IP Security Overview

Def: Internet Protocol security (IPSec) is a framework of open standards for protecting communications over Internet Protocol (IP) networks through the use of cryptographic security services. IPSec supports network-level peer authentication, data origin authentication, data integrity, data confidentiality (encryption), and replay protection.

Need for IPSec

In Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT)'s 2001 annual report it listed 52,000 security incidents in which most serious types of attacks included **IP spoofing**, in which intruders create packets with false IP addresses and exploit applications that use authentication based on IP and various forms of **eavesdropping and packet sniffing**, in which attackers read transmitted information, including logon information and database contents. In response to these issues, the IAB included authentication and encryption as necessary security features in the next-generation IP i.e. IPv6.

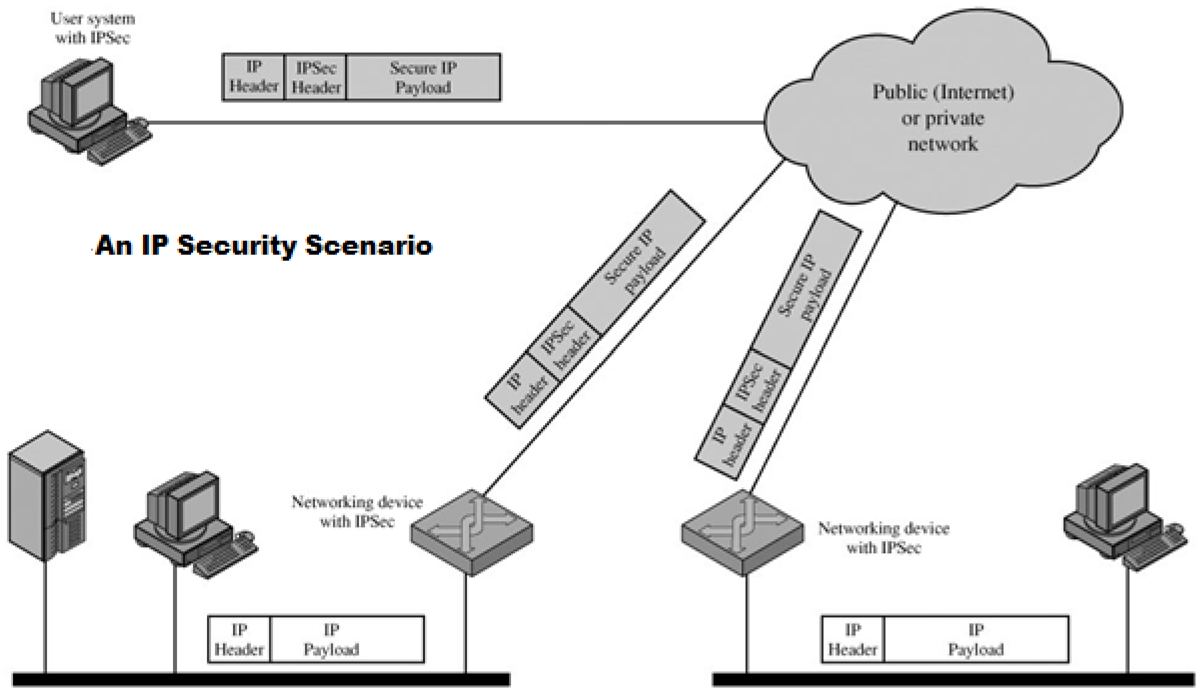
Applications of IPSec

IPSec provides the capability to secure communications across a LAN, across private and public wide area networks (WAN's), and across the Internet.

- ***Secure branch office connectivity over the Internet***: A company can build a secure virtual private network over the Internet or over a public WAN. This enables a business to rely heavily on the Internet and reduce its need for private networks, saving costs and network management overhead.
- ***Secure remote access over the Internet***: An end user whose system is equipped with IP security protocols can make a local call to an Internet service provider (ISP) and gain secure access to a company network. This reduces the cost of toll charges for travelling employees and telecommuters.
- ***Establishing extranet and intranet connectivity with partners***: IPSec can be used to secure communication with other organizations, ensuring authentication and confidentiality and providing a key exchange mechanism.
- ***Enhancing electronic commerce security***: Even though some Web and electronic commerce applications have built-in security protocols, the use of IPSec enhances that security.

The principal feature of IPSec enabling it to support varied applications is that it can encrypt and/or authenticate all traffic at IP level. Thus, all distributed applications, including remote logon, client/server, e-mail, file transfer, Web access, and so on, can be secured.

The following figure shows a typical scenario of IPSec usage. An organization maintains LANs at dispersed locations. Non secure IP traffic is conducted on each LAN.



An IP Security Scenario

The IPSec protocols operate in networking devices, such as a router or firewall that connect each LAN to the outside world. The IPSec networking device will typically encrypt and compress all traffic going into the WAN, and decrypt and decompress traffic coming from the WAN; these operations are transparent to workstations and servers on the LAN. Secure transmission is also possible with individual users who dial into the WAN. Such user workstations must implement the IPSec protocols to provide security.

Benefits of IPSec

The benefits of IPSec are listed below:

- IPSec in a firewall/router provides strong security to all traffic crossing the perimeter
- IPSec in a firewall is resistant to bypass
- IPSec is below transport layer(TCP,UDP), hence transparent to applications
- IPSec can be transparent to end users
- IPSec can provide security for individual users if needed (useful for offsite workers and setting up a secure virtual subnetwork for sensitive applications)

Routing Applications

IPSec also plays a vital role in the routing architecture required for internetworking. It assures that:

- router advertisements come from authorized routers
- neighbor advertisements come from authorized routers
- redirect messages come from the router to which initial packet was sent
- A routing update is not forged

IP Security Architecture

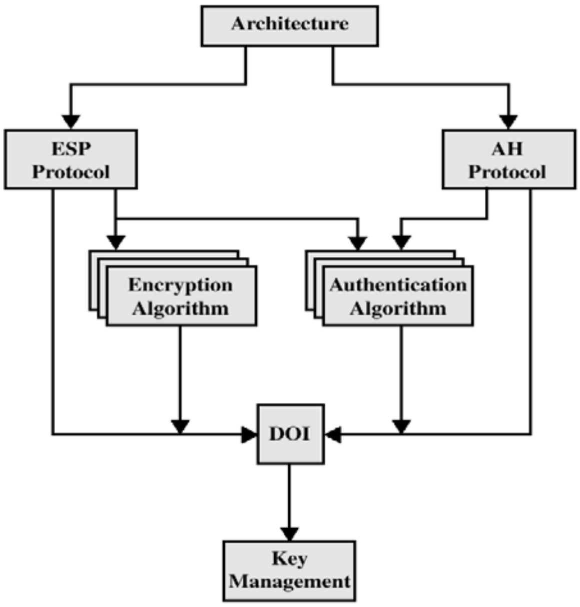
To understand IP Security architecture, we examine IPSec documents first and then move on to IPSec services and Security Associations.

IPSec Documents

The IPSec specification consists of numerous documents. The most important of these, issued in November of 1998, are RFCs 2401, 2402, 2406, and 2408:

- RFC 2401: An overview of a security architecture
- RFC 2402: Description of a packet authentication extension to IPv4 and IPv6
- RFC 2406: Description of a packet encryption extension to IPv4 and IPv6
- RFC 2408: Specification of key management capabilities

Support for these features is mandatory for IPv6 and optional for IPv4. In both cases, the security features are implemented as extension headers that follow the main IP header. The extension header for authentication is known as the Authentication header; that for encryption is known as the Encapsulating Security Payload (ESP) header. In addition to these four RFCs, a number of additional drafts have been published by the IP Security Protocol Working Group set up by the IETF. The documents are divided into seven groups, as depicted in following figure:



- **Architecture**: Covers the general concepts, security requirements, definitions, and mechanisms defining IPSec technology
- **Encapsulating Security Payload (ESP):** Covers the packet format and general issues related to the use of the ESP for packet encryption and, optionally, authentication.
- **Authentication Header (AH):** Covers the packet format and general issues related to the use of AH for packet authentication.

- **Encryption Algorithm**: A set of documents that describe how various encryption algorithms are used for ESP.
- **Authentication Algorithm:** A set of documents that describe how various authentication algorithms are used for AH and for the authentication option of ESP.
- **Key Management**: Documents that describe key management schemes.
- **Domain of Interpretation (DOI):** Contains values needed for the other documents to relate to each other. These include identifiers for approved encryption and authentication algorithms, as well as operational parameters such as key lifetime.

IPSec Services

IPSec architecture makes use of two major protocols (i.e., Authentication Header and ESP protocols) for providing security at IP level. This facilitates the system to beforehand choose an algorithm to be implemented, security protocols needed and any cryptographic keys required to provide requested services. The IPSec services are as follows:

- **Connectionless Integrity:-** Data integrity service is provided by IPSec via AH which prevents the data from being altered during transmission.
- **Data Origin Authentication**:- This IPSec service prevents the occurrence of replay attacks, address spoofing etc., which can be fatal
- **Access Control**:- The cryptographic keys are distributed and the traffic flow is controlled in both AH and ESP protocols, which is done to accomplish access control over the data transmission.
- **Confidentiality**:- Confidentiality on the data packet is obtained by using an encryption technique in which all the data packets are transformed into ciphertext packets which are unreadable and difficult to understand.
- **Limited Traffic Flow Confidentiality**:- This facility or service provided by IPSec ensures that the confidentiality is maintained on the number of packets transferred or received. This can be done using padding in ESP.
- **Replay packets Rejection**:- The duplicate or replay packets are identified and discarded using the sequence number field in both AH and ESP.

	AH	ESP (encryption only)	ESP (encryption plus authentication)
Access control	✔	✔	✔
Connectionless integrity	✔		✔
Data origin authentication	✔		✔
Rejection of replayed packets	✔	✔	✔
Confidentiality		✔	✔
Limited traffic flow confidentiality		✔	✔

Security Associations

Since IPSEC is designed to be able to use various security protocols, it uses Security Associations (SA) to specify the protocols to be used. SA is a database record which specifies security parameters controlling security operations. They are referenced by the sending host and established by the receiving host. An index parameter called the Security Parameters Index (SPI) is used. SAs are in one direction only and a second SA must be established for the transmission to be bi-directional. A security association is uniquely identified by three parameters:

- **Security Parameters Index (SPI):** A bit string assigned to this SA and having local significance only. The SPI is carried in AH and ESP headers to enable the receiving system to select the SA under which a received packet will be processed.
- **IP Destination Address**: Currently, only unicast addresses are allowed; this is the address of the destination endpoint of the SA, which may be an end user system or a network system such as a firewall or router.
- **Security Protocol Identifier**: This indicates whether the association is an AH or ESP security association.

SA Parameters

In each IPSec implementation, there is a nominal Security Association Database that defines the parameters associated with each SA. A security association is normally defined by the following parameters:

- **Sequence Number Counter:** A 32-bit value used to generate the Sequence Number field in AH or ESP headers
- **Sequence Counter Overflow:** A flag indicating whether overflow of the Sequence Number Counter should generate an auditable event and prevent further transmission of packets on this SA (required for all implementations).
- **Anti-Replay Window:** Used to determine whether an inbound AH or ESP packet is a replay
- **AH Information:** Authentication algorithm, keys, key lifetimes, and related parameters being used with AH (required for AH implementations).
- **ESP Information:** Encryption and authentication algorithm, keys, initialization values, key lifetimes, and related parameters being used with ESP (required for ESP implementations).
- **Lifetime of This Security Association:** A time interval or byte count after which an SA must be replaced with a new SA (and new SPI) or terminated, plus an indication of which of these actions should occur (required for all implementations).
- **IPSec Protocol Mode:** Tunnel, transport, or wildcard (required for all implementations). These modes are discussed later in this section.
- **Path MTU:** Any observed path maximum transmission unit (maximum size of a packet that can be transmitted without fragmentation) and aging variables (required for all implementations).

Transport and Tunnel Modes

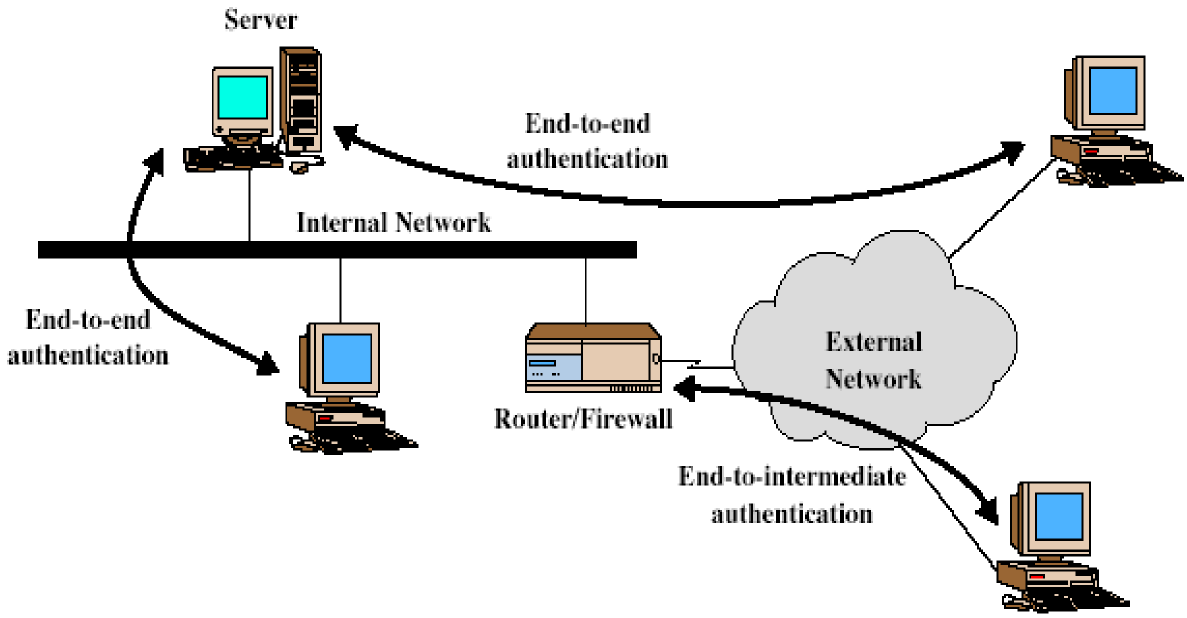
Both AH and ESP support two modes of use: transport and tunnel mode.

	Transport Mode SA	Tunnel Mode SA
AH	**Authenticates** IP payload and selected portions of IP header and IPv6 extension headers	**Authenticates** entire inner IP packet plus selected portions of outer IP header
ESP	**Encrypts** IP payload and any IPv6 extesion header	**Encrypts** inner IP packet
ESP with authentication	**Encrypts** IP payload and any IPv6 extesion header. **Authenticates** IP payload but no IP header	**Encrypts** inner IP packet. **Authenticates** inner IP packet.

IP sec can be used (both AH packets and ESP packets) in two modes

- **Transport mode**: the IP sec header is inserted just after the IP header –this contains the security information, such as SA identifier, encryption, authentication
  - ❖ Typically used in end-to-end communication
  - ❖ IP header not protected

- **Tunnel mode**: the entire IP packet, header and all, is encapsulated in the body of a new IP packet with a completely new IP header
  - ❖ Typically used in firewall-to-firewall communication
  - ❖ Provides protection for the whole IP packet
  - ❖ No routers along the way will be able (and will not need) to check the content of the packets



End-to-End versus End-to-Intermediate Authentication

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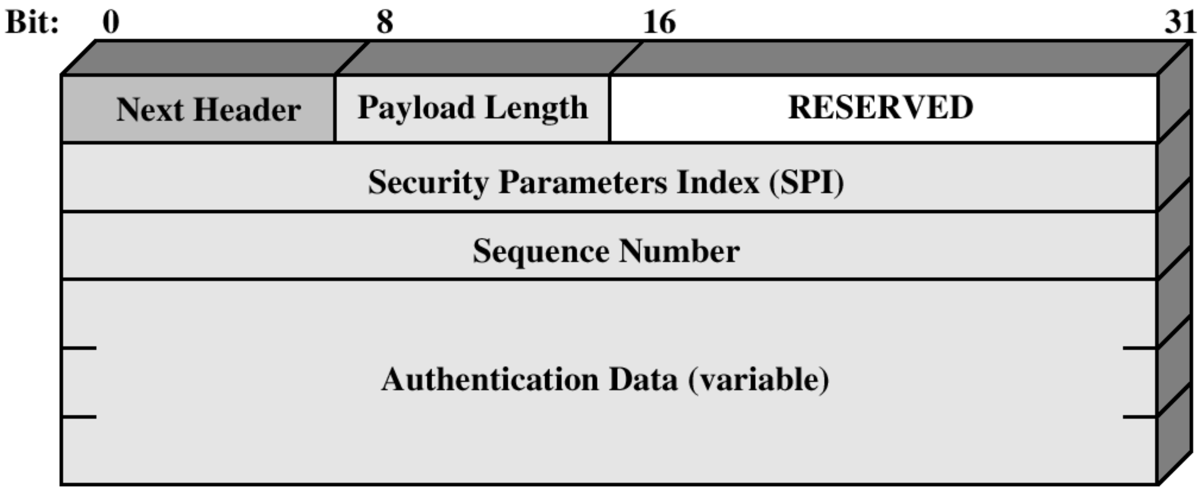
Authentication Header

The Authentication Header provides support for data integrity and authentication of IP packets. The data integrity feature ensures that undetected modification to a packet's content in transit is not possible. The authentication feature enables an end system or network device to authenticate the user or application and filter traffic accordingly; it also prevents the address spoofing attacks observed in today's Internet. The AH also guards against the replay attack. Authentication is based on the use of a message authentication code (MAC), hence the two parties must share a secret key. The Authentication Header consists of the following fields:



IPSec Authentication Header

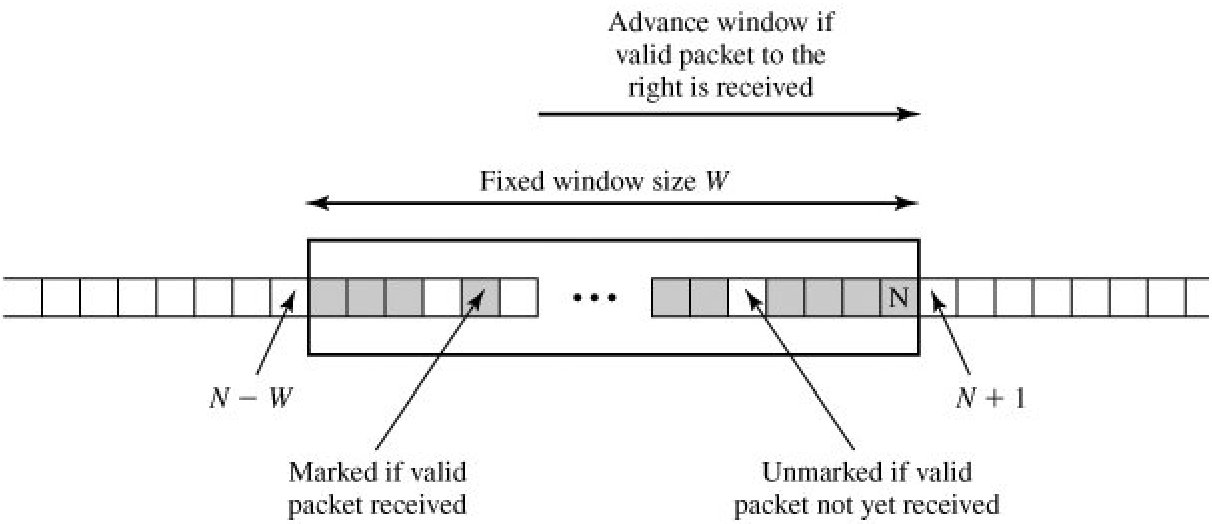
- **Next Header (8 bits):** Identifies the type of header immediately following this header.
- **Payload Length (8 bits):** Length of Authentication Header in 32-bit words, minus 2. For example, the default length of the authentication data field is 96 bits, or three 32-bit words. With a three-word fixed header, there are a total of six words in the header, and the Payload Length field has a value of 4.
- **Reserved (16 bits):** For future use.
- **Security Parameters Index (32 bits):** Identifies a security association.
- **Sequence Number (32 bits):** A monotonically increasing counter value, discussed later.
- **Authentication Data (variable):** A variable-length field (must be an integral number of 32-bit words) that contains the Integrity Check Value (ICV), or MAC, for this packet.

Anti-Replay Service

Anti-replay service is designed to overcome the problems faced due to replay attacks in which an intruder intervenes the packet being transferred, make one or more duplicate copies of that authenticated packet and then sends the packets to the desired destination, thereby causing inconvenient processing at the destination node. The Sequence Number field is designed to thwart such attacks.

When a new SA is established, the sender initializes a sequence number counter to 0. Each time that a packet is sent on this SA, the sender increments the counter and places the value in the Sequence Number field. Thus, the first value to be used is 1. This value goes on increasing with respect to the number of packets being transmitted. The sequence number field in each packet represents the value of this counter. The maximum value of the sequence number field can go up to 2^{32}-1. If the limit of 2^{32}-1 is reached, the sender should terminate this SA and negotiate a new SA with a new key.

The IPSec authentication document dictates that the receiver should implement a window of size W, with a default of W = 64. The right edge of the window represents the highest sequence number, N, so far received for a valid packet. For any packet with a sequence number in the range from N-W+1 to N that has been correctly received (i.e., properly authenticated), the corresponding slot in the window is marked as shown. Inbound processing proceeds as follows when a packet is received:



Antireplay Mechanism

1. If the received packet falls within the window and is new, the MAC is checked. If the packet is authenticated, the corresponding slot in the window is marked.
2. If the received packet is to the right of the window and is new, the MAC is checked. If the packet is authenticated, the window is advanced so that this sequence number is the right edge of the window, and the corresponding slot in the window is marked.
3. If the received packet is to the left of the window, or if authentication fails, the packet is discarded; this is an auditable event.

Integrity Check Value

ICV is the value present in the authenticated data field of ESP/AH, which is used to determine any undesired modifications made to the data during its transit. ICV can also be referred as MAC or part of MAC algorithm. MD5 hash code and SHA-1 hash code are implemented along with HMAC algorithms i.e.,

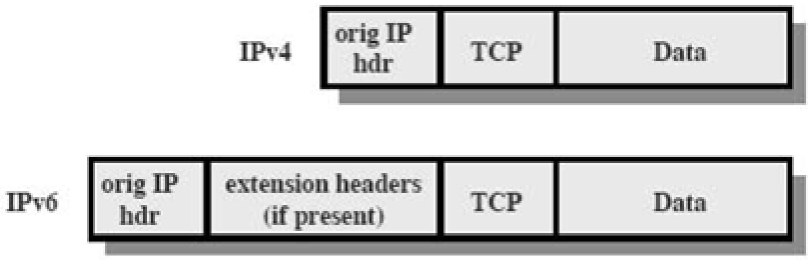
- HMAC-MD5-96
- HMAC-SHA-1-96

In both cases, the full HMAC value is calculated but then truncated by using the first 96 bits, which is the default length for the Authentication Data field. The MAC is calculated over

- IP header fields that either do not change in transit (immutable) or that are predictable in value upon arrival at the endpoint for the AH SA. Fields that may change in transit and whose value on arrival is unpredictable are set to zero for purposes of calculation at both source and destination.
- The AH header other than the Authentication Data field. The Authentication Data field is set to zero for purposes of calculation at both source and destination.
- The entire upper-level protocol data, which is assumed to be immutable in transit (e.g., a TCP segment or an inner IP packet in tunnel mode).

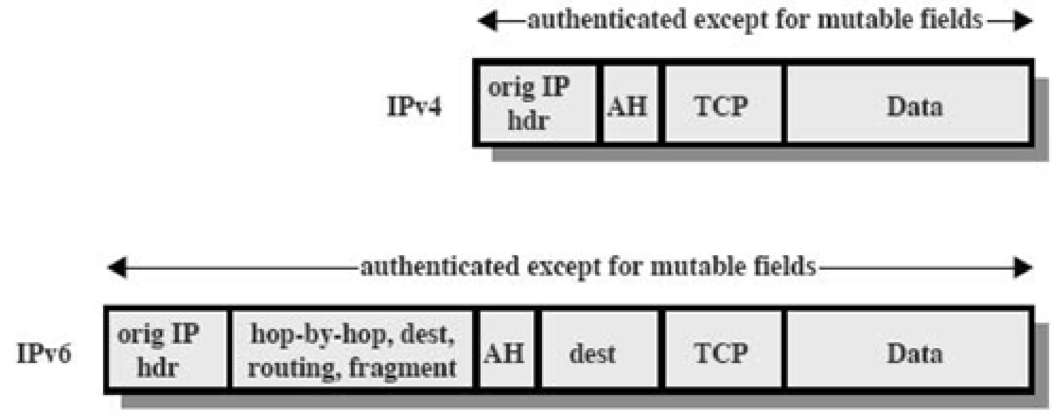
Transport and Tunnel Modes

The following figure shows typical IPv4 and IPv6 packets. In this case, the IP payload is a TCP segment; it could also be a data unit for any other protocol that uses IP, such as UDP or ICMP.

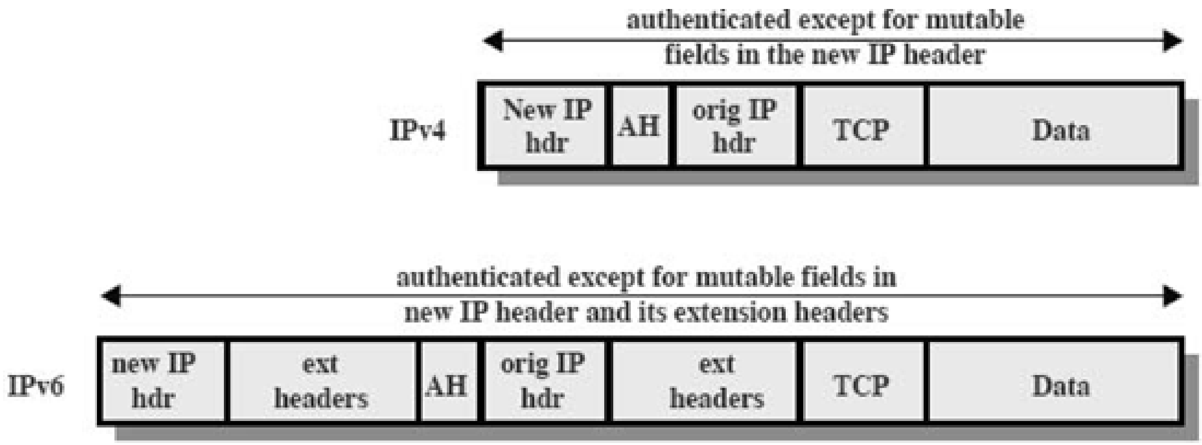


(a) Before Applying AH

For transport mode AH using IPv4, the AH is inserted after the original IP header and before the IP payload (e.g., a TCP segment) shown below. Authentication covers the entire packet, excluding mutable fields in the IPv4 header that are set to zero for MAC calculation. In the context of IPv6, AH is viewed as an end-to-end payload; that is, it is not examined or processed by intermediate routers. Therefore, the AH appears after the IPv6 base header and the hop-by-hop, routing, and fragment extension headers. The destination options extension header could appear before or after the AH header, depending on the semantics desired. Again, authentication covers the entire packet, excluding mutable fields that are set to zero for MAC calculation.



(b) Transport Mode



(c) Tunnel Mode

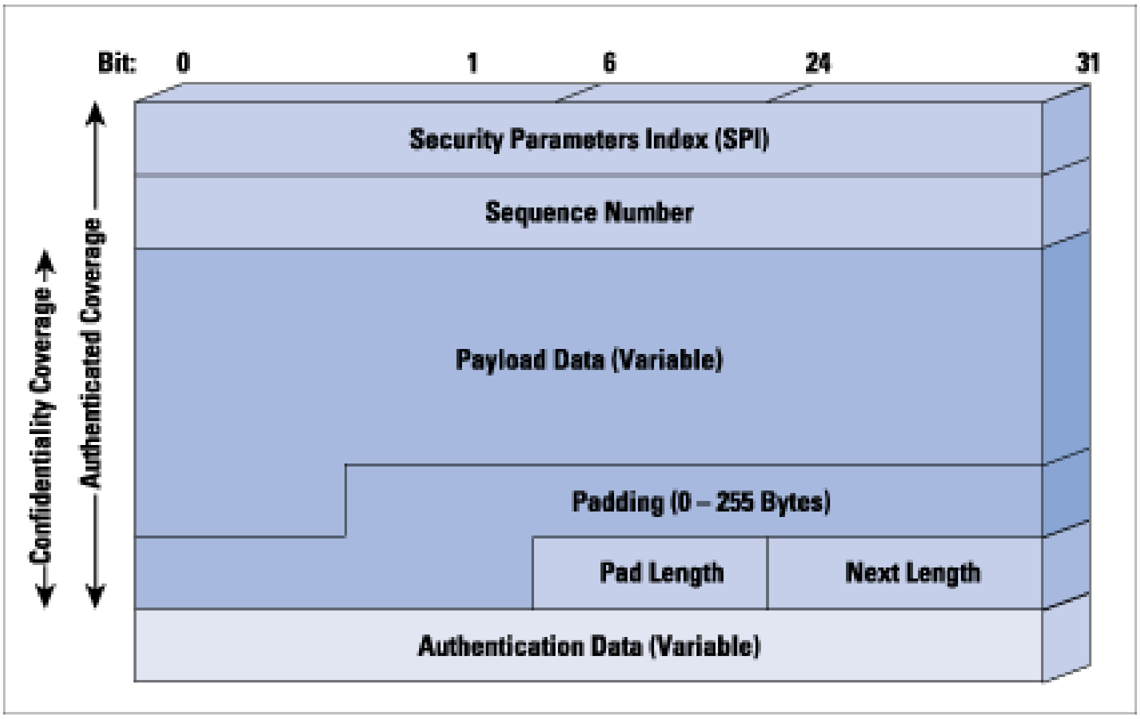
For tunnel mode AH, the entire original IP packet is authenticated, and the AH is inserted between the original IP header and a new outer IP header. The inner IP header carries the ultimate source and destination addresses, while an outer IP header may contain different IP addresses (e.g., addresses of firewalls or other security gateways). With tunnel mode, the entire inner IP packet, including the entire inner IP header is protected by AH. The outer IP header (and in the case of IPv6, the outer IP extension headers) is protected except for mutable and unpredictable fields.

Encapsulating Security Payload

The Encapsulating Security Payload provides confidentiality services, including confidentiality of message contents and limited traffic flow confidentiality. As an optional feature, ESP can also provide an authentication service.

ESP Format

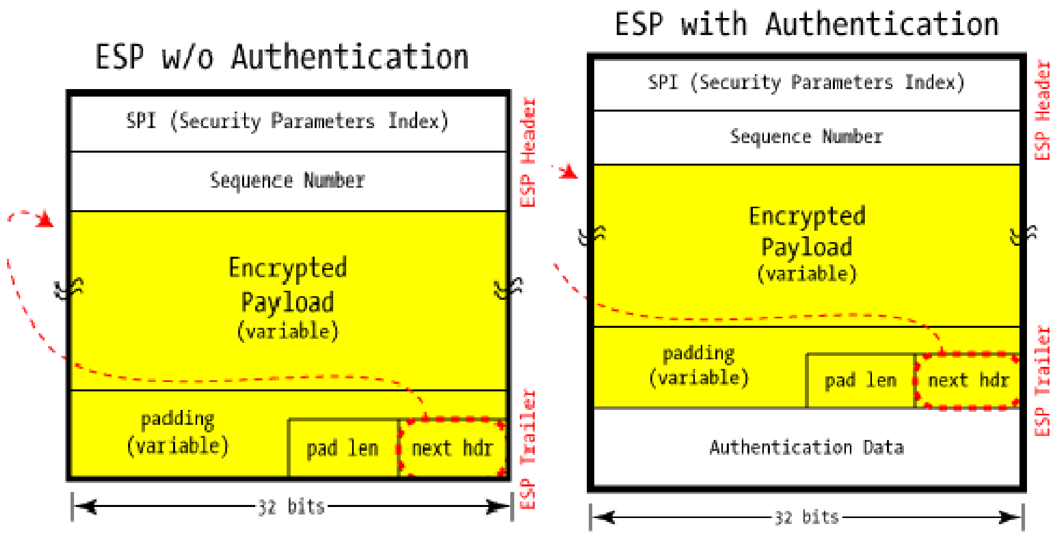
The following figure shows the format of an ESP packet. It contains the following fields:



IPSec ESP format

- **Security Parameters Index** (32 bits): Identifies a security association.
- **Sequence Number** (32 bits): A monotonically increasing counter value; this provides an anti-replay function, as discussed for AH.
- **Payload Data (variable):** This is a transport-level segment (transport mode) or IP packet (tunnel mode) that is protected by encryption.
- **Padding (0-255 bytes):** This field is used to make the length of the plaintext to be a multiple of some desired number of bytes. It is also added to provide confidentiality.
- **Pad Length (8 bits):** Indicates the number of pad bytes immediately preceding this field.
- **Next Header (8 bits):** Identifies the type of data contained in the payload data field by identifying the first header in that payload (for example, an extension header in IPv6, or an upper-layer protocol such as TCP).
- **Authentication Data (variable):** A variable-length field (must be an integral number of 32-bit words) that contains the Integrity Check Value computed over the ESP packet minus the Authentication Data field.

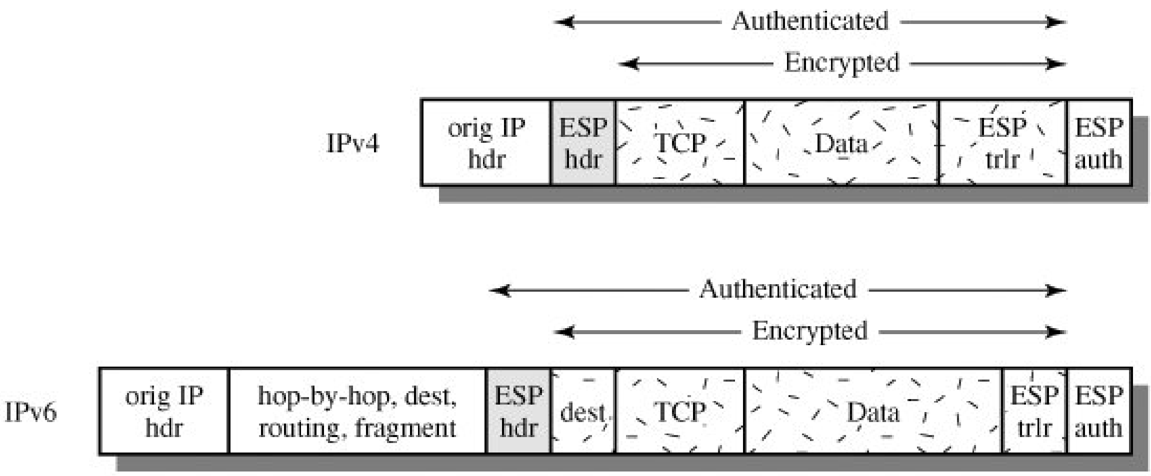
Adding encryption makes ESP a bit more complicated because the encapsulation *surrounds* the payload rather than *precedes* it as with AH: ESP includes header and trailer fields to support the encryption and optional authentication. It also provides Tunnel and Transport modes. The IPSec RFCs don't insist upon any particular encryption algorithms, but we find DES, triple-DES, AES, and Blowfish in common use to shield the payload from prying eyes. The algorithm used for a particular connection is specified by the Security Association and this SA includes not only the algorithm, but the key used. Unlike AH, which provides a small header *before* the payload, ESP *surrounds* the payload it's protecting. The Security Parameters Index and Sequence Number serve the same purpose as in AH, but we find padding, the next header, and the optional Authentication Data at the end, in the ESP Trailer.



It's possible to use ESP without any actual encryption (to use a NULL algorithm), which nonetheless structures the packet the same way. This provides no confidentiality, and it only makes sense if combined with ESP authentication. Padding is provided to allow block-oriented encryption algorithms room for multiples of their block size, and the length of that padding is provided in the **pad len** field. The **next hdr** field gives the type (IP, TCP, UDP, etc.) of the payload in the usual way, though it can be thought of as pointing "backwards" into the packet rather than forward as we've seen in AH. In addition to encryption, ESP can also optionally provide authentication, with the same HMAC as found in AH. Unlike AH, however, this authentication is *only for the ESP header and encrypted payload*: it does not cover the full IP packet

Transport Mode ESP

Transport mode ESP is used to encrypt and optionally authenticate the data carried by IP (e.g., a TCP segment). For this mode using IPv4, the ESP header is inserted into the IP packet immediately prior to the transport-layer header (e.g., TCP, UDP, ICMP) and an ESP trailer (Padding, Pad Length, and Next Header fields) is placed after the IP packet; if authentication is selected, the ESP Authentication Data field is added after the ESP trailer. The entire transport-level segment plus the ESP trailer are encrypted. Authentication covers all of the ciphertext plus the ESP header. In the context of IPv6, ESP is viewed as an end-to-end payload; that is, it is not examined or processed by intermediate routers. Therefore, the ESP header appears after the IPv6 base header and the hop-by-hop, routing, and fragment extension headers. The destination options extension header could appear before or after the ESP header, depending on the semantics desired. For IPv6, encryption covers the entire transport-level segment plus the ESP trailer plus the destination options extension header if it occurs after the ESP header. Again, authentication covers the ciphertext plus the ESP header.



(a) Transport mode

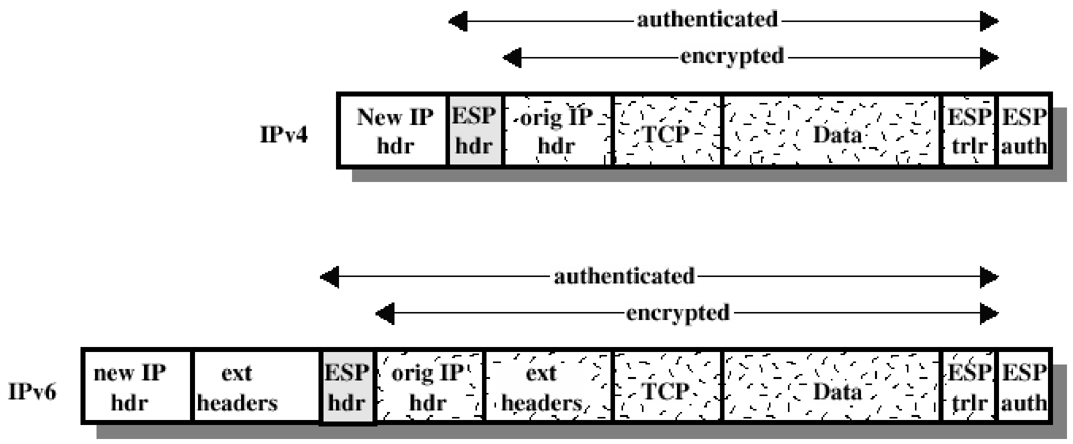
Transport mode operation may be summarized as follows:

1. At the source, the block of data consisting of the ESP trailer plus the entire transport-layer segment is encrypted and the plaintext of this block is replaced with its ciphertext to form the IP packet for transmission. Authentication is added if this option is selected.
2. The packet is then routed to the destination. Each intermediate router needs to examine and process the IP header plus any plaintext IP extension headers but does not need to examine the ciphertext.
3. The destination node examines and processes the IP header plus any plaintext IP extension headers. Then, on the basis of the SPI in the ESP header, the destination node decrypts the remainder of the packet to recover the plaintext transport-layer segment.

Transport mode operation provides confidentiality for any application that uses it, thus avoiding the need to implement confidentiality in every individual application. This mode of operation is also reasonably efficient, adding little to the total length of the IP packet. One drawback to this mode is that it is possible to do traffic analysis on the transmitted packets.

Tunnel Mode ESP

In case of tunnel mode ESP, ESP header and the ESP trailer are attached before and after the IP packet respectively, then the complete IP packet which includes IP header, Transport header and data field along with the ESP trailer is encrypted. Tunnel mode ESP is used to protect against the traffic flow analysis. But if ESP header precedes the IP header, the routers cannot identify and process this packet as the routing information and other parameters needed are present in the IP header of the packet. To overcome this problem, the complete structure which contains ESP header, encrypted text as well as authentication data are encapsulated in a new IP packet with a new IP header. This new IP header has enough routing information inorder to process the packet to the appropriate destination.



(b) Tunnel Mode

The transport mode is suitable for protecting connections between hosts that support the ESP feature and the tunnel mode is useful in a configuration that includes a firewall or other sort of security gateway that protects a trusted network from external networks. Consider a case in which an external host wishes to communicate with a host on an internal network protected by a firewall, and in which ESP is implemented in the external host and the firewalls. The following steps occur for transfer of a transport-layer segment from the external host to the internal host:

1. The source prepares an inner IP packet with a destination address of the target internal host. This packet is prefixed by an ESP header; then the packet and ESP trailer are encrypted and Authentication Data may be added. The resulting block is encapsulated with a new IP header (base header plus optional extensions such as routing and hop-by-hop options for IPv6) whose destination address is the firewall; this forms the outer IP packet.
2. The outer packet is routed to the destination firewall. Each intermediate router needs to examine and process the outer IP header plus any outer IP extension headers but does not need to examine the ciphertext.
3. The destination firewall examines and processes the outer IP header plus any outer IP extension headers. Then, on the basis of the SPI in the ESP header, the destination node decrypts the remainder of the packet to recover the plaintext inner IP packet. This packet is then transmitted in the internal network.
4. The inner packet is routed through zero or more routers in the internal network to the destination host.

Combining Security Associations

An individual SA can implement either the AH or ESP protocol but not both. Multiple SAs must be employed for traffic flow to achieve the desired IPSec services. The term *security association bundle* refers to a sequence of SAs through which traffic must be processed to provide a desired set of IPSec services. The SAs in a bundle may terminate at different endpoints or at the same endpoints. Security associations may be combined into bundles in two ways:

- **Transport adjacency:** Refers to applying more than one security protocol to the same IP packet, without invoking tunnelling.
- **Iterated tunnelling:** Refers to the application of multiple layers of security protocols effected through IP tunnelling. This approach allows for multiple levels of nesting, since each tunnel can originate or terminate at a different IPSec site along the path.

Authentication Plus Confidentiality

Encryption and authentication can be combined in order to transmit an IP packet that has both confidentiality and authentication between hosts. There are several approaches for this:

ESP with Authentication Option

In this approach, the encryption is carried out on a data packet prior to its authentication. This can be represented using the following two cases:

- Transport Mode ESP
- Tunnel Mode ESP

Transport Adjacency

Another way to apply authentication after encryption is to use two bundled transport SAs, with the inner being an ESP SA and the outer being an AH SA. In this case ESP is used without its authentication option. Because the inner SA is a transport SA, encryption is applied to the IP payload. The resulting packet consists of an IP header (and possibly IPv6 header extensions) followed by an ESP. AH is then applied in transport mode, so that authentication covers the ESP plus the original IP header (and extensions) except for mutable fields. The advantage of this approach over simply using a single ESP SA with the ESP authentication option is that the authentication covers more fields, including the source and destination IP addresses. The disadvantage is the overhead of two SAs versus one SA.

Transport-Tunnel Bundle

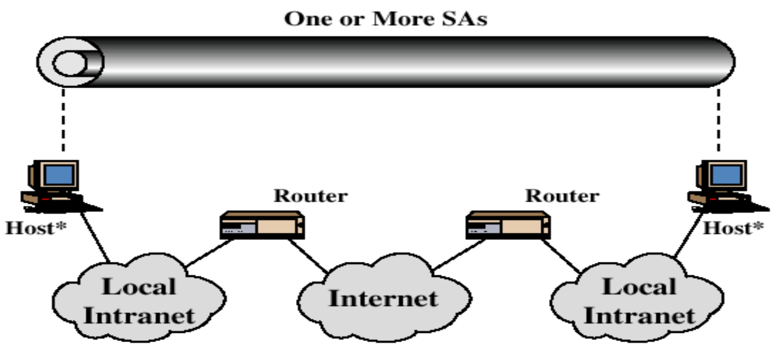
The use of authentication prior to encryption might be preferable for several reasons. First, because the authentication data are protected by encryption, it is impossible for anyone to intercept the message and alter the authentication data without detection. Second, it may be desirable to store the authentication information with the message at the destination for later reference. It is more convenient to do this if the authentication information applies to the unencrypted message; otherwise the message would have to be reencrypted to verify the authentication information.

One approach to applying authentication before encryption between two hosts is to use a bundle consisting of an inner AH transport SA and an outer ESP tunnel SA. In this case, authentication is applied to the IP payload plus the IP header (and extensions) except for mutable fields. The resulting IP packet is then processed in tunnel mode by ESP; the result is that the entire, authenticated inner packet is encrypted and a new outer IP header (and extensions) is added.

Basic Combinations of Security Associations

The IPSec Architecture document lists four examples of combinations of SAs that must be supported by compliant IPSec hosts (e.g., workstation, server) or security gateways (e.g. firewall, router).

case:-1

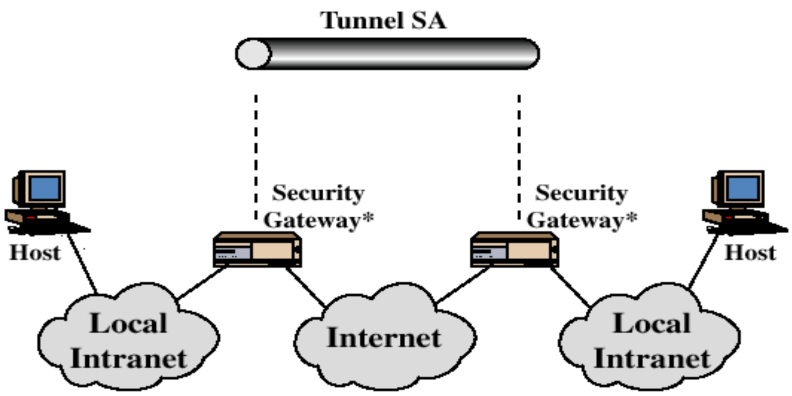


(a) Case 1

All security is provided between end systems that implement IPSec. For any two end systems to communicate via an SA, they must share the appropriate secret keys. Among the possible combinations:

a) AH in transport mode
b) ESP in transport mode
c) ESP followed by AH in transport mode (an ESP SA inside an AH SA)
d) Any one of a, b, or c inside an AH or ESP in tunnel mode

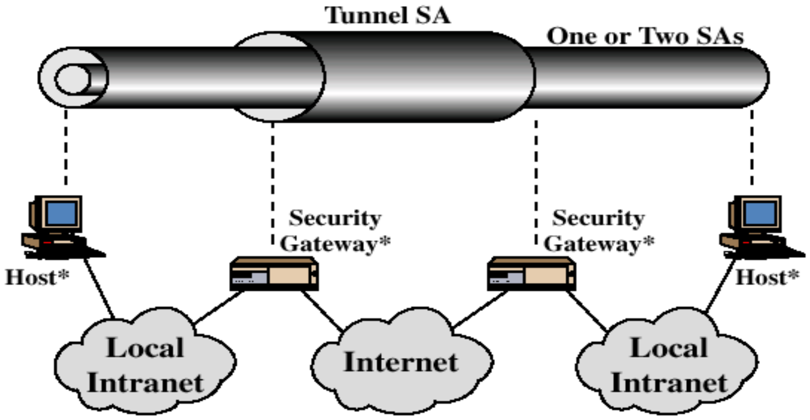
Case:-2



(b) Case 2

Security is provided only between gateways (routers, firewalls, etc.) and no hosts implement IPSec. This case illustrates simple virtual private network support. The security architecture document specifies that only a single tunnel SA is needed for this case. The tunnel could support AH, ESP, or ESP with the authentication option. Nested tunnels are not required because the IPSec services apply to the entire inner packet.

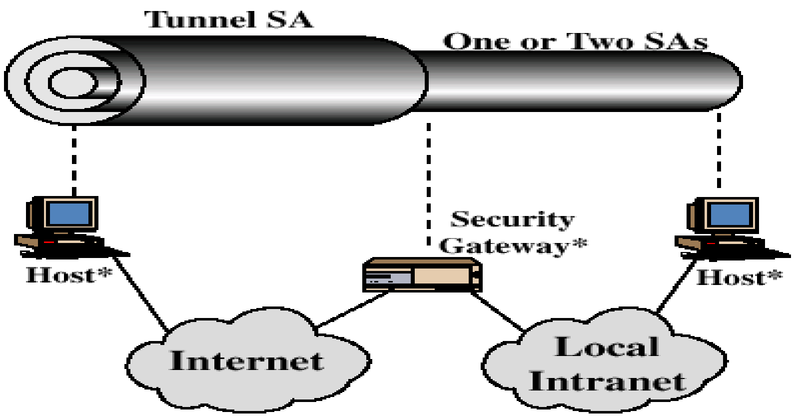
Case-3:-



(c) Case 3

The third combination is similar to the second, but in addition provides security even to nodes. This combination makes use of two tunnels first for gateway to gateway and second for node to node. Either authentication or the encryption or both can be provided by using gateway to gateway tunnel. An additional IPSec service is provided to the individual nodes by using node to node tunnel.

Case:-4



(d) Case 4

This combination is suitable for serving remote users i.e., the end user sitting anywhere in the world can use the internet to access the organizational workstations via the firewall. This combination states that only one tunnel is needed for communication between a remote user and an organizational firewall.

Key Management

The key management portion of IPSec involves the determination and distribution of secret keys. The IPSec Architecture document mandates support for two types of key management:

- **Manual:** A system administrator manually configures each system with its own keys and with the keys of other communicating systems. This is practical for small, relatively static environments.
- **Automated:** An automated system enables the on-demand creation of keys for SAs and facilitates the use of keys in a large distributed system with an evolving configuration.

The default automated key management protocol for IPSec is referred to as ISAKMP/Oakley and consists of the following elements:

- **Oakley Key Determination Protocol**: Oakley is a key exchange protocol based on the Diffie-Hellman algorithm but providing added security. Oakley is generic in that it does not dictate specific formats.
- **Internet Security Association and Key Management Protocol (ISAKMP):** ISAKMP provides a framework for Internet key management and provides the specific protocol support, including formats, for negotiation of security attributes.

Oakley Key Determination Protocol

Oakley is a refinement of the Diffie-Hellman key exchange algorithm. The Diffie-Hellman algorithm has two attractive features:

- Secret keys are created only when needed. There is no need to store secret keys for a long period of time, exposing them to increased vulnerability.
- The exchange requires no pre-existing infrastructure other than an agreement on the global parameters.

However, Diffie-Hellman has got some weaknesses:

- No identity information about the parties is provided.
- It is possible for a man-in-the-middle attack
- It is computationally intensive. As a result, it is vulnerable to a clogging attack, in which an opponent requests a high number of keys.

Oakley is designed to retain the advantages of Diffie-Hellman while countering its weaknesses.

Features of Oakley

The Oakley algorithm is characterized by five important features:

1. It employs a mechanism known as cookies to thwart clogging attacks.
2. It enables the two parties to negotiate a group; this, in essence, specifies the global parameters of the Diffie-Hellman key exchange.
3. It uses nonces to ensure against replay attacks.
4. It enables the exchange of Diffie-Hellman public key values.
5. It authenticates the Diffie-Hellman exchange to thwart man-in-the-middle attacks.

In clogging attacks, an opponent forges the source address of a legitimate user and sends a public Diffie-Hellman key to the victim. The victim then performs a modular exponentiation to compute the secret key. Repeated messages of this type can clog the victim's system with useless work. The **cookie exchange** requires that each side send a pseudorandom number, the cookie, in the initial message, which the other side acknowledges. This acknowledgment must be repeated in the first message of the Diffie-Hellman key exchange. The recommended method for creating the cookie is to perform a fast hash (e.g., MD5) over the IP Source and Destination addresses, the UDP Source and Destination ports, and a locally generated secret value. Oakley supports the use of different **groups** for the Diffie-Hellman key exchange. Each group includes the definition of the two global parameters and the identity of the algorithm. Oakley employs **nonces** to ensure against replay attacks. Each nonce is a locally generated pseudorandom number. Nonces appear in responses and are encrypted during certain portions of the exchange to secure their use. Three different authentication methods can be used with Oakley are digital signatures, public-key encryption and Symmetric-key encryption.

Aggressive Oakley Key Exchange

Aggressive key exchange is a technique used for exchanging the message keys and is so called because only three messages are allowed to be exchanged at any time.

I → R: CKY_I, OK_KEYX, GRP, g^x, EHAO, NIDP, ID_I, ID_R, N_I, $S_{KI}[ID_I \| ID_R \| N_I \| GRP \| g^x \| EHAO]$

R → I: CKY_R, CKY_I, OK_KEYX, GRP, g^y, EHAS, NIDP, ID_R, ID_I, N_R, N_I, $S_{KR}[ID_R \| ID_I \| N_R \| N_I \| GRP \| g^y \| g^x \| EHAS]$

I → R: CKY_I, CKY_R, OK_KEYX, GRP, g^x, EHAS, NIDP, ID_I, ID_R, N_I, N_R, $S_{KI}[ID_I \| ID_R \| N_I \| N_R \| GRP \| g^x \| g^y \| EHAS]$

Notation:

I	=	Initiator
R	=	Responder
CKY_I, CKY_R	=	Initiator, responder cookies
OK_KEYX	=	Key exchange message type
GRP	=	Name of Diffie-Hellman group for this exchange
g^x, g^y	=	Public key of initiator, responder; g^{xy} = session key from this exchange
EHAO, EHAS	=	Encryption, hash authentication functions, offered and selected
NIDP	=	Indicates encryption is not used for remainder of this message
ID_I, ID_R	=	Identifier for initiator, responder
N_I, N_R	=	Random nonce supplied by initiator, responder for this exchange
$S_{KI}[X]$, $S_{KR}[X]$	=	Indicates the signature over X using the private key (signing key) of intiator, responder

Example of Aggressive Oakley Key Exchange

In the first step, the initiator (I) transmits a cookie, the group to be used, and I's public Diffie-Hellman key for this exchange. I also indicates the offered public-key encryption, hash, and authentication algorithms to be used in this exchange. Also included in this message are the identifiers of I and the responder (R) and I's nonce for this exchange. Finally, I appends a signature using I's private key that signs the two identifiers, the nonce, the group, the Diffie-Hellman public key, and the offered algorithms. When R receives the message, R verifies the signature using I's public signing key. R acknowledges the message by echoing back I's cookie, identifier, and nonce, as well as the group. R also includes in the message a cookie, R's Diffie-Hellman public key, the selected algorithms (which must be among the offered algorithms), R's identifier, and R's nonce for this exchange. Finally, R appends a signature using R's private key that signs the two identifiers, the two nonces, the group, the two Diffie-Hellman public keys, and the selected algorithms.

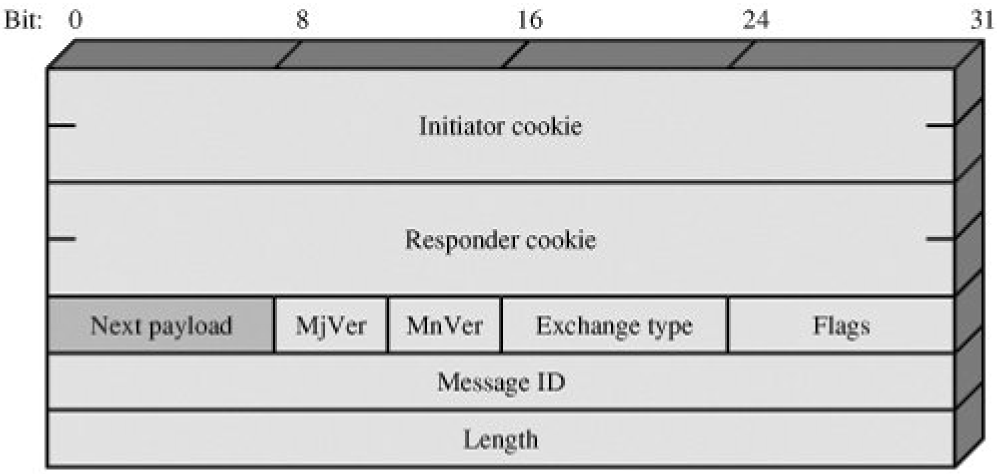
When I receives the second message, I verifies the signature using R's public key. The nonce values in the message assure that this is not a replay of an old message. To complete the exchange, I must send a message back to R to verify that I has received R's public key.

ISAKMP

ISAKMP defines procedures and packet formats to establish, negotiate, modify, and delete security associations. As part of SA establishment, ISAKMP defines payloads for exchanging key generation and authentication data.

ISAKMP Header Format

An ISAKMP message consists of an ISAKMP header followed by one or more payloads and must follow UDP transport layer protocol for its implementation. The header format of an ISAKMP header is shown below:

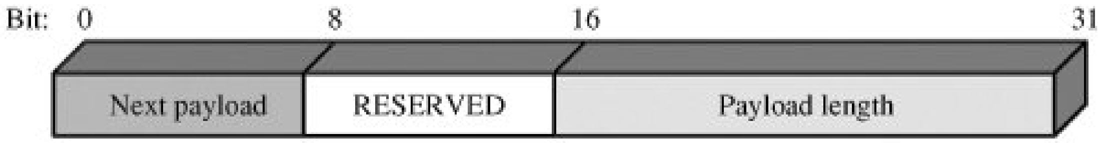


(a) ISAKMP header

- **Initiator Cookie** (64 bits): Cookie of entity that initiated SA establishment, SA notification, or SA deletion.
- **Responder Cookie** (64 bits): Cookie of responding entity; null in first message from initiator.
- **Next Payload** (8 bits): Indicates the type of the first payload in the message
- **Major Version** (4 bits): Indicates major version of ISAKMP in use.
- **Minor Version** (4 bits): Indicates minor version in use.
- **Exchange Type** (8 bits): Indicates the type of exchange. Can be informational, aggressive, authentication only, identity protection or base exchange (S).
- **Flags** (8 bits): Indicates specific options set for this ISAKMP exchange. Two bits so far defined: The Encryption bit is set if all payloads following the header are encrypted using the encryption algorithm for this SA. The Commit bit is used to ensure that encrypted material is not received prior to completion of SA establishment.
- **Message ID** (32 bits): Unique ID for this message.
- **Length** (32 bits): Length of total message (header plus all payloads) in octets.

ISAKMP Payload Types

All ISAKMP payloads begin with the same generic payload header shown below.



(b) Generic payload header

The Next Payload field has a value of 0 if this is the last payload in the message; otherwise its value is the type of the next payload. The Payload Length field indicates the length in octets of this payload, including the generic payload header. There are many different ISAKMP payload types. They are:

a. The SA payload is used to begin the establishment of an SA. The Domain of Interpretation parameter identifies the DOI under which negotiation is taking place. The Situation parameter defines the security policy for this negotiation; in essence, the levels of security required for encryption and confidentiality are specified (e.g., sensitivity level, security compartment).
b. The Proposal payload contains information used during SA negotiation. The payload indicates the protocol for this SA (ESP or AH) for which services and mechanisms are being negotiated. The payload also includes the sending entity's SPI and the number of transforms. Each transform is contained in a transform payload.
c. The Transform payload defines a security transform to be used to secure the communications channel for the designated protocol. The Transform # parameter serves to identify this particular payload so that the responder may use it to indicate acceptance of this transform. The Transform-ID and Attributes fields identify a specific transform (e.g., 3DES for ESP, HMAC-SHA-1-96 for AH) with its associated attributes (e.g., hash length).
d. The Key Exchange payload can be used for a variety of key exchange techniques, including Oakley, Diffie-Hellman, and the RSA-based key exchange used by PGP. The Key Exchange data field contains the data required to generate a session key and is dependent on the key exchange algorithm used.
e. The Identification payload is used to determine the identity of communicating peers and may be used for determining authenticity of information. Typically the ID Data field will contain an IPv4 or IPv6 address.
f. The Certificate payload transfers a public-key certificate. The Certificate Encoding field indicates the type of certificate or certificate-related information, which may include SPKI, ARL, CRL, PGP info etc. At any point in an ISAKMP exchange, the sender may include a Certificate Request payload to request the certificate of the other communicating entity.
g. The Hash payload contains data generated by a hash function over some part of the message and/or ISAKMP state. This payload may be used to verify the integrity of the data in a message or to authenticate negotiating entities.

h. The Signature payload contains data generated by a digital signature function over some part of the message and/or ISAKMP state. This payload is used to verify the integrity of the data in a message and may be used for nonrepudiation services.
i. The Nonce payload contains random data used to guarantee liveness during an exchange and protect against replay attacks.
j. The Notification payload contains either error or status information associated with this SA or this SA negotiation. Some of the ISAKMP error messages that have been defined are Invalid Flags, Invalid Cookie, Payload Malformed etc
k. The Delete payload indicates one or more SAs that the sender has deleted from its database and that therefore are no longer valid.

ISAKMP Exchanges

ISAKMP provides a framework for message exchange, with the payload types serving as the building blocks. The specification identifies five default exchange types that should be supported.

1. *Base Exchange:* allows key exchange and authentication material to be transmitted together. This minimizes the number of exchanges at the expense of not providing identity protection.

(a) Base Exchange

(1)**I**⟶**R**: SA; NONCE	Begin ISAKMP-SA negotiation
(2)**R**⟶**E**: SA; NONCE	Basic SA agreed upon
(3)**I**⟶**R**: KE; ID_I AUTH	Key generated; Initiator identity verified by responder
(4)**R**⟶**E**: KE; ID_R AUTH	Responder identity verified by initiator; Key generated; SA established

The first two messages provide cookies and establish an SA with agreed protocol and transforms; both sides use a nonce to ensure against replay attacks. The last two messages exchange the key material and user IDs, with an authentication mechanism used to authenticate keys, identities, and the nonces from the first two messages.

2. *Identity Protection Exchange:* expands the Base Exchange to protect the users' identities.

(b) Identity Protection Exchange

(1)**I**⟶**R**: SA	Begin ISAKMP-SA negotiation
(2)**R**⟶**E**: SA	Basic SA agreed upon
(3)**I**⟶**R**: KE; NONCE	Key generated
(4)**R**⟶**E**: KE; NONCE	Key generated
(5)***I**⟶**R**: ID_I; AUTH	Initiator identity verified by responder
(6)***R**⟶**E**: ID_R; AUTH	Responder identity verified by initiator; SA established

The first two messages establish the SA. The next two messages perform key exchange, with nonces for replay protection. Once the session key has been computed, the two parties exchange encrypted messages that contain authentication information, such as digital signatures and optionally certificates validating the public keys.

3. *Authentication Only Exchange*: used to perform mutual authentication, without a key exchange

(c) Authentication Only Exchange

(1)**I→R**: SA; NONCE	Begin ISAKMP-SA negotiation
(2)**R→E**: SA; NONCE; ID_R; AUTH	Basic SA agreed upon; Responder identity verified by initiator
(3)**I→R**: ID_I; AUTH	Initiator identity verified by responder; SA established

The first two messages establish the SA. In addition, the responder uses the second message to convey its ID and uses authentication to protect the message. The initiator sends the third message to transmit its authenticated ID.

4. *Aggressive Exchange:* minimizes the number of exchanges at the expense of not providing identity protection.

(d) Aggressive Exchange

(1)**I→R**: SA; KE; NONCE; ID_I;	Begin ISAKMP-SA negotiation and key exchange
(2)**R→E**: SA; KE; NONCE; ID_R; AUTH	Initiator identity verified by responder; Key generated; Basic SA agreed upon
(3)**I→R**: AUTH	Responder identity verified by initiator; SA established

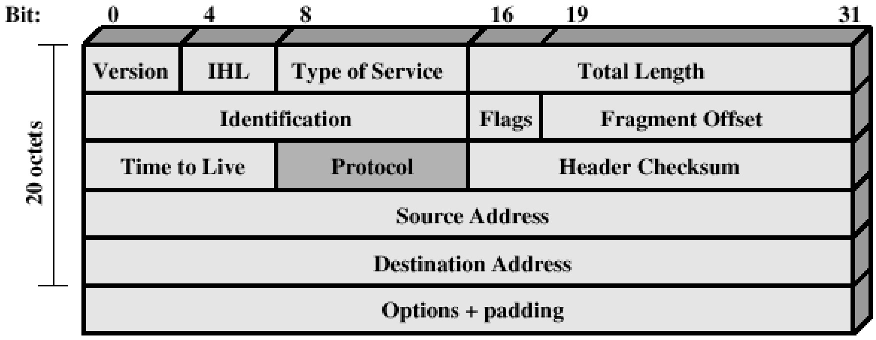
In the first message, the initiator proposes an SA with associated offered protocol and transform options. The initiator also begins the key exchange and provides its ID. In the second message, the responder indicates its acceptance of the SA with a particular protocol and transform, completes the key exchange, and authenticates the transmitted information. In the third message, the initiator transmits an authentication result that covers the previous information, encrypted using the shared secret session key.

5. *Informational Exchange*: used for one-way transmittal of information for SA management.

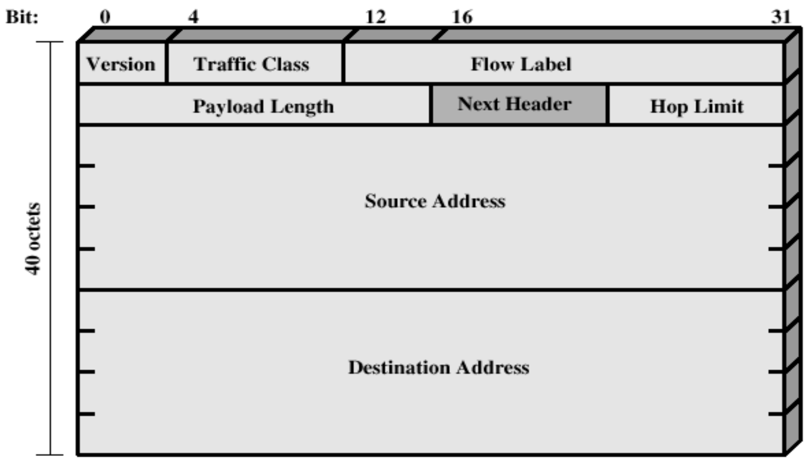
(e) Informational Exchange

(1)**I→R**: N/D	Error or status notification, or deletion

Appendix

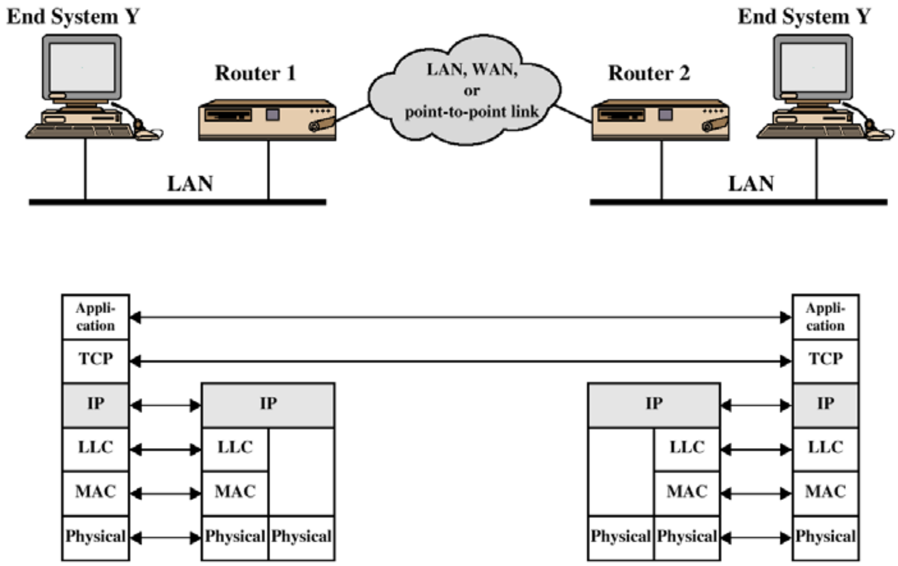


IPv4 Header



IPv6 Header

An internet protocol (IP) provides the functionality for interconnecting end systems across multiple networks. For this purpose, IP is implemented in each end system and in routers, which are devices that provide connection between networks. Higher-level data at a source end system are encapsulated in an IP protocol data unit (PDU) for transmission. This PDU is then passed through one or more networks and connecting routers to reach the destination end system.



TCP/IP Example

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Assignment questions

1. (a) Discuss about the documents regarding IPSec protocol? [8+8]
   (b) Describe any four ISAKMP payload types listing the parameters of the payload

2. (a) Discuss the scope of ESP encryption and authentication in both IPV4 and IPV6
   (b) Explain about transport adjacency and transport tunnel bundle? [8+8]

3. (a) Explain about the routing applications of IPSec?
   (b) Give the formats of ISAKMP header and Generic payload header? Explain various fields [6+10]

4. (a) What are the security services provided by IPSec at the IP layer?
   (b) Explain Authentication header protocol in detail? [6+10]

5. (a) What is the default length of Authentication data field? On what fields is it calculated?
   (b) Explain how Diffie-Hellman protocol is vulnerable to man-in-the-middle attack? How is rectified in Oakley protocol? [8+8]

6. (a) The IPSec architecture document states that when two transport mode SAs are bounded to allow both AH and ESP protocols on the same end-to-end flow, only one ordering of security protocols seems appropriate. Performing the ESP protocol before performing the AH protocol. Why this approach is recommended rather authentication before encryption?
   (b) Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of Diffie-Hellman key exchange protocol? What is the specific key exchange algorithm mandated for use in the initial version of ISAKMP [8+8]

7. (a) Discuss the purpose of SA selectors?
   (b) Enumerate on the five default ISAKMP exchange types? [8+8]

8. (a) Explain transport and tunnel modes of AH
   (b) What are benefits and applications of IP Security