST abandon a user message if the number of retransmissions of any of the DATA chunks of the user message would exceed the provided limit. The sender MUST perform all other actions required for processing the retransmission event, like possibly adopting the congestion window and the retransmission timeout. Please note that the number of retransmissions includes both fast and timer based retransmissions.

The sender MAY limit the number of retransmissions to 0. This will result in abandoning the message when it would get retransmitted for the first time. The use of this setting provides a service similar to UDP, which also does not perform any retransmissions.

The Limited Retransmissions Policy is used for data channels in the WebRTC protocol stack. See [I-D.ietf-rtcweb-data-channel] for more information.

3.2. Priority Policy

Using the Priority Policy allows the sender of a user message to specify a priority. When storing a user message in the send buffer while there is not enough available space, the SCTP stack at the sender side MAY abandon other user messages of the same SCTP association with a priority lower than the provided one. The algorithm for selecting the message being abandoned is implementation specific.

After lower priority messages have been abandoned high priority messages can be transferred without blocking the send call (if used...
The Priority Policy can be used in the IPFIX protocol stack. See [RFC7011] for more information.

4. Socket API Considerations

This section describes how the socket API defined in [RFC6458] is extended to support the newly defined PR-SCTP policies, to provide some statistical information and to control the negotiation of the PR-SCTP extension during the SCTP association setup.

Please note that this section is informational only.

4.1. Data Types

This section uses data types from [IEEE.1003-1G.1997]: uintN_t means an unsigned integer of exactly N bits (e.g. uint16_t). This is the same as in [RFC6458].

4.2. Support for Added PR-SCTP Policies

As defined in [RFC6458], the PR-SCTP policy is specified and configured by using the following sctp_prinfo structure:

```c
struct sctp_prinfo {
    uint16_t pr_policy;
    uint32_t pr_value;
};
```

When the Limited Retransmission Policy described in Section 3.1 is used, pr_policy has the value SCTP_PR_SCTP_RTX and the number of retransmissions is given in pr_value.

For using the Priority Policy described in Section 3.2, pr_policy has the value SCTP_PR_SCTP_PRIO. The priority is given in pr_value. The value of zero is the highest priority and larger numbers in pr_value denote lower priorities.

The following table summarizes the possible parameter settings defined in [RFC6458] and this document:
4.3. Socket Option for Getting the PR-SCTP Status (SCTP_PR_STATUS)

This socket option uses IPPROTO_SCTP as its level and SCTP_PR_STATUS as its name. It can only be used with getsockopt(), but not with setsockopt(). The socket option value uses the following structure:

```c
struct sctp_prstatus {
    sctp_assoc_t sprstat_assoc_id;
    uint64_t sprstat_abandoned_unsent;
    uint64_t sprstat_abandoned_sent;
};
```

- `sprstat_assoc_id`: This parameter is ignored for one-to-one style sockets. For one-to-many style sockets this parameter indicates for which association the user wants the information. It is an error to use SCTP_{CURRENT|ALL|FUTURE}_ASSOC in `sprstat_assoc_id`.

- `sprstat_abandoned_unsent`: The number of user messages which have been abandoned, before any part of the user message could be sent.

- `sprstat_abandoned_sent`: The number of user messages which have been abandoned, after a part of the user message has been sent.

There are separate counters for unsent and sent user messages because the SCTP_SEND_FAILED_EVENT supports a similar differentiation. Please note that an abandoned large user message requiring an SCTP level fragmentation is reported in the `sprstat_abandoned_sent` counter as soon as at least one fragment of it has been sent. Therefore each abandoned user message is either counted in `sprstat_abandoned_unsent` or `sprstat_abandoned_sent`.

If more detailed information about abandoned user messages is required, the subscription to the SCTP_SEND_FAILED_EVENT is recommended.

`sctp_opt_info()` needs to be extended to support SCTP_PR_STATUS.
4.4. Socket Option for Getting and Setting the PR-SCTP Support (SCTP_PR_SUPPORTED)

This socket option allows the enabling or disabling of the negotiation of PR-SCTP support for future associations. For existing associations it allows to query whether PR-SCTP support was negotiated or not on particular associations.

Whether PR-SCTP is enabled or not per default is implementation specific.

This socket option uses IPPROTO_SCTP as its level and SCTP_PR_SUPPORTED as its name. It can be used with getsockopt() and setsockopt(). The socket option value uses the following structure defined in [RFC6458]:

```
struct sctp_assoc_value {
    sctp_assoc_t assoc_id;
    uint32_t assoc_value;
};
```

assoc_id: This parameter is ignored for one-to-one style sockets. For one-to-many style sockets, this parameter indicates upon which association the user is performing an action. The special sctp_assoc_t SCTP_FUTURE_ASSOC can also be used, it is an error to use SCTP_{CURRENT|ALL}_ASSOC in assoc_id.

assoc_value: A non-zero value encodes the enabling of PR-SCTP whereas a value of 0 encodes the disabling of PR-SCTP.

sctp_opt_info() needs to be extended to support SCTP_PR_SUPPORTED.

5. IANA Considerations

This document requires no actions from IANA.

6. Security Considerations

This document does not add any additional security considerations in addition to the ones given in [RFC4960], [RFC3758], and [RFC6458]. As indicated in the Security Section of [RFC3758], transport layer security in the form of TLS over SCTP (see [RFC3436]) can’t be used for PR-SCTP. However, DTLS over SCTP (see [RFC6083]) could be used instead. It should also be noted that using PR-SCTP for an SCTP association doesn’t allow that association to behave more aggressively congestion-control wise than an SCTP association not using PR-SCTP.
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