

Chapter 10

IS-IS Overview

The Intermediate System to Intermediate System (IS-IS) protocol is an interior gateway protocol (IGP) that uses link-state information to make routing decisions.

IS-IS is a link-state IGP that uses the shortest-path-first (SPF) algorithm to determine routes. This protocol originally was developed for routing International Organization for Standardization (ISO) Connectionless Network Protocol (CLNP) packets.



Note

Because IS-IS uses ISO addresses, the configuration of the IPv6 and IPv4 implementations of IS-IS is identical.

This chapter discusses the following topics that provide background information about IS-IS:

IS-IS Standards on page 123

IS-IS Terminology on page 124

ISO Network Addresses on page 124

IS-IS Packets on page 125

IS-IS Standards

IS-IS is defined in the following documents:

draft-ietf-isis-ipv6-02.txt, *Routing IPv6 with IS-IS*

ISO/IEC 10589, *Information technology, Telecommunications and information exchange between systems, Intermediate system to intermediate system intradomain routing information exchange protocol for use in conjunction with the protocol for providing the connectionless-mode network service (ISO 8473)*

RFC 1195, *Use of OSI IS-IS for Routing in TCP/IP and Dual Environments*

RFC 2763, *Dynamic Hostname Exchange Mechanism for IS-IS*

To access Internet Requests for Comments (RFCs) and drafts, go to the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) Web site at <http://www.ietf.org>.

IS-IS Terminology

An IS-IS network is a single autonomous system (AS), also called a *routing domain*, that consists of *end systems* and *intermediate systems*. End systems are network entities that send and receive packets. Intermediate systems send and receive packets and relay (forward) packets. (Intermediate system is the Open System Interconnection [OSI] term for a router.) ISO packets are called network *protocol data units (PDUs)*.

In IS-IS, a single AS can be divided into smaller groups called *areas*. Routing between areas is organized hierarchically, allowing a domain to be administratively divided into smaller areas. This organization is accomplished by configuring *Level 1* and *Level 2* intermediate systems. Level 1 systems route within an area; when the destination is outside an area, they route toward a Level 2 system. Level 2 intermediate systems route between areas and toward other ASs.

ISO Network Addresses

IS-IS uses ISO network addresses, address family iso. Each address identifies a point of connection to the network, such as a router interface, and is called a *network service access point (NSAP)*.

An end system can have multiple NSAP addresses, in which case the addresses differ only by the last byte (called the *n-selector*). Each NSAP represents a service that is available at that node. In addition to having multiple services, a single node can belong to multiple areas.

Each network entity also has a special network address called a *network entity title (NET)*. Structurally, an NET is identical to an NSAP address but has an n-selector of 00. Most end systems and intermediate systems have one NET. Intermediate systems that participate in multiple areas can have multiple NETs.

The following ISO addresses illustrate the IS-IS address format:

```
49.0001.00a0.c96b.c490.00
49.0001.2081.9716.9018.00
```

The first portion of the address is the area number, which is a variable number from 1 through 13 bytes. The first byte of the area number (49) is the authority and format indicator (AFI). The next bytes are the assigned domain (area) identifier, which can be from 0 through 12 bytes. In the examples above, the area identifier is 0001.

The next six bytes form the system identifier (sysid). The sysid can be any six bytes that are unique throughout the entire domain. The system identifier commonly is the Media Access Control (MAC) address (as in the first example, 00a0.c96b.c490) or the IP address expressed in binary-coded decimal (BCD) (as in the second example, 2081.9716.9018, which corresponds to IP address 208.197.169.18). The last byte (00) is the n-selector.

To provide help with IS-IS debugging, the JUNOS software supports dynamic mapping of ISO sysids to the host name. Each system can be configured with a host name, which allows the sysid-to-host-name mapping to be carried in a dynamic hostname type length values (TLVs) in IS-IS label-switched path (LSP) packets. This permits ISs in the routing domain to learn about the ISO sysid of a particular IS.

IS-IS Packets

IS-IS uses the following PDUs to exchange protocol information:

IS-IS hello (IIH) PDUs—Broadcast to discover the identity of neighboring IS-IS systems and to determine whether the neighbors are Level 1 or Level 2 intermediate systems.

Link-state PDUs (LSPs)—Contain information about the state of adjacencies to neighboring IS-IS systems. LSPs are flooded periodically throughout an area.

Complete sequence number PDUs (CSNPs)—Contain a complete list of all LSPs in the IS-IS database. CSNPs are sent periodically on all links, and the receiving systems use the information in the CSNP to update and synchronize their LSP databases. The designated router multicasts CSNPs on broadcast links in place of sending explicit acknowledgments for each LSP.

Partial sequence number PDUs (PSNPs)—Multicast by a receiver when it detects that it is missing an LSP; that is, when its LSP database is out of date. The receiver sends a PSNP to the system that transmitted the CSNP, effectively requesting that the missing LSP be transmitted. That router, in turn, forwards the missing LSP to the requesting router.

