

AN1385: Performance Results for Multi-PAN RCP for OpenThread and Zigbee

This document summarizes the results of simultaneous Thread and Zigbee throughput performance testing for the concurrent multiprotocol / multi-PAN RCP, running both OpenThread and Zigbee on the host processor.

KEY POINTS

- Test plan strategy
- · Approach and dependencies
- Test methodology
- Testbed and topologies
- Summary of results
- Results comparisons

1 Introduction

This document summarizes the results of simultaneous Thread and Zigbee throughput performance testing for the concurrent multiprotocol / multi-PAN Radio Co-Processor (RCP), running both OpenThread and Zigbee on the host processor. The multiprotocol RCP architecture relies heavily on the serial transport and multiplexing capabilities provided by the Co-processor Communication daemon (CPCd), so this is one of the crucial components under test in the system.

The goal of this testing is to validate the performance of the Multiprotocol RCP solution, including CPCd. In particular, results demonstrate that throughput performance of the multiprotocol RCP for both Zigbee and Thread is comparable to that of a single-protocol SoC device.

See <u>AN1333: Running Zigbee, OpenThread, and Bluetooth Concurrently on a Linux Host with a Multiprotocol RCP</u> for a detailed description of the Multiprotocol RCP system's architecture, configuration, and usage, including CPCd

Terms used in this document:

OT OpenThread

Zig Zigbee protocol

DuT Device Under Test

DMP Dynamic Multiprotocol

RCP Radio co-processor

SoC System-on-chip

CPCd Co-processor Communication Daemon

2 Test Plan Strategy

This test plan is focused on the performance of CPC using mixed protocol traffic streams over a variety of scenarios and configurations, such as serial baud rates and traffic payload sizes.

Scenario	Devices	Notes	Illustrated Topology
3x3	3 SoC Devices OT 3 Soc Devices Zigbee	Basic setup and validation.	OT SoC OT
9x9	9 SoC Devices OT 9 Soc Devices Zigbee	Ideal setup to stress and prove.	OT Soc
15x15	15 SoC Devices OT 15 Soc Devices Zigbee	Stays under the default route table size (16), as well as under the REED min for router role.	The same setup as above but with more devices
Greater sizes (y)x(z)	(y) SoC Devices OT (z) Soc Devices Zigbee		The same setup as above but with more devices.

Variables for the above scenario include but are not limited to vectors for payload size, transmit rate, jitter rate, board type, interface type (UART-USB, UART-EXP, SPI) and comparisons to non-CPC devices.

3 Test Approach and Dependencies

This test effort uses open wireless devices in the Silicon Labs Boston office. The automation is written in Java™ and leverages a set of utilities for communicating with the test device via TCP. This supports simultaneous command transmission to many devices via the application console ports.

Networks are created for OpenThread (OT) and Zigbee (Zig) using the wireless SoC devices around the office. This is independent of the DuT (Device Under Test). Normally, these networks can stay up for days or weeks while the DuT continually changes code when needed and just reattaches/rejoins to these existing test networks.

The DuT starts and checks CPCd, then initiates and checks the OT and Zig processes. Next, the DuT either forms or attaches to each network.

For these tests, the DuT is not a leader or coordinator of either network, but a router on both.

Traffic is generated from the Zig and OT SoC devices (whether 3x3, 9x9, NxN) by providing the address of the DuT for each protocol.

Collection is based on CLI output from OT ping and Zigbee throughput component. These consoles are parsed and mined for discrete data metrics that are written to .csv files on completion of test runs.

4 Test Methodology

Java classes and utilities are used to control and collect data from the SoCs around the office as they transmit bursts of traffic data to the DuT.

The test measurement tools provide some basic metrics by using OT ping and Zig throughput component at the same time for mixed traffic streams. Initiatives exist to develop better traffic measurement APIs tools in the future.

The OT and Zig data streams are not equivalent. OT uses the Internet Control Message Protocol (ICMP), for which the receiver (DuT) encapsulates the received payload by adding a 4-byte header to it to be sent back to sender. This effectively transmits the payload twice and exacerbates stress with greater size and fragmentation.

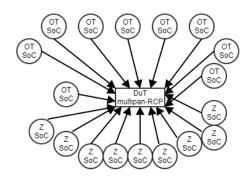
Zigbee throughput does not return the sent payload. ACKs, and counters are used to determine success and provide measurements. Zigbee traffic is minimal compared to OT traffic.

The following illustrates the test setup.

Traffic flow is being directed at the DuT.

Many->One, where the One is the DuT.

Current testing assumes all devices are within 1 hop.



The following sections provide additional details on the traffic created.

4.1 Open Thread

OT testing used ping (ICMP) with a variable payload of 8 bytes up to a maximum of 1232 bytes.

https://aithub.com/openthread/openthread/blob/main/src/cli/README.md#ping--i-source-ipaddr-size-count-interval-hoplimit-timeout

```
ping [-I source] <ipaddr> [size] [count] [interval] [hoplimit] [timeout]
```

Example:

```
> ping -I fd00:db8:0:0:76b:6a05:3ae9:a61a ff02::1 100 1 1 1
> 108 bytes from fd00:db8:0:0:f605:fb4b:d429:d59a: icmp_seq=4 hlim=64 time=7ms
1 packets transmitted, 1 packets received. Round-trip min/avg/max = 7/7.0/7 ms.
```

For the 100-byte payload specified above, the total packet size = \sim 55 bytes for header + payload. Therefore the packet transmitted overthe-air for the above command had a total packet size of \sim 155 bytes.

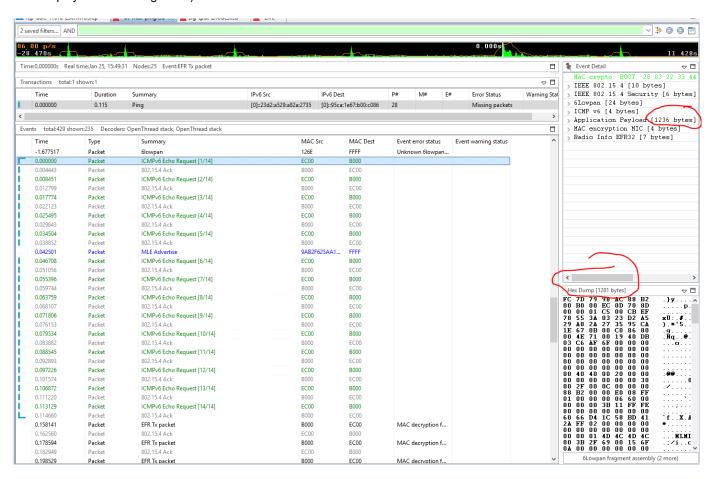
The ping API's count was set to 1000 total iterations. Each discrete ping response and time was printed before the final summary. The following is the discrete data collected and used for the latency charts, for example:

```
ping fe80:0:0:0:6066:d41c:58bd:412a 8 3 1 1 1
16 bytes from fe80:0:0:0:6066:d41c:58bd:412a: icmp_seq=23861 hlim=64 time=14ms
16 bytes from fe80:0:0:0:6066:d41c:58bd:412a: icmp_seq=23862 hlim=64 time=13ms
16 bytes from fe80:0:0:0:6066:d41c:58bd:412a: icmp_seq=23863 hlim=64 time=12ms
3 packets transmitted, 3 packets received. Packet loss = 0.0%. Round-trip min/avg/max = 12/13.0/14 ms.
Done
```

At around 80 bytes of payload (~135 total bytes) OT packets are fragmented.

OT maximum payload size=1232 bytes and uses 14 packet fragments each way.

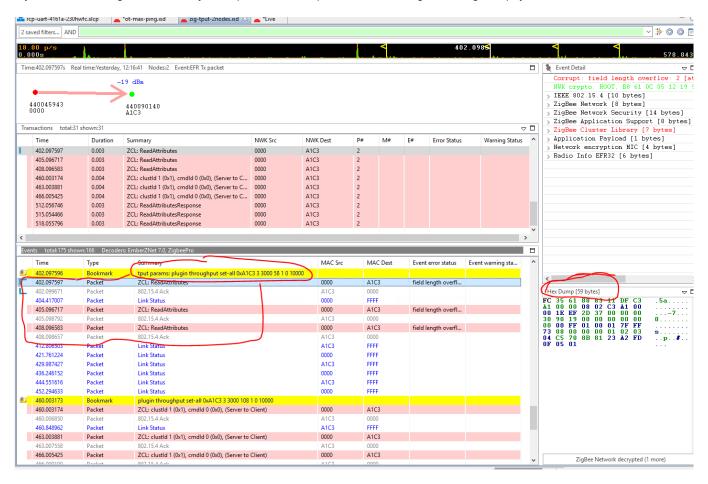
The following is a snapshot from a Network Analyzer (NA) capture trace. Notice the timing and payload sizes (NA combines the fragment sizes to display total of all fragments).



4.2 Zigbee

Zigbee testing used the Zigbee Throughput component.

This API cannot send fragmented packets. The maximum payload size is 72 bytes with a 57-byte header, for a maximum packet size of 129 bytes. The following Network Analyzer capture trace snapshot shows the Zigbee timing and payload sizes.



5 Testbed and Topologies

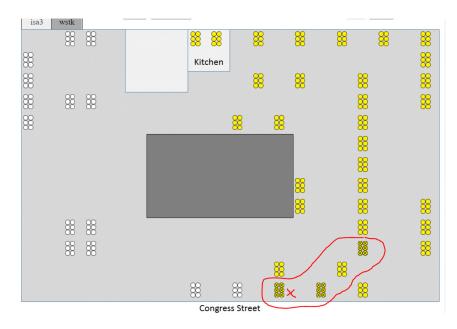
The DuT uses Silicon Labs' wireless starter kit (WSTK) debug adapter and a Raspberry Pi as the host to cover the configurations of varying baud rates and UART serial configurations, as well as SPI. The UART setup uses the USB connection for the VCOM serial configuration and expansion ports on the WSTK and Raspberry Pi for GPIO configuration.

This serial link can be a big bottleneck given that the 15.4 protocols can operate at around 250 kbps. Additionally, without flow control there are no guarantees that data is not lost over this serial link.

The test topology used for this document is the open wireless network around the software quality assurance (SQA) pod at the Silicon Labs Boston office. This office space is approximately 20,000 square feet with hundreds of test devices uniformly distributed.

The three clusters of six shown below and marked with 'x' are approximately 8 m apart (25 feet).

The red 'x' identifies the DuT location.



6 Test Results Summary

Discrete data is not yet available for Zigbee, so it is not charted. The summary data from the Zigbee Throughput component is shown in the table to the left of the chart.

When reading these charts, note the left vertical y-axis markings, as they change for each chart. That is the high-water mark for time for Round Trip Time (RTT) for an OT ping. The horizontal x-axis shows each iteration of the test run.

The rate shown in the tables is how often that device is transmitting data. We increase this value as traffic increases. Finding the sweet spot with zero data loss at the highest possible traffic rates is one goal of this test effort.

Also note that when very high discrete data is recorded, there may be a bug in the GitHub OT logic for calculating ping returns when greater than a certain threshold. It does not seem to be linear nor does it correlate with the time to return that data. The issue is under investigation.

The following results are from a 9x9 topology and baud rates of 115 kbps, 230 kbps, 460 kbps, and 921 kbps using hardware flow control (HWFC). The charts use OT discrete data only. The Min/Max/Avg is shown for both OT and Zigbee.

Results PROTO SIZE RATE JIT TX RX LOSS MIN AVG MAX 22q2 GA 9x9-exp115-fc 8bytes 30 27 ОТ 100 ОТ 24 31 28 10.4.186.18 50 50 50 0.4.186.20 OT OT 100 24 37 ×10.4.186.24 52 50 50 50 ZIG ×10.4.186.26 10.4.186.28 ZIG +10.4.186.84 10.4.186.86 ZIG 10.4.186.88 ZIG Each discrete sample 22q2 GA 9x9-exp115-fc 256bytes ОТ 254 ОТ ОТ 10.4.186.18 **10.4.186.20** ОТ **▲** 10.4.186.22 ОТ ×10.4.186.26 ZIG 10.4.186.28 ZIG 77 77 +10 4 186 84 ZIG 100 54 55 60 10.4.186.86 ZIG 77 77 77 55 55 56 10.4.186.88 ZIG Each discrete sample ZIG 22q2 GA 9x9-exp115-fc 1024bytes OT OT OT OT 0.4.186.20 **▲** 10.4.186.22 ОТ ОТ ×10 4 186 24 ZIG ZIG 56 77 300 53 ×10.4.186.26 54 55 55 55 +10.4.186.84 ZIG 10.4.186.86 ZIG 10.4.186.88 ZIG

Table 6.1. UART EXP 115k HWFC

Table 6.2. UART EXP 230k HWFC

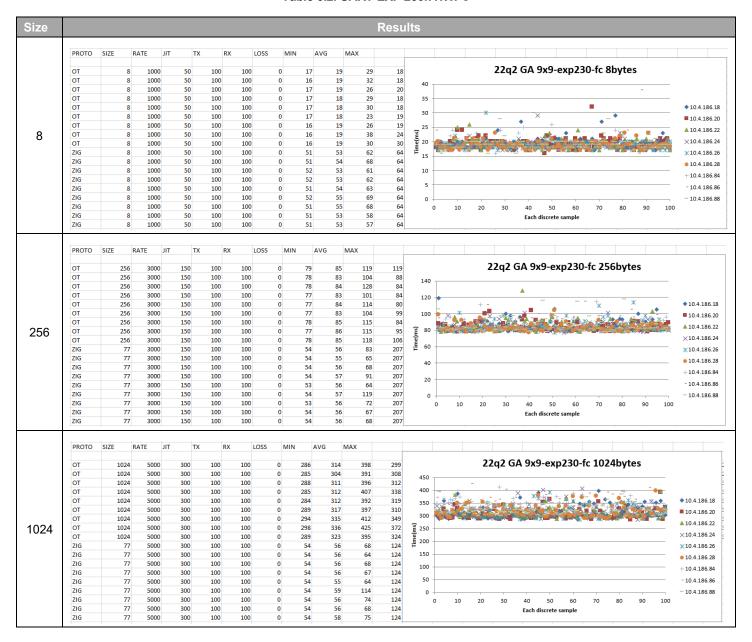
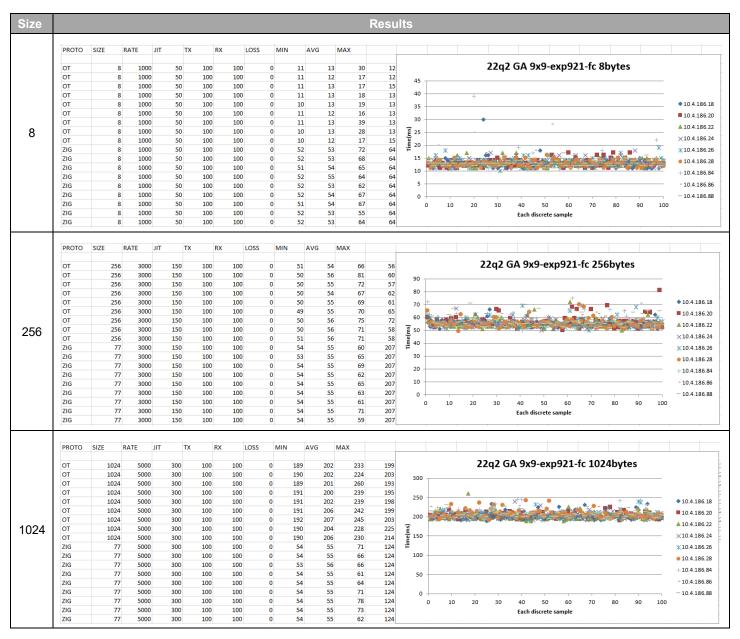


Table 6.3. UART EXP 460k HWFC



Table 6.4 UART EXP 921k HWFC



The above tables for UART EXP GPIO configuration all use HWFC (Hardware Flow Control). The following tables show results from the same tests when flow control was disabled. Note that in practice flow control should always be used.

Table 6.5. UART EXP 460k No Flow Control

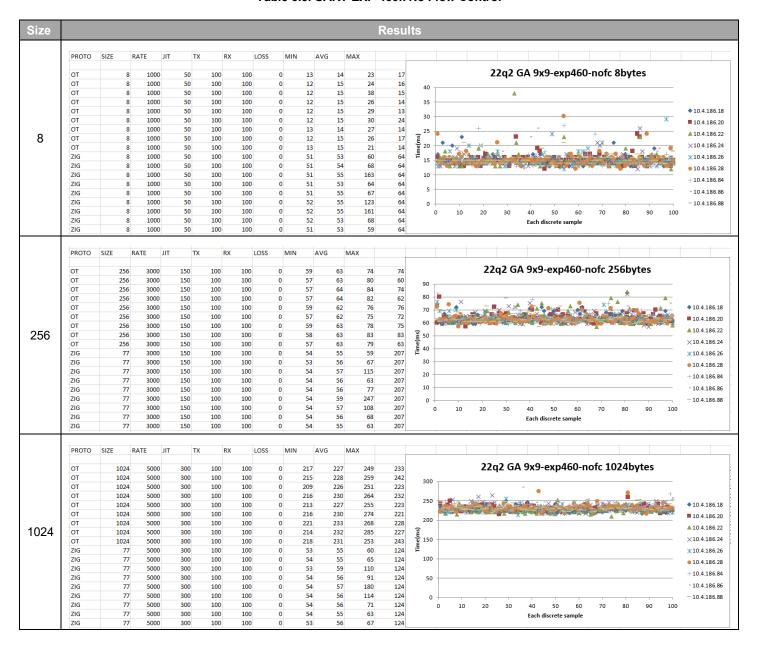


Table 6.6. UART EXP 921k No Flow Control



The next set of tables show the results using UART VCOM configurations.

Table 6.7. UART VCOM 115k HWFC

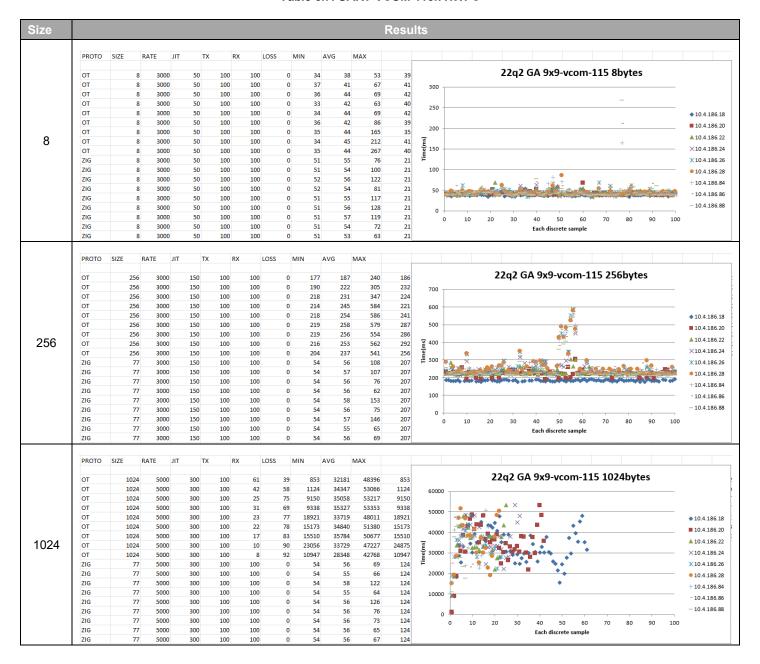


Table 6.8. UART VCOM 230k HWFC



Table 6.9. UART VCOM 460k HWFC

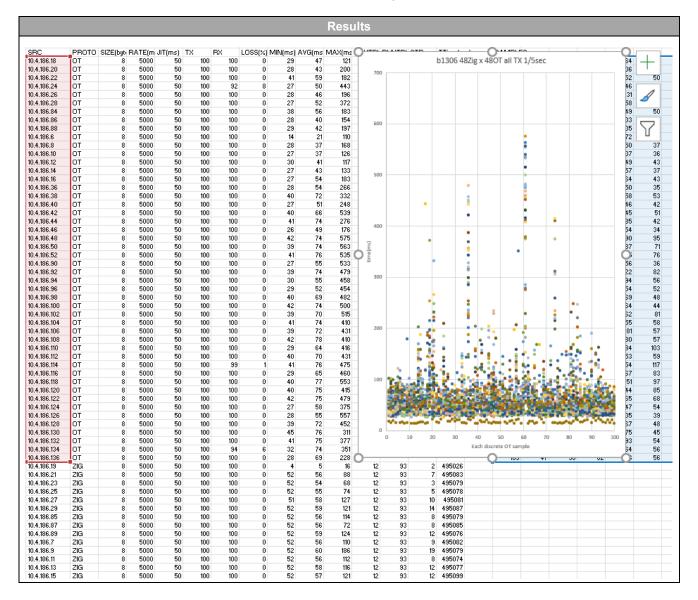


Table 6.10. UART VCOM 921k HWFC



The following table shows the results using a larger network topology of 48 OT devices and 48 Zig devices, where all are sending 8 bytes to the DuT at a rate of one every five seconds. The spikes shown are expected under the traffic stress of 96 devices sending (and receiving) from 1 device.

Table 6.11. UART EXP 460k 48Zig x 48OT Network



7 Additional Test Results Comparisons



8 Document Revision History

Revision 0.1

June 2022

Initial public release





IoT Portfolio www.silabs.com/IoT



SW/HW www.silabs.com/simplicity



Quality www.silabs.com/quality



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