

ETSI TS 138 422 V16.1.0 (2023-07)



**5G;
NG-RAN;
Xn signalling transport
(3GPP TS 38.422 version 16.1.0 Release 16)**



Reference

RTS/TSGR-0338422vg10

Keywords

5G

ETSI

650 Route des Lucioles
F-06921 Sophia Antipolis Cedex - FRANCE

Tel.: +33 4 92 94 42 00 Fax: +33 4 93 65 47 16

Siret N° 348 623 562 00017 - APE 7112B
Association à but non lucratif enregistrée à la
Sous-Préfecture de Grasse (06) N° w061004871

Important notice

The present document can be downloaded from:

<https://www.etsi.org/standards-search>

The present document may be made available in electronic versions and/or in print. The content of any electronic and/or print versions of the present document shall not be modified without the prior written authorization of ETSI. In case of any existing or perceived difference in contents between such versions and/or in print, the prevailing version of an ETSI deliverable is the one made publicly available in PDF format at www.etsi.org/deliver.

Users of the present document should be aware that the document may be subject to revision or change of status.

Information on the current status of this and other ETSI documents is available at

<https://portal.etsi.org/TB/ETSIDeliverableStatus.aspx>

If you find errors in the present document, please send your comment to one of the following services:

<https://portal.etsi.org/People/CommitteeSupportStaff.aspx>

If you find a security vulnerability in the present document, please report it through our
Coordinated Vulnerability Disclosure Program:

<https://www.etsi.org/standards/coordinated-vulnerability-disclosure>

Notice of disclaimer & limitation of liability

The information provided in the present deliverable is directed solely to professionals who have the appropriate degree of experience to understand and interpret its content in accordance with generally accepted engineering or other professional standard and applicable regulations.

No recommendation as to products and services or vendors is made or should be implied.

No representation or warranty is made that this deliverable is technically accurate or sufficient or conforms to any law and/or governmental rule and/or regulation and further, no representation or warranty is made of merchantability or fitness for any particular purpose or against infringement of intellectual property rights.

In no event shall ETSI be held liable for loss of profits or any other incidental or consequential damages.

Any software contained in this deliverable is provided "AS IS" with no warranties, express or implied, including but not limited to, the warranties of merchantability, fitness for a particular purpose and non-infringement of intellectual property rights and ETSI shall not be held liable in any event for any damages whatsoever (including, without limitation, damages for loss of profits, business interruption, loss of information, or any other pecuniary loss) arising out of or related to the use of or inability to use the software.

Copyright Notification

No part may be reproduced or utilized in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying and microfilm except as authorized by written permission of ETSI.

The content of the PDF version shall not be modified without the written authorization of ETSI.

The copyright and the foregoing restriction extend to reproduction in all media.

© ETSI 2023.
All rights reserved.

Intellectual Property Rights

Essential patents

IPRs essential or potentially essential to normative deliverables may have been declared to ETSI. The declarations pertaining to these essential IPRs, if any, are publicly available for **ETSI members and non-members**, and can be found in ETSI SR 000 314: "*Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs); Essential, or potentially Essential, IPRs notified to ETSI in respect of ETSI standards*", which is available from the ETSI Secretariat. Latest updates are available on the ETSI Web server (<https://ipr.etsi.org/>).

Pursuant to the ETSI Directives including the ETSI IPR Policy, no investigation regarding the essentiality of IPRs, including IPR searches, has been carried out by ETSI. No guarantee can be given as to the existence of other IPRs not referenced in ETSI SR 000 314 (or the updates on the ETSI Web server) which are, or may be, or may become, essential to the present document.

Trademarks

The present document may include trademarks and/or tradenames which are asserted and/or registered by their owners. ETSI claims no ownership of these except for any which are indicated as being the property of ETSI, and conveys no right to use or reproduce any trademark and/or tradename. Mention of those trademarks in the present document does not constitute an endorsement by ETSI of products, services or organizations associated with those trademarks.

DECT™, **PLUGTESTS™**, **UMTS™** and the ETSI logo are trademarks of ETSI registered for the benefit of its Members. **3GPP™** and **LTE™** are trademarks of ETSI registered for the benefit of its Members and of the 3GPP Organizational Partners. **oneM2M™** logo is a trademark of ETSI registered for the benefit of its Members and of the oneM2M Partners. **GSM®** and the GSM logo are trademarks registered and owned by the GSM Association.

Legal Notice

This Technical Specification (TS) has been produced by ETSI 3rd Generation Partnership Project (3GPP).

The present document may refer to technical specifications or reports using their 3GPP identities. These shall be interpreted as being references to the corresponding ETSI deliverables.

The cross reference between 3GPP and ETSI identities can be found under <https://webapp.etsi.org/key/queryform.asp>.

Modal verbs terminology

In the present document "**shall**", "**shall not**", "**should**", "**should not**", "**may**", "**need not**", "**will**", "**will not**", "**can**" and "**cannot**" are to be interpreted as described in clause 3.2 of the [ETSI Drafting Rules](#) (Verbal forms for the expression of provisions).

"**must**" and "**must not**" are **NOT** allowed in ETSI deliverables except when used in direct citation.

Contents

Intellectual Property Rights	2
Legal Notice	2
Modal verbs terminology.....	2
Foreword.....	4
1 Scope	5
2 References	5
3 Definitions and abbreviations.....	5
3.1 Definitions	5
3.2 Abbreviations	6
4 Xn signalling bearer	6
4.1 Functions and protocol stack.....	6
5 Data link layer	6
6 IP layer	6
7 Transport layer	7
Annex A (informative): Change history	8
History	9

Foreword

This Technical Specification has been produced by the 3rd Generation Partnership Project (3GPP).

The contents of the present document are subject to continuing work within the TSG and may change following formal TSG approval. Should the TSG modify the contents of the present document, it will be re-released by the TSG with an identifying change of release date and an increase in version number as follows:

Version x.y.z

where:

- x the first digit:
 - 1 presented to TSG for information;
 - 2 presented to TSG for approval;
 - 3 or greater indicates TSG approved document under change control.
- y the second digit is incremented for all changes of substance, i.e. technical enhancements, corrections, updates, etc.
- z the third digit is incremented when editorial only changes have been incorporated in the document.

1 Scope

The present document specifies the standards for signalling transport to be used across Xn interface. The Xn interface provides means for interconnecting two NG-RAN nodes. The Xn interface is a logical interface between two nodes of the NG-RAN. The present document describes how the XnAP signalling messages are transported over Xn.

2 References

The following documents contain provisions which, through reference in this text, constitute provisions of the present document.

- References are either specific (identified by date of publication, edition number, version number, etc.) or non-specific.
- For a specific reference, subsequent revisions do not apply.
- For a non-specific reference, the latest version applies. In the case of a reference to a 3GPP document (including a GSM document), a non-specific reference implicitly refers to the latest version of that document *in the same Release as the present document*.

- [1] 3GPP TR 21.905: "Vocabulary for 3GPP Specifications".
- [2] IETF RFC 4960: "Stream Control Transmission Protocol".
- [3] 3GPP TS 38.300: "NR; Overall Description; Stage 2".
- [4] IETF RFC 8200 (2017-07): "Internet Protocol, Version 6 (IPv6) Specification".
- [5] IETF RFC 791 (1981-09): "Internet Protocol".
- [6] IETF RFC 2474 (1998-12): "Definition of the Differentiated Services Field (DS Field) in the IPv4 and IPv6 Headers".
- [7] IETF RFC 6083 (2011-01): "Datagram Transport Layer Security (DTLS) for Stream Control Transmission Protocol (SCTP)".
- [8] IETF RFC 6335 (2011-08): "Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA) Procedures for the Management of the Service Name and Transport Protocol Port Number Registry".

3 Definitions and abbreviations

3.1 Definitions

For the purposes of the present document, the terms and definitions given in 3GPP TR 21.905 [1] and the following apply. A term defined in the present document takes precedence over the definition of the same term, if any, in 3GPP TR 21.905 [1].

NG-RAN node: as defined in TS 38.300 [3]

Xn: interface between two NG-RAN nodes, providing an interconnection point between the NG-RAN nodes.

Xn-C: Reference point for the control plane protocol between NG-RAN nodes.

3.2 Abbreviations

For the purposes of the present document, the abbreviations given in 3GPP TR 21.905 [1] and the following apply. An abbreviation defined in the present document takes precedence over the definition of the same abbreviation, if any, in 3GPP TR 21.905 [1].

IP	Internet Protocol
SCTP	Stream Control Transmission Protocol
DiffServ	Differentiated Service
PPP	Point to Point Protocol
IANA	Internet Assigned Number Authority

4 Xn signalling bearer

4.1 Functions and protocol stack

Xn-C signalling bearer provides the following functions:

- Provision of reliable transfer of XnAP message over Xn-C interface.
- Provision of networking and routing function.
- Provision of redundancy in the signalling network.
- Support for flow control and congestion control.

The protocol stack for Xn-C Signalling Bearer is shown in figure 4.1-1 and details on each protocol are described in the following clauses.

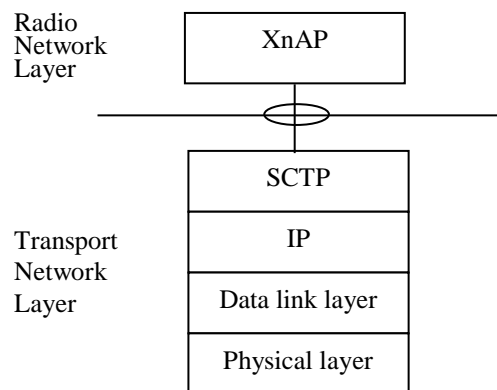


Figure 4.1-1: Xn-C signalling bearer protocol stack

The Transport Network Layer is based on IP transport, comprising SCTP on top of IP.

5 Data link layer

The support of any suitable Data Link Layer protocol, e.g. PPP, Ethernet, etc., shall not be prevented.

6 IP layer

The NG-RAN node shall support IPv6 (IETF RFC 8200 [4]) and/or IPv4 (IETF RFC 791 [5]).

The IP layer of Xn-C only supports point-to-point transmission for delivering XnAP message.

The NG-RAN node shall support the Diffserv Code Point marking as described in IETF RFC 2474 [6].

7 Transport layer

SCTP (IETF RFC 4960 [2]) shall be supported as the transport layer of Xn-C signalling bearer. The Payload Protocol Identifier (ppid) assigned by IANA to be used by SCTP for the application layer protocol XnAP is 61, and 67 for DTLS over SCTP (IETF RFC 6083 [7]). The byte order of the ppid shall be big-endian.

SCTP refers to the Stream Control Transmission Protocol developed by the Sigtran working group of the IETF for the purpose of transporting various signalling protocols over IP network.

An NG RAN node shall support a configuration with a single SCTP association per NG RAN node pair. Configurations with multiple SCTP endpoints per the NG RAN node pair should be supported. When configurations with multiple SCTP associations are supported, the NG RAN node may request to dynamically add/remove SCTP associations between the NG RAN node pair. Within the set of SCTP associations established between one NG RAN node pair, a single SCTP association shall be employed for XnAP elementary procedures that utilize non-UE-associated signalling with the possibility of fail-over to a new association to enable robustness. The SCTP Destination Port number value assigned by IANA to be used for XnAP is 38422. When a NG-RAN node requests to dynamically add additional SCTP associations between the NG RAN node pair, the SCTP Destination Port number value may be 38422, or any dynamic port value (IETF RFC 6335 [8]). The NG RAN node configuration update procedure shall be the first XnAP procedure triggered on an additional TNLA of an already setup Xn-C interface instance after the TNL association has become operational, and the peer NG RAN node shall associate the TNLA to the Xn-C interface instance using the included Global NG-RAN Node ID.

Between one pair of two NG-RAN nodes:

- a single pair of stream identifiers shall be reserved over an SCTP association for the sole use of XnAP elementary procedures that utilize non UE-associated signalling.
- At least one pair of stream identifiers over one or several SCTP associations shall be reserved for the sole use of XnAP elementary procedures that utilize UE-associated signalling. However, a few pairs (i.e. more than one) should be reserved.
- For a single UE-associated signalling, the NG RAN nodes shall use one SCTP association and one SCTP stream and the SCTP association/stream should not be changed during the communication of the UE-associated signalling unless current SCTP association is failed or removed, or TNL binding update is performed.

Transport network redundancy may be achieved by SCTP multi-homing between two end-points, of which one or both is assigned with multiple IP addresses. SCTP end-points shall support a multi-homed remote SCTP end-point. For SCTP endpoint redundancy an INIT may be sent from one NG-RAN node, at any time for an already established SCTP association, which shall be handled as defined in IETF RFC 4960 [2] in sub clause 5.2.

The SCTP congestion control may, using an implementation specific mechanism, initiate higher layer protocols to reduce the signalling traffic at the source and prioritise certain messages.

Annex A (informative): Change history

Change history							
Date	Meeting	TDoc	CR	Rev	Cat	Subject/Comment	New version
2018-01	RAN3-AH-1801	R3-180544				Reflected agreed TP in RAN3-AH-1801 in 2018-01 (Sophia Antipolis)	0.2.0
2018-05	RAN3#100	R3-183596				Reflected agreed TP in RAN3#100 in 2018-05 (Busan) and made some editorial corrections	0.3.0
2018-06	RAN#80	RP-180682				Submitted to RAN plenary for Approval	1.0.0
2018-06	RAN#80	RP-181276				Typos corrected ("NGAP" corrected to "XnAP" in two places)	1.0.1
2018-06	RAN#80		-	-	-	Specification approved at TSG-RAN and placed under change control	15.0.0
2018-09	RAN#81	RP-181920	0001	-	F	Updated reference to IPv6	15.1.0
2018-12	RAN#82	RP-182447	0003	-	F	Enabling multiple SCTP associations	15.2.0
2019-09	RAN#85	RP-192166	0005	1	F	CR on PPID value for DTLS over SCTP	15.3.0
2019-09	RAN#85	RP-192167	0007	1	F	Use of SCTP ports for multiple TNLA	15.3.0
2019-12	RAN#86	RP-192915	0008	-	F	Ambiguity with multiple SCTP associations in 38.422	15.4.0
2020-03	RAN#87-e	RP-200425	0009		F	Rapporteur's Update for 38.422	16.0.0
2023-06	RAN#100	RP-231075	0015	2	F	Clarifications on TNLA Addition/Removal/Modification procedures	16.1.0

History

Document history		
V16.0.0	September 2020	Publication
V16.1.0	July 2023	Publication