OpenLCB Technical Note
Simple Train Information Protocol
Apr 30, 2021   Preliminary

1 Introduction

There is a need for something for ~~tiny~~train nodes, that uses a single message instead of datagrams and configuration. This allows ~~getting~~ getting the information with a bare minimum of support at the requested node end, so long as the requesting node can be sure to handle it.

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~~See the larger description in the ACDI TN, which should be copied here too. But note that SNII they can exist independently of whether ACDI is present in the node or not.~~

2 Annotations to the Standard

2.1 Introduction

10   Note that this section of the Standard is informative, not normative.

2.2 Intended Use

Note that this section of the Standard is informative, not normative.

2.3 Reference and Context

Cross-link to ACDI is important.

15   ## 2.4 Messages

Name	Dest ID		Common MTI	CAN format	Data Content
Simple ~~Node~~Train Information Request	Y		0x~~35200~~DA8	0x~~1Edd~~19DA,~~d~~8sss ~~52~~	fddd

Name	Dest ID		Common MTI	CAN format	Data Content
Simple ~~Node~~Train Information Reply	Y		0x~~353~~009C8	0x~~1Edd,d~~199C,~~s~~8ss ~~53~~s	fddd, Content, see below

The Simple ~~Node~~Train Information Reply message(s) carry a stream of bytes:

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- The byte 1 to indicate the version of the following content

- A null-terminated string for ~~manufacturer~~the road name ~~name~~(i.e. "Rio Grande Southern") ~~of no more than 41 bytes including terminating null~~ is recommended, but not required that this string be 32 characters or less based on a single line display of a modern smart phone.

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- A null-terminated string for the ~~node model name~~train class (i.e. "K-27") ~~of no more than 41 bytes including terminating null.~~ is recommended, but not required that this string be 32 characters or less based on a single line display of a modern smart phone.

- A null-terminated string for the ~~node hardware version~~road number (i.e. "455") ~~of no more than 21 bytes including terminating null.~~ is recommended, but not required that this string be 32 characters or less based on a single line display of a modern smart phone.

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- A null-terminated string for ~~node software version~~the train name (i.e "San Juan Express") ~~of no more than 21 bytes including terminating null.~~ is recommended, but not required that this string be 32 characters or less based on a single line display of a modern smart phone.

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- ~~The byte 1 to indicate the version of the following content~~

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- ~~A null-terminated string for user-provided node name of no more than 63 bytes including terminating null.~~

- ~~A null-terminated string for user-provided node description of no more than 64 bytes including terminating null.~~A null-terminated string for the manufactures name (i.e "Blackstone") is recommended, but not required that this string be 32 characters or less based on a single line display of a modern smart phone.

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- A null-terminated string for the owners name (i.e "John Smith") is recommended, but not required that this string be 32 characters or less based on a single line display of a modern smart phone.

- [Optional] One byte to indicate Legacy Proxy Technology, see Traction Proxy Protocol.

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- [Optional] One word to indicate Legacy Proxy Train ID, see Traction Proxy Protocol.

- [Optional] One byte to indicate Legacy Proxy Parameter 0 (for DCC this is the NMRA DCC speed steps), see the Traction Proxy Protocol.

- [Optional] Remaining bytes for the Legacy Proxy Parameters depending on the Legacy Proxy Technology field, see the Traction Proxy Protocol.

50   Note that the total length, including version numbers and nulls, must be less than [253] bytes. This is based on the length of SNIP. There is discussion as to if this limit is needed. The argument is due to buffer management in a bridge between a fast and slow physical layer (Ethernet to CAN for instance). The bridge must buffer the entire Ethernet message then split it into CAN 8 byte messages.
55   Having a fixed max length allows fixed buffers in the software/firmware development.

Since the size of the returned information is variable the protocol uses the Framing Bits in the destination address as described in the General Message Network document. Counting null bytes and fixed locations for data within the
60   data stream will not be possible with the STNIP

The data returned by STIP must equivalent that is returned in the corresponding elements in the CDI Protocol.

~~Note that the total length, including version numbers and nulls, must be less than 253 bytes.~~

2.5 Interactions

65   When a node gets a ~~Simple~~Simple ~~Node~~Train Information Request, if possible it shall reply with one or more Simple ~~Node~~Train Information Reply messages containing the ~~node's~~train information. If it's not able to process the information, it shall send an Optional Interaction Rejected with an appropriate error code.

It's recommended that the rejection message have the temporary-error bit set, so that the node sending
70   the original request will retry it.

3 Draft notes

Handling a second request while sending the first: If they can't be queued for later (immediate) processing, the node can reply with OptionalInteractionRejected message that indicates the issue is temporary, and that the request should be retried if the information is still desired.
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(Setting of the first/last bits to make it a message; "because this version of the specification predates the use of first/last bits", nodes initiating a transfer must be able to handle a series of reply messages)

Do nodes sending the response need to be able to resend it in response to a TerminateDueToError?
80   This might be needed is e.g. a gateway gets congested while merging frames.

The information returned is intended to be considered static: A node may request it and never have to request it again, because it won't change. But the user might change the user-provided node name. How will other nodes know to do a S~~NT~~TI~~I~~P request? They don't. Configuration tools could force
85   themselves to reacquire the data, but there's no global notification of the change. (Allowing the node to only change on reset would fix that, because we could have S~~NP~~PI~~I~~P users re-request the info when they see the reset.)

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