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## Private Extensions to the Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) for Asserted Identity within Trusted Networks

### Status of this Memo

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

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### Abstract

This document describes private extensions to the Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) that enable a network of trusted SIP servers to assert the identity of authenticated users, and the application of existing privacy mechanisms to the identity problem. The use of these extensions is only applicable inside an administrative domain with previously agreed-upon policies for generation, transport and usage of such information. This document does NOT offer a general privacy or identity model suitable for use between different trust domains, or use in the Internet at large.

### Table of Contents

1.	Applicability Statement . . . . .	2
2.	Conventions . . . . .	3
3.	Introduction . . . . .	4
4.	Overview . . . . .	5
5.	Proxy Behavior . . . . .	5
6.	Hints for Multiple Identities . . . . .	6
7.	Requesting Privacy . . . . .	6
8.	User Agent Server Behavior . . . . .	7
9.	Formal Syntax . . . . .	7
9.1	The P-Asserted-Identity Header . . . . .	8
9.2	The P-Preferred-Identity Header . . . . .	8
9.3	The "id" Privacy Type . . . . .	9

10.	Examples . . . . .	9
10.1	Network Asserted Identity passed to trusted gateway . .	9
10.2	Network Asserted Identity Withheld . . . . .	11
11.	Example of Spec(T) . . . . .	13
12.	Security Considerations . . . . .	14
13.	IANA Considerations . . . . .	14
13.1	Registration of new SIP header fields . . . . .	14
13.2	Registration of "id" privacy type for SIP Privacy header	15
14.	Acknowledgements . . . . .	15
	Normative References . . . . .	15
	Informational References . . . . .	16
	Authors' Addresses . . . . .	17
	Full Copyright Statement . . . . .	18

## 1. Applicability Statement

This document describes private extensions to SIP [1] that enable a network of trusted SIP servers to assert the identity of end users or end systems, and to convey indications of end-user requested privacy. The use of these extensions is only applicable inside a 'Trust Domain' as defined in Short term requirements for Network Asserted Identity [5]. Nodes in such a Trust Domain are explicitly trusted by its users and end-systems to publicly assert the identity of each party, and to be responsible for withholding that identity outside of the Trust Domain when privacy is requested. The means by which the network determines the identity to assert is outside the scope of this document (though it commonly entails some form of authentication).

A key requirement of [5] is that the behavior of all nodes within a given Trust Domain 'T' is known to comply to a certain set of specifications known as 'Spec(T)'. Spec(T) MUST specify behavior for the following:

1. The manner in which users are authenticated
2. The mechanisms used to secure the communication among nodes within the Trust Domain
3. The mechanisms used to secure the communication between UAs and nodes within the Trust Domain

4. The manner used to determine which hosts are part of the Trust Domain
5. The default privacy handling when no Privacy header field is present
6. That nodes in the Trust Domain are compliant to SIP [1]
7. That nodes in the Trust Domain are compliant to this document
8. Privacy handling for identity as described in [Section 7](#).

An example of a suitable Spec(T) is shown in [Section 11](#).

This document does NOT offer a general privacy or identity model suitable for inter-domain use or use in the Internet at large. Its assumptions about the trust relationship between the user and the network may not apply in many applications. For example, these extensions do not accommodate a model whereby end users can independently assert their identity by use of the extensions defined here. Furthermore, since the asserted identities are not cryptographically certified, they are subject to forgery, replay, and falsification in any architecture that does not meet the requirements of [5].

The asserted identities also lack an indication of who specifically is asserting the identity, and so it must be assumed that the Trust Domain is asserting the identity. Therefore, the information is only meaningful when securely received from a node known to be a member of the Trust Domain.

Despite these limitations, there are sufficiently useful specialized deployments that meet the assumptions described above, and can accept the limitations that result, to warrant informational publication of this mechanism. An example deployment would be a closed network which emulates a traditional circuit switched telephone network.

## 2. Conventions

The key words "MUST", "MUST NOT", "REQUIRED", "SHALL", "SHALL NOT", "SHOULD", "SHOULD NOT", "RECOMMENDED", "MAY", and "OPTIONAL" in this document are to be interpreted as described in [BCP 14](#), [RFC 2119](#) [3].

Throughout this document requirements for or references to proxy servers or proxy behavior apply similarly to other intermediaries within a Trust Domain (ex: B2BUAs).

The terms Identity, Network Asserted Identity and Trust Domain in this document have meanings as defined in [5].

### 3. Introduction

Various providers offering a telephony service over IP networks have selected SIP as a call establishment protocol. Their environments require a way for trusted network elements operated by the service providers (for example SIP proxy servers) to communicate the identity of the subscribers to such a service, yet also need to withhold this information from entities that are not trusted when necessary. Such networks typically assume some level of transitive trust amongst providers and the devices they operate.

These networks need to support certain traditional telephony services and meet basic regulatory and public safety requirements. These include Calling Identity Delivery services, Calling Identity Delivery Blocking, and the ability to trace the originator of a call. While baseline SIP can support each of these services independently, certain combinations cannot be supported without the extensions described in this document. For example, a caller that wants to maintain privacy and consequently provides limited information in the SIP From header field will not be identifiable by recipients of the call unless they rely on some other means to discover the identity of the caller. Masking identity information at the originating user agent will prevent certain services, e.g., call trace, from working in the Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) or being performed at intermediaries not privy to the authenticated identity of the user.

This document attempts to provide a network asserted identity service using a very limited, simple mechanism, based on requirements in [5]. This work is derived from a previous attempt, [6], to solve several problems related to privacy and identity in Trust Domains. A more comprehensive mechanism, [7] which uses cryptography to address this problem is the subject of current study by the SIP working group.

Providing privacy in a SIP network is more complicated than in the PSTN. In SIP networks, the participants in a session are typically able to exchange IP traffic directly without involving any SIP service provider. The IP addresses used for these sessions may themselves reveal private information. A general purpose mechanism for providing privacy in a SIP environment is discussed in [2]. This document applies that privacy mechanism to the problem of network asserted identity.

#### 4. Overview

The mechanism proposed in this document relies on a new header field called 'P-Asserted-Identity' that contains a URI (commonly a SIP URI) and an optional display-name, for example:

```
P-Asserted-Identity: "Cullen Jennings" <sip:fluffy@cisco.com>
```

A proxy server which handles a message can, after authenticating the originating user in some way (for example: Digest authentication), insert such a P-Asserted-Identity header field into the message and forward it to other trusted proxies. A proxy that is about to forward a message to a proxy server or UA that it does not trust MUST remove all the P-Asserted-Identity header field values if the user requested that this information be kept private. Users can request this type of privacy as described in [Section 7](#).

The formal syntax for the P-Asserted-Identity header is presented in [Section 9](#).

#### 5. Proxy Behavior

A proxy in a Trust Domain can receive a message from a node that it trusts, or a node that it does not trust. When a proxy receives a message from a node it does not trust and it wishes to add a P-Asserted-Identity header field, the proxy MUST authenticate the originator of the message, and use the identity which results from this authentication to insert a P-Asserted-Identity header field into the message.

If the proxy receives a message (request or response) from a node that it trusts, it can use the information in the P-Asserted-Identity header field, if any, as if it had authenticated the user itself.

If there is no P-Asserted-Identity header field present, a proxy MAY add one containing at most one SIP or SIPS URI, and at most one tel URL. If the proxy received the message from an element that it does not trust and there is a P-Asserted-Identity header present which contains a SIP or SIPS URI, the proxy MUST replace that SIP or SIPS URI with a single SIP or SIPS URI or remove this header field. Similarly, if the proxy received the message from an element that it does not trust and there is a P-Asserted-Identity header present which contains a tel URI, the proxy MUST replace that tel URI with a single tel URI or remove the header field.

When a proxy forwards a message to another node, it must first determine if it trusts that node or not. If it trusts the node, the proxy does not remove any P-Asserted-Identity header fields that it

generated itself, or that it received from a trusted source. If it does not trust the element, then the proxy MUST examine the Privacy header field (if present) to determine if the user requested that asserted identity information be kept private.

## 6. Hints for Multiple Identities

If a P-Preferred-Identity header field is present in the message that a proxy receives from an entity that it does not trust, the proxy MAY use this information as a hint suggesting which of multiple valid identities for the authenticated user should be asserted. If such a hint does not correspond to any valid identity known to the proxy for that user, the proxy can add a P-Asserted-Identity header of its own construction, or it can reject the request (for example, with a 403 Forbidden). The proxy MUST remove the user-provided P-Preferred-Identity header from any message it forwards.

A user agent only sends a P-Preferred-Identity header field to proxy servers in a Trust Domain; user agents MUST NOT populate the P-Preferred-Identity header field in a message that is not sent directly to a proxy that is trusted by the user agent. Were a user agent to send a message containing a P-Preferred-Identity header field to a node outside a Trust Domain, then the hinted identity might not be managed appropriately by the network, which could have negative ramifications for privacy.

## 7. Requesting Privacy

Parties who wish to request the removal of P-Asserted-Identity header fields before they are transmitted to an element that is not trusted may add the "id" privacy token defined in this document to the Privacy header field. The Privacy header field is defined in [6]. If this token is present, proxies MUST remove all the P-Asserted-Identity header fields before forwarding messages to elements that are not trusted. If the Privacy header field value is set to "none" then the proxy MUST NOT remove the P-Asserted-Identity header fields.

When a proxy is forwarding the request to an element that is not trusted and there is no Privacy header field, the proxy MAY include the P-Asserted-Identity header field or it MAY remove it. This decision is a policy matter of the Trust Domain and MUST be specified in Spec(T). It is RECOMMENDED that the P-Asserted-Identity header fields SHOULD NOT be removed unless local privacy policies prevent it, because removal may cause services based on Asserted Identity to fail.

However, it should be noted that unless all users of the Trust Domain have access to appropriate privacy services, forwarding of the P-Asserted-Identity may result in disclosure of information which the user has not requested and cannot prevent. It is therefore STRONGLY RECOMMENDED that all users have access to privacy services as described in this document.

Formal specification of the "id" Privacy header priv-value is described in [Section 9.3](#). Some general guidelines for when users require privacy are given in [2].

If multiple P-Asserted-Identity header field values are present in a message, and privacy of the P-Asserted-Identity header field is requested, then all instances of the header field values MUST be removed before forwarding the request to an entity that is not trusted.

## 8. User Agent Server Behavior

Typically, a user agent renders the value of a P-Asserted-Identity header field that it receives to its user. It may consider the identity provided by a Trust Domain to be privileged, or intrinsically more trustworthy than the From header field of a request. However, any specific behavior is specific to implementations or services. This document also does not mandate any user agent handling for multiple P-Asserted-Identity header field values that happen to appear in a message (such as a SIP URI alongside a tel URL).

However, if a User Agent Server receives a message from a previous element that it does not trust, it MUST NOT use the P-Asserted-Identity header field in any way.

If a UA is part of the Trust Domain from which it received a message containing a P-Asserted-Identity header field, then it can use the value freely but it MUST ensure that it does not forward the information to any element that is not part of the Trust Domain, if the user has requested that asserted identity information be kept private.

If a UA is not part of the Trust Domain from which it received a message containing a P-Asserted-Identity header field, then it can assume this information does not need to be kept private.

## 9. Formal Syntax

The following syntax specification uses the augmented Backus-Naur Form (BNF) as described in [RFC-2234](#) [4].

### 9.1 The P-Asserted-Identity Header

The P-Asserted-Identity header field is used among trusted SIP entities (typically intermediaries) to carry the identity of the user sending a SIP message as it was verified by authentication.

```
PAssertedID = "P-Asserted-Identity" HCOLON PAssertedID-value
              *(COMMA PAssertedID-value)
PAssertedID-value = name-addr / addr-spec
```

A P-Asserted-Identity header field value MUST consist of exactly one name-addr or addr-spec. There may be one or two P-Asserted-Identity values. If there is one value, it MUST be a sip, sips, or tel URI. If there are two values, one value MUST be a sip or sips URI and the other MUST be a tel URI. It is worth noting that proxies can (and will) add and remove this header field.

This document adds the following entry to Table 2 of [1]:

Header field	where	proxy	ACK	BYE	CAN	INV	OPT	REG
-----	-----	-----	---	---	---	---	---	---
P-Asserted-Identity		adr	-	o	-	o	o	-
			SUB	NOT	REF	INF	UPD	PRA
			---	---	---	---	---	---
			o	o	o	-	-	-

### 9.2 The P-Preferred-Identity Header

The P-Preferred-Identity header field is used from a user agent to a trusted proxy to carry the identity the user sending the SIP message wishes to be used for the P-Asserted-Header field value that the trusted element will insert.

```
PPreferredID = "P-Preferred-Identity" HCOLON PPreferredID-value
              *(COMMA PPreferredID-value)
PPreferredID-value = name-addr / addr-spec
```

A P-Preferred-Identity header field value MUST consist of exactly one name-addr or addr-spec. There may be one or two P-Preferred-Identity values. If there is one value, it MUST be a sip, sips, or tel URI. If there are two values, one value MUST be a sip or sips URI and the other MUST be a tel URI. It is worth noting that proxies can (and will) remove this header field.



This document adds the following entry to Table 2 of [1]:

Header field	where	proxy	ACK	BYE	CAN	INV	OPT	REG
-----	-----	-----	---	---	---	---	---	---
P-Preferred-Identity		adr	-	o	-	o	o	-
			SUB	NOT	REF	INF	UPD	PRA
			---	---	---	---	---	---
			o	o	o	-	-	-

### 9.3 The "id" Privacy Type

This specification adds a new privacy type ("priv-value") to the Privacy header, defined in [2]. The presence of this privacy type in a Privacy header field indicates that the user would like the Network Asserted Identity to be kept private with respect to SIP entities outside the Trust Domain with which the user authenticated. Note that a user requesting multiple types of privacy MUST include all of the requested privacy types in its Privacy header field value.

```
priv-value = "id"
```

Example:

```
Privacy: id
```

## 10. Examples

### 10.1 Network Asserted Identity passed to trusted gateway

In this example, proxy.cisco.com creates a P-Asserted-Identity header field from an identity it discovered from SIP Digest authentication. It forwards this information to a trusted proxy which forwards it to a trusted gateway. Note that these examples consist of partial SIP messages that illustrate only those headers relevant to the authenticated identity problem.

```
* F1    useragent.cisco.com -> proxy.cisco.com
```

```
INVITE sip:+14085551212@cisco.com SIP/2.0
Via: SIP/2.0/TCP useragent.cisco.com;branch=z9hG4bK-123
To: <sip:+14085551212@cisco.com>
From: "Anonymous" <sip:anonymous@anonymous.invalid>;tag=9802748
Call-ID: 245780247857024504
CSeq: 1 INVITE
Max-Forwards: 70
Privacy: id
```

\* F2    proxy.cisco.com -> useragent.cisco.com

SIP/2.0 407 Proxy Authorization

Via: SIP/2.0/TCP useragent.cisco.com;branch=z9hG4bK-123

To: <sip:+14085551212@cisco.com>;tag=123456

From: "Anonymous" <sip:anonymous@anonymous.invalid>;tag=9802748

Call-ID: 245780247857024504

CSeq: 1 INVITE

Proxy-Authenticate: .... realm="sip.cisco.com"

\* F3    useragent.cisco.com -> proxy.cisco.com

INVITE sip:+14085551212@cisco.com SIP/2.0

Via: SIP/2.0/TCP useragent.cisco.com;branch=z9hG4bK-124

To: <sip:+14085551212@cisco.com>

From: "Anonymous" <sip:anonymous@anonymous.invalid>;tag=9802748

Call-ID: 245780247857024504

CSeq: 2 INVITE

Max-Forwards: 70

Privacy: id

Proxy-Authorization: .... realm="sip.cisco.com" user="fluffy"

\* F4    proxy.cisco.com -> proxy.pstn.net (trusted)

INVITE sip:+14085551212@proxy.pstn.net SIP/2.0

Via: SIP/2.0/TCP useragent.cisco.com;branch=z9hG4bK-124

Via: SIP/2.0/TCP proxy.cisco.com;branch=z9hG4bK-abc

To: <sip:+14085551212@cisco.com>

From: "Anonymous" <sip:anonymous@anonymous.invalid>;tag=9802748

Call-ID: 245780247857024504

CSeq: 2 INVITE

Max-Forwards: 69

P-Asserted-Identity: "Cullen Jennings" <sip:fluffy@cisco.com>

P-Asserted-Identity: tel:+14085264000

Privacy: id

\* F5 proxy.pstn.net -> gw.pstn.net (trusted)

```
INVITE sip:+14085551212@gw.pstn.net SIP/2.0
Via: SIP/2.0/TCP useragent.cisco.com;branch=z9hG4bK-124
Via: SIP/2.0/TCP proxy.cisco.com;branch=z9hG4bK-abc
Via: SIP/2.0/TCP proxy.pstn.net;branch=z9hG4bK-alb2
To: <sip:+14085551212@cisco.com>
From: "Anonymous" <sip:anonymous@anonymous.invalid>;tag=9802748
Call-ID: 245780247857024504
CSeq: 2 INVITE
Max-Forwards: 68
P-Asserted-Identity: "Cullen Jennings" <sip:fluffy@cisco.com>
P-Asserted-Identity: tel:+14085264000
Privacy: id
```

## 10.2 Network Asserted Identity Withheld

In this example, the User Agent sends an INVITE that indicates it would prefer the identity sip:fluffy@cisco.com to the first proxy, which authenticates this with SIP Digest. The first proxy creates a P-Asserted-Identity header field and forwards it to a trusted proxy (outbound.cisco.com). The next proxy removes the P-Asserted-Identity header field and the request for Privacy before forwarding this request onward to the biloxi.com proxy server which it does not trust.

\* F1 useragent.cisco.com -> proxy.cisco.com

```
INVITE sip:bob@biloxi.com SIP/2.0
Via: SIP/2.0/TCP useragent.cisco.com;branch=z9hG4bK-a111
To: <sip:bob@biloxi.com>
From: "Anonymous" <sip:anonymous@anonymous.invalid>;tag=9802748
Call-ID: 245780247857024504
CSeq: 1 INVITE
Max-Forwards: 70
Privacy: id
P-Preferred-Identity: "Cullen Jennings" <sip:fluffy@cisco.com>
```

\* F2 proxy.cisco.com -> useragent.cisco.com

```
SIP/2.0 407 Proxy Authorization
Via: SIP/2.0/TCP useragent.cisco.com;branch=z9hG4bK-a111
To: <sip:bob@biloxi.com>;tag=123456
From: "Anonymous" <sip:anonymous@anonymous.invalid>;tag=9802748
Call-ID: 245780247857024504
CSeq: 1 INVITE
Proxy-Authenticate: .... realm="cisco.com"
```

\* F3      useragent.cisco.com -> proxy.cisco.com

INVITE sip:bob@biloxi.com SIP/2.0  
Via: SIP/2.0/TCP useragent.cisco.com;branch=z9hG4bK-a123  
To: <sip:bob@biloxi.com>  
From: "Anonymous" <sip:anonymous@anonymous.invalid>;tag=9802748  
Call-ID: 245780247857024504  
CSeq: 2 INVITE  
Max-Forwards: 70  
Privacy: id  
P-Preferred-Identity: "Cullen Jennings" <sip:fluffy@cisco.com>  
Proxy-Authorization: .... realm="cisco.com" user="fluffy"

\* F4      proxy.cisco.com -> outbound.cisco.com (trusted)

INVITE sip:bob@biloxi SIP/2.0  
Via: SIP/2.0/TCP useragent.cisco.com;branch=z9hG4bK-a123  
Via: SIP/2.0/TCP proxy.cisco.com;branch=z9hG4bK-b234  
To: <sip:bob@biloxi.com>  
From: "Anonymous" <sip:anonymous@anonymous.invalid>;tag=9802748  
Call-ID: 245780247857024504  
CSeq: 2 INVITE  
Max-Forwards: 69  
P-Asserted-Identity: "Cullen Jennings" <sip:fluffy@vovida.org>  
Privacy: id

\* F5      outbound.cisco.com -> proxy.biloxi.com (not trusted)

INVITE sip:bob@biloxi SIP/2.0  
Via: SIP/2.0/TCP useragent.cisco.com;branch=z9hG4bK-a123  
Via: SIP/2.0/TCP proxy.cisco.com;branch=z9hG4bK-b234  
Via: SIP/2.0/TCP outbound.cisco.com;branch=z9hG4bK-c345  
To: <sip:bob@biloxi.com>  
From: "Anonymous" <sip:anonymous@anonymous.invalid>;tag=9802748  
Call-ID: 245780247857024504  
CSeq: 2 INVITE  
Max-Forwards: 68  
Privacy: id

\* F6 proxy.biloxi.com -> bobster.biloxi.com

```
INVITE sip:bob@bobster.biloxi.com SIP/2.0
Via: SIP/2.0/TCP useragent.cisco.com;branch=z9hG4bK-a123
Via: SIP/2.0/TCP proxy.cisco.com;branch=z9hG4bK-b234
Via: SIP/2.0/TCP outbound.cisco.com;branch=z9hG4bK-c345
Via: SIP/2.0/TCP proxy.biloxi.com;branch=z9hG4bK-d456
To: <sip:bob@biloxi.com>
From: "Anonymous" <sip:anonymous@anonymous.invalid>;tag=9802748
Call-ID: 245780247857024504
CSeq: 2 INVITE
Max-Forwards: 67
Privacy: id
```

## 11. Example of Spec(T)

The integrity of the mechanism described in this document relies on one node knowing (through configuration) that all of the nodes in a Trust Domain will behave in a predetermined way. This requires the predetermined behavior to be clearly defined and for all nodes in the Trust Domain to be compliant. The specification set that all nodes in a Trust Domain T must comply with is termed 'Spec(T)'.

The remainder of this section presents an example Spec(T), which is not normative in any way.

### 1. Protocol requirements

The following specifications MUST be supported:

1. [RFC 3261](#)
2. [RFC 3325](#)

### 2. Authentication requirements

Users MUST be authenticated using SIP Digest Authentication.

### 3. Security requirements

Connections between nodes within the Trust Domain and between UAs and nodes in the Trust Domain MUST use TLS using a cipher suite of RSA\_WITH\_AES\_128\_CBC\_SHA1. Mutual authentication between nodes in the trust domain MUST be performed and confidentiality MUST be negotiated.

#### 4. Scope of Trust Domain

The Trust Domain specified in this agreement consists of hosts which possess a valid certificate which is a) signed by `examplerootca.org`; b) whose `subjectAltName` ends with one of the following domain names: `trusted.div1.carrier-a.net`, `trusted.div2.carrier-a.net`, `sip.carrier-b.com`; and c) whose domain name corresponds to the hostname in the `subjectAltName` in the certificate.

#### 5. Implicit handling when no Privacy header is present

The elements in the trust domain must support the 'id' privacy service therefore absence of a Privacy header can be assumed to indicate that the user is not requesting any privacy. If no Privacy header field is present in a request, elements in this Trust Domain MUST act as if no privacy is requested.

### 12. Security Considerations

The mechanism provided in this document is a partial consideration of the problem of identity and privacy in SIP. For example, these mechanisms provide no means by which end users can securely share identity information end-to-end without a trusted service provider. Identity information that the user designates as 'private' can be inspected by any intermediaries participating in the Trust Domain. This information is secured by transitive trust, which is only as reliable as the weakest link in the chain of trust.

When a trusted entity sends a message to any destination with that party's identity in a P-Asserted-Identity header field, the entity MUST take precautions to protect the identity information from eavesdropping and interception to protect the confidentiality and integrity of that identity information. The use of transport or network layer hop-by-hop security mechanisms, such as TLS or IPSec with appropriate cipher suites, can satisfy this requirement.

### 13. IANA Considerations

#### 13.1 Registration of new SIP header fields

This document defines two new private SIP header fields, "P-Asserted-Identity" and "P-Preferred-Identity". As recommended by the policy of the Transport Area, these headers have been registered by the IANA in the SIP header registry, using the RFC number of this document as its reference.

Name of Header: P-Asserted-Identity

Short form: none

Registrant: Cullen Jennings  
fluffy@cisco.com

Normative description:  
[Section 9.1](#) of this document

Name of Header: P-Preferred-Identity

Short form: none

Registrant: Cullen Jennings  
fluffy@cisco.com

Normative description:  
[Section 9.2](#) of this document

### 13.2 Registration of "id" privacy type for SIP Privacy header

Name of privacy type: id

Short Description: Privacy requested for Third-Party Asserted Identity

Registrant: Cullen Jennings  
fluffy@cisco.com

Normative description:  
[Section 9.3](#) of this document

## 14. Acknowledgements

Thanks to Bill Marshall and Flemming Andreason [6], Mark Watson [5], and Jon Peterson [7] for authoring drafts which represent the bulk of the text making up this document. Thanks to many people for useful comments including Jonathan Rosenberg, Rohan Mahy and Paul Kyzivat.

## Normative References

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- [2] Peterson, J., "A Privacy Mechanism for the Session Initiation Protocol (SIP)", [RFC 3323](#), November 2002.

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