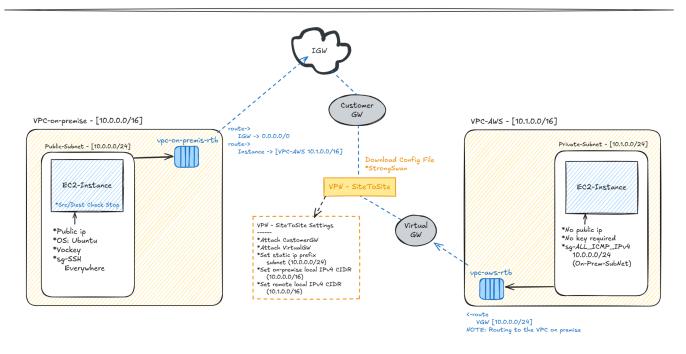
Omar BaGunaid

In this document, I will go through the steps to implement a Site-to-Site Virtual Private Network (VPN) using an on-premises network simulated as a separate Virtual Private Cloud (VPC). And the other will be the VPC we connect to via the VPN.

Requirements

Topology

SITE TO SITE VPN



Omar BaGunaid

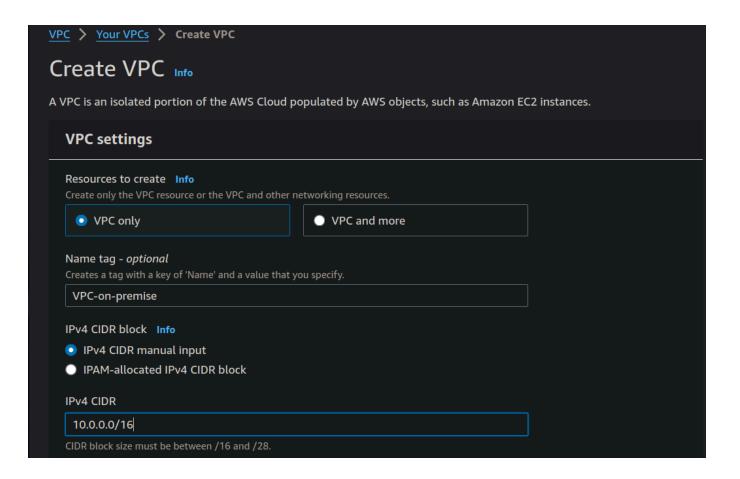
Resources

- 1. vpc-on-premise (10.0.0.0/16)
 - 1. public-subnet (10.0.0.0/24)
 - 1. vpc-on-premise-rtb
 - 1. To Internet Gateway (0.0.0.0/0)
 - 2. To Instance of the other side instance 10.1.0.0/16
 - 2. ec2-instance
 - 1. OS: Ubuntu
 - 2. Public IP

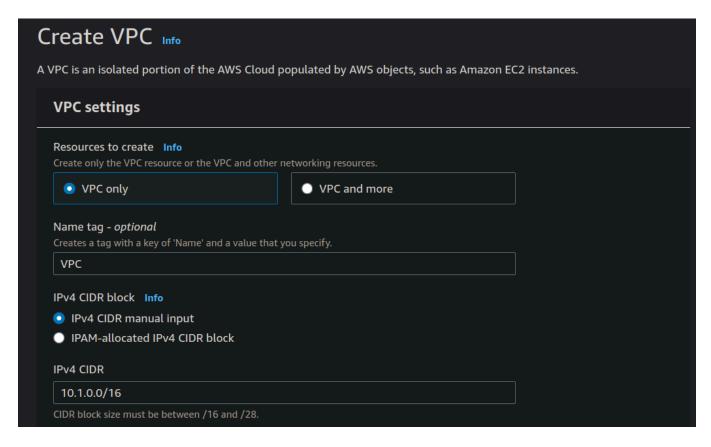
- 3. VOCKEY
- 4. SG-SSH Everywhere.
- 2. Internet Gateway
- 2. aws-vpc (10.1.0.0/16)
 - 1. private-subnet (10.1.0.0/24)
 - 1. vpc-aws-rtb
 - 1. To Virtual Gateway
 - 2. ec2-instance
 - 1. No public ip
 - 2. No key
 - 3. OS: Amazon Linux (default)
 - 4. SG-all icmp ipv4 from 10.0.0.0/24 (on-premise-public-subnet)
- 3. Customer Gateway (will use the public ip address of the on-premise-instance)
- 4. Internet Gateway (will be used in the on-premise-public-subnet)
- 5. Virtual Gateway (will be used on the aws-vpc private-subnet routing table)
- 6. Site to Site VPN Connection
 - 1. *Attach CustomerGW
 - 2. Attach VirtualGW
 - 3. Set static ip prefix subnet (10.0.0.0/24)
 - 4. Set on-premise local IPv4 CIDR (10.0.0.0/16)
 - 5. Set remote local IPv4 CIDR (10.1.0.0/16)
 - 6. In the static routes add the vpc-on-premise CIDR Block (10.0.0.0/16) or the public-subnet of the on-premise (10.0.0.0/24).

Lets Create VPCs and subnets

VPC-on-premise



Another VPC to be connected to from the VPC-on-premise

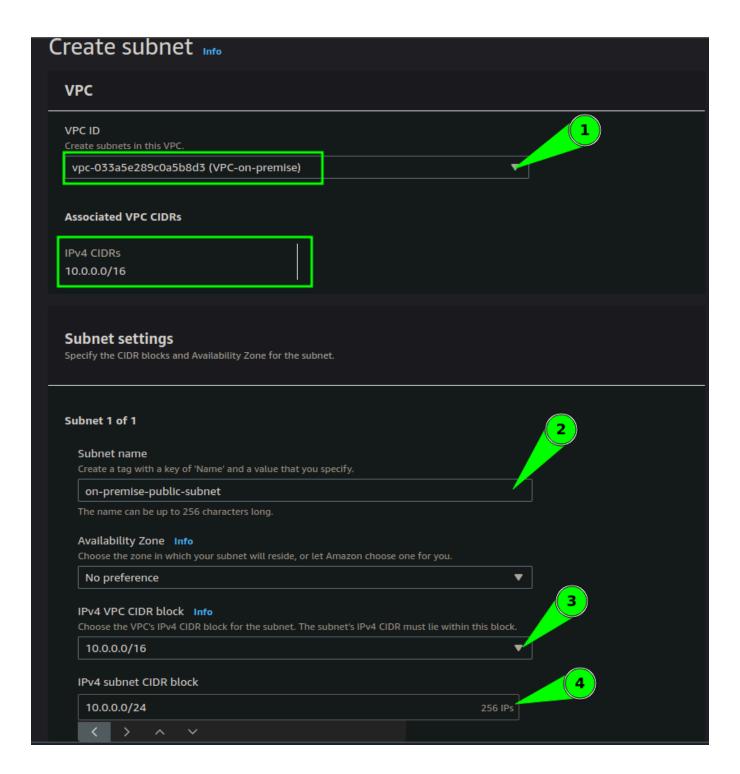




Lets create the subnets

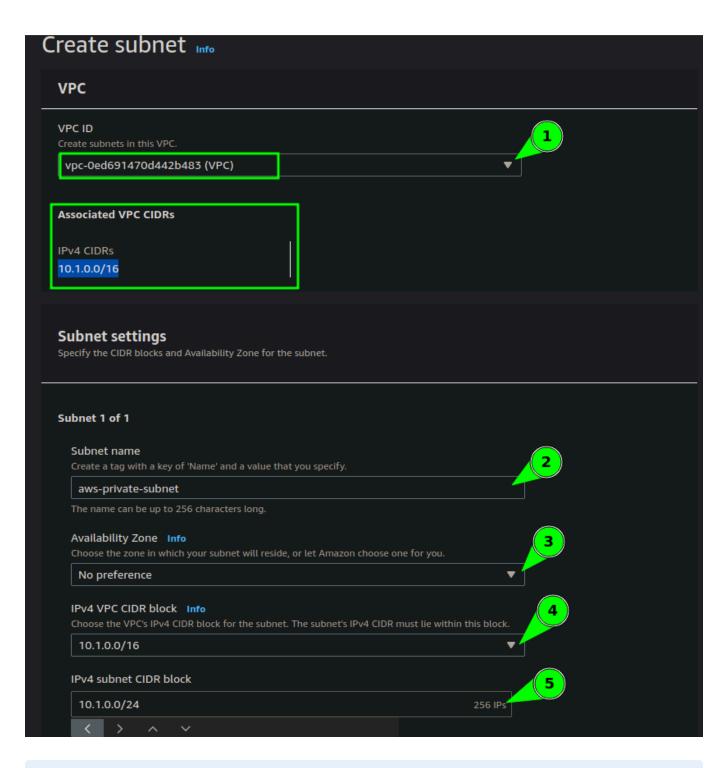
On-Premise Public Subnet

First subnet will be created for the VPC-on-premise. Its going to be named on-premise-public-subnet. It needs a routing table and also needs an Internet Gateway (IGW). The on premise subnet will use the VPC-on-premise at CIDR block 10.0.0.0/16 and this subnet, will use 10.0.0.0/24 of the vpc-on-premise CIDR block, this will give the subnet 256 hosts. I will be using only one host, for the EC2 instance to connect to the VPN.



AWS VPC Private Subnet

Secondly, creating a subnet for the other VPC, vpc . For this one, I will name it aws-private-subnet . It needs a routing table as well. This subnet will use the VPC ip block 10.1.0.0/16 and this subnet, will use 10.1.0.0/24 from the given VPC block, this will give the subnet 256 hosts.





Total of required subnets for this Site To Site VPN. Only two subnets, one will be used for the on-premise machine, and the other one will be used on other side, will be used to connect to the instances within the subnet using the tunnels by the Site To Site VPN.



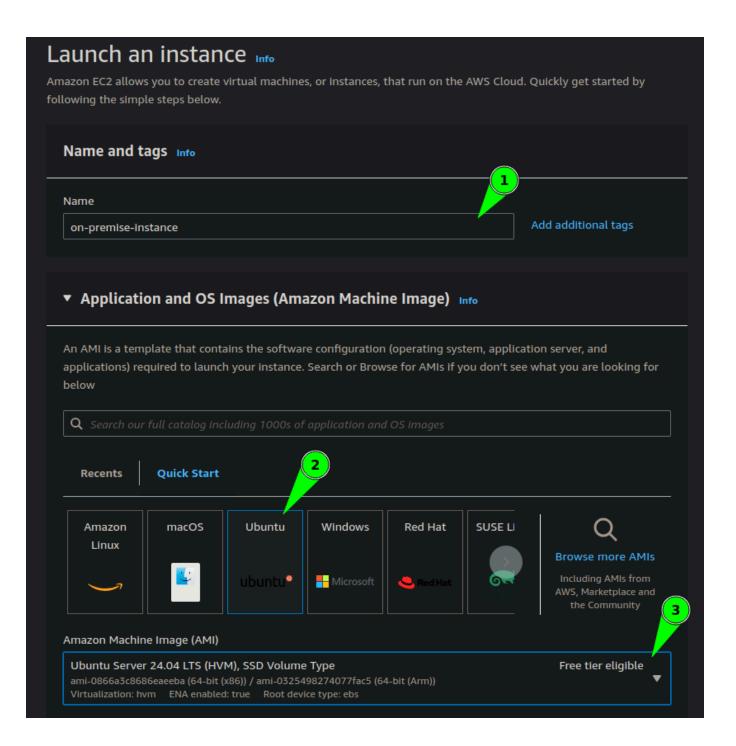
Lets edit or create routing table.

I will be using the routing tables that were created while creating the subnets. You can edit them and renamed them if you want or create new ones, thats totally up to you. I will go through editing their routings later.



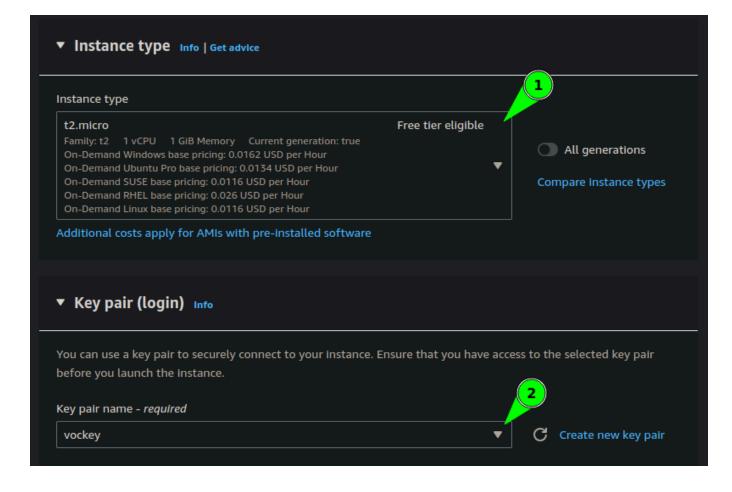
Lets create an EC2 instance for vpc-on-premise

Its required since we need its public ip address for the *Customer Gateway* later. As well, I will be going through editing the routing table of the on-premise-public-subnet.

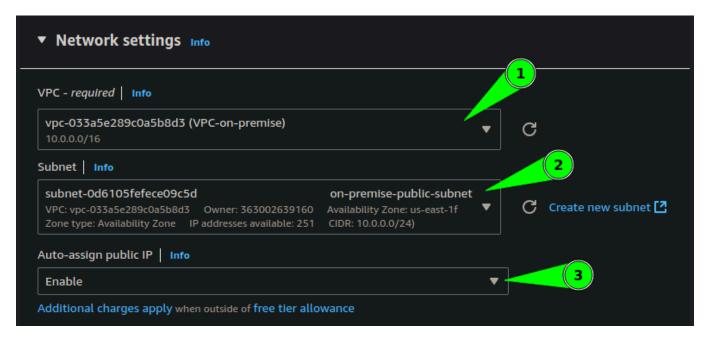


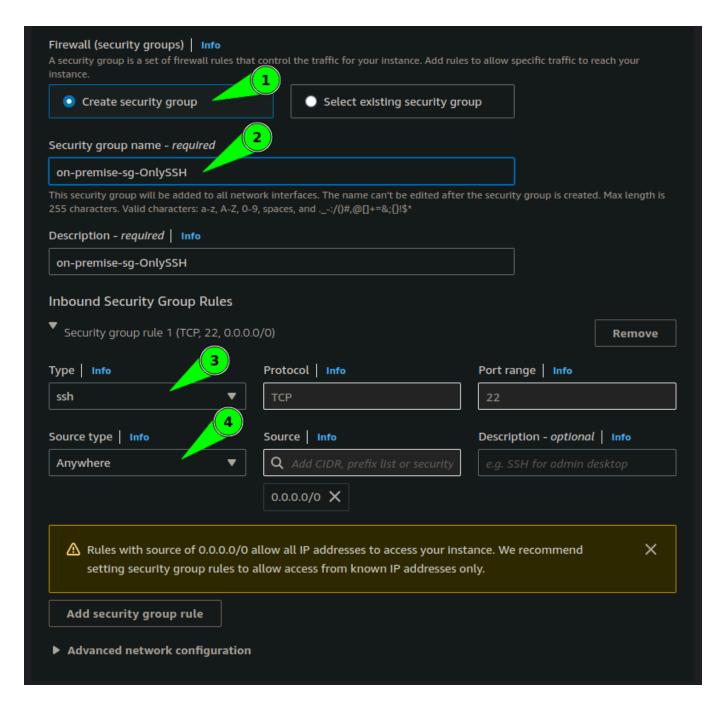
on-premise-instance

strongSwan



I am going to be using the **vockey** provided for me. You can create a pair, don't forget to download the private key, we will be needing that to login to the instance through SSH.





Make sure to add SSH security group, we will want to connect to it later.



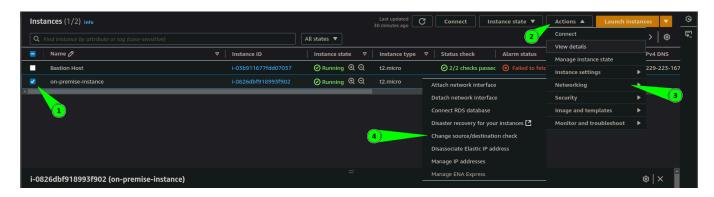
Security Groups Rules: You can assign your public IP address to limit access to that instance for secure login. To do this, make sure to select *My IP* from *Source type*. This ensures that only your home public IP address is allowed to connect to the instance.



Note

Copy the public ip address of the created instance, we will be needing that later for the *Customer Gateway* as well as to login to that instance.

Also, we will need to stop Source and Destination check from the instance.



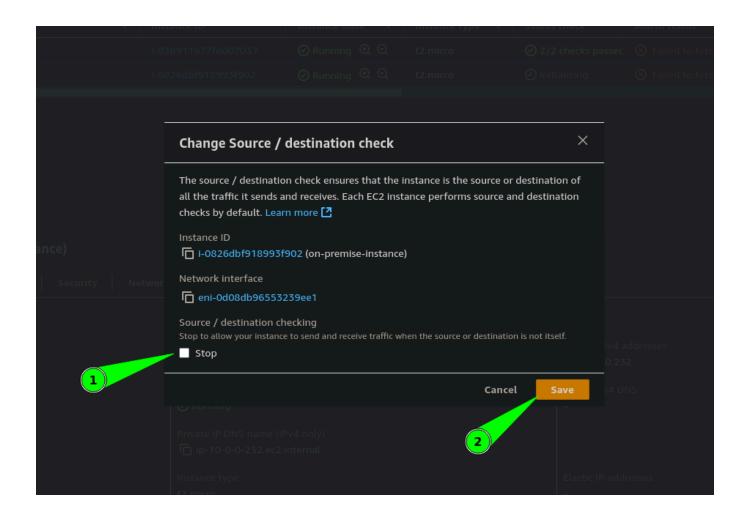
Note

Stopping this will allow the instance to route traffic. It can accept data from one network and send it to another, acting like a bridge between different networks. Because that Instance will act as a VPN endpoint.

Adding more instances to that VPC, will just have to route its traffic to that VPN Endpoint.

This instance do not originate or terminate traffic, its forwarding it between different networks.

https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/why-do-we-disable-sourcedestination-checks-nat-instance-usman-ahmad/

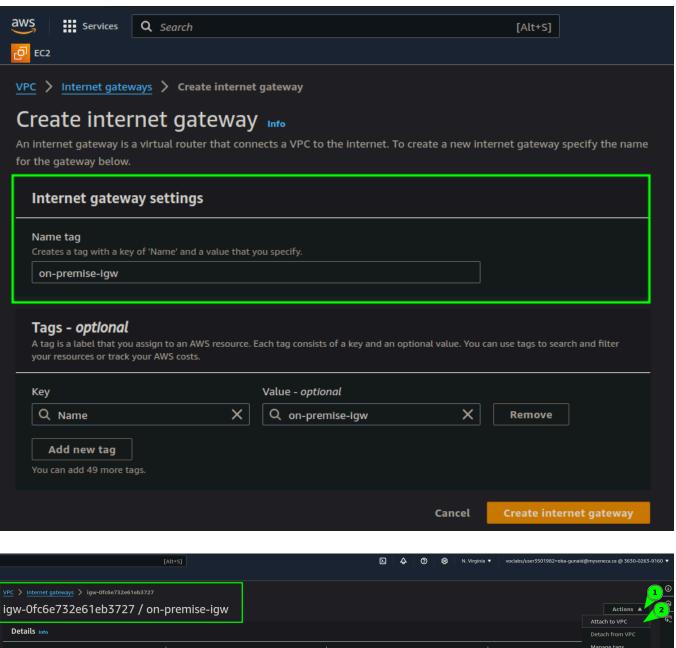


Lets create the required gateways

Internet Gateway

You will need to navigate to the **Internet Gateway** section and create a new Internet Gateway. I will name this on-premise-igw. Remember, we are only creating one Internet Gateway to be used for the vpc-on-premises VPC.

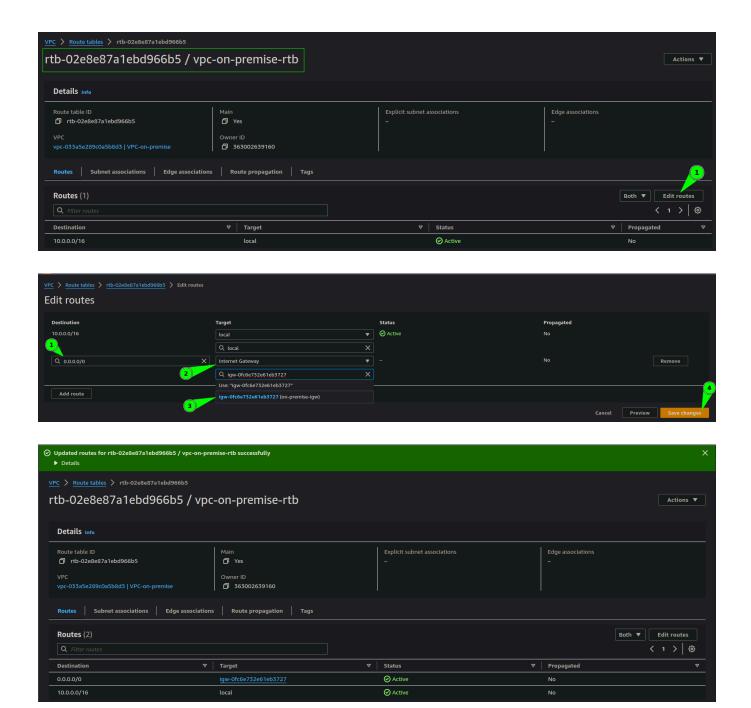
We will later add this to the routing table of the on-premise-vpc



Don't forget to attach it to the vpc-on-premise

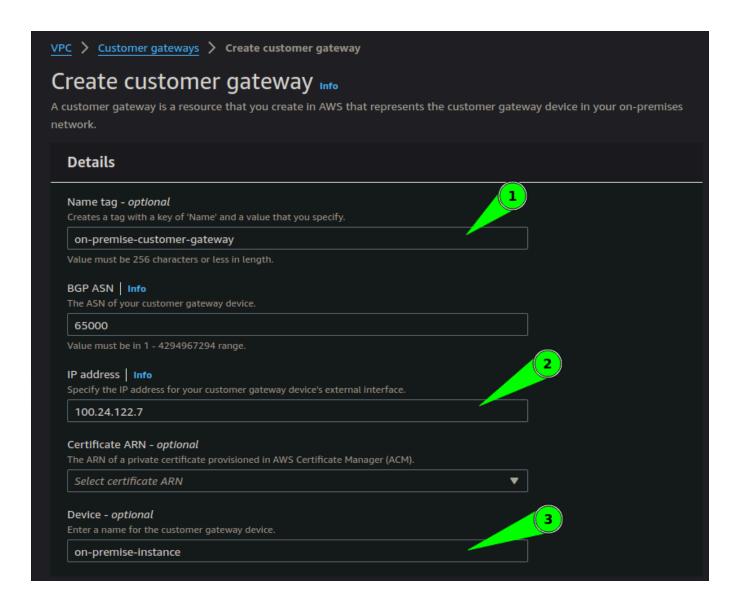
S Important

on-premise-public-subnet - Internet Access: Before we move on, lets take a look at the routing table of *on-premise-public-subnet*, we will need to add this **Internet Gateway** to it. This will ensure that all instances within the <code>on-premise-public-subnet</code>, will have internet access.



Customer Gateway

Under Virtual Private Network VPN section, navigate to Customer Gateway. Create a new one.



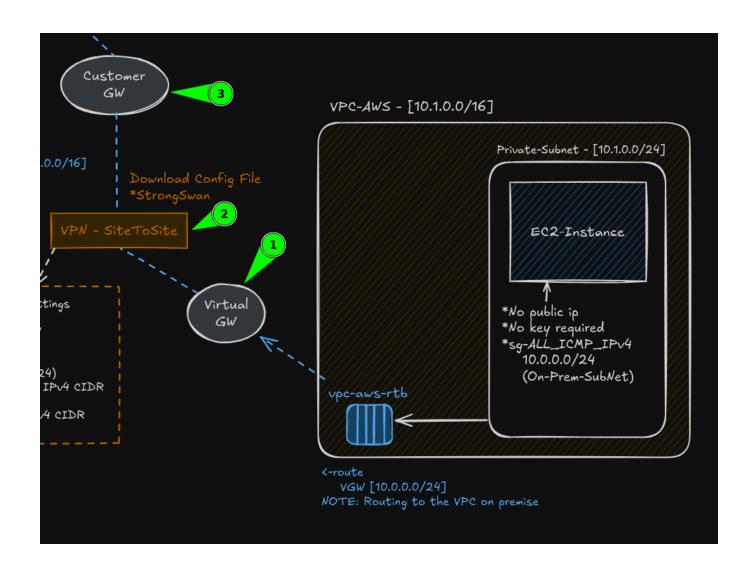
I used the public IP address of the on-premise-instance I created earlier. This instance will serve as the on-premises site.

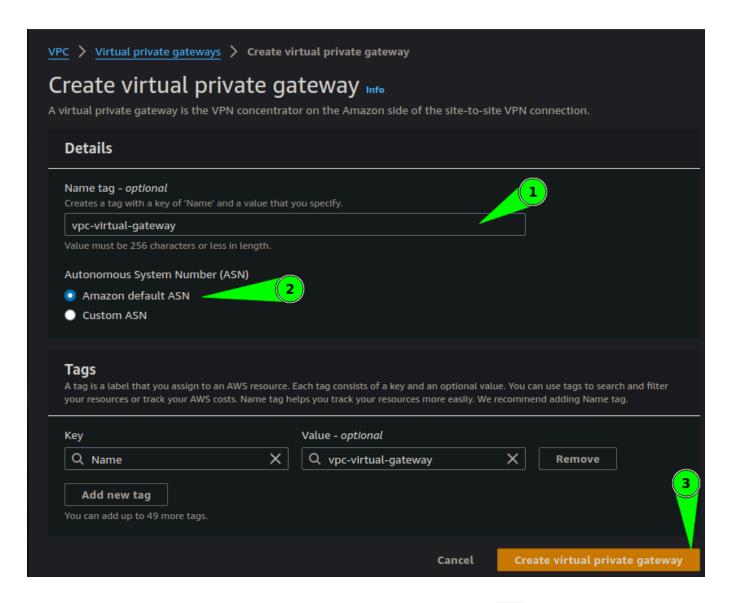


Virtual Private Gateway

The virtual gateway is required to establish a Site-to-Site VPN connection. This virtual gateway will be used by the Site-to-Site VPN and the vpc.

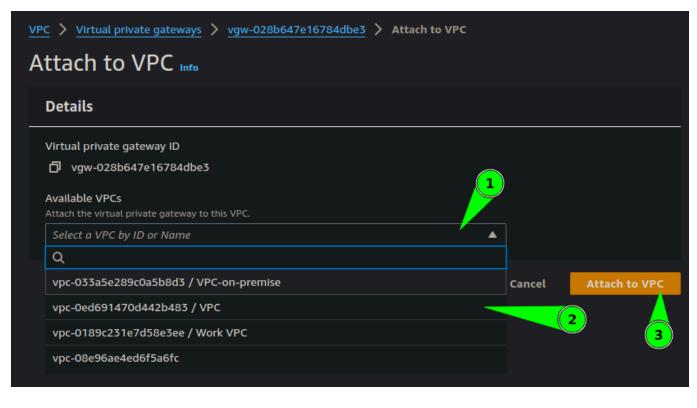
NOTE: Look at the topology.





This Virtual Private Gateway needs to be attached to the aws-vpc VPC.



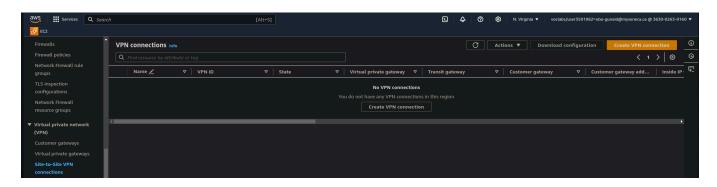




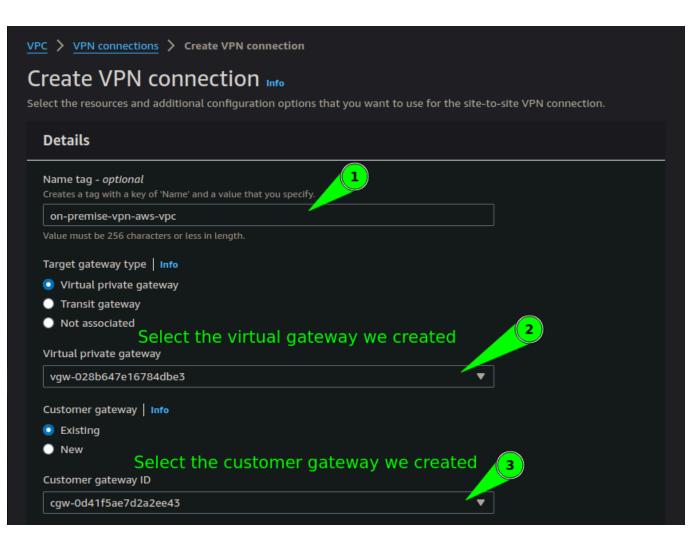
Now the VPC attached to the Virtual Private Gateway.



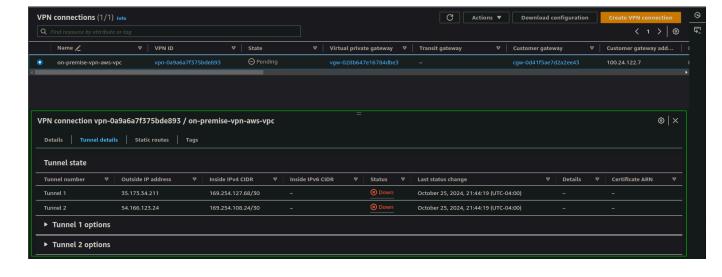
Site To Site VPN Connection



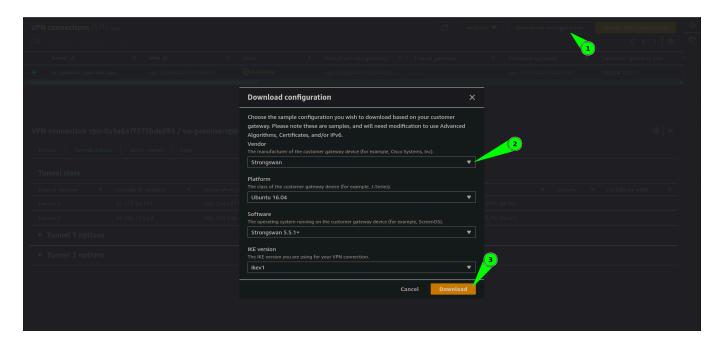
Now we will create a site to site vpn connection.





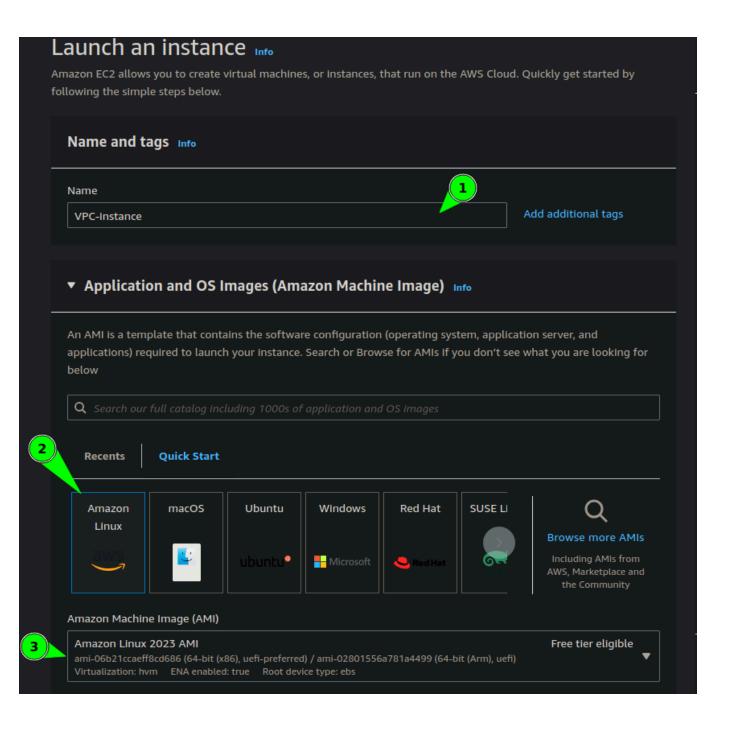


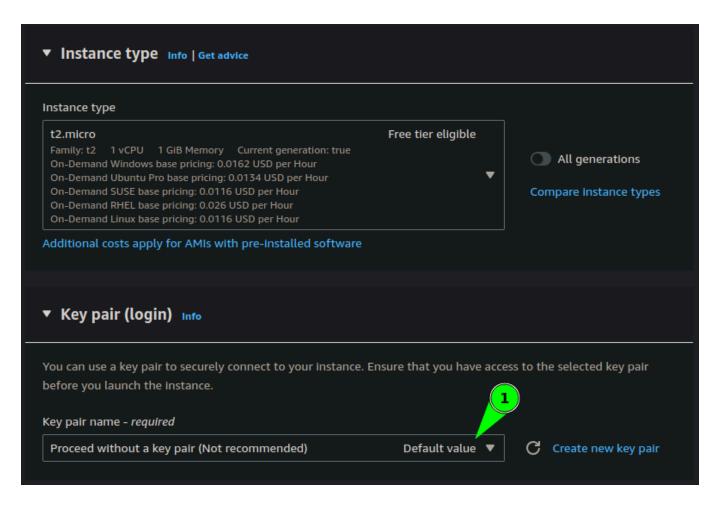
As you can see the tunnels are down. Lets download the configuration file for now. I will be using *strongSwan*.

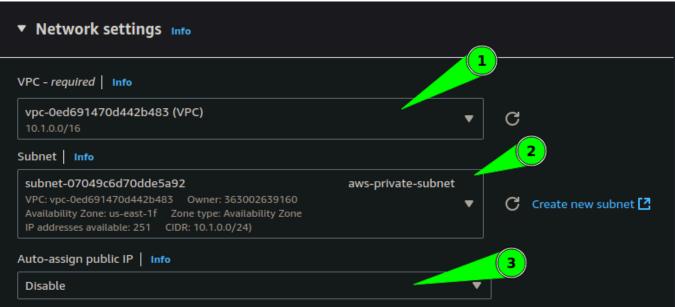


Launch an EC2 instance in VPC the non-premise VPC

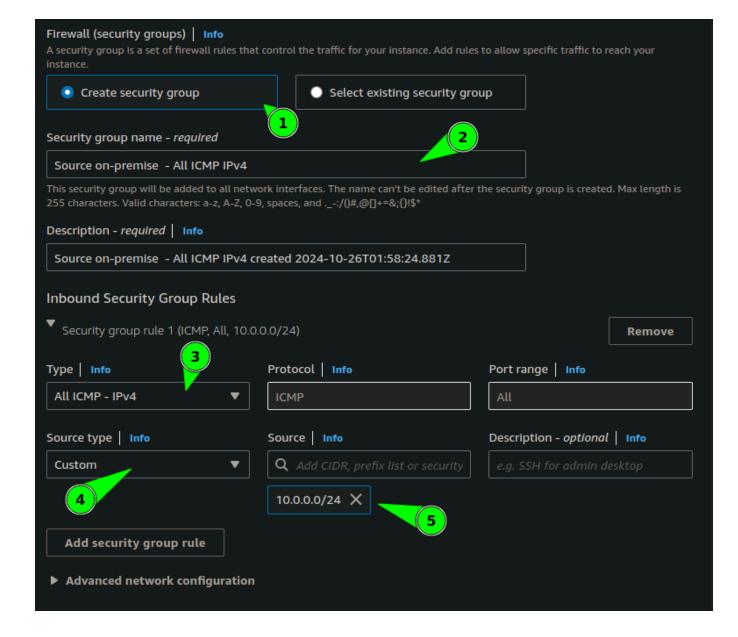
This instance won't have a public ip address, and no key is required. Just in the security group, we will need to allow Allow All ICMP IPv4 from 10.0.0.0/24 which is the on-premise-public-subnet.







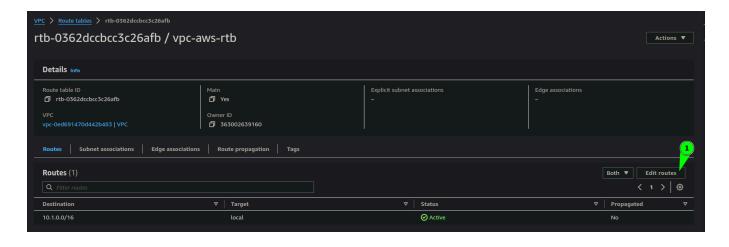
Now will need to ensure this instance accepts traffic from a specific IP CIDR block. 10.0.0.0/24

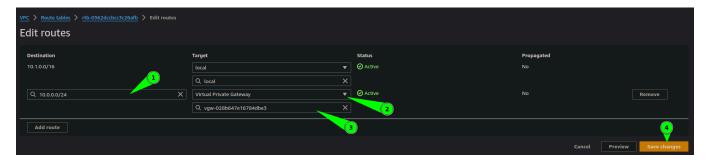


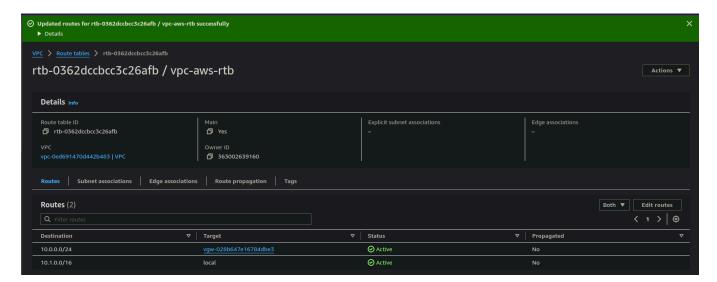
Lets go back to route tables now.

Before starting to configure the strongswan, lets make sure the route tables are set correctly, lets start with the AWS-VPC private-subnet. Since its closer to the **Virtual Private Gateway**. It needs to route traffic to the other on-premise-public-subnet. using the virtual private gateway.

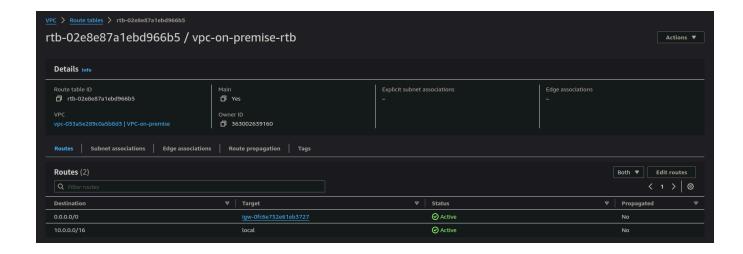
Vpc-aws routing table







On-premise-public-subnet route table



aws-private-subnet



Lets configure the on-premise-instance

First, we need to login to our on-premise-instance to do that, we need to download our key from aws if you haven't. I did, and the first thing is to ensure the key can be only read. So using the linux command prompt type:

```
chmod 400 path/labsuser
```

Then we will need to connect to the instance, for example:

```
ssh -i labsuser.pem ubuntu@123.222.24.2
```

```
Warning: Permanently added '44.223.12.92' (ED25519) to the list of known hosts.
Welcome to Ubuntu 24.04.1 LTS (GNU/Linux 6.8.0-1016-aws x86_64)
 * Documentation: https://help.ubuntu.com
* Management: https://landscape.canonical.com
 * Management:
                          https://ubuntu.com/pro
 System information as of Sat Oct 26 14:43:54 UTC 2024

        System load:
        0.08
        Processes:
        104

        Usage of /:
        22.8% of 6.71GB
        Users logged in:
        0

        Memory usage:
        19%
        IPv4 address for enX0:
        10.0.0.87

        Swap usage:
        0%

Expanded Security Maintenance for Applications is not enabled.
0 updates can be applied immediately.
Enable ESM Apps to receive additional future security updates.
See https://ubuntu.com/esm or run: sudo pro status
The list of available updates is more than a week old.
To check for new updates run: sudo apt update
The programs included with the Ubuntu system are free software;
the exact distribution terms for each program are described in the
individual files in /usr/share/doc/*/copyright.
Ubuntu comes with ABSOLUTELY NO WARRANTY, to the extent permitted by
To run a command as administrator (user "root"), use "sudo <command>". See "man sudo_root" for details.
 buntu@ip-10-0-0-87:~$
```

Configuration

Lets install strongswan

```
ubuntu@ip-10-0-0-87:~$ sudo apt install strongswan
```

Open /etc/sysctl.conf



Editor: I am using Vim to edit these files; you can use any editor, such as nano, which is also available.

Please refer to the documentation for either Vim or Nano.

S Important

Check Your Configuration File: Check your configuration file downloaded from the Site To Site VPN Connection Page. You can follow the steps provided in the file. I am going through the steps used for strongswan.

```
# /etc/sysctl.conf - Configuration file for setting system variables
# See /etc/sysctl.d/ for additional system variables.
# See sysctl.conf (5) for information.
#kernel.domainname = example.com
# Uncomment the following to stop low-level messages on console
\#kernel.printk = 3 4 1 3
# Functions previously found in netbase
# Uncomment the next two lines to enable Spoof protection (reverse-path filter
# Turn on Source Address Verification in all interfaces to
# prevent some spoofing attacks
#net.ipv4.conf.default.rp_filter=1
#net.ipv4.conf.all.rp_filter=1
# Uncomment the next line to enable TCP/IP SYN cookies
# See http://lwn.net/Articles/277146/
# Note: This may impact IPv6 TCP sessions too
#net.ipv4.tcp_syncookies=1
# Uncomment the next line to enable packet forwarding for IPv4
net.ipv4.ip_forward=1 ---
# Uncomment the next line to enable packet forwarding for IPv6
# Enabling this option disables Stateless Address Autoconfiguration
# based on Router Advertisements for this host
#net.ipv6.conf.all.forwarding=1
"/etc/sysctl.conf" 64L, 2208B written
                                                            28,1
                                                                          Top
```

Uncomment net.ipv4.ip_forward=1

Now we need to apply the changes:

```
sudo sysctl -p
```

Next, open etc/ipsec.conf

```
sudo vim /etc/ipsec.conf
```

Uncomment uniqueids = no

And copy the following from your config file. And paste it at the end of /etc/ipsec.conf file.

```
# AWS VPN will also support AES256 and SHA256 for the "ike" (Phase 1) and "esp" (Phase 2) entries below.
# For Phase 1, AWS VPN supports DH groups 2, 14-18, 22, 23, 24. Phase 2 supports DH groups 2, 5, 14-18,
22, 23, 24
# To see Strongswan's syntax for these different values, please refer to https://wiki.strongswan.org/
projects/strongswan/wiki/IKEv1CipherSuites
conn Tunnel1
       auto=start
        left=%defaultroute
       leftid=44.223.12.92
       right=3.216.254.210
       type=tunnel
       leftauth=psk
       rightauth=psk
       keyexchange=ikev1
        ike=aes128-sha1-modp1024
       ikelifetime=8h
       esp=aes128-sha1-modp1024
       lifetime=1h
       keyingtries=%forever
       leftsubnet=0.0.0.0/0
       rightsubnet=0.0.0.0/0
       dpddelay=10s
       dpdtimeout=30s
       dpdaction=restart
       ## Please note the following line assumes you only have two tunnels in your Strongswan
configuration file. This "mark" value must be unique and may need to be changed based on other entries in
your configuration file.
       mark=100
       ## Uncomment the following line to utilize the script from the "Automated Tunnel Healhcheck and
Failover" section. Ensure that the integer after "-m" matches the "mark" value above, and <VPC CIDR> is
replaced with the CIDR of your VPC
       ## (e.g. 192.168.1.0/24)
       #leftupdown="/etc/ipsec.d/aws-updown.sh -ln Tunnel1 -l1 169.254.198.158/30 -lr 169.254.198.157/30
-m 100 -r <VPC CIDR>"
```

```
conn Tunnel1
       auto=start
       left=%defaultroute
       leftid=44.223.12.92
       right=3.216.254.210
       type=tunnel
       leftauth=psk
       rightauth=psk
       keyexchange=ikev1
       ike=aes128-sha1-modp1024
       ikelifetime=8h
       esp=aes128-sha1-modp1024
       lifetime=1h
       keyingtries=%forever
       leftsubnet=0.0.0.0/0
       rightsubnet=0.0.0.0/0
       dpddelay=10s
       dpdtimeout=30s
       dpdaction=restart
        ## Please note the following line assumes you only have two tunnels in
your Strongswan configuration file. This "mark" value must be unique and may
need to be changed based on other entries in your configuration file.
       mark=100
       ## Uncomment the following line to utilize the script from the "Automa
ted Tunnel Healhcheck and Failover" section. Ensure that the integer after "-m
" matches the "mark" value above, and <VPC CIDR> is replaced with the CIDR of
your VPC
       ## (e.g. 192.168.1.0/24)
       leftupdown="/etc/ipsec.d/aws-updown.sh -ln Tunnel1 -ll 169.254.198.15
```

This is **tunnel 1**, we will do the same thing for **tunnel 2**. First, find it from your configuration file.

```
conn Tunnel2
       auto=start
      left=%defaultroute
       leftid=44.223.12.92
       right=34.236.97.73
       type=tunnel
       leftauth=psk
       rightauth=psk
       keyexchange=ikev1
       ike=aes128-sha1-modp1024
       ikelifetime=8h
       esp=aes128-sha1-modp1024
       lifetime=1h
       keyingtries=%forever
       leftsubnet=0.0.0.0/0
       rightsubnet=0.0.0.0/0
       dpddelay=10s
       dpdtimeout=30s
       ## Please note the following line assumes you only have two tunnels in your Strongswan
configuration file. This "mark" value must be unique and may need to be changed based on other entries in
your configuration file.
       ## Uncomment the following line to utilize the script from the "Automated Tunnel Healhcheck and
Failover" section. Ensure that the integer after "-m" matches the "mark" value above, and <VPC CIDR> is
replaced with the CIDR of your VPC
       ## (e.g. 192.168.1.0/24)
       #leftupdown="/etc/ipsec.d/aws-updown.sh -ln Tunnel2 -l1 169.254.246.50/30 -lr 169.254.246.49/30
m 200 -r <VPC CIDR>"
```

Then copy it and uncommment the last line that starts with leftupdown=... and update the <PC CIDR> This CIDR range is the AWS-VPC not the on-premise-vpc. Which is 10.1.0.0/16

Next, open /etc/ipsec.secrets

```
sudo vim /etc/ipsec.secrets
```

```
4) Create a new file at /etc/ipsec.secrets if it doesn't already exist, and append this line to the file (be mindful of the spacing!). This value authenticates the tunnel endpoints:
44.223.12.92 3.216.254.210 : PSK "vZwFmB5mCecewKoWIXHDwI7.AYeO5eai"
```

This is the shared secret for the tunnel 1, there is also another shared secret for tunnel 2.

```
4) Create a new file at /etc/ipsec.secrets if it doesn't already exist, and append this line to the file (be mindful of the spacing!). This value authenticates the tunnel endpoints: 44.223.12.92 34.236.97.73 : PSK "yYXnYEzfZLwzmUd5ofzv.oSMUy3ClojR"
```

```
# This file holds shared secrets or RSA private keys for authentication.

# RSA private key for this host, authenticating it to any other host

# which knows the public part.

44.223.12.92 3.216.254.210 : PSK "vZwFmB5mCecewKoWIXHDwI7.AYeO5eai" 2 tunnel2

44.223.12.92 34.236.97.73 : PSK "yYXnYEzfZLwzmUd5ofzv.oSMUy3C1ojR" 2 tunnel2
```

Copy them and add them to the file.

Next, we will create a new file. At /etc/ipsec.d/aws-updown and copy the following code from your configuration file.

```
sudo vim /etc/ipsec.d/aws-updown.sh
```

```
=== HOW-TO ===
1) Create a new file at /etc/ipsec.d/aws-updown.sh if it doesn't already exist, and append the following
#!/bin/bash
while [[ $# > 1 ]]; do
                                                                      Copy the whole code
       case ${1} in
                -ln|--link-name)
                        TUNNEL_NAME="${2}"
                        TUNNEL_PHY_INTERFACE="${PLUTO_INTERFACE}"
                        shift
                        ;;
                -11 --link-local)
                        TUNNEL_LOCAL_ADDRESS="${2}"
                        TUNNEL_LOCAL_ENDPOINT="${PLUTO_ME}"
                        shift
                        ;;
                -lr | --link-remote)
                        TUNNEL_REMOTE_ADDRESS="${2}"
                        TUNNEL_REMOTE_ENDPOINT="${PLUTO_PEER}"
                        shift
                        ;;
                -m | --mark)
                       TUNNEL_MARK="${2}"
                        shift
                        ;;
                -r --static-route)
                        TUNNEL STATIC ROUTE="${2}"
```

There is also a minor tweak required on this code. There is a function called add_route()

```
add_route() {
        IFS=',' read -ra route <<< "${TUNNEL_STATIC_ROUTE}"
        for i in "${route[@]}"; do
            ip route add ${i} dev ${TUNNEL_NAME} metric ${TUNNEL_MARK} src 10.0.0.8]

        done
        iptables -t mangle -A FORWARD -o ${TUNNEL_NAME} -p tcp --tcp-flags SYN,RST SYN -j TCPM
SS --clamp-mss-to-pmtu
        iptables -t mangle -A INPUT -p esp -s ${TUNNEL_REMOTE_ENDPOINT} -d ${TUNNEL_LOCAL_ENDP
OINT} -j MARK --set-xmark ${TUNNEL_MARK}
        ip route flush table 220
}</pre>
```

That is my local private ip address on the on-premise-instance. After saving the files.

Run sudo chmod 744 /etc/ipsec.d/aws-updown.sh

We will need to restart the ipsec with the following command.

```
sudo ipsec restart

ubuntu@ip-10-0-0-87:~$ sudo chmod 744 /etc/ipsec.d/aws-updown.sh
```

```
ubuntu@ip-10-0-0-87:~$ sudo chmod 744 /etc/ipsec.d/aws-updown.sh
ubuntu@ip-10-0-0-87:~$ sudo ipsec restart
Stopping strongSwan IPsec...
Starting strongSwan 5.9.13 IPsec [starter]...
ubuntu@ip-10-0-0-87:~$
```

Lets check the status of the ipsec

```
sudo ipsec status
```

```
ubuntu@ip-10-0-0-87:~$ sudo ipsec status
Security Associations (2 up, 0 connecting):
    Tunnel2[2]: ESTABLISHED 91 seconds ago, 10.0.0.87[44.223.12.92]...34.236.97.73[34.236.97.
73]
    Tunnel2{1}: INSTALLED, TUNNEL, reqid 1, ESP in UDP SPIs: cbfe0d3c_i cd5f38cb_o
    Tunnel2{1}: 10.0.0.0/16 == 10.1.0.0/16
    Tunnel1[1]: ESTABLISHED 91 seconds ago, 10.0.0.87[44.223.12.92]...3.216.254.210[3.216.254.210]
    Tunnel1{2}: INSTALLED, TUNNEL, reqid 2, ESP in UDP SPIs: caa9f1a2_i cb012ac7_o
    Tunnel1{2}: 10.0.0.0/16 == 10.1.0.0/16
ubuntu@ip-10-0-0-87:~$ [
```

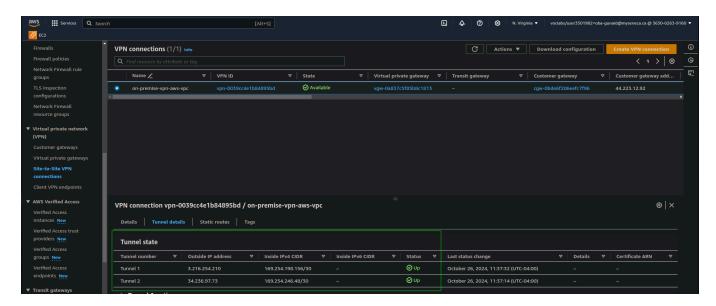
All the tunnels are established and installed.

Lets check ifconfig but first we need to install net-tools

```
sudo apt install net-tools
```

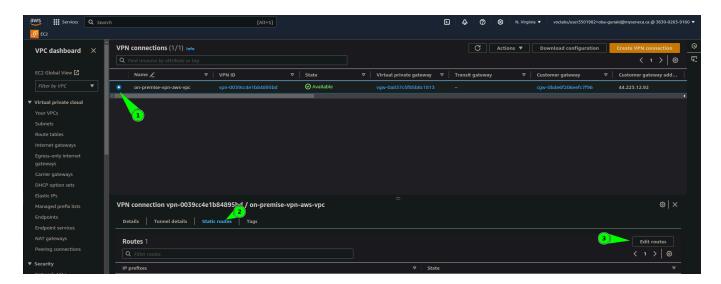
```
ubuntu@ip-10-0-0-87:~$ ifconfig
Tunnel1: flags=209<UP,POINTOPOINT,RUNNING,NOARP> mtu 1419
       inet 169.254.198.158 netmask 255.255.252 destination 169.254.198.157
       inet6 fe80::5efe:a00:57 prefixlen 64 scopeid 0x20<link>
                txqueuelen 1000 (IPIP Tunnel)
       RX packets 0 bytes 0 (0.0 B)
       RX errors 0 dropped 0 overruns 0 frame 0
       TX packets 0 bytes 0 (0.0 B)
       TX errors 0 dropped 0 overruns 0 carrier 0 collisions 0
Tunnel2: flags=209<UP,POINTOPOINT,RUNNING,NOARP> mtu 1419
       inet 169.254.246.50 netmask 255.255.252 destination 169.254.246.49
       inet6 fe80::5efe:a00:57 prefixlen 64 scopeid 0x20<link>
       tunnel
                txqueuelen 1000 (IPIP Tunnel)
       RX packets 0 bytes 0 (0.0 B)
       RX errors 0 dropped 0 overruns 0 frame 0
       TX packets 0 bytes 0 (0.0 B)
       TX errors 0 dropped 0 overruns 0 carrier 0 collisions 0
```

Lets check our **Site To Site VPN** and confirm that the tunnels are working.



The last part (set static route & ping instance)

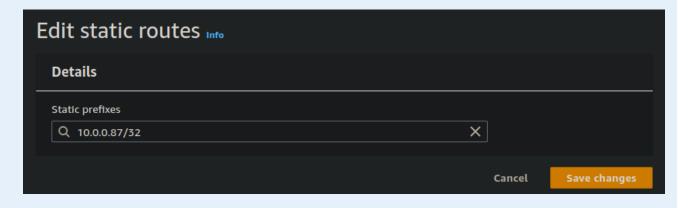
Before we ping the private aws-instance using its private ip address, we will need to add the on-premise-instance private IP address or its VPC CIDR block, in the static routes of the Site To Site VPN we created.

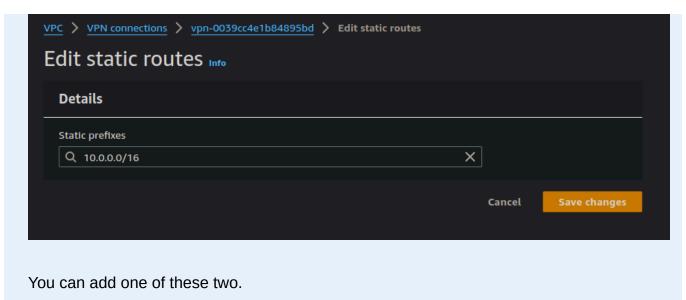




Note

You can set the whole range of the on-premise-vpc, or just a specific IP address i.e the on-premise-instance.

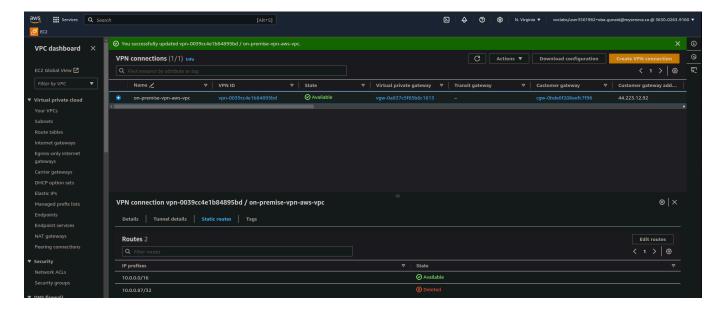




⚠ Caution

Don't forget to click on it from the drop-down list and save changes.







I have tested it in both ways, from a specific range i.e 10.0.0.0/16 (vpc-on-premise), and from a specific private ip address of an instance 10.0.0.87/32 (on-premise-instance).

Ping from 10.0.0.87 (on-premise-instance) to 10.1.0.179 (aws-instance)

```
ubuntu@ip-10-0-0-87:~$ ping 10.1.0.179 ________1
PING 10.1.0.179 (10.1.0.179) 56(84) bytes of data.
64 bytes from 10.1.0.179: icmp_seq=1 ttl=127 time=2.13 ms
64 bytes from 10.1.0.179: icmp_seq=2 ttl=127 time=2.08 ms
64 bytes from 10.1.0.179: icmp_seq=3 ttl=127 time=2.36 ms
64 bytes from 10.1.0.179: icmp_seq=4 ttl=127 time=2.18 ms
64 bytes from 10.1.0.179: icmp_seq=5 ttl=127 time=2.70 ms
64 bytes from 10.1.0.179: icmp_seq=6 ttl=127 time=2.36 ms
64 bytes from 10.1.0.179: icmp_seq=7 ttl=127 time=2.11 ms
64 bytes from 10.1.0.179: icmp_seq=8 ttl=127 time=2.16 ms
64 bytes from 10.1.0.179: icmp_seq=9 ttl=127 time=1.85 ms
64 bytes from 10.1.0.179: icmp_seq=10 ttl=127 time=2.36 ms
^С
10 packets transmitted, 10 received, 0% packet loss, time 9013ms
rtt min/avg/max/mdev = 1.850/2.226/2.697/0.217 ms
```

With a few additional modifications to the AWS VPC, we can add more public and private subnets and possibly another bastion host or multiple instances. We can also SSH into any AWS instance using only its private IP address, but we must enable SSH access in the security groups.

Additionally, it's important to note that, since we included the entire on-premises CIDR range in the Site-to-Site VPN configuration *static IPs*, any instance within that on-premises CIDR block can securely access resources within the AWS VPC using their private ip addresses, as long as appropriate routing and security group rules are configured.