

# ETSI TS 133 122 V15.4.0 (2023-01)



LTE;  
5G;

**Security aspects of Common API Framework (CAPIF)  
for 3GPP northbound APIs  
(3GPP TS 33.122 version 15.4.0 Release 15)**

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**Reference**

RTS/TSGS-0333122v40

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**Keywords**

5G,LTE

**ETSI**

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# Foreword

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# 1 Scope

The present document specifies the security architecture i.e., the security features and the security mechanisms for the common API framework (CAPIF) as per the architecture and procedures defined in 3GPP TS 23.222 [3].

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## 2 References

The following documents contain provisions which, through reference in this text, constitute provisions of the present document.

- References are either specific (identified by date of publication, edition number, version number, etc.) or non-specific.
- For a specific reference, subsequent revisions do not apply.
- For a non-specific reference, the latest version applies. In the case of a reference to a 3GPP document (including a GSM document), a non-specific reference implicitly refers to the latest version of that document *in the same Release as the present document*.

- [1] 3GPP TR 21.905: "Vocabulary for 3GPP Specifications".
- [2] 3GPP TS 33.310: "Network Domain Security (NDS); Authentication Framework (AF)".
- [3] 3GPP TS 23.222: "Common API Framework for 3GPP Northbound APIs".
- [4] IETF RFC 6749: "The OAuth 2.0 Authorization Framework".
- [5] IETF RFC 6750: "The OAuth 2.0 Authorization Framework: Bearer Token Usage".
- [6] IETF RFC 7519: "JSON Web Token (JWT)".
- [7] IETF RFC 7515: "JSON Web Signature (JWS)".
- [8] 3GPP TS 33.220: "Generic Authentication Architecture (GAA); Generic Bootstrapping Architecture (GBA)".
- [9] IETF RFC 5246: "The Transport Layer Security (TLS) Protocol Version 1.2".

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## 3 Definitions, symbols and abbreviations

### 3.1 Definitions

For the purposes of the present document, the terms and definitions given in 3GPP TR 21.905 [1] and the following apply. A term defined in the present document takes precedence over the definition of the same term, if any, in 3GPP TR 21.905 [1].

### 3.2 Symbols

For the purposes of the present document, the following symbols apply:

AEF<sub>PSK</sub>      Pre-Shared Key for AEF

### 3.3 Abbreviations

For the purposes of the present document, the abbreviations given in 3GPP TR 21.905 [1] and the following apply. An abbreviation defined in the present document takes precedence over the definition of the same abbreviation, if any, in 3GPP TR 21.905 [1].

AEF	API Exposing Function
API	Application Programming Interface
CAPIF	Common API Framework
JSON	JavaScript Object Notation
JWT	JSON Web Token
KDF	Key Derivation Function
PKI	Public Key Infrastructure
PSK	Pre-Shared Key
TLS	Transport Layer Security

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## 4 Security requirements

### 4.1 General

Architectural requirements pertaining to CAPIF security are found in 3GPP TS 23.222 [3]. The following are CAPIF derived security requirements.

### 4.2 Common security requirements

Security requirements that are applicable to all CAPIF entities are:

- [CAPIF-SEC-4.2-a] The CAPIF shall provide mechanisms to hide the topology of the PLMN trust domain from the API invokers accessing the service APIs from outside the PLMN trust domain.
- [CAPIF-SEC-4.2-b] The CAPIF shall provide mechanisms to hide the topology of the 3rd party API provider trust domain from the API invokers accessing the service APIs from outside the 3rd party API provider trust domain.
- [CAPIF-SEC-4.2-c] The CAPIF shall provide authorization mechanism for service APIs from the 3rd party API providers.
- [CAPIF-SEC-4.2-d] The CAPIF shall support a common security mechanism for all API implementations to provide confidentiality and integrity protection.
- [CAPIF-SEC-4.2-e] API invoker authentication and authorization shall support all deployment models listed in 3GPP TS 23.222 [3].
- [CAPIF-SEC-4.2-f] The API invoker and CAPIF should enforce the result of the authentication for the duration of communications (e.g. by integrity protection or implicit authentication by encryption with a key that is derived from the authentication and is unknown to the adversary).

### 4.3 Security requirements on the CAPIF-1/1e reference points

The CAPIF-1/1e reference points between the API invoker and the CAPIF core function shall fulfil the following requirements:

- [CAPIF-SEC-4.3-a] Mutual authentication between the API invoker and the CAPIF Core function shall be supported.
- [CAPIF-SEC-4.3-b] The transport of messages over the CAPIF-1 and CAPIF-1e reference points shall be integrity protected.

- [CAPIF-SEC-4.3-c] The transport of messages over the CAPIF-1 and CAPIF-1e reference points shall be protected from replay attacks.
- [CAPIF-SEC-4.3-d] The transport of messages over the CAPIF-1 and CAPIF-1e reference points shall be confidentiality protected.
- [CAPIF-SEC-4.3-e] Privacy of the 3GPP user over the CAPIF-1 and CAPIF-1e reference points shall be protected.
- [CAPIF-SEC-4.3-f] The CAPIF core function shall authorize the API invoker prior to the API invoker accessing the AEF.
- [CAPIF-SEC-4.3-g] The CAPIF core function shall authorize the API invoker prior to accessing the discover service API.
- [CAPIF-SEC-4.3-h] The CAPIF core function shall authenticate the API invoker's onboarding request.
- [CAPIF-SEC-4.3-i] The CAPIF core function shall authenticate the API invoker's offboarding request.

## 4.4 Security requirements on the CAPIF-2/2e reference points

The CAPIF-2/2e reference points between the API invoker and API exposing function shall fulfil the following requirements:

- [CAPIF-SEC-4.4-a] Mutual authentication between the API invoker and the API exposing function shall be supported.
- [CAPIF-SEC-4.4-b] The transport of messages over the CAPIF-2 and CAPIF-2e reference points shall be integrity protected.
- [CAPIF-SEC-4.4-c] The transport of messages over the CAPIF-2 and CAPIF-2e reference points shall be protected from replay attacks.
- [CAPIF-SEC-4.4-d] The transport of messages over the CAPIF-2 and CAPIF-2e reference points shall be confidentiality protected.
- [CAPIF-SEC-4.4-e] Privacy of the 3GPP user over the CAPIF-2 and CAPIF-2e reference points shall be protected.
- [CAPIF-SEC-4.4-f] The API exposing function shall determine whether API invoker is authorized to access service API.

## 4.5 Security requirements on the CAPIF-3/4/5 reference points

The security requirements for CAPIF-3/4/5 reference points are:

- [CAPIF-SEC-4.5-a] The transport of messages over the CAPIF-3/4/5 reference points shall be integrity protected.
- [CAPIF-SEC-4.5-b] The transport of messages over the CAPIF-3/4/5 reference points shall be confidentiality protected.
- [CAPIF-SEC-4.5-c] The transport of messages over the CAPIF-3/4/5 reference points shall be protected from replay attacks.
- [CAPIF-SEC-4.5-d] The CAPIF core function shall be able to authenticate the service API publishers to publish and manage the service API information.
- [CAPIF-SEC-4.5-e] The CAPIF core function shall be able to authorize the service API publishers to publish and manage the service API information.
- [CAPIF-SEC-4.5-f] The CAPIF core function shall be able to request explicit grant of new API invoker's onboarding.

## 5 Functional security model

Figure 5-1 shows the functional security model for the CAPIF architecture. The interfaces CAPIF-1, CAPIF-1e, CAPIF-2, CAPIF-2e, CAPIF-3, CAPIF-4 and CAPIF-5 are defined in 3GPP TS 23.222 [3] and support the CAPIF functionality defined in 3GPP TS 23.222 [3]. CAPIF-1, CAPIF-2, CAPIF-3, CAPIF-4 and CAPIF-5 are interfaces that lie within the PLMN trust domain while the CAPIF-1e and CAPIF-2e interfaces are CAPIF core and AEF access points for API Invokers outside of the PLMN trust domain.

Security for the CAPIF-1, CAPIF-2, CAPIF-3, CAPIF-4 and CAPIF-5 interfaces support TLS as specified in IETF RFC 5246 [9], and are defined in subclauses 6.2, 6.4 and 6.6 of the present document. Security for the CAPIF-1e and CAPIF-2e interfaces support TLS [9], and are defined in subclause 6.3 and subclause 6.5, respectively.

Authentication and authorization are required for both API invokers that lie within the PLMN trust domain and API invokers that lie outside of the PLMN trust domain. For an API invoker that is outside of the PLMN trust domain, the CAPIF core function in coordination with the API exposing function utilizes the CAPIF-1e, CAPIF-2e and the CAPIF-3 interfaces to onboard, authenticate and authorize the API invoker prior to granting access to CAPIF services. Security flow diagrams for onboarding security, CAPIF-1e security and CAPIF-2e security can be found in Annex B. When the API invoker is within the PLMN trust domain, the CAPIF core function in coordination with the API exposing function perform authentication and authorization of the API invoker via the CAPIF-1, the CAPIF-2 and the CAPIF-3 interfaces prior to granting access to CAPIF services. Authentication and authorization of API invokers (both internal and external to the PLMN trust domain) is specified in clause 6 of the present document.

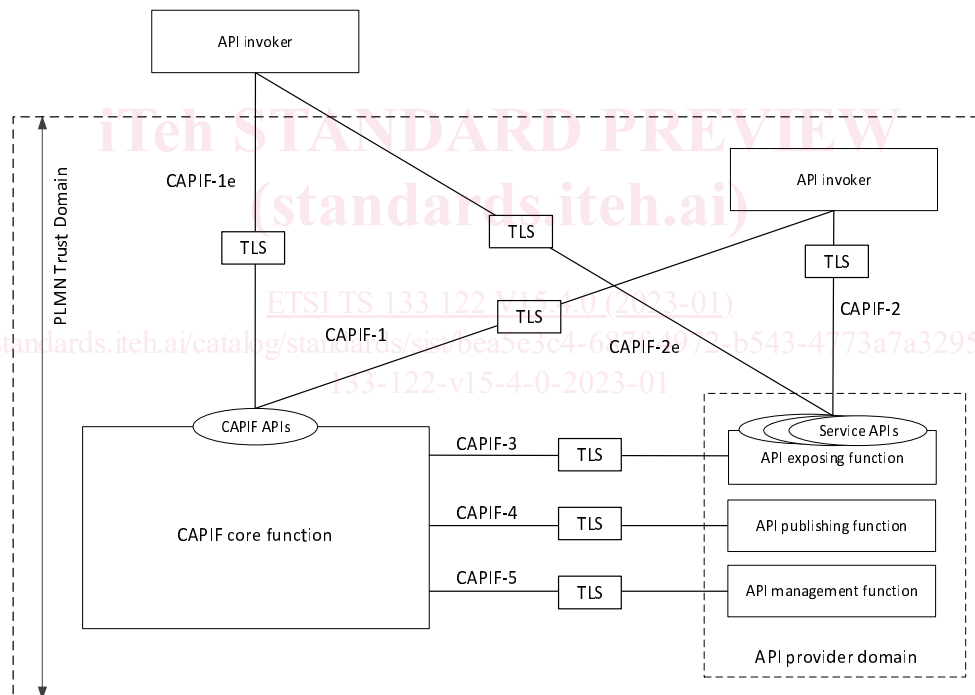


Figure 5-1: CAPIF functional security model

## 6 Security procedures

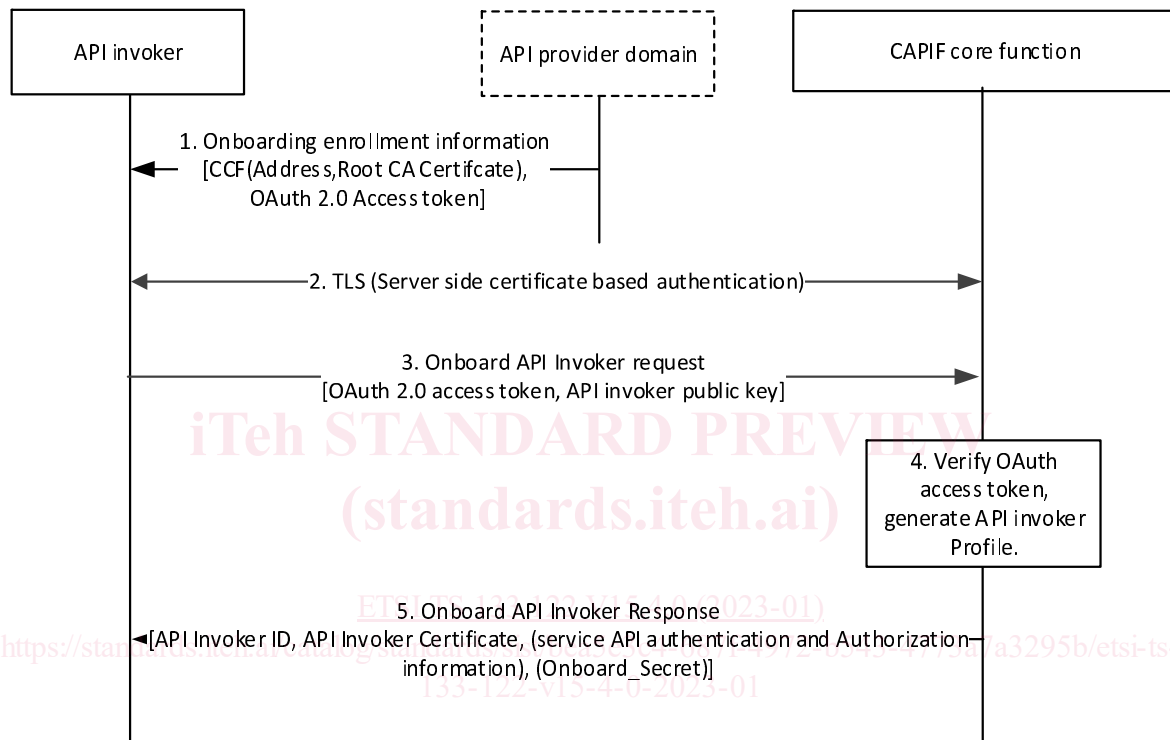
### 6.1 Security procedures for API invoker onboarding

The API invoker and the CAPIF core function shall follow the procedure in this subclause to secure and authenticate the onboarding of the API invoker to the CAPIF core function. The API invoker and the CAPIF core function shall establish a secure session using TLS as specified in IETF RFC 5246 [9].

With a secure session established, the API Invoker sends an Onboard API Invoker Request message to the CAPIF core function. The Onboard API Invoker Request message carries an onboard credential obtained during pre-provisioning of

the onboard enrolment information, which may be an OAuth 2.0 [4] access token. When the OAuth 2.0 token based mechanism is used as the onboarding credential, the access token shall be encoded as JSON web token as specified in IETF RFC 7519 [6], shall include the JSON web signature as specified in IETF RFC 7515 [7], and shall be validated per OAuth 2.0 [4], IETF RFC 7519 [6] and IETF RFC 7515 [7]. Other credentials may also be used (e.g. message digest).

Figure 6.1-1 details the security information flow for the API invoker onboarding procedure. The OAuth 2.0 token based authentication credential is shown in this example.



**Figure 6.1-1: Security procedure for API invoker onboarding**

1. As a prerequisite to the onboarding procedure, the API invoker obtains onboarding enrolment information from the API provider domain. The onboarding enrolment information is used to authenticate and establish a secure TLS communication with the CAPIF core function during the onboarding process. The enrolment information includes details of the CAPIF core function (Address, and Root CA certificate) and includes an onboarding credential (the OAuth 2.0 [4] access token).

NOTE 1: The procedure used to obtain the enrolment information by the API invoker is out of scope of the present document.

2. The API invoker and CAPIF core function shall establish a secure session based on TLS (Server side certificate authentication). The API invoker shall use the enrolment information obtained in step 1 to establish the TLS session with the CAPIF core function.
3. After successful establishment of the TLS session, the API invoker shall send an Onboard API invoker request message to the CAPIF core function along with the enrolment credential (OAuth 2.0 [4] access token). The API invoker generates the key pair {Private Key, Public key} and provides the public key along with the Onboard API invoker request.
4. The CAPIF core function shall validate the enrolment credential (OAuth 2.0 [4] access token). If validation of the credential (the OAuth 2.0 [4] access token in this example) is successful, the CAPIF core function shall generate an API invoker's profile as specified in TS 23.222 [3] which may contain the selected method for AEF authentication and authorization between the API Invoker and the AEF (see subclause 6.5.2). The CAPIF core

function may generate API invoker's certificate on its own, for the assigned API invoker identity and public key. This certificate shall be used by the API invoker for subsequent authentication procedures with the CAPIF core function and may be used for establishing a secure connection and authentication with the API Exposing Function. The CAPIF core function may optionally generate an Onboard\_Secret if the subscribed Service API uses Method 3 (as specified in clause 6.5.2.3 of the present document) for CAPIF-2e security. The Onboard\_Secret value remains the same during the lifetime of the onboarding, and shall be bound to the CAPIF core function specific API Invoker ID.

- NOTE 2: When API invoker's client certificate is issued by the third party, then in Step 3 the API invoker can additionally include the certificate in Onboard API Invoker request message. If the CAPIF core function trusts the issuer of the API invoker's client certificate, then the CAPIF Core Function includes the provided certificate in the API invoker's profile, in step 4. It is up to the CAPIF domain policy to accept the client certificates issued by third party.
5. The CAPIF core function shall respond with an Onboard API invoker response message. The response shall include the CAPIF core function assigned API invoker ID, AEF Authentication and authorization information (if generated in step 4), API invoker's certificate and the API invoker Onboard\_Secret (if generated by the CAPIF core function).

## 6.2 Security procedures for CAPIF-1 reference point

TLS, as specified in IETF RFC 5246 [9], shall be used to provide integrity protection, replay protection and confidentiality protection. The support of TLS is mandatory and optional to use based on the domain administrator's policy to protect interfaces within the trusted domain.

The procedure in subclause 6.3 of the present document shall be followed unless the security of CAPIF-1 reference point is provided by other means.

## 6.3 Security procedures for CAPIF-1e reference point

### 6.3.1 Authentication and authorization

#### 6.3.1.1 General

For authentication of the CAPIF-1e reference point, mutual authentication based on client and server certificates shall be performed between the CAPIF core function and the API invoker, as specified in IETF RFC 5246 [9] using TLS.

Certificate based authentication shall follow the profiles given in 3GPP TS 33.310 [2], subclauses 6.1.3a and 6.1.4a. The structure of the PKI used for the certificate is out of scope of the present document.

TLS [9] shall be used to provide integrity protection, replay protection and confidentiality protection for CAPIF-1e interface. The support of TLS on CAPIF-1e interface is mandatory. Security profiles for TLS implementation and usage shall follow the provisions given in TS 33.310 [2], Annex E.

#### 6.3.1.2 Security method negotiation

The API invoker and the CAPIF core function shall negotiate a security method that shall be used by the API invoker and the API exposing function for CAPIF-2e interface authentication and protection. After successful mutual authentication on CAPIF-1e interface, based on the API invoker's subscribed service APIs, access scenarios (whether the API invoker access the AEF prior to service API invocation or upon the service API invocation) and AEF capabilities, the CAPIF core function shall choose the security method and sends the chosen security methods along with the information required for authentication of the API invoker at the AEF to the API invoker. The information may include the validity time of the CAPIF-2e credentials. This is depicted in figure 6.3.1-1.

Pre-conditions:

1. The API invoker is onboarded with the CAPIF core function.