Abstract

This document proposes a solution for BGP deployments in some specific environments to automatically establish BGP sessions without need for manual peer configuration.

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1. Definitions of Terms Used in This Memo

NLRI - Network Layer Reachability Information.

RIB - Routing Information Base.

AS - Autonomous System number.

The key words "MUST", "MUST NOT", "REQUIRED", "SHALL", "SHALL NOT",
"SHOULD", "SHOULD NOT", "RECOMMENDED", "NOT RECOMMENDED", "MAY", and
"OPTIONAL" in this document are to be interpreted as described in BCP 14 [RFC2119] [RFC8174] when, and only when, they appear in all capitals, as shown here.

2. Introduction

The popularity of use of BGP in number of data centers or campus deployments where BGP is being used as/instead of IGP brings operational challenges associated with setup of BGP peering relations

This proposal aims on automating the BGP session bring-up without aprior knowledge of the peer’s IP addresses by use of existing BGP protocol.

3. Proposed Solution

When BGP attempts to establish the EBGP sessions with unknown peers router will start sending BGP Session Explorer (BSE) packets which are to be regular BGP session establishment packets containing plain BGP OPEN Message except instead of regular peer address a multicast
address will be used 224.0.0.2 "All Routers on this Subnet" as UDP
destination address. Destination port of this UDP packets is to be
assigned by IANA. Source address will be selected by the operator
either local interface address (when establishing plain p2p relation)
or loopback address (when establishing peering between loopback
addresses).

Authors leave this as open discussion point to use instead of well
known multicast address of 224.0.0.2 a new IANA assigned multicast
address dedicated for the purpose of BGP Auto Session Setup.

Unidirectional reception of BGP Session Explorers will allow for peer
to respond with standard unicast TCP BGP OPEN Message using
destination address indicated previously as source address of BSE
packets. Source address in the BGP OPEN Message attempt will be
peer’s local operator’s selected source address.

The above procedure will allow for automated BGP session bring-up
without aprior knowledge of the peer’s BGP peering address for any
AFI/SAFI.

BGP Sessions Explorers are unidirectional and only are to be sent out
on those interfaces where there is no direct EBGP session established
on or which would be otherwise used as recursive members of L3 group
of parallel links with already recursive routes installed to
corresponding EBGP session between loopback addresses.

4. Loopbacks reachability bootstrapping

Upon reception of BGP Session Explorer packet on a BGP designated
port BGP will parse the BGP OPEN Message in an informational mode to
record peer’s interest in EBGP session establishment. However at
this point there is an assumption that loopback addresses are
unreachable on both sides. When session is p2p session over
connected interface the reachability to session endpoints is by
default in place and no further work is needed.

In the case of loopbacks after successful parsing of BGP Session
Explorer packets BGP is to install in RIB BGP reachability towards
the source address of the BSE source address with the outgoing
interface BSE packet arrived on.

Such reachability is of temporary nature till BGP session is
established between peers and peers exchange in their corresponding
BGP UPDATE Messages loopback reachability with at least one next hop
belonging to local connected address.
It is recommended that in the event of no session being established such temporary reachability will time out after configurable timer interval (default 180 seconds).

5. ECMP routes recursion

The described session establishment process will result in either point to point EBGP sessions or EBGP sessions between loopback addresses.

In the former case the direct point to point connected subnet is used as peering address and there is no need for any additional procedures.

In the case however when peering is established between loopbacks - typically the case in the ECMP based deployments when multiple L3 interface interconnect given pair of routers the loopback address used both as peering address and next hop of advertised routes need to recursively resolve via all directly connected subnets in order to effectively perform load balancing of traffic. For this task authors recommend regular BGP UPDATE Message to be used along with new BGP ATTRIBUTE MULTIPLE_HOP containing the list of all connected local addresses configured to be used as ECMP paths towards non connected next hop. The detailed proposal for this attribute has been described in the former work: draft-bhatia-bgp-multiple-next-hops [I-D.bhatia-bgp-multiple-next-hops].

An alternative methods for learning connected addresses towards not connected next hop can also be used. The choice of methods of accomplishing this reachability propagation is purposely made out of scope of this specification allowing both operator’s choice as well as technology evolution in this space.

6. Scalability

Parsing received to port 179 TCP packets and fixed size BGP OPEN Messages from all potential EBGP peers in applicable deployment scenarios of the target space of this proposal may result in very limited and contained need for additional processing. When port 179 is not open BGP OPEN Messages will be dropped. Upon establishing BGP session no new BGP OPEN Messages will be send on a given subnet.

7. Advantages to alternative proposals

The solutions described does not require any new message on the wire other then standard BGP OPEN Message already defined in other documents.
The proposed solution does not require any extra efforts for route installation in RIB and FIB other than via standard BGP route insertion and deletion procedures.

The proposed solutions reuses all of the existing BGP mechanisms in the space of session establishment and session maintenance and does not result in any race conditions or conflicts between existing and new procedures.

The proposed solution by its design does not allow any additional functionality like interface_ids or node/link topology discovery as it is authors believe that there are much better methods to accomplish those tasks outside of BGP protocol.

8. Changes to BGP Finite State Machine

The following changes to BGP FSM are proposed:

To be completed when/if document gets traction in the WG.

9. Security Considerations

No new security issues are introduced to the BGP protocol by this specification.

All operational security procedures which are applicable to standard BGP operation apply here.

It is highly recommended that TCP authentication when establishing unicast TCP sessions is used.

10. IANA Considerations

This document request IANA to allocate UDP port number for BGP Session Explorer messages.

11. Acknowledgments

Authors would like to thank ... for their valuable input.

12. References

12.1. Normative References


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12.2. Informative References

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Author’s Address

Robert Raszuk (editor)
Bloomberg LP
731 Lexington Ave
New York City, NY 10022
USA

Email: robert@raszuk.net