A Convention for Defining Traps
for use with the SNMP

Status of this Memo

This memo suggests a straightforward approach towards defining traps
used with the SNMP. Readers should note that the use of traps in the
Internet-standard network management framework is controversial. As
such, this memo is being put forward for information purposes.
Network management practitioners who employ traps are encouraged to
make use of this document. Practitioners who do not employ traps can
safely ignore this document.

This memo provides information for the Internet community. It does
not specify any standard. Distribution of this memo is unlimited.

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1. Historical Perspective

As reported in RFC 1052, IAB Recommendations for the Development of
Internet Network Management Standards [1], a two-prong strategy for
network management of TCP/IP-based internets was undertaken. In the
short-term, the Simple Network Management Protocol (SNMP), defined in
RFC 1067, was to be used to manage nodes in the Internet community.
In the long-term, the use of the OSI network management framework was
be examined. Two documents were produced to define the management
information: RFC 1065, which defined the Structure of Management Information (SMI), and RFC 1066, which defined the Management Information Base (MIB). Both of these documents were designed so as to be compatible with both the SNMP and the OSI network management framework.

This strategy was quite successful in the short-term: Internet-based network management technology was fielded, by both the research and commercial communities, within a few months. As a result of this, portions of the Internet community became network manageable in a timely fashion.

As reported in RFC 1109, Report of the Second Ad Hoc Network Management Review Group [2], the requirements of the SNMP and the OSI network management frameworks were more different than anticipated. As such, the requirement for compatibility between the SMI/MIB and both frameworks was suspended. This action permitted the operational network management framework, based on the SNMP, to respond to new operational needs in the Internet community by producing MIB-II.

In May of 1990, the core documents were elevated to "Standard Protocols" with "Recommended" status. As such, the Internet-standard network management framework consists of: Structure and Identification of Management Information for TCP/IP-based internets, RFC 1155 [3], which describes how managed objects contained in the MIB are defined; Management Information Base for Network Management of TCP/IP-based internets, which describes the managed objects contained in the MIB, RFC 1156 [4]; and, the Simple Network Management Protocol, RFC 1157 [5], which defines the protocol used to manage these objects.

2. Defining Traps

Due to its initial requirement to be protocol-independent, the Internet-standard SMI does not provide a means for defining traps. Instead, the SNMP defines a few standardized traps and provides a means for management enterprises to transmit enterprise-specific traps.

However, with the introduction of experimental MIBs, some of which have a need to define experiment-specific traps, a convenient means of defining traps is desirable. The TRAP-TYPE macro is suggested for this purpose:

```
IMPORTS
   ObjectName
FROM RFC1155-SMI;
```
TRAP-TYPE MACRO ::= 
BEGIN
  TYPE NOTATION ::= "ENTERPRISE" value 
                  (enterprise OBJECT IDENTIFIER)
                  VarPart
                  DescrPart
                  ReferPart
  VALUE NOTATION ::= value (VALUE INTEGER)
  VarPart ::= 
             "VARIABLES" "{" VarTypes "}" 
             | empty
  VarTypes ::= VarType | VarTypes "," VarType
  VarType ::= value (vartype ObjectName)
  DescrPart ::= 
              "DESCRIPTION" value (description DisplayString) 
              | empty
  ReferPart ::= 
              "REFERENCE" value (reference DisplayString) 
              | empty
END

It must be emphasized however, that the use of traps is STRONGLY discouraged in the Internet-standard Network Management Framework. The TRAP-TYPE macro is intended to allow concise definitions of existing traps, not to spur the definition of new traps.

2.1. Mapping of the TRAP-TYPE macro

It should be noted that the expansion of the TRAP-TYPE macro is something which conceptually happens during implementation and not during run-time.

2.1.1. Mapping of the ENTERPRISE clause

The ENTERPRISE clause, which must be present, defines the management enterprise under whose registration authority this trap is defined (for a discussion on delegation of registration authority, see the SMI [3]). This value is placed inside the enterprise field of the SNMP Trap-PDU.

By convention, if the value of the ENTERPRISE clause is
as defined in MIB-II [7], then instead of using this value, the value of sysObjectID is placed in the enterprise field of the SNMP Trap-PDU. This provides a simple means of using the TRAP-TYPE macro to represent the existing standard SNMP traps; it is not intended to provide a means to define additional standard SNMP traps.

2.1.2. Mapping of the VARIABLES clause

The VARIABLES clause, which need not be present, defines the ordered sequence of MIB objects which are contained within every instance of the trap type. Each variable is placed, in order, inside the variable-bindings field of the SNMP Trap-PDU. Note that at the option of the agent, additional variables may follow in the variable-bindings field.

However, if the value of the ENTERPRISE clause is

as defined in MIB-II [7], then the introduction of additional variables must not result in the serialized SNMP Message being larger than 484 octets.

2.1.3. Mapping of the DESCRIPTION clause

The DESCRIPTION clause, which need not be present, contains a textual definition of the trap type. Note that in order to conform to the ASN.1 syntax, the entire value of this clause must be enclosed in double quotation marks, although the value may be multi-line.

Further, note that if the MIB module does not contain a textual description of the trap elsewhere then the DESCRIPTION clause must be present.

2.1.4. Mapping of the REFERENCE clause

The REFERENCE clause, which need not be present, contains a textual cross-reference to a trap, event, or alarm, defined in some other MIB module. This is useful when de-osifying a MIB produced by some other organization.

2.1.5. Mapping of the TRAP-TYPE value

The value of an invocation of the TRAP-TYPE macro is the (integer) number which is uniquely assigned to the trap by the registration authority indicated by the ENTERPRISE clause. This value is placed
inside the specific-trap field of the SNMP Trap-PDU, and the
generic-trap field is set to "enterpriseSpecific(6)".

By convention, if the value of the ENTERPRISE clause is

```
    snmp   OBJECT IDENTIFIER ::= { mib-2 11 }
```

as defined in MIB-II [7], then the value of an invocation of the
TRAP-TYPE macro is placed inside the generic-trap field of the SNMP
Trap-PDU, and the specific-trap field is set to 0. This provides a
simple means of using the TRAP-TYPE macro to represent the existing
standard SNMP traps; it is not intended to provide a means to define
additional standard SNMP traps.

2.2. Usage Examples

2.2.1. Enterprise-specific Trap

Consider a simple example of an enterprise-specific trap that is sent
when a communication link failure is encountered:

```
    myEnterprise OBJECT IDENTIFIER ::= { enterprises 9999 }

    myLinkDown TRAP-TYPE
      ENTERPRISE  myEnterprise
      VARIABLES   { ifIndex }
      DESCRIPTION
        "A myLinkDown trap signifies that the sending
        SNMP application entity recognizes a failure
        in one of the communications links represented
        in the agent’s configuration."

    ::= 2
```

2.2.2. Generic-Traps for use with the SNMP

Consider how the standard SNMP traps might be defined:

```
coldStart TRAP-TYPE
  ENTERPRISE  snmp
  DESCRIPTION
    "A coldStart trap signifies that the sending
    protocol entity is reinitializing itself such
    that the agent’s configuration or the rotocol
    entity implementation may be altered."

  ::= 0

warmStart TRAP-TYPE
  ENTERPRISE  snmp
```
DESCRIPTION

"A warmStart trap signifies that the sending protocol entity is reinitializing itself such that neither the agent configuration nor the protocol entity implementation is altered."

::= 1

linkDown TRAP-TYPE
ENTERPRISE snmp
VARIABLES { ifIndex }
DESCRIPTION

"A linkDown trap signifies that the sending protocol entity recognizes a failure in one of the communication links represented in the agent’s configuration."

::= 2

linkUp TRAP-TYPE
ENTERPRISE snmp
VARIABLES { ifIndex }
DESCRIPTION

"A linkUp trap signifies that the sending protocol entity recognizes that one of the communication links represented in the agent’s configuration has come up."

::= 3

authenticationFailure TRAP-TYPE
ENTERPRISE snmp
DESCRIPTION

"An authenticationFailure trap signifies that the sending protocol entity is the addressee of a protocol message that is not properly authenticated. While implementations of the SNMP must be capable of generating this trap, they must also be capable of suppressing the emission of such traps via an implementation-specific mechanism."

::= 4
egpNeighborLoss TRAP-TYPE
ENTERPRISE  snmp
VARIABLES   { egpNeighAddr }
DESCRIPTION
"An egpNeighborLoss trap signifies that an EGP neighbor for whom the sending protocol entity was an EGP peer has been marked down and the peer relationship no longer obtains."
:= 5

3. Acknowledgements

This document was produced by the SNMP Working Group:

Anne Ambler, Spider
Karl Auerbach, Sun
Fred Baker, ACC
Ken Brinkerhoff
Ron Broersma, NOSC
Jack Brown, US Army
Theodore Brunner, Bellcore
Jeffrey Buffum, HP
John Burress, Wellfleet
Jeffrey D. Case, University of Tennessee at Knoxville
Chris Chiptasso, Spartacus
Paul Ciarfella, DEC
Bob Collet
John Cook, Chipcom
Tracy Cox, Bellcore
James R. Davin, MIT-LCS
Eric Decker, cisco
Kurt Dobbins, Cabletron
Nadya El-Afandi, Network Systems
Gary Ellis, HP
Fred Engle
Mike Erlinger
Mark S. Fedor, PSI
Richard Fox, Synoptics
Karen Frisa, CMU
Chris Gunner, DEC
Fred Harris, University of Tennessee at Knoxville
Ken Hibbard, Xylogics
Ole Jacobsen, Interop
Ken Jones
Satish Joshi, Synoptics
Frank Kastenholz, Racal-Interlan
Shimshon Kaufman, Spartacus
Ken Key, University of Tennessee at Knoxville
Jim Kinder, Fibercom
Alex Koifman, BBN
Christopher Kolb, PSI
Cheryl Krupczak, NCR
Paul Langille, DEC
Peter Lin, Vitalink
John Lunny, TWG
Carl Malamud
Randy Mayhew, University of Tennessee at Knoxville
Keith McClughrie, Hughes LAN Systems
Donna McMaster, David Systems
Lynn Monsanto, Sun
Dave Perkins, 3COM
Jim Reinstedler, Ungerman Bass
Anil Rijsinghani, DEC
Kathy Rinehart, Arnold AFB
Kary Robertson
Marshall T. Rose, PSI (chair)
L. Michael Sabo, NCSC
Jon Saperia, DEC
Greg Satz, cisco
Martin Schoffstall, PSI
John Seligson
Steve Sherry, Xyplex
Fei Shu, NEC
Sam Sjogren, TGV
Mark Sleeper, Sparta
Lance Sprung
Mike St.Johns
Bob Stewart, Xyplex
Emil Sturniold
Kaj Tesink, Bellcore
Dean Throop, Data General
Bill Townsend, Xylogics
Maurice Turcotte, Racal-Milgo
Kannan Varadhhou
Sudhanshu Verma, HP
Bill Versteeg, Network Research Corporation
Warren Vik, Interactive Systems
David Waitzman, BBN
Steve Waldbusser, CMU
Dan Wintringhan
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4. References


5. Security Considerations

Security issues are not discussed in this memo.

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