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Seamless Handover in Mobile IP-based Next Generation Networks

**- A Cross-Layer Solution for Ubiquitous Communication
over Optimized Routes in IPv6 Networks -**

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Abstract

In order to provide seamless handover services with minimum handover latency and packet loss, IETF has proposed *Fast Mobile IPv6 (FMIPv6)* mobility management protocol which enhances the performance and operational scope of the standard *Mobile IPv6 (MIPv6)* protocol. However, there are technical obstacles and performance issues that need to be addressed before FMIPv6 can be considered feasible for broad deployment in Next Generation Networks.

In the work described in this thesis, different novel solutions are presented that addresses the many open performance issues identified along the operational spectrum of the FMIPv6 protocol. The main objective and motivation is to enhance the seamless performance of the FMIPv6 handover process. The performance of the proposed solutions is tested and analyzed against the existing solutions by means of simulation experiments and analytical calculations. The accuracy of the simulation model has been validated in detail against an experimental test bed.

With regards to packet losses incurred during the candidate access point discovery process, a prerequisite for the *Candidate Access Router Discovery (CARD)* protocol, two iterative scanning algorithms namely the *Full Channel Iterative Scan (FCIS)* and *Single Channel Iterative Scan (SCIS)* have been developed. It is shown that this approach improves not only the throughput performance significantly but also the accuracy of the handover decision process. In consideration of the experience gained from the FCIS and SCIS investigation and the FMIPv6's reliance on the CARD protocol, a new *Multi-Hop Discovery of Candidate Access Routers (MHD-CAR)* protocol has been designed that reduces the signaling load on the air link; and also the delay due to the advance discovery process of the next access router. MHD-CAR also provides a *distributed cross-layer platform* to enhance inter-layer cooperation between the mobility functions of the network layer and the data link layer in order to improve the operational capabilities of the mobility management process.

Another major contribution of this thesis is the design and analysis of a novel method called *Proactive Bindings for FMIPv6 (PB-FMIPv6)* protocol that optimizes the FMIPv6 protocol by reducing the tunneling load during the time the Mobile Node is negotiating a handover with the new access router. It also decouples the dependence of the FMIPv6 protocol on the speed of the mobile entity and the timing of the protocol initiation.

Also addressed is the fact that future networks will not only consist of single mobile nodes but also mobile IP subnets with multiple stations (e.g., buses, trains etc.). To manage the mobility of such entities, termed as *Mobile Networks*, IETF has proposed *Network Mobility (NEMO)* protocol but it has lacked to specify a Route Optimization mechanism. The performance inefficiencies due to the absence of such a mechanism get compounded for *nested Mobile Network* architectures owing to *pin-ball routing* phenomenon. This issue is addressed by proposing a solution called *NEst Route Optimization for NEMO (NERON)*, which is an efficient and light-weight solution expected to compliment the standard NEMO protocol in the future networks.

As part of the work, an extensive event-driven simulation framework has been developed and portion of it released to the public, which has solicited a very good response from the developers and research community. Besides, the proposed contributions have also been presented at various forums in the form of conference/workshop proceedings and book chapters. Also noteworthy is the fact that the various solution proposals have been put forward to the IETF standardization body as Internet Drafts, such as PB-FMIPv6, NERON and MHD-CAR, where the last two have been introduced in the context of a research project on mobile transmission of confidential data for fire and rescue services. In the future, the solution concepts developed in this thesis will be used for extending IP based communication services to Unmanned Aerial Systems.

Zusammenfassung

Um in zukünftigen, vollständig Internet-basierten Netzen unterbrechungsfreie Handover-Prozesse mit minimaler Verzögerungen und Paketverlusten realisieren zu können, wurde in der IETF (Internet Engineering Task Force) das Fast Mobile IPv6 (FMIPv6) Mobilitätsmanagement-Protokoll vorgeschlagen. Auch wenn sich wesentliche Leistungsparameter mit FMIPv6 gegenüber dem bekannten Mobile IPv6 (MIPv6) Protokoll verbessern lassen, sind verschiedene technische Probleme bisher nicht gelöst und behindern daher die breite Einführung des FMIPv6 in den Netzen der nächsten Generation.

In hier vorgelegte Arbeit werden verschiedene Lösungsansätze vorgestellt, die offene Probleme adressieren und zu einer substantiellen Verbesserung der Leistungsfähigkeit der Handoverprozessen in IP-basierten Netzen führen. Die Leistungsfähigkeit der erarbeiteten Lösungsansätze wurde im Detail mit Hilfe simulativer und analytischer Methoden vergleichend evaluiert. Das Simulationsmodell wurde im Detail mit einem experimentellen Laboraufbau validiert. In Bezug auf die Minimierung der Paketverluste während der Erkundung von unmittelbar benachbarten Stationen konnte mit Hilfe des Vergleichs zweier Mechanismen, dem sog. Full Channel Iterative Scan (FCIS) und Single Channel Iterative Scan (SCIS) eine deutliche Verbesserung gezeigt werden. Diese Untersuchung führten zur Entwicklung eines neuartigen Mechanismus, mit dem Nachbarstationen in der weiteren Umgebung erfasst und damit frühzeitig erkannt werden können. Das sog. MHD-CARD (Multi-Hop Discovery- Candidate Access Router Discovery)-Protokoll reduziert die Belastung der ressourcenbeschränkten Luftschnittstelle und bietet weitere Möglichkeiten der schichtenübergreifenden Optimierung des Systems. Ein weiterer wesentlicher Beitrag dieser Arbeit ist der Entwurf und die Analyse eines neuartigen Verfahrens zur Reduktion der Netzlast während der Vorbereitung eines Handovers. Durch die proaktive Kommunikation mit dem zukünftigen Zugangsknoten unter Nutzung der Infrastruktur kann die Abhängigkeit des FMIPv6-Protokolls von der Geschwindigkeit der mobilen Stationen entkoppelt werden. Ein weiterer untersuchter Aspekt ist, dass in fortgeschrittenen Szenarien nicht nur die Bewegung einer einzelnen Station zu betrachten ist, sondern auch die Bewegung von Subnetzen mit mehreren Stationen (z.B. in einem Bus oder Zug). Das Problem der sog. Mobile Networks wird durch die IETF durch das NEMO (Network Mobility)-Protokoll grundsätzlich adressiert, jedoch ohne eine ausreichende Optimierung der Routenführung im Netz. Diese Problematik verstärkt sich im Falle von mehrfach ineinander verschachtelten mobilen Netzen (sog. Nested Mobile Networks) und führen zum sog. Pin-Ball-Routing Phänomen. Abschließend stellt die Arbeit daher die Ergebnisse hinsichtlich eines neu entwickelten Protokolls zur Optimierung des Routings. Durch die Ergebnisse der Leistungsbewertung kann gezeigt werden, dass das NEMO-Protokoll mit Hilfe des NERON (Nest Route Optimization for NEMO) effizient ergänzt werden kann.

Im Rahmen der Arbeiten wurde u.a. eine umfangreiche ereignisgesteuerte Simulationsumgebung entwickelt, von der Teilergebnisse veröffentlicht und in der entsprechenden Entwicklercommunity eine sehr gute Resonanz gefunden haben. Besonders hervorzuheben ist weiterhin, dass das MHD-CAR wie auch das MHD-CAR als Internet Draft formuliert und in die IETF-Standardisierungsarbeit eingespeist wurden. Die Ergebnisse der grundlegenden Arbeiten konnten in einem Forschungsprojekt zur mobilen Übertragung von vertraulichen Daten für Rettungskräfte im Brand- und Katastrophenschutz eingebracht werden. In der Zukunft werden die entwickelten Mechanismen auch im praktischen Einsatz Verwendung finden und in einem neuen Projekt IP-basierte Kommunikation zur Steuerung von Flugrobotern weiterentwickelt werden.

Contents

1	Mobility Management in Next Generation Networks: An Introduction	1
1.1	Introduction	1
1.1.1	Background	1
1.1.2	What is the Next Generation Network (NGN)?	2
1.2	Challenges and Motivation	3
1.2.1	Requirements of NGN	3
1.2.2	Mobility Management in 4G Networks	4
1.2.3	Challenges to Mobility Management Mechanisms	6
1.3	Research Scope	7
1.4	Research Methodology	8
1.5	Summary of Contributions	10
1.6	Thesis Organization	11
2	IPv6 Based Mobility Management Protocols: A Survey	13
2.1	Introduction	13
2.2	MIPv6 Protocol	14
2.2.1	Operational Concept	15
2.2.2	Protocol Details	16
2.2.3	Performance Issues	20
2.3	Fast Mobile IPv6 (FMIPv6) Protocol	26
2.3.1	Protocol Overview	26
2.3.2	Protocol Details	26
2.4	Conclusions	30
3	Mobility Management Simulation Engine for NGN	31
3.1	Introduction	31
3.2	OMNeT++: A Brief Summary	32
3.2.1	Modeling Concept in OMNeT++	33
3.3	INET Simulation Framework	35
3.4	Extensible Mobility Management Simulation Engine for IPv6 Networks (xMMSEv6)	37
3.4.1	Motivation	38
3.4.2	Design Objectives of xMMSEv6	39
3.4.3	xMMSEv6 Model Summary	41
3.5	Performance Validation and Analysis of xMMSEv6	44
3.5.1	Handover Delay Components	44
3.5.2	Test Environment	46

3.5.3	Validation Results	47
3.6	Conclusions	49
4	Layer 2 Considerations for Seamless Handovers	53
4.1	Introduction	53
4.2	Summary of the IEEE 802.11 Handover Process	54
4.2.1	Detection Phase	57
4.2.2	Discovery Phase	57
4.2.3	Execution Phase	59
4.3	Problem Statement	60
4.4	Related Work	63
4.4.1	Approaches for Reducing the IEEE 802.11 Handover Delay	63
4.4.2	FMIPv6 Performance over IEEE 802.11 Infrastructure	64
4.5	On-Off Iterative Scanning Algorithm	65
4.5.1	Operational Concept of FCIS and SCIS Modes	66
4.6	Performance Analysis	67
4.6.1	Factors Affecting Performance of FCIS and SCIS Modes	69
4.6.2	Packet Loss Performance of FCIS and SCIS	73
4.6.3	Effect of Packet Size on Loss Performance	76
4.6.4	Effect of FCIS and SCIS Scan Modes on the QoE of VoIP Service	76
4.7	Conclusions	79
5	Cross Layer Solution for Advance Discovery of Candidate Access Routers	81
5.1	Introduction	81
5.2	Technical Background	82
5.2.1	Card Protocol	83
5.2.2	FMIPv6 Operation with CARD Protocol	85
5.3	Problem Statement	86
5.4	Related Work	88
5.5	MHD-CAR Operation Summary	88
5.5.1	CAR Table Initialization	89
5.5.2	CAR Table Distribution	90
5.5.3	Mobile Node Operation	91
5.6	Performance Analysis	92
5.6.1	Impact of MHD-CAR on Signaling Load	93
5.6.2	Impact of MHD-CAR on Scanning Delay	96
5.7	Comparison with IEEE 802.21 MIHS	98
5.8	Conclusions	100
6	Optimizing Tunnel Management in FMIPv6	103
6.1	Introduction	103
6.2	Performance Implications of a Forwarding Tunnel	104
6.3	Pro-active Bindings for Fast Mobile IPv6 (PB-FMIPv6)	104
6.3.1	Protocol Concept	105
6.3.2	Protocol Details	105
6.3.3	Qualitative Comparison of PB-FMIPv6 with FMIPv6	110
6.4	Performance Analysis	110

6.4.1	Tunneling Load (Ψ) Analysis	110
6.4.2	Signaling Cost Analysis	115
6.5	Conclusions	120
7	Route optimization in Mobile Networks	121
7.1	Introduction	121
7.2	NEMO Basic Support Protocol	122
7.2.1	General Handover Process in Mobile Networks	122
7.2.2	Binding Management	123
7.2.3	Packet Forwarding	125
7.2.4	Performance Issues	126
7.3	Performance Issues in Nested Mobile Networks	126
7.3.1	Multiple Encapsulation and Pinball Routing Issue	127
7.3.2	Recursive IP Fragmentation	129
7.4	Route Optimization Solution Requirements for Nested Mobile Networks	130
7.5	Related Work	131
7.6	NEst Route Optimization for NEMO (NERON)	132
7.6.1	Motivation and Design Goals	132
7.6.2	Protocol Overview	133
7.6.3	Packet Forwarding	138
7.7	Performance Analysis	140
7.7.1	Simulation Environment	141
7.7.2	Comparison and Analysis of RTD	141
7.7.3	Comparative Analysis of Packet Overhead	145
7.8	Conclusions	145
8	Conclusions and future work	149
8.1	Summary and Conclusion	149
8.1.1	Seamless Handover in Next Generation Networks	149
8.1.2	IETF's Efforts for Providing Seamless Handover Solutions	150
8.1.3	Development of a Mobility Management Simulation Framework	150
8.1.4	FMIPv6 Performance Optimization	151
8.1.5	Route Optimization Solution for Nested Mobile Networks	153
8.2	Future Work	153
8.2.1	General Recommendations	154
8.2.2	Solution Specific Recommendations	154
8.3	Impact of the Research Work	155
8.4	Vision for the Future	157
A	xMMSEv6 Simulation Framework	159
A.1	Composition of the xMMSEv6 Framework	159
A.2	Functional Summary of Key Modules	160
A.2.1	ipTunneling Module	160
A.2.2	BindingCache and BindingUpdateList Modules	162
A.2.3	xMobileIPv6 Module	162
A.2.4	CARD Simple Module	165
A.2.5	carTable Simple Module	166

A.3	xMMSEv6 Nodes	166
B	Iterative Scanning Algorithms (FCIS and SCIS)	171
B.1	Effect of Active Channels and Transmit Interval on the Scan Interval	171
B.2	Effect of FCIS on UDP Throughput	172
C	Pseudo Code for the Processing Logic of PrNAR	175
	Bibliography	177

Acronyms

AID	Association Identifier
AP	Access Point
AR	Access Router
BA	Binding Acknowledgement
BC	Binding Cache
BRR	Binding Refresh Rate
BU	Binding Update
BUL	Binding Update List
CAP	Candidate Access Point
CAR	Candidate Access Router
CARD	Candidate Access Router Discovery Protocol
CBR	Constant Bit Rate
CGR	Core Gateway Router
CoA	Care of Address
CoT	Care of Test
CoTI	Care of Test Init
DAD	Duplicate Address Detection
DCC	Discovery of CAR Capabilities
EP	Emergency Personnel
EV	Emergency Vehicle
FMIPv6	Fast Mobile IPv6
FCIS	Full Channel Iterative Scan
FN	Foreign Network
GI	Guard Interval
HAck	Handover Acknowledgement
HI	Handover Initiate
HMIPv6	Hierarchical Mobile IPv6
HN	Home Network
HoA	Home Address
HoT	Home Test
HoTI	Home Test Init
IAPP	Inter Access Point Protocol
IETF	Internet Engineering Task Force
LCoA	Local Care-of-Address
LFN	Local Fixed Node
LLoA	Link Local Address

MHD-CAR	Multi-Hop Discovery of Candidate Access Router
MIPv6	Mobile IPv6
MN	Mobile Node
MNet	Mobile Network
MNN	Mobile Network Node
MNP	Mobile Network Prefix
MR	Mobile Router
MTU	Maximum Transmission Unit
NA	Neighbor Advertisement
NAR	New/Next Access Router
NBSP	NEMO Basic Support Protocol
NCoA	New Care of Address
NEMO	Network Mobility
NEP	Nest Entrance Point
NERON	Nest Route Optimization for NEMO
NG	Neighbor Graph
NGO	Nest Gate Option
NGT	Nest Gate Table
NIC	Network Interface Card
nMNet	Nested Mobile Network
nMR	Nested Mobile Router
NS	Neighbor Solicitation
OptiDAD	Optimistic Duplicate Address Detection
OSA	Open System Authentication
PAP	Present Access Point
PAR	Present Access Router
PB-FMIPv6	Proactive Bindings for Fast Mobile IPv6
PCoA	Previous Care of Address
pCoA	Prospective Care of Address
PESQ	Perceptive Evaluation of Speech Quality
PMIPv6	Proxy Mobile IPv6
PT	Prefix Table
QoE	Quality of Experience
QoS	Quality of Service
RA	Router Advertisement
RAT	Reverse Address Translation
RCoA	Regional Care-of-Address
RFC	Request For Comments
RO	Route Optimization
RPB	Receive Power Buffer
RR	Return Routability
RS	Router Solicitation
RSSI	Receive Signal Strength Indicator
RTD	Round Trip Delay
RTT	Round Trip Time
SAP	Service Access Point

SCIS	Single Channel Iterative Scan
STA	Station
TAP	Target Access Point
TAR	Target Access Router
UAS	Unmanned Aerial System
UAV	Unmanned Aerial Vehicle
UNA	Unsolicited Neighbor Advertisement
VMN	Visit Mobile Node
VMR	Visit Mobile Router
WAT	Wireless Access Technology
WG	Working Group
xMMSEv6	Extensible Mobility Management Simulation Engine for IPv6