

Getting Started Guide for Standalone MM on X86 Systems

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Revision History

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1 MM INTRODUCTION

1.1 SMM and MM Overview

This section describes the main differences between Traditional SMM and Standalone MM on X86 systems. A detailed comparison of the Traditional MM and Standalone MM load process is described in the PI Specification sections "Initializing Management Mode in MM Traditional Mode" and "Initializing Management Mode in Standalone Mode" respectively.

In the following comparison, we will use "SMM" to represent "Traditional SMM" and "MM" to represent "Standalone MM".

SMM Driver:

- Module type is DXE_SMM_DRIVER. The entry point of an SMM driver follows the UEFI specification EFI IMAGE ENTRY POINT.
- SMM driver can access the DXE, UEFI, and SMM services during initialization, but can only access SMM services during runtime.
- Launches at the DXE phase, because SMM might have dependencies on DXE.
- Multiple rounds of dispatch depend on the gEfiEventDxeDispatchGuid event.
- Uses PEI HOBs.
- No memory protection before the end of DXE: PiSmmCore installs the EDKII_PI_SMM_MEMORY_ATTRIBUTES_TABLE at the gEfiEndOfDxeEventGroupGuid event.
- Can access non-MMRAM memory types at runtime: EfiReservedMemoryType, EfiRuntimeServicesData, and EfiACPIMemoryNVS.

MM Driver:

- Module type is MM_STANDALONE. The entry point of an updatable MM driver follows the PI specification MM_IMAGE_ENTRY_POINT.
- A Standalone MM driver must only refer to MM servers.
- Launches early in the PEI phase.
- Two rounds of dispatch depend on the gEventMmDispatchGuid event. Refer to section **1.2 MM Driver Dispatch** for details.
- Cannot access any non-MMRAM memory unless the MmUnblockMemoryRequest() API is called for the non-MMRAM memory. Refer to section **1.4 Non-MMRAM Access** for details.
- Uses MM self-owned HOBs. Refer to section 1.5 MM HOBs for details.
- Early memory protection in PEI: standaloneMmCore installs the EDKII_PI_SMM_MEMORY_ATTRIBUTES_TABLE once the second round of dispatch finishes. Refer to section **1.7 Memory Protection** for details.

1.2 MM Driver Dispatch

For traditional SMM drivers dispatch on X86 systems, they are dispatched within multiple rounds: The dispatch is hooked on the <code>gefieventDxeDispatchGuid</code> event, which is signaled by DXE Core when DXE Core finishes one round of dispatch.

standaloneMmIpl is a PEIM responsible for locating and loading standaloneMmCore. All the MM drivers are dispatched by standaloneMmCore in the 2-round dispatches in X86:

- **1st round**: standaloneMmCore dispatches MM drivers in its IPL entry point running in non-SMM mode. It exits to standaloneMmIpl after PiSmmCpuStandaloneMm installs the SMI handler in its entry point.
- **2nd round**: StandaloneMmIpl triggers SMI (gEventMmDispatchGuid) to inform StandaloneMmCore to dispatch the remaining MM drivers in SMM mode in its SMI entry point.

Produce required MM HOBs

Init SMM Service

SMM CPU Entry

Dispatch Standalone MM drivers in BFV

Ready SMI Env

Communicate to MM Foundation to dispatch all standalone MM drivers

The following flow chart describes the MM driver dispatch flow:

Figure 1: MM Driver Dispatch Flow

1.3 MM Communication Buffer

MM communication buffer is specific memory regions used for communication between the Non-MM and MM environment.

Traditional SMM Communication Buffer can be allocated by each DXE driver. It can be any EfiReservedMemoryType, EfiRuntimeServicesData or EfiACPIMemoryNvs runtime buffer. SMI Handlers directly access them. There is no protection of access/call out before EndofDxe.

Standalone MM introduces a more secure method for handling MM Communication Buffer. standaloneMmIpl is responsible for allocating and unblocking a fixed size of runtime memory (non-MMRAM) for commBuffer (MdeModulePkg/Include/Guid/MmCommBuffer.h) between non-MM and MM. standaloneMmCore allocates a shadowed communication buffer in MMRAM accordingly. The commBuffer will be used by the MM Communication PPI and Protocol.

Every communication flow is as follows where steps #2, #3, and #4 run inside MM:

- 1. Non-MM code modifies the commBuffer and triggers MMI.
- 2. StandaloneMmCore copies the content to the shadowed one in MMRAM and calls the corresponding MMI handler.
- 3. MMI handler accesses the shadowed commBuffer in MMRAM.
- 4. Upon returning of the MMI handler, standaloneMmCore copies the updated content in the shadowed buffer to the commBuffer in non-MMRAM.
- 5. Upon returning to non-MM mode, non-MM code reads the commBuffer.

By following the above, the communifer used by the Communication PPI/Protocol is referred to as the **Primary Buffer**. Additionally, other non-MMRAM memory for specific MM driver usage are termed **Non-Primary Buffer**. Those buffer can be pointed from the MM HOBs, or pointed from the communication PPI/Protocol is referred to as the **Primary Buffer**. Both

the Primary Buffer and Non-Primary Buffer used by MM drivers should be validated for accessibility before use.

1.4 Non-MMRAM Access

Any memory outside of the MMRAM (non-MMRAM) that needs to be accessed by MMI handlers must be explicitly declared as "Unblock Mem" through MmUnblockMemoryRequest() (MdePkg/Include/Library/MmUnblockMemoryLib.h).

Requirements for marking the non-MMRAM as "Unblocked":

- 1. The memory must be allocated and unblocked in the Post-Mem phase and before the gEfiPeiMmCommunicationPpiGuid is installed.
- 2. The memory must be runtime-accessible and cannot be reclaimed by the OS.

StandaloneMmIp1 builds the corresponding EFI_HOB_RESOURCE_DESCRIPTOR in the MM HOB list for all unblocked non-MMRAM memory access. Any non-MMRAM memory region that is not described by EFI_HOB_RESOURCE_DESCRIPTOR in the MM HOB list is not accessible from SMM mode.

1.5 MM HOBs

PEI HOBs are used by the traditional SMM. The lifecycle of traditional SMM HOBs is limited to the boot phase, and once entering the runtime phase, HOBs can no longer be accessed or used in the SMM. In contrast, Standalone MM is designed to maintain the validity of its self-owned HOBs throughout the entire lifecycle, including the runtime phase.

standaloneMmIp1 is not required to pass the entire PEI HOB list to the SMM foundation. Instead, it must create and pass a specific subset of HOBs that are essential for the operation of the Standalone MM environment. Overall, MM self-owned HOBs can be divided into two categories: **MM Foundation HOBs** and **MM Platform HOBs**.

1.5.1 MM Foundation HOBs

The MM Foundation HOBs are a set of HOBs that are created by the common logic within the standaloneMmIpl. These HOBs provide the necessary information about the firmware environment and memory regions that the MM Core and drivers will interact with. The following HOBs are created by standaloneMmIpl common logic; hence, they should **NOT** be created by the platform part:

- Single GUIDed (gEfiSmmSmramMemoryGuid) HOB to describe the MM regions.
- Single EFI_HOB_TYPE_MEMORY_ALLOCATION (gEfihobMemoryAllocModuleGuid) HOB to describe the MM region of MM Core.
- Single EFI_HOB_TYPE_FV to describe the BFV where MM Core resides if there is no MM FV HOB created by the platform.
- Multiple EFI_HOB_RESOURCE_DESCRIPTOR HOBs to describe the non-MM regions and their access permissions. All accessible non-MM regions should be described by EFI_HOB_RESOURCE_DESCRIPTOR HOBs.
- Single EFI_HOB_TYPE_MEMORY_ALLOCATION (gmmProfileDataHODGuid) HOB to describe the MM profile data region. This region is to log the non-MM regions marked with the MM_RESOURCE_ATTRIBUTE_LOGGING attribute in EFI_HOB_RESOURCE_DESCRIPTOR HOBS once they are accessed in MM.
- Single GUIDed (gMmCommBufferHobGuid) HOB to identify the MM Communication buffer (commBuffer) in the non-MM region.
- Multiple GUIDed (gsmmBaseHobGuid) HOBs to describe the SMM base address of each processor.
- Multiple GUIDed (gMpInformation2HobGuid) HOBs to describe the MP information.
- Single GUIDed (gMmcpusyncconfigHobGuid) HOB to describe how BSP synchronizes with APs in x86 SMM.
- Single GUIDed (gMmAcpiS3EnableHobGuid) HOB to describe the ACPI S3 enable status.

- Single GUIDed (gEfiAcpiVariableGuid) HOB to identify the S3 data root region in x86.
- Single GUIDed (gMmStatusCodeUseSerialHobGuid) HOB to describe whether the status code uses the serial port or not.

1.5.2 MM Platform HOBs

In addition to the MM Foundation HOBs, the StandaloneMmIp1 will consume the MmPlatformHobProducerLib/CreateMmPlatformHob() to create platform-specific HOBs that are necessary for the Standalone MM environment. These HOBs provide information and configuration details that are unique to the platform on which the system is running. The creation of these HOBs ensures that the MM environment is properly configured to interact with the platform's hardware and firmware features.

1.6 Communication between SMM/Non-SMM

The following mechanisms are provided for communication between SMM and Non-SMM:

- 1. Using commBuffer with Protocol efi_mm_communication_protocol or PPI efi_pei_mm_communication_ppi:
 - Requires dependency on the <code>efi_mm_communication_protocol</code> or <code>efi_pei_mm_communication_ppi</code> .
 - $\circ~$ Triggers an SMI when sharing data between SMM and Non-SMM code.
- 2. Using "Unblock Mem":
 - Must meet the usage requirements. Refer to section 1.4 Non-MMRAM Access for details.
- 3. Using MM Guided HOBs:
 - For data sizes < 64KB: Embed the data directly into the HOB.

Option #1 is suitable when the data cannot be finalized before launching MM or when the data flow is bidirectional between SMM and Non-SMM code. Option #2 is necessary for ASL code to pass data to the SW SMI handler. It is also an alternative solution to avoid triggering an SMI for latency considerations. Option #3 is ideal when the data size is small than 64K and it can be finalized before launching MM and the data flow is unidirectional between SMM and Non-SMM code.

But in cases where silicon initialization code does not want to rely on the communication PPI, the data size to be passed to MM exceeds 64KB, and the memory cannot be runtime-accessible due to the requirement for Runtime Non-SMM invisibility, then options #1 and #2 are not applicable. Option #3 requires splitting the data into multiple Guided HOBs, which increases code complexity due to the need to reassemble the data in MM. To simplify this, a fourth method was introduced as below:

- 1. Using MM Memory Allocation HOBs with BSData and Non-Zero GUID:
 - Memory Producer (PEIM): Create a Memory Allocation HOB pointing to a BSData memory region and assign a Non-Zero GUID to the corresponding HOB.
 - MM Core: Migrate the Memory Allocation HOB into MMRAM by copying the data from Non-MMRAM to MMRAM. Refer to MigrateMemoryAllocationHobs() in Edk2/StandaloneMmPkg/Core/StandaloneMmCore.c.
 - Memory Consumer (MM Drivers): Retrieve the memory from the Memory Allocation HOB using its assigned Non-Zero GUID.

1.7 Memory Protection

The PismmcpustandaloneMm driver creates a page table used in MM mode according to the EFI_HOB_RESOURCE_DESCRIPTOR in the MM HOB list. The newly created page table controls memory accessibility in MM.

The following table outlines the differences in memory protection policies between the traditional SMM and the Standalone MM. Note: this comparison is particularly relevant for x86 systems and highlights the security enhancements provided by Standalone MM.

ltems	Policy	SMM	ММ
DRAM	CommBuffer & Unblock Mem: non-executable, Writable. Others Mem: Non-Present	EndOfDxe	End of CpuMm.Entrypoint
ммю	Non-Executable, Writable	EndOfDxe	End of CpuMm.Entrypoint
SMRAM	Code: Read-only, Executable. Data: Writable, non-executable	EndOfDxe	End of Mmlpl.Entrypoint
Code Check (MSR[4E0h].BIT2)	Forbidden call-out	EndOfDxe	End of CpuMm.Entrypoint
SMRR (MSR[1F2h])	Forbidden access-in	End of CpuMm.Entrypoint	End of CpuMm.Entrypoint
SMM Paging State (MSR[141h].BIT0)	Lock SMM paging state	EndOfDxe	End of Mmlpl.Entrypoint

Table 1: SMM and MM Memory Protection Policy

2 SMM TO MM PORTING GUIDE

2.1 Porting Design Overview

This section provides instructions on how to convert traditional SMM drivers to MM drivers on X86 systems. A traditional SMM driver may need to be split into one or more drivers when transitioning to a Standalone MM driver:

- 1. **PEI/DXE Driver**: If the traditional SMM driver contains non-MM initialization code:
 - The PEI driver can be used to either unblock memory or prepare required data for runtime code and pass the data via HOB or Comm PPI/Protocol.
 - The DXE driver might be needed to handle any requirements involving <code>gBS</code> , <code>gDS</code> , <code>gRT</code> , or ACPI-related services.
- 2. Standalone MM Driver: Abstracted from the traditional SMM driver.

The figure below illustrates how to convert a traditional SMM driver to an MM driver:

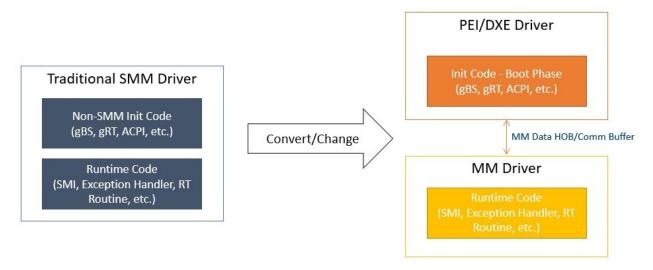


Figure 2: SMM to MM Conversion

2.2 Checkpoints in Converted MM Driver

To ensure the converted Standalone MM driver is functional, the following checkpoints should be verified:

1. Checkpoint 1: Check Access to Dynamic PCD

Dynamic PCD cannot be used in Standalone MM as it relies on services from the PEI or DXE phases, violating the independence principle of Standalone MM. Instead:

- Use static PCD or feature PCD.
- Alternatively, store the PCD value in a HOB and retrieve it in Standalone MM.
- 2. Checkpoint 2: Confirm Necessary HOBs Have Been Migrated to MM HOB Database

Refer to section **1.5 MM HOBs** for details. **Note**: HOB creation cannot depend on the end of the PEI notify event if the HOB needs to be accessed in MM. This is because the standaloneMmIp1 PEIM is dispatched before the end of PEI, leaving no opportunity for the IPL to migrate newly created HOBs to the MM HOB database.

3. Checkpoint 3: Check Dependencies on gbs , gps , grt , or ACPI-Related Services

If the original SMM driver depends on DXE protocols (e.g., gps or gps), it can only be used during the DXE phase. And ACPI tables must be installed during the DXE phase.

4. Checkpoint 4: Check Access to Non-MMRAM

Non-MMRAM access typically falls into the following cases:

- Case 1: Accessing a HOB that contains a pointer or address pointing to non-MMRAM. Use
 MmUnblockMemoryRequest() in the PEI phase before the standaloneMmIp1 entry point to allow access to the buffer from the MM environment.
- Case 2: The registered SMI handler uses gMmst->MmiHandlerRegister(SmiHandler, &CommunicationGuid, ...) . If it accesses another buffer pointed from the commBuffer , modify the MM driver to embed all communication data within the commBuffer itself.
- o **Case 3**: The registered SMI handler uses gMmst->MmiHandlerRegister(SmiHandler, NULL, ...) or MM Child Dispatch protocols (e.g., SwDispatch->Register). If it accesses any non-MMRAM buffer, use MmUnblockMemoryRequest() in the PEI phase before the standaloneMmIp1 entry point.

5. Checkpoint 5: Validate Primary & Non-Primary Buffers

Refer to section **1.3 MM Communication Buffer** for definitions of Primary and Non-Primary Buffers. Both types of buffers used by MM drivers should be validated for accessibility before use:

- Use xxxIsPrimaryBufferValid() to validate the commBuffer.
- Use xxxisNonPrimaryBufferValid() to validate non-MMRAM memory pointed from the commBuffer or MM HOB.

2.3 Sample: SMM to MM Conversion

The Tcg2 SMM and MM modules will be used as a sample to highlight the key points to consider when converting a traditional SMM module to an MM module:

- Edk2\SecurityPkg\Tcg\Tcg2Smm\Tcg2Smm.inf
- Edk2\SecurityPkg\Tcg\Tcg2Smm\Tcg2StandaloneMm.inf

Module Type

Traditional SMM uses <code>module_type = dxe_smm_driver</code> . Standalone MM uses <code>module_type = mm_standalone</code> .

```
Edk2 > SecurityPkg > Tcg > Tcg2Smm > [ ] Tcg2Smm.inf
                                                                                      Edk2 > SecurityPkg > Tcg > Tcg2Smm > [*] Tcg2StandaloneMm.inf
      [Defines]
                                                                                              [Defines]
                                                                                        29
                                          = Tcg2Smm
 31
         BASE NAME
                                                                                               BASE NAME
                                                                                                                                 = Tcg2StandaloneMm
                                                                                                                                 = D40F321F-5349-4724-B667-131670587861
         MODULE UNI FILE
                                         = Tcg2Smm.uni
         FILE GUID
                                         = 44A20657-10B8-4049-A148-ACD8812AF257
                                                                                        33
                                                                                                MODULE TYPE
                                                                                                                                = MM STANDALONE
                                         = DXE_SMM_DRIVER
                                                                                                PI_SPECIFICATION_VERSION
                                                                                                                                = 0x00010032
         MODULE_TYPE
         PI_SPECIFICATION_VERSION
                                         = 0x0001000A
                                                                                        35
                                                                                                VERSION STRING
                                                                                                                                = 1.0
                                                                                                                                = InitializeTcgStandaloneMm
         VERSION_STRING
                                                                                        36
37
         ENTRY_POINT
                                         = InitializeTcgSmm
```

Figure 3: Tcg2 SMM and MM Module Type

• Entry Point

Traditional SMM uses the EFI_IMAGE_ENTRY_POINT entry point. Standalone MM uses the MM_IMAGE_ENTRY_POINT entry point.

```
Edk2 > SecurityPkg > Tcg > Tcg2Smm > [ Tcg2TraditionalMm.c > ... 110 EFI_STATUS
                                                       111
      EFIAPI
                                                        114
                                                              EFIAPI
      InitializeTcgSmm (
                                                              InitializeTcgStandaloneMm (
112
                                                        115
        IN EFI HANDLE
113
                            ImageHandle,
                                                        116
                                                                IN EFI HANDLE
                                                                                       ImageHandle,
        IN EFI_SYSTEM_TABLE *SystemTable
                                                        117
                                                                IN EFI_MM_SYSTEM_TABLE *SystemTable
114
115
        )
                                                        118
116
                                                        119
117
       return InitializeTcgCommon ();
                                                        120
                                                               return InitializeTcgCommon ();
118
                                                        121
```

Figure 4: Tcg2 SMM and MM Entry Point

• HOB to Replace Dynamic PCD

Refer to **Checkpoint 1**. The <code>gEdkiiTpmInstanceHobGuid</code> is built for the value from the dynamic PCD (<code>PcdTpmInstanceGuid</code>) in the PEI module (<code>Edk2\SecurityPkg\Tcg\Tcg2Config\Tcg2ConfigPei.inf</code>). It will be used to replace the dynamic PCD usage.

```
Edk2 > SecurityPkg > Tcg > Tcg2Smm > 1 Tcg2StandaloneMm,c > ...
 80
      IsTpm20Dtpm (
 81
        VOID
 82
        )
 83
 84
        VOID *GuidHob:
 85
 86
        GuidHob = GetFirstGuidHob (&gEdkiiTpmInstanceHobGuid);
 87
        if (GuidHob != NULL)
          if (CompareGuid ((EFI_GUID *)GET_GUID_HOB_DATA (GuidHob), &gEfiTpmDeviceInstanceTpm20DtpmGuid)) {
 89
            return TRUE;
 90
 91
 92
          DEBUG ((DEBUG_ERROR, "No TPM2 DTPM instance required! - %g\n", (EFI_GUID *)GET_GUID_HOB_DATA (GuidHob)));
 93
        } else {
          DEBUG ((DEBUG_ERROR, "No gEdkiiTpmInstanceHobGuid!\n"));
 94
 95
 96
 97
        return FALSE;
 98
```

Figure 5: Tcg2 HOB to Replace PCD

• Handle ACPI-Related Operations in DXE Driver

There is a requirement to provide ACPI methods for TPM 2.0 support. The DXE driver needs to locate the MM communication buffer and protocol, then use it to exchange information with Tcg2standaloneMm on the NVS address and SMI value. Details can be found in Edk2\SecurityPkg\Tcg\Tcg2Acpi\Tcg2Acpi\inf.

• Handle gbs -Related Services in DXE Driver

 $\label{thm:continuity} \emph{Traditional SMM can install $_{\tt gTcg2MmSwSmiRegisteredGuid}$ directly by leveraging the $_{\tt gBS}$ service in the SMM driver entry point. For Standalone MM, a new DXE driver is required to install $_{\tt gTcg2MmSwSmiRegisteredGuid}$ to notify the readiness of the Standalone MM Tcg2 module. Details can be found in $_{\tt Edk2\SecurityPkg\Tcg2Smm\Tcg2MmDependencyDxe.inf}$.$

• Unblock Non-MMRAM for MM Access

The mTcgNvs global variable in the Tcg2 SMM module plays a crucial role in TPM operations, especially when updating the ACPI table and handling SMI callback functions. mTcgNvs is the operation region in the TCG ACPI table and must be a non-MMRAM memory buffer pointed from the commBuffer. According to Section 1.4 Non-MMRAM Access, it must be unblocked using MmUnblockMemoryRequest(). The related operation can be found in the BuildTcg2AcpiCommunicateBufferHob() function in Edk2\SecurityPkg\Tcg\Tcg2Config\Tcg2Config\Pei.inf.

• Check Primary & Non-Primary Buffer Validity

According to **Checkpoint 5**, define <code>Tcg2IsPrimaryBufferValid()</code> and <code>Tcg2IsNonPrimaryBufferValid()</code> to validate the Primary and Non-Primary Buffers.

```
{\sf Edk2} > {\sf SecurityPkg} > {\sf Tcg} > {\sf Tcg2Smm} > {\color{red} \underline{ \  \, }} \quad {\sf Tcg2TraditionalMm.c} > ...
                                                                               {\sf Edk2} > {\sf SecurityPkg} > {\sf Tcg} > {\sf Tcg2Smm} > {\color{red} \underline{ \  \, }} \  \, {\sf Tcg2StandaloneMm.c} > ...
       Tcg2IsPrimaryBufferValid (
 55
                                                                                 45 Tcg2IsPrimaryBufferValid (
 56
         IN EFI_PHYSICAL_ADDRESS Buffer,
                                                                                         IN EFI_PHYSICAL_ADDRESS Buffer,
                                                                                 46
 57
         IN UINT64
                                       Length
                                                                                 47
                                                                                         IN UINT64
                                                                                                                       Length
 58
                                                                                 48
 59
                                                                                 49
 60
         return SmmIsBufferOutsideSmmValid (Buffer, Length);
                                                                                 50
                                                                                         return TRUE;
 61
                                                                                 51
 62
                                                                                 52
 63 > /**...
                                                                                 53 > /**...
 74
      BOOLEAN
                                                                                       BOOLEAN
                                                                                 64
 75
       Tcg2IsNonPrimaryBufferValid (
                                                                                       Tcg2IsNonPrimaryBufferValid (
                                                                                 65
       IN EFI_PHYSICAL_ADDRESS Buffer,
 76
                                                                                 66
                                                                                         IN EFI_PHYSICAL_ADDRESS Buffer,
         IN UINT64
 77
                                       Length
                                                                                 67
                                                                                         IN UINT64
                                                                                                                       Length
 78
                                                                                 68
 79
                                                                                 69
 80
       return SmmIsBufferOutsideSmmValid (Buffer, Length);
                                                                                         return MmIsBufferOutsideMmValid (Buffer, Length);
                                                                                 70
 81
                                                                                 71
```

Figure 6: Tcg2 Primary and Non-Primary Buffer Check