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Part 1AX:

Link aggregation
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*Télécommunications et échange entre systèmes informatiques
— Exigences pour les réseaux locaux et métropolitains —*

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IEEE Std 802.1AX™-2020
(Revision of IEEE Std 802.1AX-2014)

IEEE Standard for Local and Metropolitan Area Networks— Link Aggregation

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Developed by the

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Approved 30 January 2020

IEEE SA Standards Board

Abstract: Link Aggregation allows parallel point-to-point links to be used as if they were a single link and also supports the use of multiple links as a resilient load-sharing interconnect between multiple nodes in two separately administered networks. This standard defines a MAC-independent Link Aggregation capability and provides general information relevant to specific MAC types.

Keywords: Aggregated Link, Aggregator, Distributed Resilient Network Interconnect, DRNI, interconnect, Link Aggregation, Link Aggregation Group, local area network, management, Network-Network Interface, NNI

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Introduction

(This introduction is not part of IEEE Std 802.1AX-2020, IEEE Standard for Local and Metropolitan Area Networks—Link Aggregation.)

Link Aggregation allows one or more links to be aggregated together to form a Link Aggregation Group (LAG) so that the Link Aggregation Client can treat the LAG as if it were a single link. Link Aggregation was originally published as IEEE Std 802.3ad™-2000 and subsequently incorporated into the IEEE Std 802.3™, 2000 Edition. In 2008 Link Aggregation was removed from IEEE Std 802.3 and published as IEEE Std 802.1AX-2008. These standards specified the aggregation of full-duplex point-to-point links using IEEE Std 802.3 media of the same speed.

An amendment, IEEE Std 802.1AXbk™-2012, specified changes to the addressing used by the link aggregation control and marker protocols to allow a LAG to span Two-Port Media Access Control (MAC) Relays (TPMRs) and to span Provider Bridged Networks and Provider Backbone Bridge Networks.

A revision, IEEE Std 802.1AX-2014, extended Link Aggregation in three areas. First, it explicitly allowed the aggregation of point-to-point links of any speed using any physical media or logical connection capable of supporting the Internal Sublayer Service specified in IEEE Std 802.1AC™. Second, it specified Conversation-Sensitive Collection and Distribution (CSCD) that provides a mechanism to identify the distribution algorithm in use to map data frames to individual links in the LAG and to convey that information to the Link Aggregation Partner via Link Aggregation Control Protocol Data Units (LACPDU) containing version 2 type/length/values (TLVs). Third, it specified Distributed Resilient Network Interconnect (DRNI) that allows a LAG to terminate at two or three cooperating Systems so that the LAG provides resiliency to System-level failures as well as link level failures. A corrigendum, IEEE Std 802.1AX-2014/Cor 1-2017, provided technical and editorial corrections to CSCD.

This revision, IEEE Std 802.1AX-2020, makes significant refinements and simplifications to the Link Aggregation Control Protocol (LACP) as well as to CSCD and DRNI. In LACP, the Periodic state machine and Transmit state machine are combined to a single machine, and the Mux machine is optimized to reduce the likelihood of excessive Link Aggregation Control Protocol Data Unit (LACPDU) transmissions. CSCD is refined to eliminate the TLVs that led to LACPDUs greater than 128 bytes in length. DRNI is significantly revised and simplified to support a LAG terminating at just two (not three) cooperating Systems.

Every effort has been made to maintain interoperability, without prior configuration, with LACP implementations conforming to IEEE Std 802.3ad-2000, IEEE Std 802.1AX-2008, or IEEE Std 802.1AX-2014 and with CSCD implementations conforming to IEEE Std 802.1AX-2014. The changes to DRNI, and in particular the Distributed Relay Control Protocol (DRCP), are such that an implementation conforming to this standard will not interoperate with a DRCP implementation conforming to IEEE Std 802.1AX-2014. The DRCP version number in this standard has been changed to version 2, and care has been taken so that a DRCP implementation conformant to IEEE Std 802.1AX-2014 will discard version 2 DRCPDUs as invalid and that implementations of this standard will discard version 1 DRCPDUs.

This standard contains state-of-the-art material. The area covered by this standard is undergoing evolution. Revisions are anticipated within the next few years to clarify existing material, to correct possible errors, and to incorporate new related material. Information on the current revision state of this and other IEEE 802 standards may be obtained from

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Contents

1.	Overview.....	18
1.1	Scope.....	18
1.2	Purpose.....	18
1.3	State diagram conventions.....	19
2.	Normative references.....	20
3.	Definitions.....	21
4.	Acronyms and abbreviations.....	24
5.	Conformance.....	25
5.1	Requirements terminology.....	25
5.2	Protocol implementation conformance statement.....	25
5.3	Link Aggregation.....	25
5.3.2	Link Aggregation options.....	26
5.4	Distributed Resilient Network Interconnect (DRNI).....	26
5.4.2	DRNI options.....	27
6.	Link Aggregation.....	28
6.1	Overview.....	28
6.1.1	Goals and objectives.....	28
6.1.2	Positioning of Link Aggregation within the IEEE 802 architecture.....	29
6.1.3	Protocol Parser/Multiplexer.....	29
6.1.3.1	Protocol Parser state diagram.....	30
6.2	Link Aggregation operation.....	31
6.2.1	Principles of Link Aggregation.....	33
6.2.2	Service interfaces.....	34
6.2.3	Frame Collector.....	34
6.2.3.1	Frame Collector state diagram.....	35
6.2.4	Frame Distributor.....	36
6.2.4.1	Frame Distributor state diagram.....	36
6.2.5	Marker Generator/Receiver (optional).....	37
6.2.6	Marker Responder.....	38
6.2.7	Aggregator Parser/Multiplexer.....	38
6.2.7.1	Aggregator Parser/Multiplexer state diagrams.....	38
6.2.8	Aggregator.....	42
6.2.9	LACP Parser/Multiplexer.....	43
6.2.10	Addressing.....	43
6.2.10.1	Source address (SA).....	43
6.2.10.2	Destination address (DA).....	43
6.3	Link Aggregation Control.....	44
6.3.1	Characteristics of Link Aggregation Control.....	45
6.3.2	System identification.....	46
6.3.3	Aggregator identification.....	46
6.3.4	Port identification.....	46
6.3.5	Capability identification.....	47
6.3.6	Link Aggregation Group identification.....	48

	6.3.6.1	Construction of the Link Aggregation Group Identifier	48
	6.3.6.2	Representation of the Link Aggregation Group Identifier.....	48
	6.3.7	Selecting a Link Aggregation Group	49
	6.3.8	Agreeing on a Link Aggregation Group	49
	6.3.9	Attaching a link to an Aggregator.....	50
	6.3.10	Signaling readiness to transfer user data.....	50
	6.3.11	Enabling the Frame Collector and Frame Distributor	50
	6.3.12	MAC_Operational status	51
	6.3.13	Monitoring the membership of a Link Aggregation Group.....	51
	6.3.14	Detaching a link from an Aggregator	51
	6.3.15	Configuration and administrative control of Link Aggregation	52
	6.3.16	Link Aggregation Control state information	52
6.4	Link Aggregation Control Protocol		52
	6.4.1	LACP design elements.....	52
	6.4.2	LACPDU structure and encoding	53
	6.4.2.1	Transmission and representation of octets	53
	6.4.2.2	Encapsulation of LACPDU in frames	53
	6.4.2.3	LACPDU structure	54
	6.4.2.4	Version 2 TLVs	57
	6.4.3	LACP state machine overview	59
	6.4.4	Constants.....	60
	6.4.5	Variables associated with each Aggregator	61
	6.4.6	Variables associated with each Aggregation Port.....	63
	6.4.7	Variables used for managing the operation of the state machines.....	68
	6.4.8	Functions.....	69
	6.4.9	Timers	72
	6.4.10	Messages.....	72
	6.4.11	LACP Receive machine.....	72
	6.4.12	Selection Logic	74
	6.4.12.1	Selection Logic—Requirements	75
	6.4.12.2	Selection Logic—Recommended default operation	77
	6.4.13	Mux machine	78
	6.4.14	LACP Transmit machine	81
6.5	Marker protocol		82
	6.5.1	Introduction.....	82
	6.5.2	Sequence of operations	83
	6.5.3	Marker and Marker Response PDU structure and encoding	83
	6.5.3.1	Transmission and representation of octets	83
	6.5.3.2	Encapsulation of Marker and Marker Response PDU in frames.....	83
	6.5.3.3	Marker and Marker Response PDU structure	84
	6.5.4	Protocol definition	85
	6.5.4.1	Operation of the marker protocol.....	85
	6.5.4.2	Marker Responder state diagram	86
6.6	Conversation-Sensitive Collection and Distribution		87
	6.6.1	Port Algorithms and Port Conversation IDs	89
	6.6.2	Link numbers and link selection.....	89
	6.6.3	Conversation-sensitive LACP.....	90
	6.6.3.1	Per-Aggregator variables	91
	6.6.3.2	Variables associated with each Aggregation Port.....	94
	6.6.3.3	Variables used for managing the operation of the state diagrams	95
	6.6.3.4	Functions.....	96
	6.6.3.5	Update Mask machine	100
6.7	Configuration capabilities and restrictions		102
	6.7.1	Use of system and port priorities	102

6.7.2	Dynamic allocation of operational Keys	103
6.7.3	Link Aggregation on shared-medium links	103
6.7.4	Selection Logic variants.....	104
6.7.4.1	Reduced reconfiguration.....	104
6.7.4.2	Limited Aggregator availability.....	104
6.7.5	LACP configuration for dual-homed Systems.....	104
7.	Management.....	106
7.1	Overview.....	106
7.1.1	Systems management overview.....	106
7.1.2	Management model.....	107
7.2	Managed objects	107
7.2.1	Introduction.....	107
7.2.2	Overview of managed objects.....	108
7.2.2.1	Text description of managed objects	108
7.2.3	Containment.....	108
7.2.4	Naming.....	109
7.2.5	Capabilities	109
7.3	Management for Link Aggregation	114
7.3.1	Aggregator managed object class	114
7.3.1.1	Aggregator attributes	115
7.3.1.2	Aggregator Notifications	125
7.3.2	Aggregation Port managed object class.....	125
7.3.2.1	Aggregation Port Attributes.....	125
7.3.2.2	Aggregation Port Extension Attributes.....	132
7.3.3	Aggregation Port Statistics managed object class	133
7.3.3.1	Aggregation Port Statistics attributes	133
7.3.4	Aggregation Port Debug Information managed object class.....	134
7.3.4.1	Aggregation Port Debug Information attributes	135
7.4	Management for Distributed Resilient Network Interconnect.....	137
7.4.1	DRNI Managed Object Class	137
7.4.1.1	DRNI Attributes.....	137
8.	Distribution algorithms	148
8.1	Distribution algorithm identification	148
8.2	Per-Service Frame Distribution	149
8.2.1	Distribution based on C-VLAN Identifier (C-VID)	149
8.2.2	Distribution based on S-VLAN Identifier (S-VID).....	150
8.2.3	Distribution based on Backbone Service Instance Identifier (I-SID).....	150
8.2.4	Distribution based on Traffic Engineering Service Instance Identifier (TE-SID).....	150
8.2.5	Distribution based on Flow Hash.....	150
9.	Distributed Resilient Network Interconnect	151
9.1	Goals	151
9.2	Distributed Relay operation	152
9.3	Intra-Relay Connection.....	154
9.4	Using DRNI	155
9.4.1	DRNI connectivity.....	155
9.4.2	DRNI fault recovery	157
9.4.3	DRNI configuration	158