

# Highly available KNX networks

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# Highly available KNX networks

## MASTER'S THESIS

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in

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# Abstract

**Home and Building Automation System (HBAS)** denominates systems for controlling building applications summarized under the terms **Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC)**. This allows to control room parameters in a centralized manner, promising lower maintenance and energy costs and higher comfort. Usually, only basic security mechanisms were implemented. The reasons were twofold: firstly, the used hardware platforms often lacked the needed processing power to implement them. Secondly, the potential impact of malicious attacks against such systems were considered negligible.

Nevertheless, corporate buildings as well as private homes contain a great variety of additional applications, for example access controls, burglar alarms or fire detection systems. This group of applications has much higher demands regarding the underlying technical system. Obviously, access must be only granted to authenticated persons and fire detection systems must work reliable in case of emergency.

The different requirements led to a separation of critical and uncritical systems. Unifying them into one system would allow to further decrease maintenance costs and re-use the existing infrastructure for both fields of applications.

Therefore, this thesis proposes an extension to KNX which is suitable for critical environments. For this purpose, it is necessary to detect and guard against malicious attacks as well as to cope with randomly occurring hardware faults. The former can be achieved through cryptography, the latter by implementing redundancy. Both terms as well as the **Konnex (KNX)** standard are introduced in detail, followed by the proposed solution. The proposal divides **KNX** installations into an insecure and a secure part. The latter is protected against malicious attacks and is implemented in a redundant way. This allows to partially resist against transient hardware faults. Finally, the implementation of the prototype is illustrated.

# Kurzfassung

**Heim- und Gebäudeautomation (HGA)** befasst sich mit Systemen zur Steuerung bzw. Regelung von Gebäudeanwendungen, wie Heizungen, Klimaanlage oder Beleuchtungssystemen. Raumparameter können so zentral gesteuert werden, wodurch sowohl der Verwaltungsaufwand als auch den Energieverbrauch gesenkt und der Komfort erhöht werden kann. Sicherheitstechnische Überlegungen spielten traditionellerweise eine untergeordnete Rolle. Einerseits standen die Ressourcen auf den verwendeten Plattformen oft nicht zur Verfügung, andererseits wurden die Auswirkungen eines böswilligen Eingriffes in das System vernachlässigt.

Firmengebäude wie Privatgebäude beherbergen jedoch eine viel grössere Anzahl an Applikationen, man denke hier an Zugangskontrollen, Alarmanlagen oder Brandlöschesysteme. Diese Gruppe von Anwendungen stellt höhere Anforderungen an das zugrunde liegende technische System: Türen dürfen nur von autorisierten Personen geöffnet werden, Alarmanlagen dürfen sich nicht einfach von Einbrechern deaktivieren lassen, und Brandmeldesysteme müssen im Extremfall mit einem hohen Grad an Zuverlässigkeit funktionieren.

Diese unterschiedlichen Anforderungen führten zu einem Auseinanderwachsen der vorhandenen Systeme. Das Zusammenführen von kritischen und unkritischen Systemen würde einerseits den Verwaltungsaufwand weiter senken und zusätzlich erlauben, die vorhandene Infrastruktur, z.B. die Verkabelung, für beide Anwendungsgebiete zu verwenden.

Diese Arbeit beschäftigt sich deshalb mit einer Erweiterung des **KNX** Standards für die **HGA**, die auch in kritischen Umgebungen eingesetzt werden kann. Dazu ist es einerseits nötig, böswillige Angriffe zu erkennen und zu verhindern als auch technische Defekte abfedern zu können. Ersteres ermöglicht der Einsatz von Kryptographie, zweiteres kann mittels Redundanz bewerkstelligt werden. Beide Begriffe, sowie **KNX** selbst, werden ausführlich erläutert, gefolgt von dem erarbeiteten Lösungsvorschlag. Der Ansatz unterteilt eine **KNX**-Installation in einen ungesicherten und einen gesicherten Teil. Letzterer ist geschützt gegen böswillige Angriffe und ausserdem doppelt ausgeführt, womit ein teilweiser Ausfall kompensiert werden kann. Der Aufbau der vorgeschlagenen Lösung wird beschrieben und abschliessend der implementierte Prototyp erläutert.

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# Introduction

## 1.1 Motivation

**KNX** is an open communications protocol for **HBAS**. It uses a layered structure and supports wired communication over twisted pair and power line as well as wireless communication by radio transmission. Additionally, it supports communication with **Internet Protocol (IP)** hosts by special routers. As such, it can be used for controlling traditional services like **HVAC**, but also for more sophisticated applications like surveillance or fire alarm systems of buildings [1].

Driven by the need to reduce maintenance costs and to improve usability, the application of **HBASs** is no longer limited to traditional **HVAC** services. Modern building management includes much more different and more sophisticated tasks like elevator control, alarm systems or access control, to name just a few. To reduce costs it would be natural to bring together these services under the control of one management system, a claim also supported through improved standardization efforts.

Given these potential applications, a wide range of attacks would be possible. Replay attacks by intercepting and replaying datagrams would allow an adversary to introduce arbitrary **KNX** traffic, switching doors or disabling burglar alarms. Passive attackers can monitor the bus traffic to analyze the types of **KNX** devices within the network, gathering knowledge that can be used to develop further attack strategies. **Denial of Service (DOS)** attacks, disabling all directly connected **KNX** devices, can be conducted by simply physically shortcutting or interrupting a line connection, rendering the corresponding network segment unavailable. Clearly, such attacks must be precluded for sensitive services like fire or burglar alarm systems, relying on the availability of the communication network.

High availability, in general, can only be achieved by redundancy, i.e., by using repli-

cated resources. Therefore, all resources needed for transmitting data between two points must exist redundantly and independently from each other.

The countermeasure against eavesdropping and replay attacks, providing integrity, confidentiality and authenticity, consists of authentication between the sender and receiver of a message, and encryption of these messages, combined in a security scheme called **Authenticated Encryption (AE)**.

## 1.2 Problem statement - security in HBAS

**HBASs** emerged from automation systems, originally used for **HVAC** building control. Central building management, leading to "intelligent buildings", promises reduced maintenance costs, energy savings and improved user comfort [2], compensating the initially higher investment costs of such buildings. Following these arguments, it would be natural to integrate additional building management functions like alarm systems, access control or communication systems, exploiting already existing infrastructure like cabling and thus benefiting from synergy effects.

This trend was contradicted by the fact that in the early days of **HBAS**, communication security was not considered a critical requirement. Firstly, the communication was done over wires, i.e., physical access to the network would have been necessary for attacking the network [3]. Secondly, the possible threats by misusing **HVAC** applications were considered negligible. Additionally, the devices used in such networks were characterized by very limited processing power - thus, the comprehensive use of cryptographic measurements would have put remarkable computing loads onto these devices and was therefore considered impracticable.

These arguments turn out to be true only at first glance. Because **HBAS** are operational over years, excluding short-time, temporary physical access is often impossible for wired networks and nearly impossible for wireless networks. Regarding the second argument, it is easy to see that simple acts of vandalism, for example shutting down the lighting system of a company building, can result in considerable financial losses.

Today, the necessary processing power is available even on embedded systems, meanwhile systems integration continued until a point where security concerns could no longer be neglected. It follows that such an **HBAS** must be protected against misuse on all existing levels. Communication networks for **HBAS** are usually built upon a two-tier model, consisting of a field- and a backbone level. The field level contains **Sensors, Actuators and Controllers (SACs)**, interacting with the environment and performing the control functions. They are interconnected by the backbone network. Here, **Management Devices (MDs)**, used for configuration, visualization and monitoring, as well as **Interconnection Devices (ICDs)**, connecting physical segments, are found. Special **ICDs** may act as gateways, providing a connection to foreign networks.

Due to this topology, two different classes of attacks are possible: network- and device attacks [4].

### Network attacks

Here, the adversary tries to compromise the field or backbone network. In the first scenario, the attacker can analyze or modify the control application. In the latter he gains access to the concentrated network data and can thus obtain a global view of the system.

To protect a communication network it would be possible to use security mechanism known from the **IP** world. Unfortunately, these mechanisms often cannot be mapped directly to **HBASs** because of the introduced overhead. Using established techniques like **Virtual Private Network (VPN)**, **Transport Layer Security (TLS)** or **Internet Protocol Security (IPSec)** is therefore reserved for the backbone level where **IP** is used.

At the field level, **IP** is hardly ever used, a fact that excludes **IP** based technologies here.

### Device attacks

Alternatively, the three different kinds of devices can be aimed at by either attacking a **SACs** to manipulate its behavior or by attacking a **ICD** to access data of the segment. Finally, the attacker can launch an attack against the **MDs** to gain management access to the other two types of devices.

Such device attacks are divided into three categories: software attacks, side-channel and physical attacks, extensively surveyed in [4] and [5].

It turns out that the basic version of the **KNX** standard does not offer any efficient protection against attackers. Being a communication protocol, **KNX** can't handle attacks against devices. Nevertheless, the origin standard did not include effective counter-measures to prevent network attacks, too. This deficit was fixed afterwards by various extensions, bringing confidentiality and authenticity to **KNX**. See Section 4.3 for a review of them.

In contrast to these cryptographic extensions, up to today no methods for increasing availability are at disposal. This fact avoids the deployment of **KNX** in certain application domains. For example, a burglar can render an alarm system useless if he can shortcut the bus lines, thus suppressing the (encrypted) alarm messages. In contrast to such a malicious attack, a transient hardware failure can also disable a system, unacceptable for systems handling fire alarms or controlling elevators.

## 1.3 Aim of the work

The overall goal of this work is to develop a concept for a secure and highly available **KNX** network that also considers interoperability and compatibility, allowing the usage even in environments with increased safety-critical requirements. The proposed solution shall be resistant against malicious adversaries, as well as against transient hardware failures.

To achieve this, so called security gateways will be used. These gateways will possess two kinds of **KNX** interfaces: one kind of interface will be connected to standard, unsecured **KNX** networks. The second interface constitutes the entry point to a secured **KNX** network which is connected to the secure interfaces of other security gateways. To achieve higher availability, these secure interfaces and the respective communication lines must exist redundantly. This ensures that even in case of a **DOS** attack, communication within the segment is possible.

To show the feasibility of the solution by a proof of concept, a demonstration network shall be built. For the security gateways, RaspberryPis in combination with **KNX-Universal Serial Bus (USB)**-dongles will be used. Therefore, the RaspberryPis are acting as gateways between the secure and the insecure **KNX** networks, each of them running a master daemon responsible for reading datagrams from the **KNX** insecure world, encrypting and authenticating them and sending them over the secure **KNX** lines.

It is important to note that the practical part of this work will only handle the twisted-pair media of **KNX** (i.e., **KNX Twisted Pair (TP)**-1), although the basic principles can be deployed in a modified manner in wireless and power line networks as well.

A threat analysis will be conducted to prove that the system can withstand the defined attacks and is robust, i.e., that it can recover from erroneous states. This will be done by exposing the demonstration network to various attacks.

## 1.4 Structure of the work

Chapter 2 explains the term "Informational security" and introduces the required prerequisites for providing integrity and confidentiality. Well known symmetric and asymmetric ciphers are reviewed. The findings from this chapter serve as basis for designing the cryptographic part of the proposed solution.

Nevertheless, an important part of "Informational security" is availability. Because the main goal of this work is to improve availability, this property is discussed separately in Chapter 3. State-of-the art technologies implementing highly-available communication networks are introduced, serving as foundation for designing the mechanism to assure high availability of the proposal.

To be able to design the general part of the **KNX** extension, insights into the structure

of the **KNX** standard had to be gathered. This is the aim of Chapter 4. This part also covers already existing cryptographic **KNX** extensions.

Based on the preceding findings, Chapter 5 suggests a **KNX** extension that is applicable in environments with increased availability needs.

Afterwards, Chapter 6 explains how the prototype was implemented. For the practical part, "C" was used as programming language. Therefore, this part also introduces some important programming models like multi-threading and how they can be realized in "C".

Finally, Chapter 7 discusses the results and proposes some additional improvements.

# CHAPTER 2

## Prerequisites

### 2.1 Information security

Information security is the effort to protect information - be it in electronic or physical form - from adversary threats. The domain in which the data is protected can be time, i.e., protecting saved information for later usage, or space, i.e., protecting information transmitted physically from one user to another. To protect information, three key objectives must be met:

**Confidentiality** is used to protect sensitive information from eavesdroppers who are not allowed to gain knowledge of that information.

**Integrity** ensures that some kind of information can not be altered by third-parties, or that such a modification can be detected by the receiver of the information, but also includes information non-repudiation. Integrity can be separated into data integrity and system integrity. While the first one assures that information is only modified in an authorized manner, the latter one demands that a system performs its intended function, free from manipulation.

**Availability** guarantees that the system works promptly and information, which is needed by an entity to provide some service, is accessible.

Because all three properties go hand-in-hand with each other, they are also called the "CIA - triad" [6] - successfully attacking one property may allow attacking another one. For example, if a confidentiality attack against a computer system responsible for money transfers can be conducted to steal a password used for controlling this system, an attacker can subsequently render the system unusable, therefore compromising availability. Otherwise, the attacker could also try to remain undetected and change booking orders, thus mounting an attack against the integrity of the system. Therefore, these

three basic concepts are interleaved and building a system which honors only parts of them will most likely lead to an insecure system.

In addition to the three objectives listed above, additional security objectives are used frequently: **authenticity** is the property of being genuine and being able to be trusted, while **accountability** allows to trace the actions of an entity uniquely to that entity.

## Threats

Threats form a *potential* violation of security. Stallings [7] divides threat consequences into four categories:

- **Unauthorized disclosure** is a threat aimed against confidentiality. It occurs when an entity gains access to information for which it is not authorized.
- **Deception** threatens system integrity, and may result in tricking an authorized entity into accepting modified data.
- **Usurpation** opposes data integrity such that a system is controlled by an unauthorized entity.
- **Disruption** compromises the availability such that the system services do not operate correctly.

## Attacks

Attacks are the manifestation of a security violation, exploited by an attacker. A classification of attacks against communication networks is given in Figure 2.1.

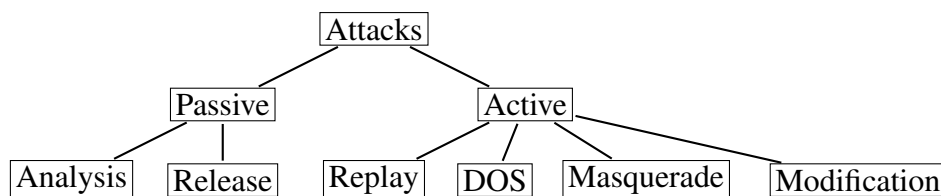


Figure 2.1: Classification of attacks

### Passive attacks

Passive attacks are aimed against confidentiality. The attacker  $E$  intercepts the data transmitted between the two or more entities by monitoring the communication medium and recording all the traffic.

After obtaining the data, the attacker can **release** the data itself to an outside entity. Another way to exploit the data is to **analyze** them, allowing the attacker to gain knowledge of some kind of meta data like origin, destination, quantity and frequency of the data flows.

Because of its passive nature, the data sent are not modified, thus such an attack is hard to detect. Otherwise, encrypting the traffic to gain confidentiality suffices to guard against the release of data. To guard against traffic analysis is harder because it may be impossible to encrypt some kind of meta data. For example, the destination address of a message may not be encrypted because routers handling the message must be able to determine the next routing decision based on this address. Another reason is that some meta information will always be present, like the size of the message or the simple fact that communication between two points has occurred.

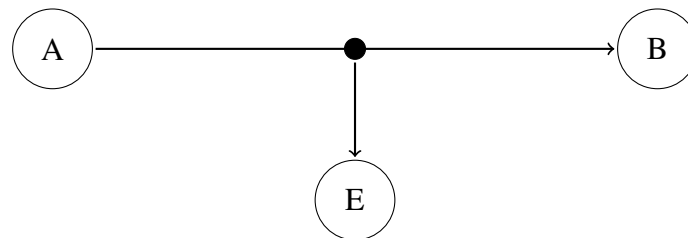


Figure 2.2: Passive attack

## Active attacks

Unfortunately, a restriction to passive attacks only is no realistic assumption for many systems. Whenever the adversary has access to the communication medium, active attacks cannot be ruled out, allowing the attacker to modify the data stream, or to create false ones. In contrast to their passive counterparts, active attacks can be detected but not prevented. Therefore, the focus lies on detecting and recovering from active attacks.

A **replay** attack consists of two steps: first, the attacker monitors the traffic (i.e., conducts a passive attack) and injects this recorded package in the second step, thus trying to produce an unauthorized effect. Of course the package can also be modified and injected afterwards, resulting in a **modification** attack. A **Denial of Service (DOS)** attack tries to overload system resources, attacking availability such that the system is not usable by legitimate users. Finally, **masquerade** attacks occurs when one entity pretends to be another entity, often based on replay attacks by replying (modified) authentication messages of an authorized entity.

To prevent active attacks, integrity mechanisms must be combined with confidential-



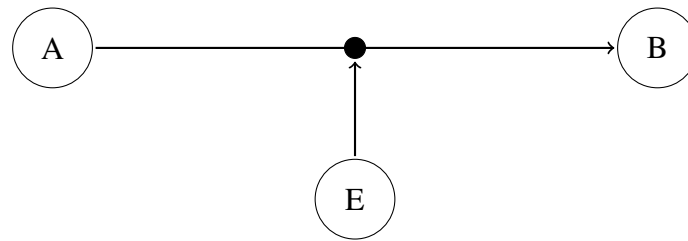


Figure 2.3: Active attack

ity mechanisms - the basic tool to achieve them is cryptography, introduced in the next Section 2.2. To provide availability, different techniques must be used, as shown in Section 3.1.

## 2.2 Cryptography

Cryptography<sup>1</sup> is the science of encrypting information - its evolution was no linear process. Ciphers were used independently in different places, were forgotten and disappeared when the corresponding civilization died. A short time table for prominent events is presented below; for a comprehensive outline of cryptographic history, "The Codebreakers", written by David Kahn, is suggested [8].

One of the oldest witnesses for cryptography are hieroglyphs used in Egypt about 2000 B.C., forming the predecessor of a simple substitution cipher. 500 B.C., the "sky-tale" was used by greek and spartan military leaders, performing a transposition cipher. Another classical example is the "Caesar Cipher", named after its inventor and used about 100 B.C. to hide information by replacing every letter of the alphabet by a letter some fixed number down the alphabet, thus performing a substitution cipher. Ah-mas al-Qalqashandi, an Egypt writer, introduced the frequency analysis, a method for breaking substitution ciphers, in the 14th century. About 300 years later, the "Geheime Kabinets-Kanzlei" in Vienna routinely intercepts, copies and re-seals diplomatic correspondence to embassies, and manages to decrypt a great percentage of the ciphertexts. In the beginning of the 20th century, the first cryptographic device called "Enigma"<sup>2</sup> is patented for commercial use and is later used in World War 2 by german troops for military communication. Successful attacks against the "Enigma" cipher are demonstrated by polish mathematicians even before outbreak of the war, and systematic decryption of "Enigma" - based ciphertexts are conducted in Bleatchley Park, U.K., by using so called "Turing-Bombs", giving the allies invaluable advantages. The second half of the

<sup>1</sup>classical greek for kryptôs: concealed

<sup>2</sup>classical greek for "riddle"

20th century introduces public key cryptography. In 1976 Whitfield Diffie and Martin Hellman specify a protocol for key exchange, based on a public key system developed by Ralph Merkle. One year later, the RSA public key encryption is invented by the American mathematicians Rivest, Shamir and Adleman.

Cryptography is basically the art of hiding information by turning cleartext data into a random looking stream or block of bits, called ciphertext, using some kind of key. This process is referred to as encryption in general, but it is important to note that for many block ciphers, this encryption process can also be used to generate a special tag called **Message Authentication Code (MAC)**, providing integrity.

The next sections deal with how to achieve confidentiality, the concepts of how to achieve integrity are partially based on the confidentiality methods and are introduced in Section 2.3.

Key, clear- and ciphertext are strings built from the alphabet  $\mathcal{A}$ .

- $\mathcal{A}$  is a finite set, denoting the alphabet used, for example  $\mathcal{A} = \{0, 1\}$
- $\{0, 1\}^n$  denotes the set of all possible strings with length  $n$
- $\mathcal{M}$  denotes the message space, consisting of all strings that can be built with the underlying alphabet
- $\mathcal{C}$  denotes the ciphertext space, also consisting of the strings from the alphabet  $\mathcal{A} = \{0, 1\}$
- $\mathcal{K}$  denotes the keyspace, also built from the alphabet. Key  $e$  is used for encryption, while key  $d$  is used for decryption. Both keys are also referred to as keypair, written  $(e, d)$ . If it is computationally easy to derive the private key  $e$  from the public key  $d$  (in most cases  $e = d$ ), the encryption scheme is called symmetric, otherwise the scheme is called asymmetric.

Every element  $e \in \mathcal{K}$  determines the function  $\mathcal{M} \rightarrow \mathcal{C}$

$$ciphertext = E_e(cleartext) \text{ }^3$$

Unauthorized parties - lacking the used key - should, by looking at the ciphertext, learn absolutely nothing about the hidden cleartext apart from the length of the origin message. Authorized parties are able to retrieve the original data out of the ciphertext by using the key with polynomial work, thus reversing the encryption. This reversing process is called decryption.

---

<sup>3</sup>this one-parameter function can also be written as the equivalent two-parameter function  $ciphertext = E(e, cleartext)$

- For every key  $d \in \mathcal{K}$ ,  $D_d$  denotes the function from  $\mathcal{C} \rightarrow \mathcal{M}$ , and is called decryption function.

$$cleartext = D_d(ciphertext)$$

Combining these properties yields a cipher or encryption scheme defined over  $(\mathcal{K}, \mathcal{M}, \mathcal{C})$ , which is a pair of *efficient*<sup>4</sup> algorithms such that

$$\begin{aligned}\mathcal{K} \times \mathcal{M} &\rightarrow \mathcal{C} \\ \mathcal{K} \times \mathcal{C} &\rightarrow \mathcal{M}\end{aligned}$$

The correctness property ensures for every pair of  $(e, d) \in \mathcal{K}$  and for every message  $m \in \mathcal{M}$  that encryption is reverseable, i.e., it must hold that

$$m = D_d(E_e(m))$$

## Security of a cipher

### Perfect secrecy

A formal definition of a secure cipher was introduced by Shannon in 1949 [9], viewed from a communication-theory point of view, as follows: given a finite message space, every possible cleartext message has its own a priori probability (for example, the distribution of letters in a specific language). Additionally, every key can be chosen with specific probability. It is assumed that these two probabilities constitute the a priori knowledge of an attacker.

A message is picked, encrypted and sent to the receiver. The eavesdropper, intercepting the message, can calculate the a posteriori probabilities for all possible cleartext messages, leading to the observed ciphertext - these are the conditional properties that under a fixed key, encrypting the cleartext message lead to the observed ciphertext message.

If the a posteriori probabilities for all possible encryptions are the same as all a priori probabilities, the attacker has learned absolutely nothing from intercepting the ciphertext, which is defined by Shannon as "perfect secrecy". Such a cipher cannot be broken by a ciphertext-only-attack, even by an adversary with unlimited time and processing power.

Shannon proved that for a perfectly secure cipher, the key space must be at least as big as the message space. Otherwise there will exist cleartext messages which are mapped to the same ciphertexts, and thus a priori and a posteriori probabilities will be different, allowing the attacker to get knowledge he should not have gotten.

---

<sup>4</sup>"runs in polynomial time"

## Semantic security

Another definition of the security of a cipher, based on complexity theory, is "semantic security". To be semantically secure, a cipher must not be breakable by an adversary in a reasonable time frame [10], where this time frame is a function of the useful timespan of the protected data. This synonymously means for a semantically secure cipher that an adversary must be forced to spend super-polynomial time to be able to break it. It follows that *all* semantically secure ciphers can be broken in principle by mounting the "brute-force" attack, searching the correct  $n$ -bit key in the exponential big key space  $2^n$ . Thus, such an exhaustive search must be rendered impracticable by using a suitable large key space to obtain a secure cipher. Semantic security is therefore a weaker form of security, namely perfect secrecy against an adversary having only polynomially bounded processing powers [11].

## Kerckhoff's principle

When designing cryptographic systems, a fundamental question is what components of it have to be protected from public knowledge, and what parts can be published without compromising the security of the system.

The Dutch cryptographer Auguste Kerckhoff stated rules for designing a secure cipher. According to "Kerckhoff's Principle" that was stated in the year 1883, among other properties, a secure system should not rely on the secrecy of its components, the only part that should be kept secret is the key alone. Shannon acknowledged these assumptions to be "pessimistic and hence safe, but in the long run realistic, since one must expect the system to be found out eventually".

Mapped to the definitions above, the sets  $\mathcal{M}, \mathcal{C}, \mathcal{K}$ , as well as the transformation functions  $E_e$  and  $D_d$ , must not be secret. The only thing that has to be kept private is the decryption key  $d$ . This separation of key and algorithm allows the publication of the basic cipher methods, benefiting from peer review. A contradicting approach trying to strengthen the safety of a cryptographic system by hiding the inner workings from public is also known as "Security by Obscurity".

## Randomness and probabilistic theory

A basic requirement of all cryptographic schemes is the availability of randomness. Entropy, denoted  $H$ , is the unit of the unpredictability of a process, as defined by Shannon in [12]

$$H = - \sum_{i=1}^k p_i * \ln(p_i) \quad (2.1)$$

where  $p_i$  is the probability of a certain outcome. The higher the predictability, or in other words, the more likely an event, the lower its entropy. Flipping a "fair" coin is a canonical example of a process with maximum entropy, because every coin flip has a probability of  $\frac{1}{2}$ , and all flips are independent from each other [13]. If obtaining "heads" of the coin is viewed as a logical "0" and "tails" as a logical "1", a binary string of length  $n$  can be built, where the probability of all possible strings of same length is equal, as shown in Figure 2.4, yielding a uniform distribution, with  $H = 2^n * \frac{1}{2^n} * \ln(2^n) = n$  bits.

The importance of random numbers in cryptography is founded on the nature of the cipher used, as will be shown in the next sections. For example, stream ciphers generate a keystream which is used for encryption. If the keystream is predictable by an adversary, the security of the cipher is reduced. Similar arguments are valid for block ciphers, which often rely on an initial value called **Initialization Vector (IV)** for encryption. Key negotiation algorithms schemes often rely on finding a random prime number, which can be achieved by choosing a random number and testing it for primality. Again, if such a prime number can be narrowed down within some borders, this fact may weaken the encryption process.

A fundamental problem in generating random numbers by utilizing computing devices is the deterministic nature of an algorithm:

*"Anyone who considers arithmetical methods of producing random digits is, of course, in a state of sin."*<sup>5</sup>

Such numbers are therefore called *pseudorandom*. Lots of cryptographic products suffered serious flaws because of relying on a broken **Pseudo Random Number Generator (PRNG)**. A historical example of such a broken random number generator, outputting biased (i.e., not uniformly distributed) values was "RANDU", invented by IBM in the 1960s. The generator belongs to the class of multiplicative congruential algorithms as proposed by Lehmer [14], which can basically generate random numbers of sufficient quality, **if** the parameters are chosen correctly. Random values can be obtained after setting an initial value for  $I_0$ , called seed, and repeatedly executing the calculation

$$I_{j+1} = 65539 * I_j \pmod{2^{31}}.$$

One problem is that consecutive values generated by RANDU are not independent, a fact that can be seen in Figure 2.5. To obtain the plot, 10000 uniformly distributed random numbers were chosen as initial seeds for  $I_i$  and plotted as x-values,  $I_{i+1}$  served as y- and  $I_{i+2}$  as z-values. While one would suspect that all points would be equally distributed, a clear pattern arises, indicating that the values are correlated.

To assess the quality of a **PRNG**, beside of such spectral tests lots of additional tests are

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<sup>5</sup>John von Neumann, 1951

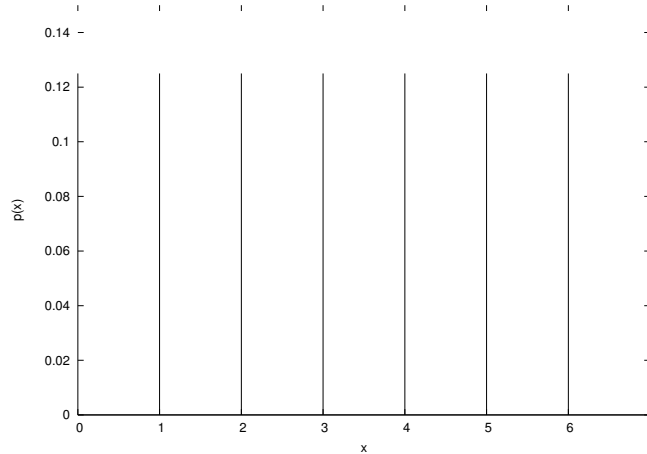


Figure 2.4: Uniform Distribution of binary string of length three

available, see [15] for details.

To encounter the shortcomings of a **PRNG**, a **True Random Number Generator (TRNG)** uses a natural process as non-deterministic data source, for example thermal noise of a semi conductor, cosmic noise from space or digital oscillators.

## The discrete logarithm problem

The **Discrete Logarithm Problem (DLP)**, a mathematical problem, is the basis of two important key exchange algorithms, both introduced in Section 2.5. **Diffie-Hellman (D-H)** utilizes finite fields, whose theoretical background is introduced below. **Elliptic Curves (ECs)**, basis for the second algorithm, are also explained.

### Finite fields **DLP**

A field consists of a set  $\mathcal{F}$  together with two operations  $\cdot$ , namely addition "+" and multiplication "\*", satisfying the following properties:

- Closure: for all elements from  $\mathcal{F}$ , the set is closed under the defined operations, i.e., applying an operator  $\cdot$  to two elements from the set results in an element also belonging to the set.
- Associativity and commutativity hold, i.e.,  $a \cdot (b \cdot c) = (a \cdot b) \cdot c$  and  $a \cdot b = b \cdot a$
- For both operations, an identity element  $e$  exists such that  $a \cdot e = a$  for all elements from the set  $\mathcal{F}$

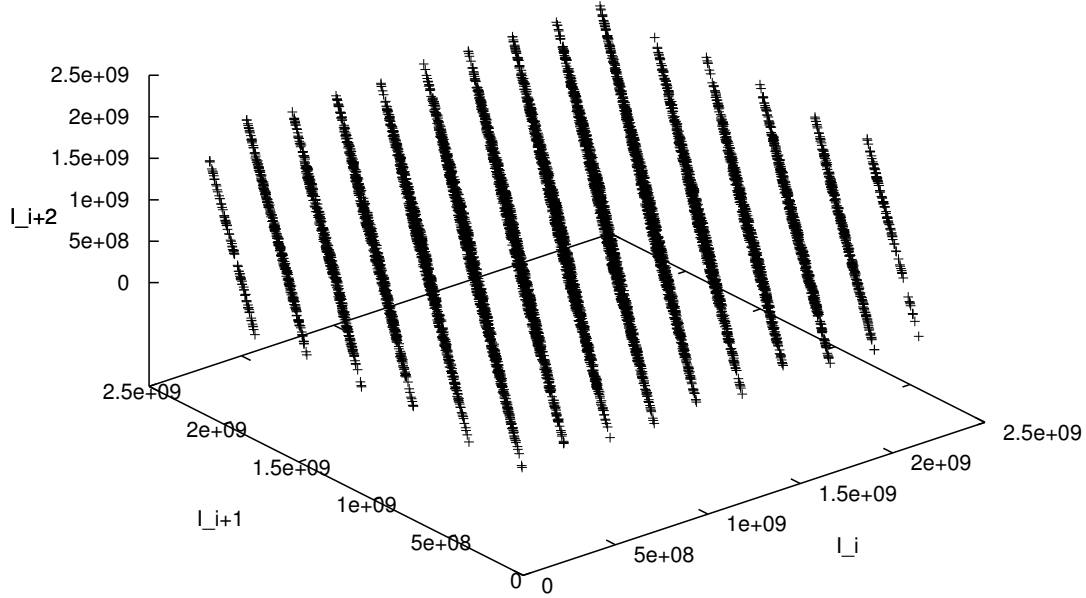


Figure 2.5: Spectral Plot of RANDU output

- For both operations, an inverse element exists such that  $a \cdot a^{-1} = e$  for all elements from the set  $\mathcal{F} \setminus \{0\}$
- Distributivity holds:  $(a + b) \cdot c = a \cdot c + b \cdot c$  for all elements

For a finite field, the cardinality of the set  $\mathcal{F}$  is finite and called order of the field, with identity elements for addition and multiplication. Inverses can be found for all elements regarding addition such that  $a + (-a) = e$  and regarding multiplication for all elements except 0 such that  $a * a^{-1} = e$ .

A specific example of a finite field is a prime field, which can be constructed by taking the set of integers  $\mathbb{Z} \pmod{p}$ , with  $p \in \mathbb{P}$ , thus restricting the set of all integers to the set  $\mathbb{Z}_p = \{0, 1, \dots, p-1\}$ . By choosing  $p$  as prime it is ensured that for any element  $a \in \mathcal{F} \setminus \{0\}$ , a multiplicative inverse exists:  $a * a^{-1} = 1 \pmod{p}$ . The set of numbers for which multiplicative inverses exist is called  $\mathbb{Z}_p^*$ , so for  $p$  being prime,  $\mathbb{Z}_p \setminus \{0\} = \mathbb{Z}_p^*$ .

By raising an element  $a \in \mathbb{Z}_p$  to different powers, a subgroup of  $\mathbb{Z}_p^*$  is generated, a fact

that follows from Fermat's little theorem stating that for  $p$  being prime and raising  $a$  to the power  $p - 1$ , the outcome is congruent 1 modulo  $p$

$$a^{p-1} \equiv 1 \pmod{p}.$$

Raising  $a$  to higher powers results in

$$\begin{aligned} a^p &\equiv a * a^{p-1} \equiv a \pmod{p} \\ a^{2p} &\equiv a^2 * a^{p-1} * \dots * a^{p-1} \equiv a^2 \pmod{p}. \end{aligned}$$

Thus, generating higher powers than  $(p - 1)$  does not yield different outcomes. If by raising  $a$  to  $(p - 1)$  different powers all elements from  $\mathbb{Z}_p^*$  can be generated,  $a$  is called primitive root or generator, generating a cyclic group. If  $p$  is prime it can be shown that at least one such generator  $g$  must exist and can be found efficiently [16]. Conversely this means that for all elements from  $\mathbb{Z}_p^*$  a unique exponent in the interval  $[0, p - 1]$  exists, called the discrete logarithm for the base  $g \pmod{p}$ .

Several algorithms exist to find the discrete logarithm. The most naive method conducts an exhaustive search, so for a prime of  $n$  bits length,  $2^n$  search operations are necessary. More efficient algorithms exist, with the best methods finishing after about  $2^{\frac{n}{2}}$  steps [17]. Therefore, by choosing a sufficient large prime, finding the discrete logarithm is considered a hard problem, a fact that is exploited by the **D-H** key exchange algorithm and its variants.

### Elliptic curve **DLP**

An **EC** is basically the set of all points satisfying an equation with the form as shown in 2.2, called "Weierstraß" equation

$$y^2 = x^3 + ax + b \tag{2.2}$$

The additional condition  $4a^3 + 27b^3 \neq 0$  assures that the **EC** does not possess any singularities.

An imaginary point "in infinity", denoted  $\infty$ , serves as additive identity element, and also belongs to the **EC** by definition

$$P + \infty = \infty + P = P, P + (-P) = \infty.$$

Negatives can be calculated easily due to the symmetric nature of the curves by swapping the sign of the y-coordinate of the point. For point  $P$  with coordinates  $(x, y)$ ,  $-P$  is defined as  $(x, -y)$ , thus satisfying  $P + (-P) = \infty$ .

By defining an **EC** over  $\mathbb{Z}_p$ , with  $a, b \in \mathbb{Z}_p$ , a cyclic group can be generated. The addition operation that "adds" two points on this curve is defined by a "chord-and-tangent"



rule. Figure 2.6 shows addition of two points, while Figure 2.7 shows adding a point to itself. It is important to note that this representation is shown in the domain  $\mathbb{R}$  for visualization - in real EC cryptography, only elements  $(\text{mod } p)$  (i.e., from the set  $\mathbb{Z}_p$ ) are allowed to avoid rounding errors.

Addition is defined as connecting points  $P$  and  $Q$ , finding the intersection of the line with the EC ( $R'$ ) and reflecting that point across the x-axis to obtain the result  $R$ .

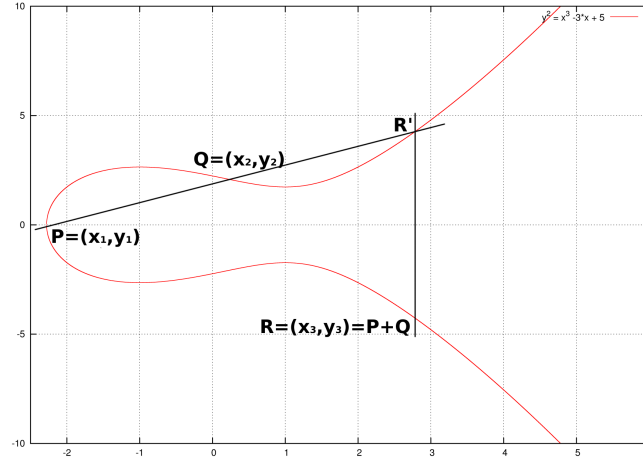


Figure 2.6: Adding two points

Mathematically, the new coordinates can be calculated as shown in Equation 2.3

$$x_3 = \left( \frac{y_2 - y_1}{x_2 - x_1} \right)^2 - x_1 - x_2, y_3 = \frac{y_2 - y_1}{x_2 - x_1} (x_1 - x_3) - y_1. \quad (2.3)$$

Point-doubling of  $P$  is achieved in a similar way by determining the tangent of  $P$ , finding the intersection and reflection.

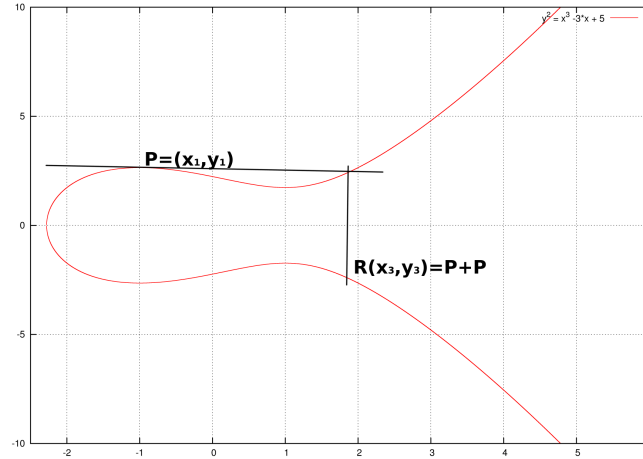


Figure 2.7: Doubling a point

Multiplication is defined as successive addition of a point to it self in the way

$$kP = \underbrace{P + P + \dots + P}_{k\text{-times}}$$

### Elliptic Curve Discrete Logarithm Problem (ECDLP)

Based on this group operations, the **ECDLP** [18] can be defined as follows: given an **EC**  $E$  over the finite field  $\mathcal{F}_p$ ,  $P$  of order  $n$  of this curve and a point  $Q$ , find the integer  $k$  such that  $Q = kP$ .  $k$  is called the discrete logarithm of  $Q$  to the base  $P$ .

To find  $k$ , the most naive algorithm trying all possible numbers will terminate after  $\frac{n}{2}$  on average. In contrast, the running time of the best known attack is bounded by  $\sqrt{p}$ , where  $p$  is the largest prime divisor of  $n$ . Therefore, such an attack is infeasible for properly chosen **EC** parameters.

## 2.3 Symmetric vs. asymmetric cryptography

As already stated, two very fundamental differences regarding the key used in a cryptographic system can be found. Symmetric ciphers, where the same key is used for encryption and decryption, outperform its asymmetric counterparts in regards of data throughput by a factor of about 1000 [19]. Additionally, they need shorter keys to achieve the same level of security - both arguments encourage its use in embedded devices because of its less computing and memory demands.

The big disadvantage of symmetric ciphers is that the key must be known to sender and receiver of the message *before* secure communication can take place. This constitutes

some kind of chicken-egg problem: to be able to send encrypted data, the key must be distributed, i.e., a secure channel has to be setup first for key exchange. But if such a secure channel can be established, it could also be used for transmitting the sensitive data themselves.

Asymmetric or public key cryptography solves the problem of key distribution by using two different keys, belonging to the same key pair: the private key must be protected from disclosure, while the public key can be published without harming security. For encryption, the public key of the receiver is used, who in turn will use his private key to decrypt the message.

To be able to take benefit from the advantages of both schemes, a hybrid approach is possible: at first, public key cryptography is used to negotiate a symmetric session key, which then can be used to encrypt the actual, sensitive data.

## Stream ciphers

For encryption, stream ciphers take arbitrary long messages (from the message space  $\mathcal{M}$ ), and encrypt them to the corresponding ciphertext (out of the ciphertext-space  $\mathcal{C}$ ), by applying one digit of the message to one digit of the key. It is valid to say that a streamcipher is a block cipher with blocklength 1.

The sequence of symbols  $e_0, e_1, \dots, e_n$ , all taken from the keyspace  $\mathcal{K}$ , is called keystream. The encryption function  $E_e$  performs the substitution  $c_i = E_{e_i}(m_i)$ , producing one encrypted symbol at a time. Analogously, the decryption function inverts this substitution:  $m_i = D_{d_i}(c_i)$ .

Most stream ciphers belong to the family of symmetric ciphers, thus  $e_i = d_i$ . The reason is that most asymmetric ciphers are deterministic ciphers, i.e., the encryption of the same message with a fixed public key always yields the same ciphertext. Thus, such repeated messages can be detected by an adversary. Probabilistic public-key encryption can solve this problem for stream ciphers, but this scheme will not be handled in this work because of its low practical application.

## Vernam cipher

This cipher, also called **One Time Pad (OTP)**, was invented by Gilbert Vernam in 1918, and belongs to the family of polyalphabetic stream ciphers, which means that every character of the original message is mapped to another character of the same alphabet. In contrast to a monoalphabetical cipher, there is no fixed mapping between the input and output characters. The substitution is achieved by generating a keystream and by executing a bit-wise **Exclusive-Or (XOR)** operation, as defined in Table 2.3, of key and message.

		$\oplus$
0	0	0
0	1	1
1	0	1
1	1	0

Decryption can be achieved by applying the **XOR** operation to key and ciphertext:

$$m_i = c_i \oplus k_i = (m_i \oplus k_i) \oplus k_i = m_i, \text{ with } k_i \oplus k_i = 0, \text{const} \oplus 0 = \text{const}.$$

Obviously, the security of the cipher heavily depends on the quality of the **PRNG**. If a truly random source is used to generate the key stream, this cipher has perfect secrecy: for a  $n$ -character ciphertext, **all**  $n$ -character cleartexts are equally probable, and vice versa. The reason for this is the **XOR** operation: both outcomes are equally probable, introducing one bit of randomness into every data bit.

Additionally, the **XOR** operation can be built easily in hardware, accelerating the encryption or decryption process.

Nevertheless, the cipher can be completely broken if the same key is used for encrypting more than one cleartext message, allowing to mount an attack based on frequency analysis. If an attacker is able to intercept a high number of different ciphertexts, all encrypted with the same key, the pairwise xor'ing of the ciphertexts yields the xor-combination of the corresponding cleartexts, because

$$m_1 \oplus m_2 = (c_1 \oplus k) \oplus (c_2 \oplus k) = c_1 \oplus c_2 \oplus k \oplus k = c_1 \oplus c_2 \oplus 0 = c_1 \oplus c_2.$$

Whenever the same character is present in two different ciphertexts at the same position, the result of the **XOR** operation will be 0x00, allowing to draw inferences about the language used. By utilizing frequency analysis, the used key can be determined with high probability position by position with effort bounded by  $O(n^2)$ .

### Stream ciphers based on **Linear Feedback Shift Register (LFSR)**

A disadvantage of the Vernam cipher is that a key of equal length as the message is necessary. To mitigate this problem, a **LFSR** can be used to generate a key of proper length from a much shorter, initial key, called seed. Such **LFSR** are denoted by the tuple  $\langle L, C(D) \rangle$ .  $L$  is the number of stages, and  $C(D)$  is the connection polynomial. Because of the finite length, every **LFSR** can only take on a finite number of internal states, producing a periodic output sequence. If the degree of the connection polynomial is equal to the number of stages and the connection polynomial is irreducible (i.e., the polynomial can not be factored into 2 non-constant polynomials), no matter of the initial state, the output sequence produced will always be of maximum periodicity.

Figure 2.8 shows a four stage non-singular **LFSR** with connection polynomial  $C(D) = 1 + D + D^4$ . Table 2.3 [20] shows the corresponding output sequence produced. After

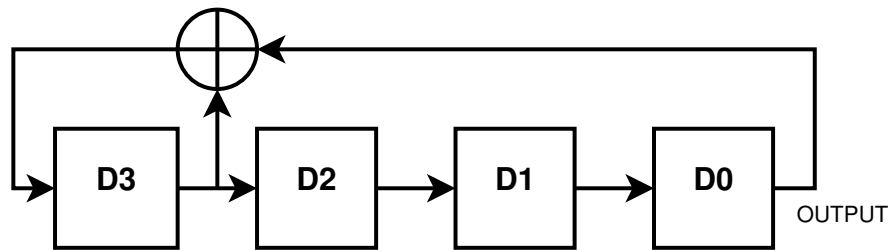


Figure 2.8: 4 Stage LFSR

15 shifts a state equal to the initial state is achieved, and the outputs begin to repeat. While such **LFSR** can be easily built in hardware, a problematic fact remains that their linear complexity is bounded by  $L$ . Therefore, a **LFSR** should never be used as keystream generator directly, instead the outputs of different **LFSR** are combined by a non-linear function, thus obtaining a nonlinear generator.

t	$D_3$	$D_2$	$D_1$	$D_0$	t	$D_3$	$D_2$	$D_1$	$D_0$
0	0	1	1	0	8	1	1	1	0
1	0	0	1	1	9	1	1	1	1
2	1	0	0	1	10	0	1	1	1
3	0	1	0	0	11	1	0	1	1
4	0	0	1	0	12	0	1	0	1
5	0	0	0	1	13	1	0	1	0
6	1	0	0	0	14	1	1	0	1
7	1	1	0	0	15	0	1	1	0

## Block ciphers

These ciphers operate on input blocks of fixed size, transforming them into output blocks of same size. This implies that larger messages must be broken into suitable blocks, and that for the last remaining block it may be necessary to add padding bytes to yield the full block size, adding overhead to the message - a disadvantage compared to stream ciphers. For example, to encrypt a message just exceeding the block size by one byte, for the excess byte a complete block must be concatenated.

On the other hand, while stream ciphers are strictly sequential by nature, there exist methods to speed up block ciphers by splitting the message first, and then processing them in parallel<sup>6</sup>.

Two main types of block cipher exist: transposition ciphers use a key-dependent permutation to re-order the characters of the block to obtain the ciphertext. This is a bijective transformation, so decryption can be achieved by simply reversing the permutation.

<sup>6</sup>Counter Mode, see Section 2.3

Substitution ciphers define a key-dependent mapping of characters from the alphabet  $\mathcal{A}$  to the same alphabet, thus replacing every character by one or more other characters. In the latter case, this equals an injective function which can not be reversed directly.

A product cipher is a combination of ciphers of different types to achieve a higher level of security than possible as with the basic ciphers.

Feistel networks are special product ciphers, composed of **Substitution-Permutation (SP)** networks. They were first described by Horst Feistel in the year 1973 [21], and are the basis of a variety of block ciphers like "LUCIFER" [22] and **Data Encryption Standard (DES)**.

Figure 2.9 shows the principal layout of such ciphers: at first, the plaintext block of length  $2n$ -bits is divided into two  $n$ -bits blocks, often called  $L_0$  and  $R_0$  for left and right block, respectively. After that the first round starts: every round is characterized by performing a substitution, followed by a permutation of the two half-blocks. For substitution, at first a round function, parametrized by a round key is applied to one half of the data block, followed by a **XOR** operation. The output of the rounds can be calculated according to the formulas shown in Table 2.3

Encryption of round 1:	$L_1 = R_0$ $R_1 = L_0 \oplus F(k_1, R_0)$
Encryption of round 2:	$L_2 = R_1$ $R_2 = L_1 \oplus F(k_2, R_1)$
...	
Encryption of round n:	$L_n = R_{n-1}$ $R_n = L_{n-1} \oplus F(k_n, R_{n-1})$

Decryption is achieved by applying the ciphertext to the same network, with the round keys applied in reverse order, reducing hardware- respectively code size. Because every decryption step, see Table 2.3, does not rely on reversing the round function, there is no necessity for the round function to be bijective.

Reversing one encryption stage is achieved as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} R_{n-1} &= L_n \\ L_{n-1} &= R_n \oplus F(k_n, R_{n-1}) = R_n \oplus F(k_n, L_n). \end{aligned}$$

### **DES and Triple Data Encryption Standard (3DES)**

**DES**, designed by IBM and published by **National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)** in 1977 [23], encrypts 64 bit blocks in 16 processing rounds.

For every round, a 56 bit round key is derived from the basic 56 bit key by permutations. The 64 bit data block to be encrypted respectively decrypted is subjected to an initial permutation and then feed into the Feistel network. The round function operates

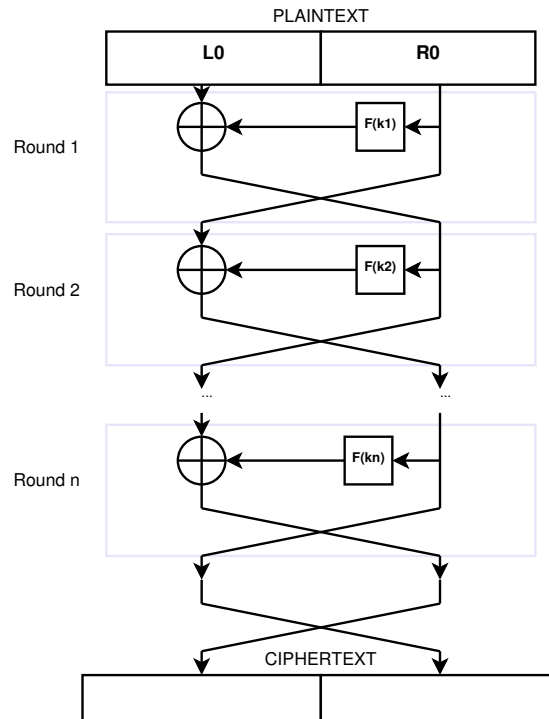


Figure 2.9: Feistel Substitution-Permutation Network

as follows:

At first, the 32 bit half block is expanded to 48 bit by copying specific bits. The outcome is added to the round key modulo 2 (i.e., the **XOR** operation). Next, a non-linear transformation is applied by so-called "S-Boxes", performing a surjective function by substituting blocks of 6 bit by only 4 bit. Lastly, a deterministic permutation follows, achieved through "P-Boxes", concluding the round function.

Because of the small key size, **DES** was successfully broken for the first time<sup>7</sup> by a brute-force attack in 1997.

To prevent such attacks, **3DES** was published: the cleartext- respectively cipertext block is fed 3 times to the **DES** cipher, using 3 different keys  $k_1, k_2, k_3$  to first encrypt with  $k_1$ , decrypt with  $k_2$  and finally encrypt with  $k_3$

$$ciphertext = E(k_3(D(k_2, E(k_1, cleartext)))),$$

effectively tripling the key size. The special sequence of encryption, decryption and again encrypting was chosen because by setting  $k_1 = k_2 = k_3$ , a **3DES** implementation can also be used for en/decryption of **DES** messages.

<sup>7</sup>At least officially - rumors about the involvement of the **National Security Agency (NSA)** regarding the small key size and the design of the S-Boxes existed since the publication

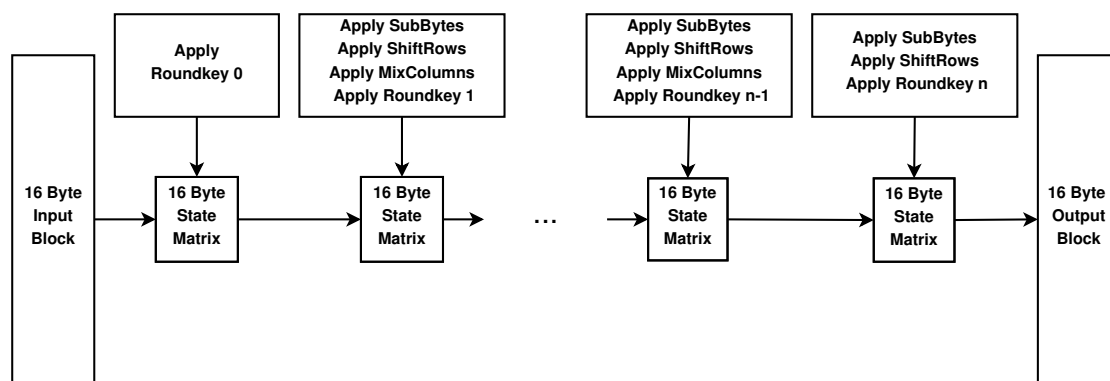


Figure 2.10: AES Encryption Process

## Advanced Encryption Standard (AES)

Also called "Rijndael" after its developers Joan Daemen und Vincent Rijmen, **AES** is the successor of **3DES**, as proposed by the **NIST** in 2001. Basic properties are a block size of 128 bit, and possible key sizes of 128, 192 or 256 bit.

The operation, shown in Figure 2.10, starts by copying the input block into a square matrix, called "State", followed by a **XOR** combination of the first round key and the matrix. Then, 9, 11 or 13 rounds, depending on the key size, are performed: substitution by S-Boxes, permutation by shifting rows, another substitution by mixing columns and applying the round key. A last round, omitting the mix-columns stage, concludes the encryption. Operating on the whole data block, **AES** is not a Feistel network, therefore all substitutions and permutations must be reversible to allow decryption: the S-Box used here is therefore implementing byte-by-byte substitutions. The round keys are derived from the original key by the **AES** key expansion. Decryption uses the round keys in reverse order. To reverse the first substitution of every round, a unique inverse S-Box is used, while the shifting rows and mixing columns can also be reversed.

## Mode of operation

Because block ciphers operate on a fixed number of bytes, messages larger than this block size must be broken into parts of suitable size, and depending on the resulting size of the last block, it may be necessary to append a padding to it. Five different modes of operation were defined by **NIST** in 2001 [24], which will be introduced in the next sections. For all modes it does not matter what underlying block cipher is used, as long as the block cipher implements a cryptographic secure function.

An important property of this modes is the error propagation. Whenever a bit error occurs on the transmission channel due to noise or interference, a logical '0' of the



transmitted ciphertext is substituted by a logical '1' or vice versa. This bit error in the ciphertext produces one or more bit errors in the cleartext, thus the name error propagation [25].

### Electronic Code Book (ECB)

ECB can be used to gain confidentiality and allows the parallel processing of all input blocks. This mode does not use any IV or nonce<sup>8</sup>, therefore repeating input blocks are mapped to the same output blocks under the same key, implementing a deterministic encryption scheme. This is problematic, which can be seen quite intuitively. Figure 2.11 shows a picture saved in the bitmap format. The pixel data following the header were extracted and encrypted in ECB mode, as shown in Figure 2.12. It can be seen easily that patterns occurring in the input data can be detected in the encrypted output data. Therefore, this mode should never be used. In contrast, Figure 2.13 shows the same picture encrypted with Cipher Block Chaining (CBC) mode, as introduced in the next section.

**SECRET  
MESSAGE  
ECB  
ENCRYPTED**

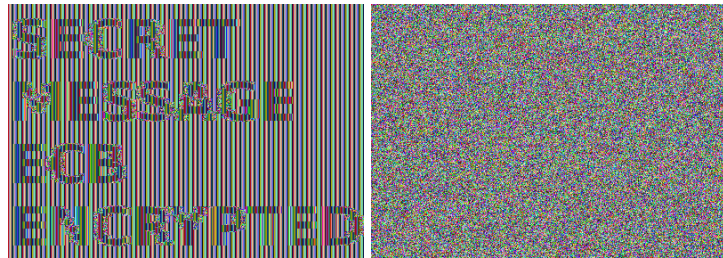


Figure 2.11: Original file

Figure 2.12: ECB mode

Figure 2.13: CBC mode

### CBC

This mode uses an IV and can therefore be used for encryption of same messages without changing the key. Additionally, CBC can also be used for MAC generation, as shown in Section 2.3.

Encrypting a message is shown in Figure 2.14.

$$\begin{aligned} C_0 &= E(k, (M_0 \oplus IV)) \\ C_1 &= E(k, (M_1 \oplus C_0)) \\ &\dots \\ C_i &= E(k, (M_i \oplus C_{i-1})) \end{aligned}$$

To reverse the process, i.e., decrypt the message, see Figure 2.14

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<sup>8</sup>short for "number used once"

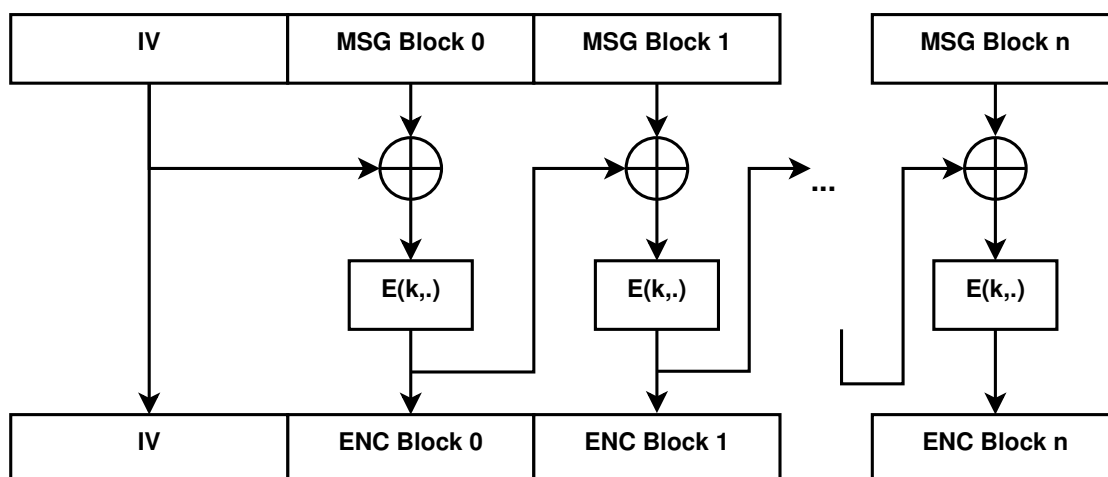


Figure 2.14: **CBC** for encrypting messages

$$\begin{aligned}
 M_0 &= D(k, C_0) \oplus IV \\
 M_1 &= D(k, C_1) \oplus C_0 \\
 &\dots \\
 M_i &= D(k, C_i) \oplus C_{i-1}
 \end{aligned}$$

The **IV** does not have to be kept private, but must be known to the receiver of the message. It is important that such an **IV** is unpredictable, otherwise allowing a **Chosen Plaintext Attack (CPA)**. Also, it must not repeat over the lifetime of the key, otherwise introducing the **ECB** problem again.

The **IV** introduces overhead, which is problematic for short messages. To avoid such a message expansion, a solution is to use a nonce, as suggested in [26]. To avoid the need for sending the nonce with every message, the sender and receiver must maintain a message counter. This message counter must be encrypted to avoid predictability, and can then be used as **IV**. Care must be taken for the counter not to overflow within the lifetime of a key.

### **Counter Mode (CTR) mode**

This confidentiality mode generates a key stream by encrypting a counter value with a block cipher. The key stream is then applied to the cleartext blocks with the **XOR** operation, as shown in Figure 2.16. For the last block, the key stream is truncated to match the size of the cleartext block.

Decryption works by generating the same key stream on the receiver's side, and applying the **XOR** operation to the ciphertext blocks, similar to the decryption process used in the Vernam cipher. To avoid the duplicate usage of the same counter value in bidirec-

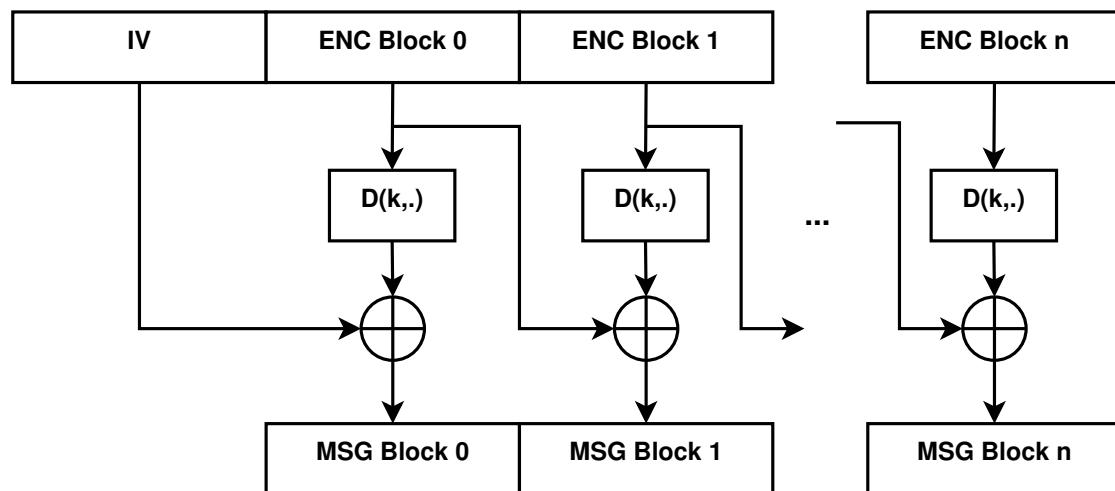


Figure 2.15: **CBC** for decrypting messages

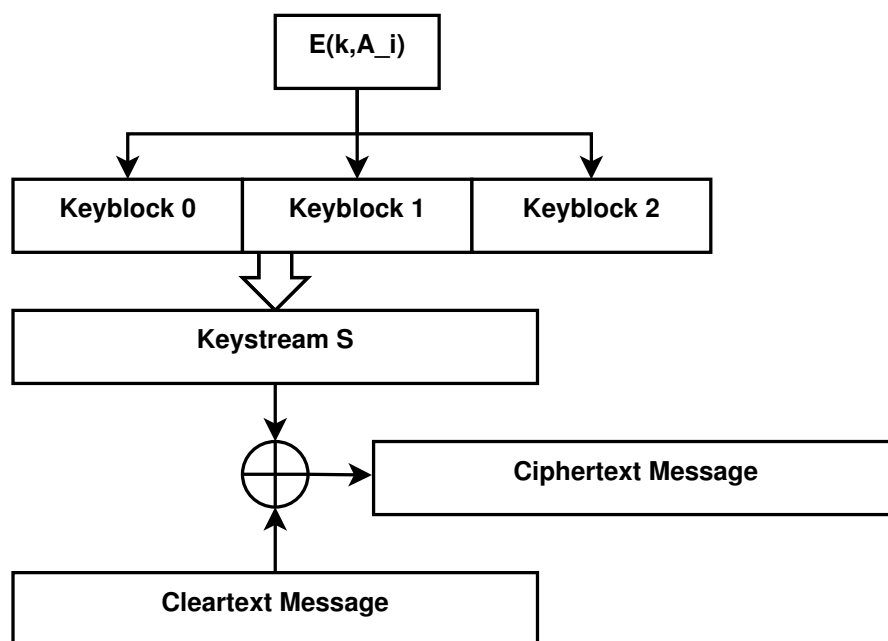


Figure 2.16: **CTR** mode encryption

tional communication, the counter can be combined with a sender-dependent nonce by concatenation before encrypting the counter:

$$\begin{aligned} K_0 &= E(k, nonce || Ctr_0) \\ K_1 &= E(k, nonce || Ctr_1) \\ &\dots \\ K_i &= E(k, nonce || Ctr_i) \\ C_i &= K_i \oplus M_i \end{aligned}$$

### Cipher Feedback Mode (CFB)

**CFB** can be used to turn a block cipher into a stream cipher. Beside the block size  $b$ , another parameter  $s$  determines the operation.  $s$  corresponds to the size of one transmission unit. For initialization, an unpredictable **IV** is set as input for the underlying block cipher. Then, in every processing step a new transmission unit is generated by **XORing** the  $s$  most significant bits of the output of the encryption function with the  $s$  bit message unit. After that, the **IV** is shifted to the left and the gap is filled by the newly generated character, as shown in Figure 2.17:

$$\begin{aligned} C[0] &= E(k, IV[0 : b - 1])[b - 1 : b - s - 1] \oplus M[0] \\ C[1] &= E(k, IV[0 : b - s - 1] || C[0])[b - 1 : b - s - 1] \oplus M[1] \\ &\dots \\ C[n] &= E(k, IV[0 : b - ns - 1] || C[0] || C[1] || \dots || C[n - 1])[b - 1 : b - s - 1] \oplus M[n - 1] \end{aligned}$$

To decrypt, the same encryption function, **IV** and key is used to retrieve one transmission unit at a time.

### Output Feedback Mode (OFB)

This mode is very similar to **CFB**, but here the  $s$  bit output from the encryption function is used directly to update the space caused by the **IV** left shift. This avoids error propagation in case a transmission unit was damaged on transmit and thus a bit changed its value: for **OFB** encryption systems, one or more bit errors in one ciphertext character only affects the decryption of this character. In contrast, one bit error in **CFB** affects decryption of all following characters.

$$\begin{aligned} O_0 &= E(k, IV[0 : b - 1])[0 : s - 1] \\ C[0] &= O_0 \oplus M[0] \\ O_1 &= E(k, IV[0 : b - 1] || O_0)[0 : s - 1] \\ C[1] &= O_1 \oplus M[1] \\ &\dots \end{aligned}$$

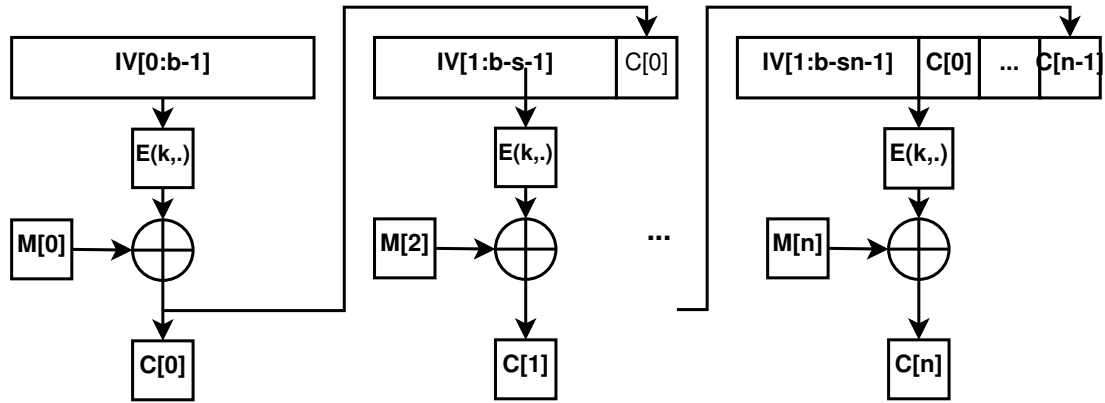


Figure 2.17: CFB Encryption

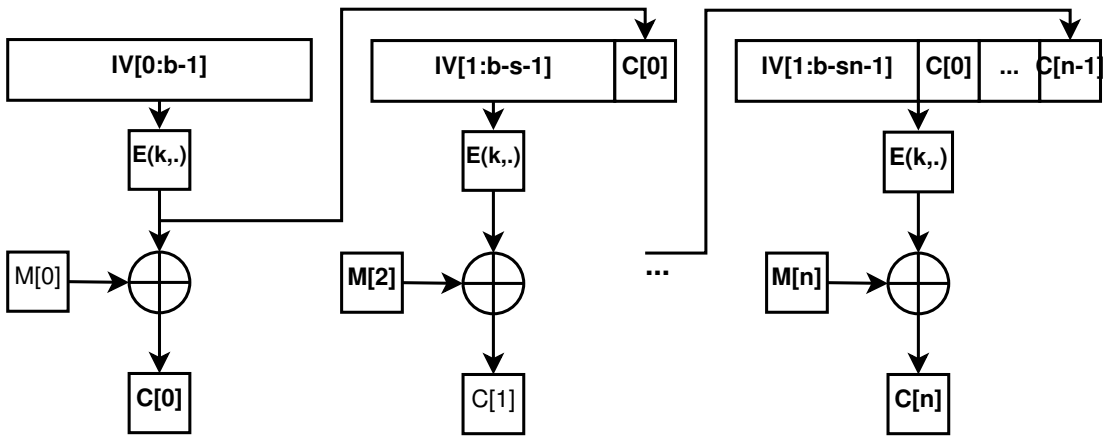


Figure 2.18: OFB Encryption

$$O_n = E(k, IV[0 : ns - 1] || O_0 || O_1 || \dots || O_{n-1})[0 : s - 1]$$

$$C[n] = O_n \oplus M[n]$$

## Integrity

All modes of operation introduced so far are used to provide confidentiality only. To provide the second column of information security, i.e., integrity, in general **MACs** or digital signatures are used. Digital signatures, based on public key cryptography, are introduced in Section 2.5. In contrast, **MACs** use symmetric keys, providing integrity

and authenticity.

The basic way to protect a data unit - be it a message traveling from a sender to a recipient or a file saved for later usage - from modification by a third party is to generate a tag  $t$ , also called **MAC**, and concatenating this tag to the message, as shown in Figure 2.19. Verifying the integrity is done by re-generating the tag and comparing it to the saved one.

In contrast to confidentiality modes, which should always be combined with a method to guarantee integrity, integrity-only modes do have a right to exist. For example, archives containing source code for open source project, available from the Internet, must not be encrypted but should be secured against modification. For example, the UNIX based operating system "FreeBSD" uses asymmetric keys to protect its package management system from adversary modification.

Combining integrity and confidentiality in a security scheme called **AE** will be handled in Section 2.4.

As tag generation and tag verification algorithms, keyed or unkeyed cryptographic secure hash functions are used. For integrity-only, keyed hash functions must be used, or otherwise an arbitrary entity can modify the message undetectable by regenerating the correct tag. Therefore, a simple checksum like a **Cyclic Redundancy Check (CRC)** or an unkeyed hash function can not provide integrity only, simply because the function value can be re-generated by an adversary modifying the message, allowing to mount an attack called **MAC** forgery. Nevertheless, in combination with a confidentiality mode such an unkeyed function *may* be secure, although its use is discouraged because many applications operating this way are broken and can be attacked (i.e., **Secure Shell (SSH)** version 1 [27]).

A hash function takes as input an arbitrary large message  $\mathcal{M}$  and generates a hash value  $t = h(\mathcal{M})$  of fixed size, therefore  $|\mathcal{M}| \gg |t|$ . This many-to-one mapping implies the existence of collisions, i.e., the existence of distinct messages  $m_1, m_2$  which are mapped to the same tag  $t$ .

To be cryptographically secure, a hash function must fulfill specific properties [28]. Firstly, it should be easy to generate the tag by calculating  $t = h(m)$ . Reversing the process to get  $m$  by executing  $h(t)^{-1}$  should be hard, a property called preimage resistance. Additionally, 2nd-preimage resistance assures that for any given message  $m$  and corresponding tag  $t$ , it must be infeasible to find a second message that maps to the same tag. Finally, (strong) collision resistance states that it also must be infeasible to find any two messages generating the same tag, therefore collision resistance implies 2nd-preimage resistance [29].

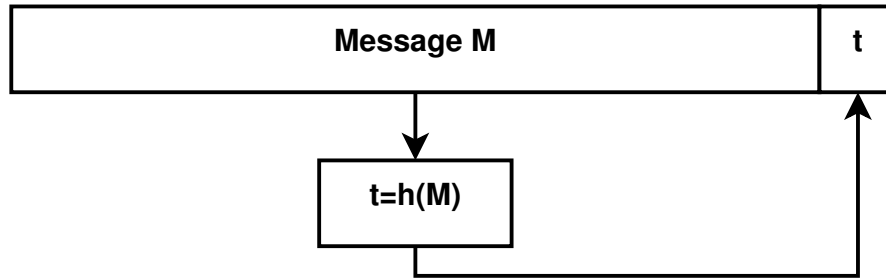


Figure 2.19: Tag generation

Important representatives of cryptographically secure hash functions are the family of **Standard Hashing Algorithms (SHAs)**, with variants providing hashes of 160, 256, 384 or 512 bit length, defined by **NIST** [30]. For **SHA-1**, an attack to find collisions was found [31] and should therefore not be used anymore.

Because these hash functions lack a secret key and therefore would allow **MAC** forgery, a construction called **Keyed-Hash Message Authentication Code (HMAC)** can be used, which takes additionally to the message  $m$  as input a key  $k$ , and  $ipad$  and  $opad$  being constant values [32].

$$t = S(k, m) = h((k \oplus opad) || h((k \oplus ipad) || m)) \quad (2.4)$$

A different way for tag-generation, called **CBC-MAC**, is based on block ciphers, utilizing a construction similar to **CBC** mode encryption, shown in Figure 2.20. Here,  $F(k, \cdot)$  denotes any block cipher of suitable size.

## 2.4 Authenticated encryption

Many applications demand the integration of confidentiality *and* integrity modes. The need for confidentiality is self explaining in systems where submitted data must be protected from a passive adversary. One example would be a password for logging into a remote computer, sent over a network connection - just by monitoring the connection, an attacker can steal the password and gain illegitimate access to the system.

The need to additionally provide integrity and authenticity measurements is maybe not that obvious, but can be motivated in various ways. For example, two entities sharing an initial key known to both of them which want to negotiate a temporary session key could randomly choose the temporary key, encrypt it and send it to the other side. Even if a passive adversary knows that the package he monitors will be used as session key he cannot derive it, provided a secure cipher is used. In contrast, an active attacker can

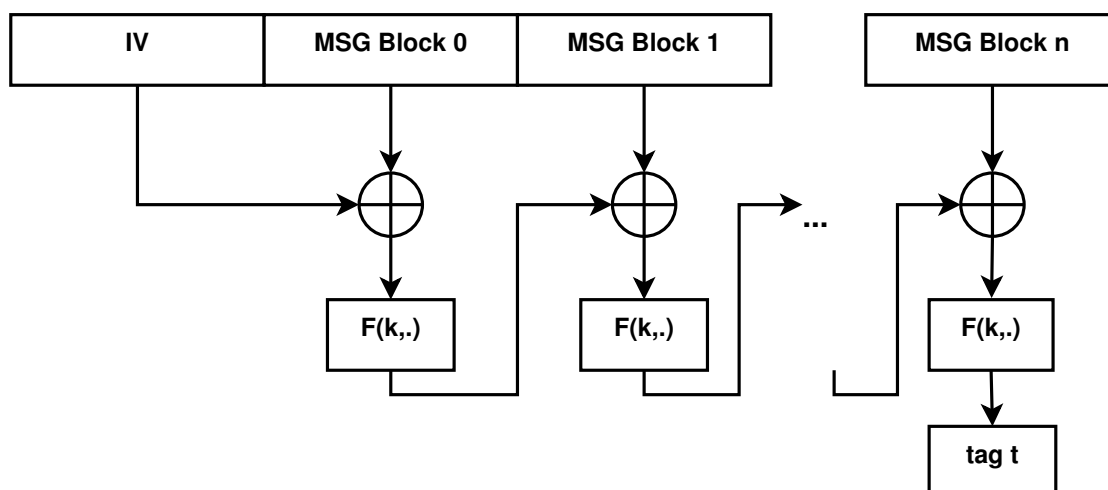


Figure 2.20: **CBC** for generating a MAC

intercept and modify the encrypted session key, and afterwards inject the modified message. The receiver would then decrypt the package, thus obtaining a modified session key. After all, the two entities would use two different keys, crippling their communication.

To avoid that attacks, methods to provide encryption and integrity are combined. Basically, 3 different ways how this can be achieved exist:

- "encrypt-and-mac" encrypts the message  $m$  and appends the tag  $t$  of the cleartext message

$$c = E(k_e, m) || h(k_h, m) \quad (2.5)$$

- "mac-then-encrypt" generates the tag for the cleartext message  $m$ , appends it and afterwards encrypts cleartext + tag to get ciphertext  $c$ :

$$c = E(k_e, m || h(k_h, m)) \quad (2.6)$$

- "encrypt-then-mac" encrypts the message  $m$  first, and afterwards appends the tag  $t$  of the encrypted message to obtain  $c$

$$c = E(k_e, m) || h(k_h, E(k_e, m)) \quad (2.7)$$

For all 3 schemes,  $E(k, m)$  must be a semantically secure encryption function, and  $h(k, m)$  denotes a keyed, cryptographically secure hash function. The latter is of particular importance for "encrypt-and-mac", because this scheme otherwise directly leaks



information about the plaintext in the tag.

As general, cryptographic data should always be authenticated first. Only if authenticity can be verified, the encrypted data should be processed further. Following this rule, it turns out that only "encrypt-then-mac" is considered generically secure against chosen plaintext attacks. "Encrypt-and-mac" [33], used in **SSH**, is considered generically insecure. For "mac-then-encrypt", used in **Secure Sockets Layer (SSL)**, the same holds true, but this scheme can be used in a secure manner if **CBC** or a stream cipher like **CTR** mode is used for encryption.

## CCM

**Counter with CBC MAC (CCM)** [34] combines **CBC** for authentication with **CTR** for encryption for 128 bit blocks. **CCM** generates the **MAC** for the message first, appends this **MAC** to the cleartext data and afterwards encrypts data and **MAC** with counter mode, thus using a *MAC-then-Encrypt* scheme. While authenticated encryption modes using this scheme *may* be vulnerable to padding oracle attacks [35], **CTR** effectively avoids these attacks simply because there is no padding needed.

Two application dependent parameters which are part of the **CBC IV** can be chosen. The first parameter determines the length of the **MAC** field which allows to reduce overhead. The second parameter allows a trade-off between the maximum message size and the size of the nonce (i.e., the maximum number of messages which can be protected with the same key).

## 2.5 Public key cryptography

Public Key Cryptography solves the problem of establishing a secure channel by using an insecure one. Here sender and recipient use two different keys: one for encryption, called public key, the other for decryption, called private key. This key pair belongs together, hence this scheme is also called asymmetric encryption. A fundamental requirement is that it must be hard to derive the decryption key from the encryption key. This behavior is achieved by some kind of public known one-way function where it is computationally easy to calculate the result of  $f(x) = y$ , but only given  $y$ , it is computationally - in the domain of processing power and/or memory - hard to reverse this function to get  $x$ . The basic idea for such a one-way function was formulated for the first time in the year 1874 by William Stanley Jevons stating:

*"Can the reader say what two numbers multiplied together will produce the number 8616460799? I think it unlikely that anyone but myself will ever know."* [36]

Although his statement was not related to cryptography at all, and of course factoring

of much bigger numbers is doable nowadays, this statement exactly describes the spirit of public key systems. The security of RSA, introduced below, is directly connected to the inability to factor large numbers in reasonable time.

Because disclosure of the public key does not affect the security of the scheme, the public key can be published in some sort of dictionary. An entity wanting to send an encrypted message to a receiver can then look up the receiver's public key, encrypt the message and send the resulting ciphertext to the recipient, who then can decrypt the message.

It is remarkable that any algorithm establishing public keys must authenticate its participants, or it will be vulnerable to man-in-the-middle attacks.

## Merkle puzzles

In [37], Ralph C. Merkle developed an algorithm for key exchange between two parties. While the algorithm is based on symmetric ciphers and is not practicable, it motivates the usage of public key systems based on algebraic structures and is therefore introduced.

The basic idea is that the necessary work by the two legitimate parties when negotiating a key is bounded by  $O(n)$ , while an adversary must spend  $O(n^2)$  to also calculate the key, thus generating a quadratic gap. Merkle defines a puzzle as ciphertext that is supposed to be broken. This can be achieved by restricting the size of the symmetric key used such that an exhaustive search can be finished in feasible time. Every puzzle contains an id and a session key, both chosen randomly, as well as a static string, known to all participants.

The party initiating the key exchange, called  $X$ , generates  $n$  such puzzles and sends all of them to the receiver  $Y$ .  $Y$  picks one puzzle at random and decrypts it by trying all possible keys. Because of the static string inside the puzzle,  $Y$  knows for sure when the correct key has been tried.  $Y$  then extracts the session key and sends the corresponding id back to  $X$ . Subsequently, both parties can use the session key referenced by the id for encryption. An eavesdropper  $Z$ , monitoring all puzzles, cannot directly determine which of them is containing the returned id and therefore does not know the session key the two parties agreed on - the only possibility for  $Z$  is to attack **all** puzzles, squaring the effort spent by  $X$  and  $Y$ .

If, for example, one puzzle can be broken by  $2^{32}$  computations, and  $2^{32}$  different puzzles are used,  $X$  must prepare, save and send  $2^{32}$  puzzles to  $Y$ , who in turn must try  $2^{32}$  different keys.  $Z$  must crack all  $2^{32}$  puzzles, each with effort  $2^{32}$ , thus resulting in  $2^{64}$  processing steps.

While this algorithm is very wasteful in regards of processing power, memory and communication capacity, such a protocol would be useful if a more-than-quadratic blowup

could be achieved. Unfortunately, for all algorithms based on symmetric ciphers, a quadratic gap is the best that can be achieved, as shown in [38].

To further increase the effort an attacker has to spend a different approach has to be found. It turns out that hard mathematical problems exist that are suitable for such a purpose.

Therefore, in the next sections three important public key algorithms are introduced: **D-H** key exchange, based on prime fields, **Elliptic Curve Cryptography (ECC)**, and **RSA**.

## **D-H** key exchange

Whitfield Diffie and Martin Hellman proposed a way to solve the problem for key-exchange based on finite fields in the year 1976 [39]. The algorithm enables two entities to agree on a shared secret which never has to be transmitted between them. The security of their original algorithm is based on the hardness of the **DLP**, as shown in 2.2.

With the original **D-H** algorithm, 2 entities -  $A$  and  $B$  - use exponentiation over finite fields to agree on a shared secret, which then can be used to parametrize a block or stream cipher. The first step for both entities is to agree on the set of parameters  $\{p, g\}$ , where  $p$  is a large prime and  $g$  is a generator of the cyclic group  $Z_p^*$ . These parameters are not secret and can thus be sent over an unsecured channel. Additionally, each entity randomly chooses an integer  $x$  from the interval  $(1, p - 2]$ , and calculates the value  $y = g^x \pmod{p}$ .  $x$  is the private key,  $y$ , which is computationally easy to calculate, is the public key.  $A$  sends its public key  $y_A \equiv g^{x_A} \pmod{p}$  to  $B$ , and  $B$  its public key  $y_B \equiv g^{x_B} \pmod{p}$  to  $A$ . Due to the characteristics of exponentiation,  $A$  and  $B$  can now easily derive the shared secret by using its counterpart's public key and raising it to the power of its own private key in the domain of  $Z_p^*$ :

$$\begin{aligned} k_B &\equiv y_A^{x_B} \equiv (g^{x_A})^{x_B} \equiv g^{x_A * x_B} \pmod{p} \\ &= \\ k_A &\equiv y_B^{x_A} \equiv g^{(x_B) * x_A} \equiv g^{x_B * x_A} \pmod{p} \end{aligned}$$

An eavesdropper that intercepts the initially sent parameter set  $\{p, g\}$  and the public keys  $y_A$  and  $y_B$  and that wants to calculate the shared secret  $k_A = k_B$  must therefore calculate the discrete logarithm of  $y_A$  or  $y_B$  to the base  $p$ , i.e., must solve the **DLP**, a hard problem as shown in Section 2.2.

## **ECC**

The **D-H** protocol can be based on different kinds of cyclic groups. Koblitz and Miller independently proposed the usage of cyclic groups based on **ECs** [40] [41]. See Section

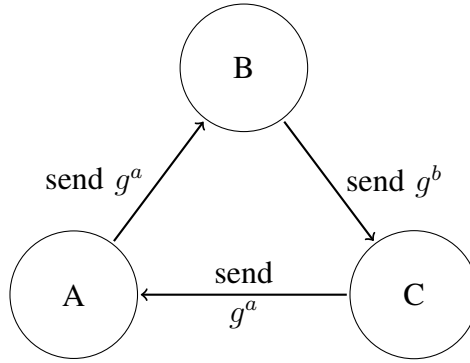


Figure 2.21: **D-H** Round 1

**2.2** for the theoretical introduction. These cyclic groups are receiving increased importance in cryptography because they allow the usage of shorter keys compared to **D-H** over prime fields or RSA, while providing the same level of secrecy.

To build a public key system, two users  $A$  and  $B$  initially agree on a set of public domain parameters. The most important parameters are [42]

- the order of the field,  $q$
- the coefficients  $a, b \in \mathcal{F}_p$ , defining the **EC**
- the coordinates  $(x_p, y_p \in \mathcal{F}_p)$  of the base point  $P$ ,
- the order of  $P$ , denoted  $n$

After agreeing on this set,  $A$  selects a randomly chosen integer  $k_A$ , calculates  $P_A = k_A * P$  and sends this point to  $B$ , who in turn randomly chooses  $k_B$  and sends  $P_B = k_B * P$  to  $A$ . Subsequently, both can calculate the point  $k_A * k_B * P$ , which can be used to derive a key.

## Multi-party key negotiation

**D-H** and therefore also the **ECDLP** can be generalized to  $n$  parties, obtaining one key in common. The key negotiation procedure for three parties, using classical **D-H**, is shown in Figures 2.21 and 2.22, where it is assumed that all three parties  $A$ ,  $B$  and  $C$  already agreed upon  $(p, g)$ . After finishing the second communication round, every party raises the last received value to its own private key and thus derives the shared secret.

$$((g^b)^c)^a = ((g^c)^a)^b = ((g^a)^b)^c = g^{a*b*c} \quad (2.8)$$

For  $n$  parties,  $(n - 1)$  communication rounds are used. Obviously, this algorithm may not be practicable for a large  $n$ . Additionally, a complete new run must be executed

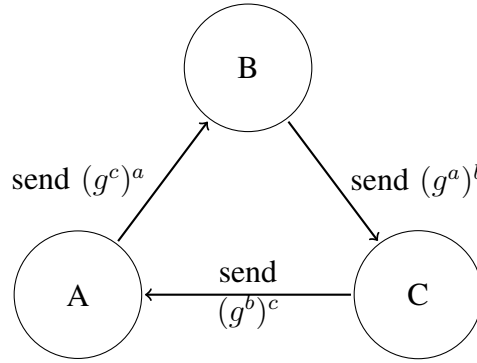


Figure 2.22: **D-H** Round 2

whenever a new node joins.

Additionally, this key agreement mechanism (as well as all others presented so far) uses no authentication and is therefore vulnerable to active attacks.

## RSA

RSA, published in 1977 by Ron Rivest, Adi Shamir, and Leonard Adleman [43] and formalized in [44], relies on the hardness of finding the prime factors of a big composite number. In contrast to **D-H**, RSA is not a key agreement algorithm but can instead be used to encrypt *and* sign messages.

For key generation, two large primes  $p, q$ , which should be of about same size, are chosen randomly, with  $N = pq$ . Additionally, a public exponent  $e$  and a private exponent  $d$  are chosen such that they are multiplicative inverses to each other in  $(\text{mod } \varphi(N))$ :

$$e * d \equiv 1 \pmod{\varphi(N)} \quad (2.9)$$

$\varphi(N)$ , Euler's totient function, counts the number of integers in the interval  $[1, N]$  which are relatively prime to  $N$ . For a prime  $p$ ,  $\varphi(p) = (p - 1)$ , therefore for the product  $p * q$  of two different primes,  $\varphi(p * q) = (p - 1) * (q - 1)$ . Additionally, Euler's theorem is used:

$$a^{\varphi(N)} \equiv 1 \pmod{N} \quad (2.10)$$

The public key consists of the pair  $(N, e)$  and the private key of the pair  $(N, d)$ . In practice, for the public exponent  $e$  the numbers 3, 5, 17, 257 or 65537 are suggested [45], a suitable  $d$  satisfying Equation 2.9 can then be found by using the extended Euclidean algorithm.

## Encryption and decryption of messages

To encrypt, the message  $M$  must be converted to an integer. Then, the sender uses the recipients public key and raises  $M$  to the power of  $e \pmod{N}$ :

$$C \equiv M^e \pmod{N}$$

To decrypt, the receiver uses his own private key to raise  $C$  to the power of  $d \pmod{N}$ :

$$M' \equiv C^d \equiv M^{d \cdot e} \pmod{N} \quad (2.11)$$

From the way  $e$  and  $d$  have been chosen in Equation 2.9 it follows that

$$e * d = k * \varphi(N) + 1, k \in \mathbb{Z} \quad (2.12)$$

Inserting Equation 2.12 in Equation 2.11 yields

$$M' \equiv M^{k \cdot \varphi(N) + 1} \equiv M * M^{k \cdot \varphi(N)} \pmod{N} \quad (2.13)$$

By using Euler's Theorem 2.10, Equation 2.13 shows that  $M = M'$ , i.e., decryption yields the correct value because

$$M' \equiv M * M^{k \cdot \varphi(N)} \equiv M * (M^{\varphi(N)})^k \equiv M * 1^k \equiv M \pmod{N}.$$

## Digital signatures

Digital signatures are, as its symmetric-key **MAC** counterparts, used to provide integrity. Most digital signature schemes are based on cryptographically secure hash functions, so the same requirements as listed in Section 2.3 must also hold here.

Nevertheless, due to the use of asymmetric keys, an important semantic difference between **MACs** and digital signatures emerges: for a **MAC** a key is shared by at least 2 entities. A digital signature, in contrast, is generated by utilizing the private key of an entity, which is not thought to be shared with other entities. Therefore, digital signatures can also provide non-repudiation. This property allows to convince an unbiased "judge" that a message, signed by the sender, was indeed sent by this sender, i.e., the message was not forged by a third party. This is an important difference to **MACs**, where such an assessment is not possible.

### Signatures based on RSA

By 'reversing' the encryption process, the RSA algorithm can also be used to generate signatures of a message. This is typically achieved by generating a hash value of the message and *encrypting* that hash with the *private* key. The signature is then attached to the message. Afterwards, every entity can verify the integrity by *decrypting* the signature with the *public* key of the sender, calculating of the hash of the message and comparing it to the decrypted hash.

## Elliptic Curve Digital Signature Algorithm (ECDSA)

Based on the idea of Scott Vanstone, this signature algorithm is the **ECC** variant of the **Digital Signature Algorithm (DSA)**, standardized by **NIST** [46]. Analog to the **ECDLP**, as shown in Section 2.2, the domain parameters are public knowledge. The signer of the message chooses a random integer  $k$  and obtains the coordinates  $(x_Q, y_Q)$  of the new point  $Q$  by multiplying the base point  $P$  with  $k$ . Afterwards,  $x_Q$  is converted to an integer, obtaining  $r = x'_Q \pmod{n}$ . Finally, by using his private key  $d$ ,  $s$  is calculated:

$$s \equiv k^{-1}(h(m) + dr) \pmod{n} \quad (2.14)$$

This results in the tuple  $(r, s)$ , i.e., the signature of  $m$ , where  $h(m)$  denotes a cryptographically secure hash function.

The receiver of the message can use the domain parameters and signature to verify the integrity by calculating:

$$\begin{aligned} x' &\equiv s^{-1}(h(m)P + rQ) \pmod{n} \\ x' &\equiv s^{-1}(h(m)P + rkP) \pmod{n} \\ x' &\equiv P \underbrace{(s^{-1}(h(m) + rk))}_{k'} \pmod{n} \end{aligned}$$

$x'$  is converted to an integer and reduced  $\pmod{n}$  to obtain  $r'$ . If  $r = r'$ , the signature is accepted, proving the authenticity of the message.

## 2.6 Summary

It showed that when designing a cryptographic extension, both integrity **and** confidentiality must be honored. Additionally, the findings suggest that such an extension will most likely exist of a mixture of symmetric and asymmetric schemes. To keep key size small without harming security, **ECC** qualifies itself for key negotiation. Using **CTR** mode of operation is a way to avoid unnecessary overhead, while **AES** serving as block cipher is likely the best choice.

# CHAPTER 3

## Availability

### 3.1 Introduction

Availability measures the delivery of correct service as a fraction of the time that the system is ready to provide a service.

The services provided by the system through its service interface to the user(s) is described by the functional specification. Whenever the provided service deviates from correct service a system failure, called outage or downtime<sup>1</sup> occurs. A failure is defined to be caused originally by a fault inside the system, which may be dormant. Under special conditions, the fault may become apparent and lead to an error. Faults can be categorized into random and systematic faults. Random faults are unpredictable and concern hardware: for example, because of aging a memory cell can be damaged, but the fault may be hidden because the cell is not used. Software and design faults belong to systematic faults. Similar to a damaged memory cell, a software bug may only trigger an error under special inputs. In both cases, the error then causes a deviation from the required operation of the system or a subsystem. Finally, the error can cause a failure if the system fails to provide the correct service:

$$fault \rightarrow error \rightarrow failure$$

Availability is measured subjectively from the system user's point of view. While an optimal system may have availability of 1, this value is only of theoretical value because random faults can not be ruled out. Therefore, system failures are inevitable, and availability is often given in  $x$ -9s<sup>2</sup> notation, denoting the number of nines in the time

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<sup>1</sup>in contrast, uptime does not guarantee correct service - for example, a server can be 'up' but unreachable

<sup>2</sup>read 'one-nine', 'two-nines', ...



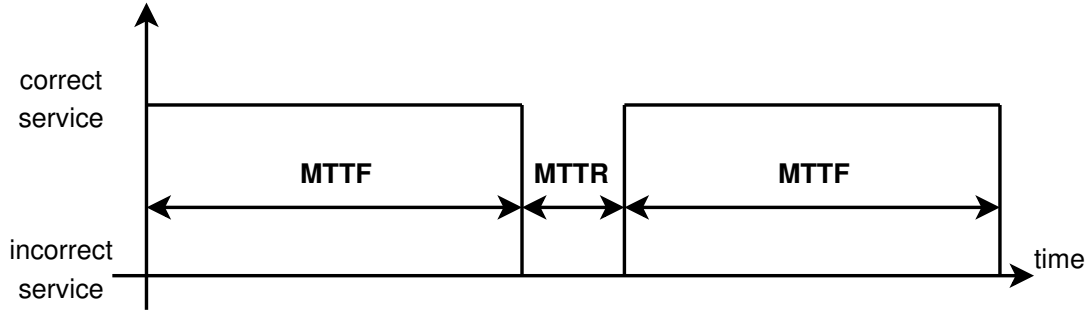


Figure 3.1: Relationship between MTTF and MTTR

x	$P_{availability}$	failure duration per year
1	90,0000	36 days
2	99,0000	3,5 days
3	99,9000	9 hours
4	99,9900	1 hour
5	99,9990	5 minutes
6	99,9999	31 seconds

Table 3.1: Availability in x-9 notation

fraction the system delivers correct service, as shown in Table 3.1. The availability may be asserted by the provider of the system to the customer by a **Service Level Agreement (SLA)** - if the **SLA** is violated, the provider may be fined.

For a system with 6-9 availability, this would mean that the system provider assures that the system will be unavailable not more than about 31 seconds over a whole year.

Availability is important simply because unavailable systems are costly. Because of the relation of availability to reliability and the maintainability of the system, as shown in Equation 3.1 and Figure 3.1, two options to improve availability exist: either increasing the **Mean Time To Failure (MTTF)** (i.e., increasing reliability) or decreasing **Mean Time To Repair (MTTR)**.

$$P_{Availability} = \frac{t_{correct\ service}}{t_{total}} = \frac{MTTF}{MTTF + MTTR} \quad (3.1)$$

Reliability measures the probability that the service will work as expected until time  $t$ :

$$R(t) = e^{-\lambda(t-t_0)} \quad (3.2)$$

Equation 3.2 is known as the exponential failure law,  $\lambda$  denotes the failures per hour, its inverse  $\frac{1}{\lambda}$  is called **MTTF**. Reliability can also be expressed in terms of *unreliability*,

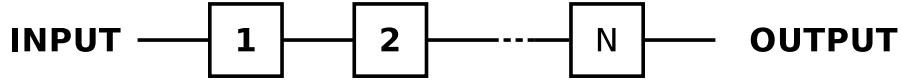


Figure 3.2: Model of a series system

denoted  $Q(t)$ :

$$Q(t) = 1 - R(t) \quad (3.3)$$

Maintainability measures the time that is needed to repair a system, with  $\mu$  denoting the repair rate and  $\frac{1}{\mu}$  called **MTTR**.

Every system will most likely consist of different and distinct components, each with its own reliability and failure rates. The final system will possess an overall reliability, determining its availability. To model the resulting system, the components will be put together in a mixture of serial and parallel systems. For example, if all  $i$  components, ranging from 1 to  $N$ , are necessary to work correctly for the overall system to deliver correct service, this can be modeled as a series system, see Figure 3.2. This does not mean that the components are necessarily connected in a serial way, it just stresses that failure of one single components breaks the whole system. System's reliability then equals the product of all component's reliabilities:

$$R_{system}(t) = \prod_{i=1}^N R_i(t) \quad (3.4)$$

In contrast, a system containing redundant components, failure of one such component must not produce an outage of the overall system. This can be modeled as a parallel system (as shown in Figure 3.3). Here, the overall reliability can be calculated as given in Equation 3.5.

$$R(t)_{system} = 1 - \prod_{i=1}^N (1 - R_i(t)) = 1 - \prod_{i=1}^N Q_i(t) \quad (3.5)$$

Mixed systems, containing parallel and series system, can be calculated by iteratively condensing serial subsystems or parallel subsystems into single components, as shown in Figure 3.4.

**High Availability (HA)** characterizes a system that is designed in a way to avoid outages, or in case of a failure that can be repaired in shortest possible time. The level of the needed availability depends on the environment of the system and must be weighted

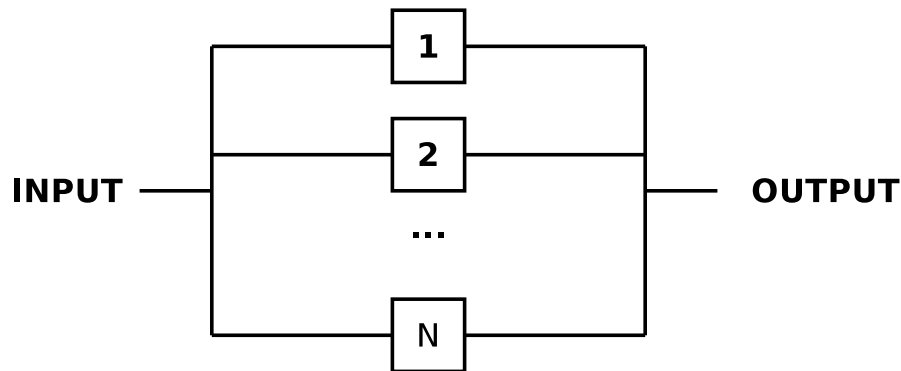


Figure 3.3: Model of a parallel system

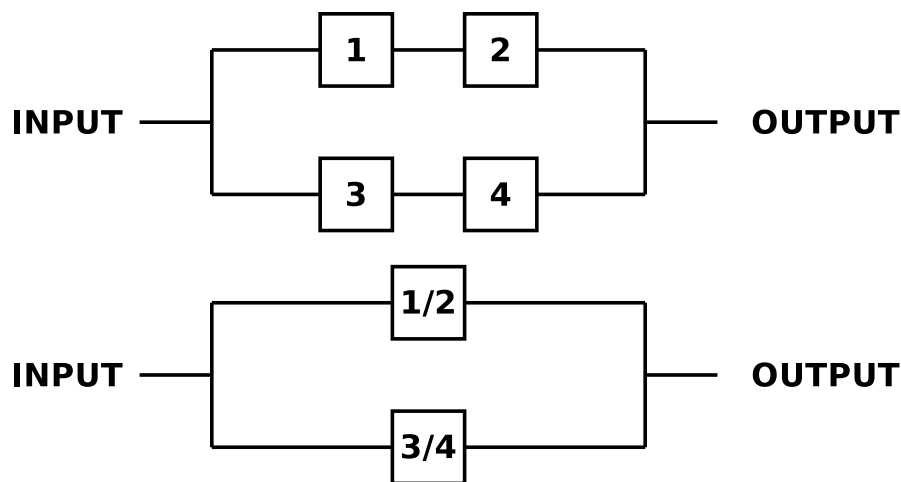


Figure 3.4: Condensing a mixed system

against the additional costs, introduced by improving availability. Therefore, no hard definition for HA can be given - it is a design goal and depends on the context. Availability requirements will most certainly be higher for systems in safety-critical requirements. A safety-critical system must not fail, otherwise endangering human lives or causing substantial economic loss or environmental damage [47]. On the other side, systems that will produce only minor costs when not operating correctly will probably have to meet less stringent availability levels.

For example, our society heavily depends on electric power supply, an outage is nearly unacceptable. On the other side, it is impossible to guarantee 100% availability, so if a power outage occurs, the system must be fixed as soon as possible to restore correct service, otherwise risking human lives. On the contrary, a booking system will obviously result in financial losses for the company if not working, but no more serious conse-

quences are to be assumed.

This work's focus lies on security-critical systems, increasing availability of KNX networks, but restricting its deployment to environments without safety-critical needs. Thus, safety criticality is neglected here because of its most stringent demands, as needed in avionics or weapons systems. The difference between safety-critical and security-critical systems can be given as follows [48]: safety means that software must not harm the world (i.e., containment), while security means that the world must not harm software (i.e., protection).

## 3.2 Failure avoidance

Different strategies exist to handle faults, thus trying to avoid that a fault propagates through the system and finally leads to a system failure. These strategies are introduced in the next section.

### Fault Removal

Fault removal tries to identify faults by testing the system before its deployment. Therefore, the system is exposed to test cases, which ideally would cover all possible internal states. Whenever a failure occurs, the erroneous state is identified, the underlying fault is removed and a new testing cycle begins. A problem about this approach is the huge test space that for even simple systems would be required to iterate through. Therefore, the method suffers from the very fundamental dilemma that testing never can prove that a system is fault free.

### Fault avoidance

Fault avoidance aims at producing a system which is fault-free per design and is applied at the design stage of the system. Despite the methods for achieving fault avoidance can be applied in the domain of software and hardware, they can not guard against transient hardware faults occurring after the system is deployed.

Fault avoidance is based on two distinct processing steps: validation and verification. Validation is used to show that the specification, which is the basis of system implementation, matches the real world within reasonable borders. This is necessary because every human built system uses an abstraction of the real world, thus simplifying the model.

In contrast, verification assures that the system indeed matches the specification. In other words, validation tries to answer if the correct system was built, while verification is concerned about to build the system correctly.

Formal methods can be utilized for verification if the system model is available in a formal language. The formal properties of the specification can then be checked automatically against a finite-state model of the system, a method called model checking. While automatic validation can prove that the resulting system is correct in regard to the specification, a big problem here is to obtain the formal properties out of an informal specification.

Obviously, both fault removal as well as fault avoidance cannot handle deliberately introduced faults, caused by an active adversary. Additionally, they cannot deal with hardware errors - therefore it is argued that fault tolerance is the only practical way to guarantee availability in a hostile environment (i.e., an environment where active attackers are assumed to exist and therefore **DOS** attacks cannot be ruled out), as well as to protect against random hardware errors.

Consequently, the proposed solution will be based on fault tolerance to achieve **HA**, which will be examined more detailed.

## **Fault tolerance**

Fault tolerance tries to ensure correct service despite the occurrence of faults and is achieved through error detection and subsequent system recovery. To enable error detection, redundancy is added to a system and thereby the system's complexity is increased. This can be achieved both in the domain of hardware and software.

The basis of the design of fault tolerant systems is the definition of a fault hypothesis, stating which faults must be tolerable by the system, thus dividing the fault state into normal faults and rare faults (i.e., faults not covered by the fault hypothesis). Normal faults can be corrected by the fault-tolerance mechanism.

### **Fail-silent fault tolerance**

Fault tolerance can be achieved based on fail-silent components. A fail-silent component either works correctly, i.e., outputs correct values, or does not output any values at all [49]. By duplicating such a module and comparing the outputs, fault tolerance can be achieved by cutting off the faulty module from the system.

This method is used for example for **Redundant Array of Independent Disks (RAID)** based data storage<sup>3</sup>. For **RAID** level 1, all data to be stored is duplicated to two independent disks. In case a hardware failure of one drive is detected, the data can be accessed from the second drive. This method does obviously not work if both drives

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<sup>3</sup>Although the logic distributing the data chunks to different devices can be built in hardware or in software, i.e., the operating system, **RAID** always relies on redundant disks

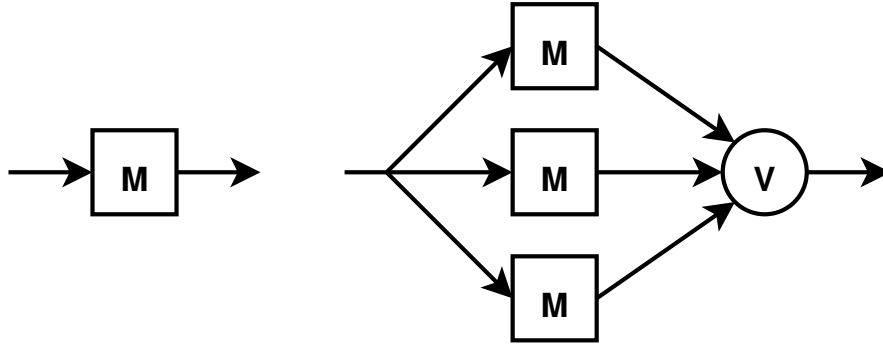


Figure 3.5: Non-redundant operation vs. **TMR**

seem operable, but one drive outputs bogus data, i.e., it is not acting fail-silent. To handle this situation, higher redundancy levels are needed, as implemented for example in **Triple Modular Redundancy (TMR)**.

### **TMR**

A **TMR** system, see Figure 3.5, is composed out of 3 modules or black boxes, all performing the same task, and one majority organ  $V$ , as proposed by John von Neumann [50]. The latter element is also called voter because out of its 3 inputs, it chooses the 'correct' output based on majority voting. As long as at least 2 black boxes do not fail, the system can provide correct service. If it is assumed that the voting element has perfect reliability = 1 and all black boxes  $M$  are independent from each other and have reliability  $R_M$ , the overall, time-invariant system's reliability is given in Equation 3.6 [51] and plotted in Figure 3.6

$$R_{system} = R_M^3 + 3R_M^2(1 - R_M) = 3R_M^2 - 2R_M^3 \quad (3.6)$$

It can be seen that if  $R_M \leq 0.5$ , overall reliability even gets worse, while for components reliabilities nearly being unit, very high system reliability can be achieved.

The concept of **TMR** can be generalized to  $n$  devices performing the same operation. In most cases  $n$  will be odd, so failure of up to  $\frac{n-1}{2}$  modules can be tolerated.

## **3.3 Fault tolerant technologies**

In the next sections, communication protocols based on Ethernet, satisfying the needs of industrial communication networks, are examined. Beside the need for high availability, industrial production lines are sensitive against network disruptions. While, depending

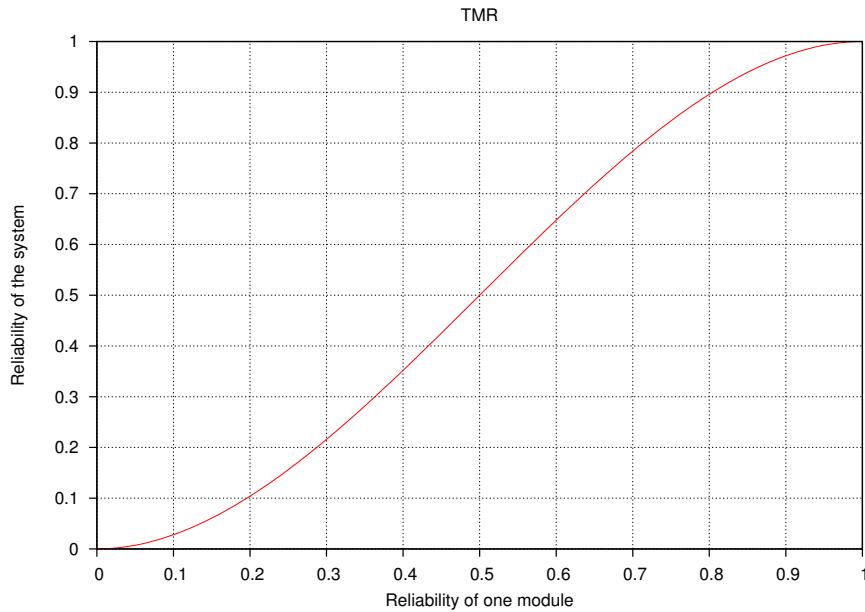


Figure 3.6: Reliability of resulting system

on the application domain short interruptions in the range of milliseconds to seconds may be tolerable, longer outages will force emergency stops or even cause damage.

## Network redundancy

Communication networks can be modeled as graphs. A graph, as shown in Figure 3.7, is an ordered pair  $G = (V, E)$ , with  $V$  being the set of vertices and  $E$  the set of edges, connecting the vertices. For a weighted graph, every edge is associated to a cost.

A closed walk or cycle exists if a path from one vertex to itself exists, resulting in multiple paths from one node to others. Such a network possesses intrinsic redundancy, a fact that can be exploited to gain fault tolerant systems.

If the graph is undirected, every line determines a bidirectional communication link.

A spanning tree of graph  $G$  is a subgraph  $T$ , possessing all vertices  $V$  but only a subset of the edges  $E' \subseteq E$  such that all vertices are reachable, but no loops exists. In the case of a weighted graph, the weight of the spanning tree is the sum of all existing edges.

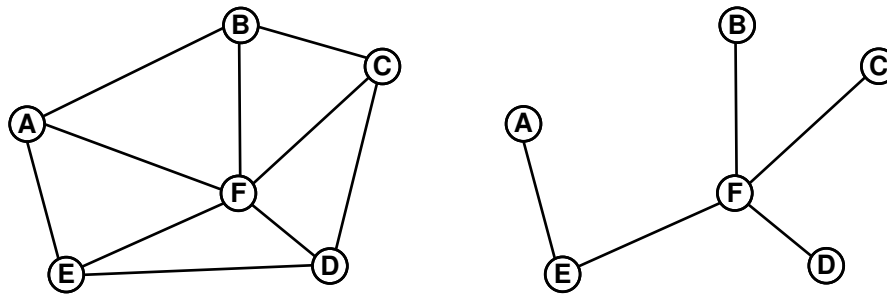


Figure 3.7: Undirected graph, spanning tree of the graph

### Spanning Tree Protocol (STP)

The widely used **Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE)** 802.3 Ethernet standard was not designed with high availability in mind. Nevertheless, it already provided basic fault tolerance mechanisms based on the **IEEE 802.1D STP**.

In typical Ethernet installations, depending on the network topology different nodes may be reachable through different paths, i.e., physical loops may exist. Switches, operating at **Open System Interconnection Model (OSI)** layer 2, are responsible for loop detection and loop prevention. They must logically disconnect such loops by blocking the corresponding ports to protect the network, as required by the Ethernet specification, because multicast or broadcast traffic, generated by one of the connected devices, will be forwarded by all switches on all ports (except the incoming ports). This would flood the network until no regular communication will be possible any more.



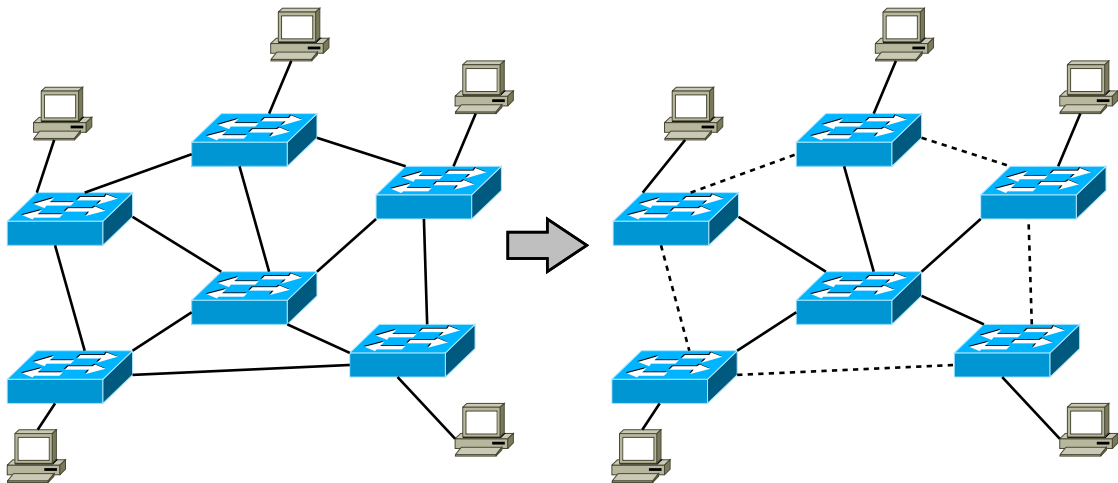


Figure 3.8: Protecting Ethernet segments from loops with **STP**

This situation is shown in Figure 3.8: on the left side, the physical connections are shown, containing loops. **STP** removes the loops by setting certain interfaces to blocking mode, connected by dotted lines, as shown on the right side of Figure 3.8.

The algorithm works as follows:

- The first step of the **STP** algorithm is to nominate one device as root bridge<sup>4</sup>. This can be done manually by the network administrator, or dynamically through the exchange of packets containing a priority. All switches will agree on lowest priority device as root bridge, additionally using the unique hardware **Medium Access (MAC)** address if collisions occur. The root bridge sets all interfaces to forwarding mode.
- Afterwards, every switch determines the path with minimal costs for reaching the root bridge. The cost of every connection can be determined by the link speed or configured by the network administrator manually.
- Finally, all devices except the root bridge set the ports belonging to the minimal-cost path to forward mode. All other ports are set to blocking mode, thus removing any loops.

If a connection is lost and an Ethernet segment is not reachable any more, the **STP**, although not primarily designed for that tasks, can be used to handle that fault. Nodes affected by the link-change report that event to the root bridge, so that the network can

<sup>4</sup>The terms switch and bridge are used synonymously, with the major difference that switches can break network segments into multiple subsegments through **Virtual Local Area Networks (VLANs)**

be re-configured and a different path can be established, thus re-connecting the unreachable segment and providing fault tolerance.

A big drawback of this mechanism is the topology-dependent time needed for network re-organization. While in simulations delays of millisecond magnitude can be achieved [52], in practice link recovery can take up to one minute which is not acceptable for many industrial environments. An improvement was achieved with IEEE 802.1w **Rapid Spanning Tree Protocol (RSTP)** and a variety of different proprietary protocols, not compatible to each other, but still no sufficient recovery times were achieved [53].

## **IEC 62439**

As it turned out that the mechanisms based on **STP** and its variations were not sufficient for many applications, the family of IEC 62439 standards was defined. IEC 62439 introduces a set of Ethernet extensions, assuring high availability and enabling its deployment in industrial applications. Three extensions are introduced below.

### **Media Redundancy Protocol (MRP)**

After IEC 62439-1 specifying basic definitions, the second draft introduced **MRP** which confines network outages to less than 500ms [54]. This is achieved by restricting the valid topologies to ring-only, so all switches are connected to the network by 2 interfaces. All switches, beside the ring manager, forward all traffic received, while the ring manager opens the loop logically by setting one of its interfaces to blocking mode. In this mode, all packages except management messages are discarded. The ring manager detects a failure by periodically sending test management messages in both directions. Additionally every node is able to detect a link failure on its local ports. It then sets the port to blocking and signals this link failure to the ring manager which opens its second port by setting it to forward mode and therefore reconnects the unreachable segment. **MRP** does not rule out package loss in case of a failure, therefore it can be seen as improved **RSTP** for ring topologies.

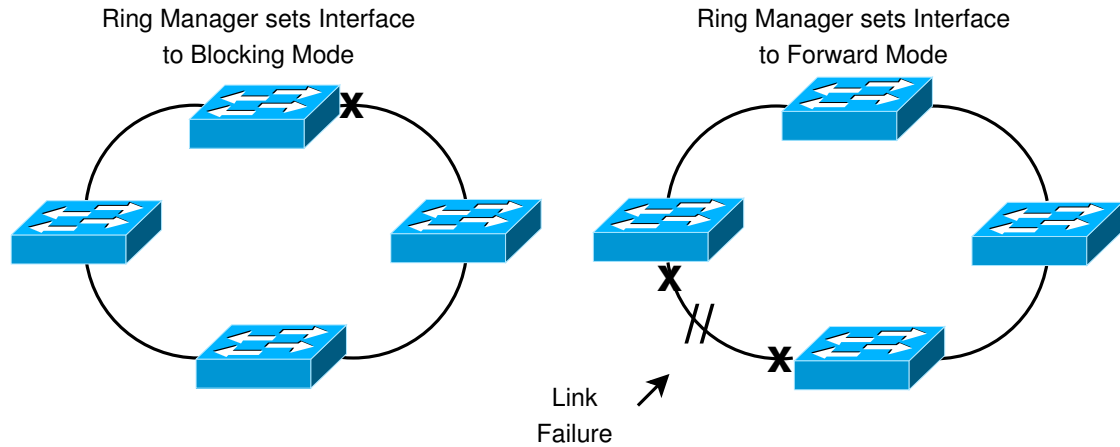


Figure 3.9: MRP fault tolerance

### Parallel Redundancy Protocol (PRP)

In 2010, IEC 62439-3 defined a first version of **PRP** and **High Availability Seamless Redundancy (HSR)**, both suitable for hard real-time systems <sup>5</sup> [55].

In 2012, IEC 62439-3 was revised, defining new versions of **PRP** and **HSR**. The basic ideas behind both protocols remained unchanged, so the latest versions are described below.

**PRP** can tolerate a link fault without packet loss by utilizing two redundant and independent **Local Area Networks (LANs)**. Nodes needing high availability, called **Doubly Attached Node with PRP (DANP)**, are connected to both networks by two interfaces, sharing the same **MAC** and **IP** addresses. Additionally, standard Ethernet devices called **Single Attached Node (SAN)** can be connected to only one network, enabling communication with devices on the same **LAN** only. An example of such a network is shown in Figure 3.10.

To support redundant connections for **DANPs**, a sub-layer on **OSI-layer 2** (i.e., the link layer), called **Link Redundancy Entity (LRE)** is defined. Upper level data arriving at the **LRE** of a **DANP** is duplicated and equipped with 6 bytes of control information, containing a 2 byte sequence number, **LAN** number, length information and a static suffix identifying the **Link Service Data Unit (LSDU)** as **PRP** traffic. The sequence number is used for duplicate detection: every node uses one global counter  $Ctr_{global}$  for outgoing messages, not discriminating the receiver. For every packet sent, the sequence number is incremented. Additionally, every node maintains distinct counter values  $Ctr_{source}$  for every unicast source-address it receives messages from, as well as for multicast and

<sup>5</sup>hard real-time characterizes a system where missing of a dead line may result in a catastrophic event

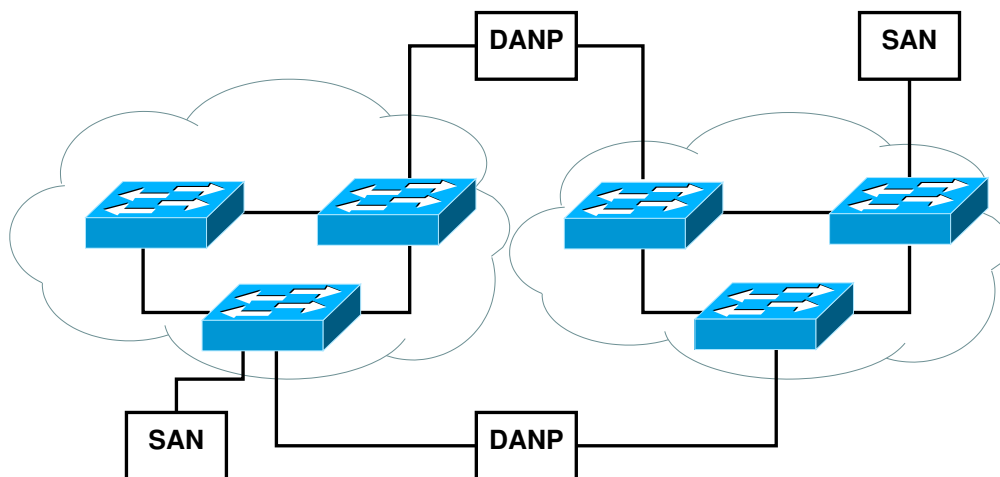


Figure 3.10: **PRP** network

broadcast messages.

On the receiving side the **PRP** traffic is detected because of the suffix, duplicates can be discarded by utilizing the sequence number [56]. The standard does not dictate how this must be achieved, it only demands that legitimate packages must not be discarded. Because of the short global outgoing sequence number, duplicates may not be detected as such - responsibility for final detection is delegated to upper layers.

### **HSR**

**HSR** is based on ring-topology, but it also allows to connect **HSR** and **PRP** networks, different **HSR** rings or even to build a ring of rings. Every node is connected to the network by two interfaces, duplicating data from upper layers and sending one copy in clockwise, the other copy in counter-clockwise direction, thus eliminating the need for duplicated networks but wasting about half of the available bandwidth [57].

## **3.4 Summary**

To increase availability, the **MTTF** has to be minimized by handling faults. When investigating different techniques to handle them, it turned out that the only possibility to handle malicious as well randomly happening transient faults is by applying redundancy. Because the **KNX** specification forbids ring topologies, using intrinsic network redundancy is not possible. Therefore, similar to **PRP**, some kind of redundancy must be artificially introduced to be able to improve availability.

# CHAPTER 4

## KNX

### 4.1 Introduction

**KNX**<sup>1</sup> implements a specialized form of automated process control, dedicated to the needs of **HBAS**. **KNX** emerged from three leading standards namely the **European Installation Bus (EIB)**, the **European Home Systems Protocol (EHS)** and BatiBUS. It is an open, platform independent standard, developed by the KNX Association implementing the EN50090 standard for home and building electronic systems.

To provide platform independence, the standard uses a layered structure, based on the **International Organization for Standardization (ISO) / OSI**. Different kinds of physical backends are supported, allowing its use in different environments.

**EIB** already supported interoperability between products from different manufacturers. This was achieved by the definition of the **EIB interworking standard (EIS)**, which standardizes the data transported inside the datagrams. **KNX** continued these efforts with the introduction of common **Data Point Types (DPTs)**, distinguishable through unique IDs, thus standardizing their encoding, format, range and unit. Every **DPT** groups related **Data Points (DPs)**, the actual control variables of the network together.

For example, every **KNX** certified manufacturer producing a switching actuator must use the defined dataformat - an end-user can therefore exchange such an actuator without caring about compatibility issues. For configuration and parametrization of the devices, a Windows based software suite called **Engineering Tool Software (ETS)** is used, which also offers a bus monitor for debugging.

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<sup>1</sup>connexio, latin for connection

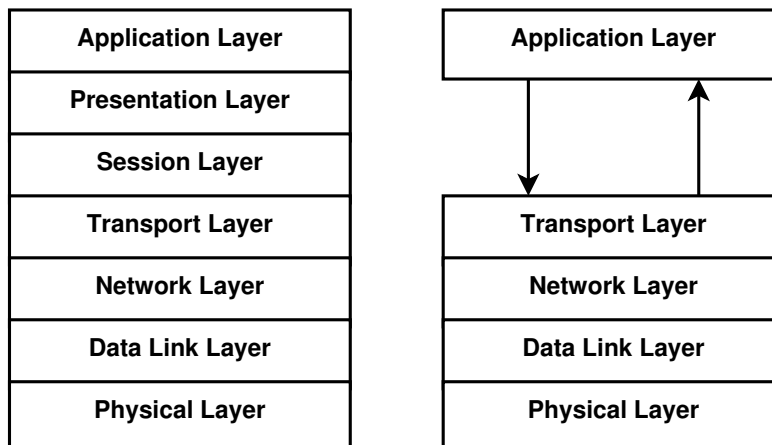


Figure 4.1: OSI Layer Model, compared to the **KNX** Model

## 4.2 **KNX** layers

The **OSI** standardizes the communication between different, independent systems by grouping the needed functions into 7 sublayers to provide interchangeability and abstraction. Every layer provides services to its next-higher layer, and uses the services provided by its next-lower layer. Every service is defined by standardized interfaces - that way any layer can be modified internally without compromising the function of the system, as long as the defined interfaces are implemented. This fragmentation of one service follows the paradigm of *divide et impera*<sup>2</sup> and facilitates the building of complex systems by dividing one complex problem into subsequent, less-complex problems.

**KNX** implements this model, omitting layers 5 and 6, as shown in Figure 4.1. Data from applications are directly passed to the transport layer in a transparent way, and vice versa.

### Physical layer

This is the lowest layer as defined by **OSI** and determines the basic transmission parameters like symbol rate, signal form but also mechanical characteristics like which connectors are used.

To provide flexibility in **KNX**, four different physical media are defined. **TP-1** which was inherited from **EIB**, and is the successor of **TP-0**, as defined by BatiBUS, is the basis medium, consisting of a twisted pair cabling. Data and power can be transmitted with one pair, so low-power devices can be fed over the bus. Data transfer is done asyn-

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<sup>2</sup>latin for: divide and rule

chronously, with bidirectional, half-duplex communication and a data rate of 9600 **bits per second (bps)**. **TP-1** uses collision avoidance, and allows all topologies beside rings. Because this work is based on the **TP1** - part of **KNX** only, this medium will be explained in more detail in the next section.

PL110, which was also inherited from **EIB**, uses power line installations for communications. The carrier uses spread frequency shift keying, and can be used for bidirectional, half duplex communication with an even lower data rate of 1200 bit/sec. **KNX Radio Frequency (RF)** is used for short range wireless communication at 868,3 MHz. **KNXnet/IP** allows the integration of **KNX** into networks using **IP** for communication. Here, three different communication modes are defined: tunneling mode is used for configuration and monitoring a client device by a **KNXnet/IP** server. Routing mode is used for connecting **KNX** lines over **IP**, while **KNX IP** is used for direct communication between **KNX** devices. [58]

## TP-1

The accurate name for this medium is 'Physical Layer type Twisted Pair', with variants PhL **TP-1-64** and PhL **TP-1-256**, which are backward compatible to the former one. While the first one allows the connection of up to 64 devices, the latter one allows up to 256 devices connected in a linear, star, tree or mixed topology as one physical segment, also called a line.

Bridges do not possess their own address and are used for galvanic separation of physical segments and for extension of TP-1-64 segments to allow up to 256 devices. Therefore, they acknowledge layer 2 frames received on one side and forward them to their second interface.

Routers have their own address space and only forward packages received on one side if the destination address is located on the other side of the router. As well as bridges, they can be used for galvanic separation and they acknowledge frames on layer 2. A **Line Coupler (LC)** is a router that integrates up to 16 lines into one logical object called area. A **Backbone Coupler (BbC)** is a router that connects up to 16 areas to one network, thus providing the maximum size of a network consisting of 65536 devices:

- up to 256 devices per line
- up to 16 lines per area = 4096 devices in 16 lines
- up to 16 areas for whole network = 65536<sup>3</sup> devices in 16 areas

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<sup>3</sup>It is to be noted that the actual number of usable devices is smaller because routers have their own address

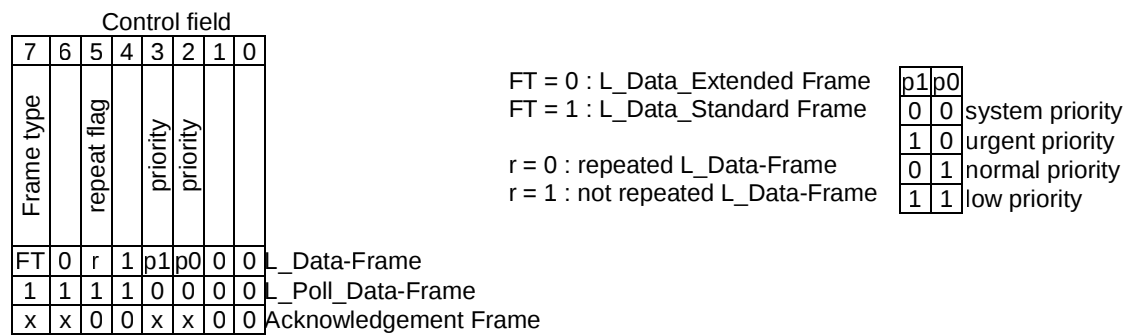


Figure 4.2: Control Field

Gateways are used to connect **KNX** networks to non-**KNX** networks.

A logical '1' is regarded as the idle state of the bus, so the transmitter of the **Medium Access Unit (MAU)** is disabled when sending a '1', i.e., the analog signal on the bus consists only of the DC part. **TP-1** uses **Courier Sense Multiple Access (CSMA)/Collision Avoidance (CA)** for bus access, so every device must listen to the bus and is only allowed to begin sending when the bus is idle. In the case of a simultaneous transmission start, a logical '1' of one device will eventually be overwritten by a logical '0' of the other device. The overruled sender will detect this by continuously checking the state of the bus and has to stop transmission. This behavior is used to implement priority control and is exploited by the next layer.

## Data link layer for TP1

This layer is responsible for error detection, retransmission of corrupted packages, framing of the higher level packages into suitable frames and accessing the bus according to the rules used by the particular bus medium. It is often broken into 2 distinct sublayers, namely the **MAC** as bus arbiter and the **logical link control (LLC)**, providing a reliable point-to-point datagram service. Three frame formats are defined: L\_Data frames are used for sending a data payload to an **Individual Address (IA)**, a group address or for broadcasting data to the bus. L\_Poll\_Data frames are used to request data from an individual **KNX** device or a group of devices. Acknowledgement frames are used to provide a reliable transport mechanism, i.e., to acknowledge the reception of a frame by a **KNX** device.

For L\_Data\_Frame, 2 different formats are defined: standard frames, as shown in Figure 4.3 and extended frames, see Figure 4.5. While standard frames can bear up to 15 bytes of application data, extended frames allow the transmission of up to 254 bytes of data.



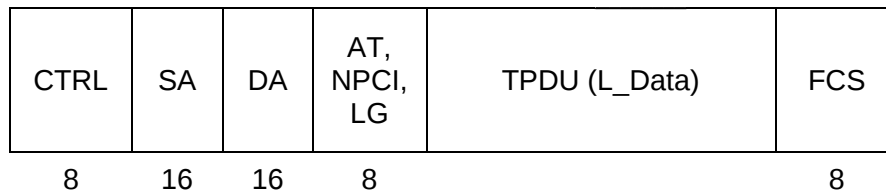


Figure 4.3: Standard Frame

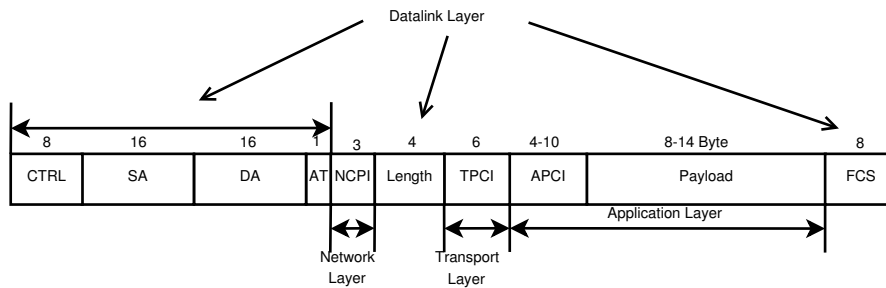


Figure 4.4: Standard Frame, in detail

### Standard L\_Data\_Frame

Every standard frame starts with the control field, determining the frame type. After that, sender address and destination address, each 2 bytes, follow. The next byte contains 1 address type bit, 3 bits which belong to the **LSDU** of the next higher layer and 4 bits of length information, resulting in an maximum payload of 15 bytes (by design, it is also allowed to set this length field to 0, i.e., to send an empty data frame). After the corresponding number of payload bytes, a check byte completes the frame. This check frame is defined as an odd parity over all preceding bytes, which represents a logical NOT XOR function.

### Extended L\_Data\_Frame

The extended frame starts with a control field, as a standard frame. After that, a special **Extended Control Field (CTRLE)** follows, as shown in Figure 4.6. Source- and destination addresses, each 2 bytes, follow. To allow the bigger payload, the next byte is used as length field, with the value 0xFF reserved as escape code, resulting in a maximum payload of 254 bytes. After the length field, the payload and the check byte, as defined above, follow.



Figure 4.5: Extended Frame

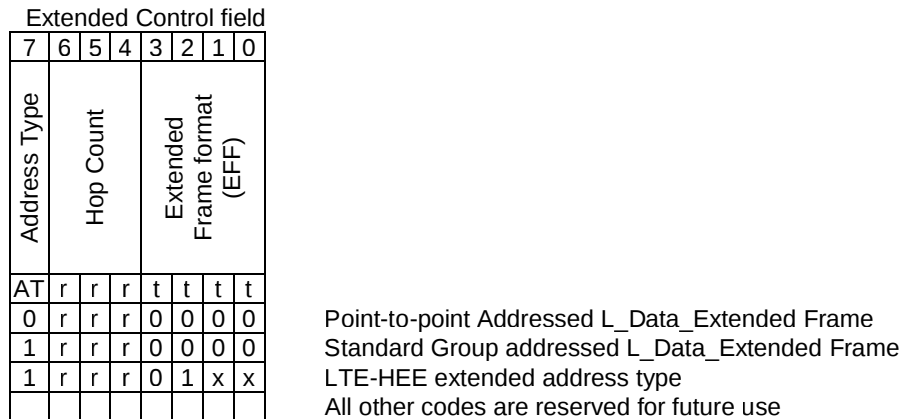


Figure 4.6: Extended Frame CTRLE field

### L\_Poll\_Data frame

These frames serve as data requests of the poll-data master for a maximum of 15 bytes and start with a control field, as defined, followed by the 2 byte source address of the sender (called Poll\_Data Master). The following 2 byte destination address is used to address up to 15 poll slaves, all belonging to the same poll group. The number of expected bytes and the check octet follow.

Poll requests are answered by poll slaves by transmitting the databytes in the corresponding poll slave slot. This is achieved by defining exact timings when each poll data slave must send the requested data. Therefore, such frames can only be used within one physical segment [59].

### Acknowledge frame

This frames are used to acknowledge the reception of a **KNX** data frames for **Group Addressss (GAs)** or **IAs** and consist of one byte, sent after a fixed timespan after reception of the frame.

### KNX addressing scheme

Two different kinds of addresses are defined: **GAs** or **IAs**, which type is used is determined by the 'address type' flag in the control field of the datagram(0 = **IA**). While the

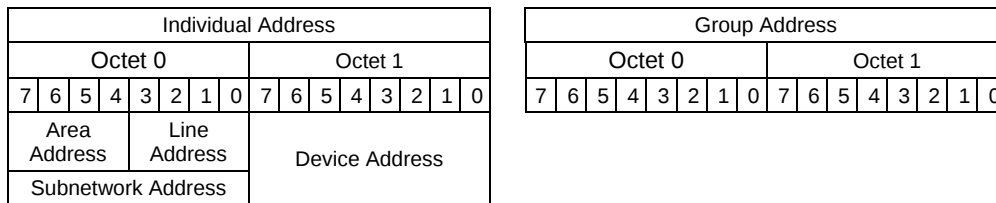


Figure 4.7: **KNX** individual and group addresses

source address always is an **IA**s and must be unique within the network, the destination address can be of type group or individual (see Figure 4.7 for the layout).

For poll-data frames, the destination address determines the poll group address which must be unique within the physical segment.

Poll data responses as well as acknowledgement frames each just contain 1 byte, i.e., they do not possess source- and destination addresses.

## Network layer

The main task of the network layer is the routing and forwarding of packets, so the main parameter on this layer is the destination address of the datagram. Additionally, **KNX** reserves 3 bits of every standard- and extended data frame as hop count. This counter is decremented by every router and the frame is discarded if the counter reaches the value zero. This mechanism, known from **Internet Protocol version 4 (IPv4)** [60]<sup>4</sup>, avoids the infinite circulation of packages within an incorrectly configured network.

## Transport layer

According to the **OSI** modell, this layer provides point-to-point communication for hosts.

In **KNX**, the connection orientated, reliable point-to-point communication mode addresses the **IA** of a remote device and uses a timer to detect timeouts. Up to to 3 retransmissions are allowed if the sent datagram is not acknowledged. A simple handshake - similar to **Transport Control Protocol (TCP)** - is used, as shown in Figure 4.8.

All other modes are unreliable, i.e., unacknowledged, transport mechanisms and can be used to address a **IA**, a **GA** or all devices in the network. For the latter mode, the special **KNX** broadcast address 0x0000 is reserved. The **Transport Layer Protocol Control Information (TPCI)**, included in the control field, determines the type of the **Transport**

<sup>4</sup>Originally, this was called **Time To Live (TTL)**

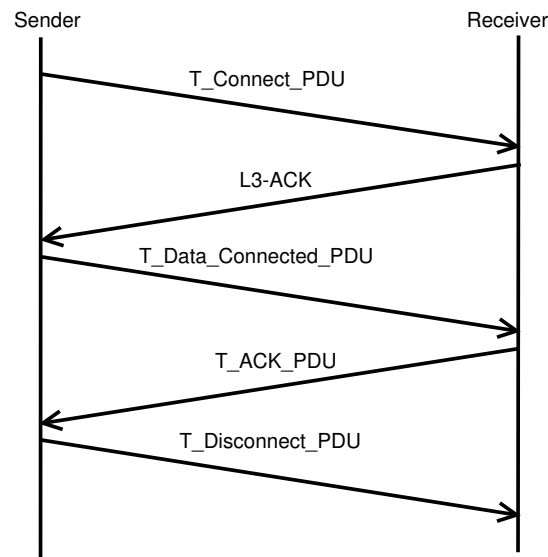


Figure 4.8: Handshake for connection-orientated communication

**Layer Protocol Data Unit (TPDU)** and also possesses a 4 bit sequence number by which duplicate datagrams, caused by damaged acknowledge-frames, can be discarded.

## Session layer

This layer is responsible for maintaining sessions, i.e., it provides services to maintain synchronized data exchange. It does not exist in **KNX**.

## Presentation layer

This layer allows a system-independent data representation, which is not necessary in **KNX** because the usage of standardized **DPTs**.

## Application layer

This layer provides services for process-to-process information through a **KNX** network. Up to 10 bits are reserved in the application control field, inside the **Application Layer Protocol Data Unit (APDU)**, containing the application layer service code. The provided services range from tasks like reading or writing group values, distribution of network parameters to obtaining device information.

Octet 5								Octet 6							
								transport ctrl field							
7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
Address Type (AT)								Data/Control Flag							
								Numbered							
1								0	0	0	0	0	0		
1								0	0	0	0	0	0		
1								0	0	0	0	0	1		
0								0	0	0	0	0	0		
0								0	1						
										SeqNo					
0								1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
0								1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
0								1	1						
										SeqNo					
										SeqNo					
										SeqNo					
										SeqNo					
0								1	1					1	1
										SeqNo					
										SeqNo					
										SeqNo					
										SeqNo					

T\_Data\_Broadcast-PDU (destination\_address = 0)

T\_Data\_Group-PDU (destination\_address <> 0)

T\_Data\_Tag\_Group-PDU

T\_Data\_Individual-PDU

T\_Data\_Connected-PDU

T\_Connect-PDU

T\_Disconnect-PDU

T\_ACK-PDU

T\_NAK-PDU

Figure 4.9: Flags used at the Transport Layer

### 4.3 KNX security concept

As shown in Section 1.2, a paradigm shift towards increased security in HBASs can be observed. Unfortunately, the basic KNX standard does not specify any security mechanisms for control information:

*"For KNX, security is a minor concern, as any breach of security requires local access to the network. In the case of KNX TP1 or KNX PL110 networks this requires even physical access to the network wires, which in nearly all cases is impossible as the wires are inside a building or buried underground. Hence, security aspects are less of a concern for KNX field level media." [3]*

For KNX/IP, the physical containment arguments do not apply. To counter this, it is proposed to use firewalls and VPNs to prevent unauthorized access, as well as hiding critical network parameters from public. The latter concept is also known as "security by obscurity", offering - if at all - only little protection.

For management communication, a rudimentary, password-based control is used. Therefore, KNX suffers the following security flaws [61]: for management, the used keys are transmitted as cleartext, enabling an attacker to perform a passive attack to obtain the password. Subsequently, the attacker can mount an active attack, injecting arbi-

trary management messages. No methods are foreseen for generation or distribution of the keys. For control information, an adversary can directly inject arbitrary messages to control the network, allowing passive and active attacks, too. These shortcomings clearly disqualified **KNX** for usage in critical environments, restricting its possible field of application.

Today, **HBASs** are used on a large scale, and the available processing power on embedded computing platforms has risen significantly. Therefore, the deployment of such systems would be possible also in critical environments if proper security mechanisms are deployed. For **KNX**, several extensions exist which will be introduced in the next sections.

## **KNX Data Security**

In 2013, the KNX association published "Application Note 158" [62] which specifies the **KNX Secure-Application Layer (S-AL)**, providing authentication and encryption, and the **Application Interface Layer (AIL)**, implementing access control, both being part of the application layer. The settlement of these functions above the transport layer allows a transparent, communication media independent end-to-end encryption.

The application layer service code 0xF31 is reserved for this purpose, indicating that a secure header and a **S-AL Protocol Data Unit (PDU)** follow instead of a plaintext-**PDU**. This allows the flexible usage of the secure services just in situations where they are needed - otherwise, the plaintext application layer services can be used.

The **S-AL** services defines modes for authenticated encryption or authentication-only of a higher-level cleartext **APDU**. As underlying block cipher **AES128** is used in **CCM** mode, encrypting the payload with **CTR** and providing integrity with **CBC** mode. The overhead introduced by the **MAC** is reduced by using only the 32 most significant bits instead of the whole 128 bit block obtained from **CBC**. Source- and destination address as well as frame- and addresstype, the **TPCI**, length information and a 6 byte sequence number determine the **IV** for the **CBC** algorithm and are therefore also protected by the **MAC**. The sequence number is a simple counter value that provides data freshness, thus preventing replay attacks, and is sent along with every **S-AL PDU**. For synchronization of this sequence number between two devices, a **S-AL sync-service** is defined. Because no sequence number can be used here to guarantee data freshness, a challenge-response mechanism is used instead. Two different types of keys are used: a **Factory Default Setup Key (FDSK)** is used for initial setup with the **ETS**. The **ETS** then generates the **Tool Key (TK)**, which is used by the device for securing of the outgoing messages. Consequently, every device must know the **TK** of its communication partners.

While the **S-AL** empowers two devices to communicate in a secure way, the **AIL** allows a fine-grained control which sender has access to which data objects. Therefore,

every link (a combination of source address and data or service object) is connected with a role, which in turn has some specific permissions.

## EIBsec

EIBsec is another extension to **KNX**, providing data integrity, confidentiality and freshness [63]. A semi-centralized approach is taken here by using special key servers, responsible for dedicated sets of keys, providing a sophisticated key management. EIBsec divides a **KNX** network into subnets, connected by devices called **Advanced Coupler Units (ACUs)**. Beside their native task, i.e., routing traffic, they are responsible for the key management of their network segments, which includes key generation, distribution and revocation. Every standard device that wishes to communicate with other devices must at first retrieve the corresponding secret key from its responsible **ACU**, which can therefore control the group membership of the requesting device by allowing or denying the request respectively by revoking the key at a later point in time.

EIBsec uses two different keys: in normal mode, a session with the keyserver is established to retrieve the session key, establishing a secure channel. This mode uses encryption-only by utilizing a **Pre Shared Key (PSK)**, integrity must therefore be guaranteed by the sender of the message. Counter mode is used for transmitting management and group data over the secure channel. A simple **CRC** is added to the payload before encryption and shall guarantee integrity. Both modes encrypt the traffic on transport level, allowing standard routers to handle the datagrams. As block cipher, **AES-128** is used in **CTR** mode.

## KNX IP Security

This work [64] focuses on securing the **KNX IP** specification, which can be used as backbone for connecting distinct **KNX** installations [65]. Thanks to the widespread use of **IP**, a wide range of physical transport mechanisms can be utilized.

A structure comparable to the design of **TLS** is defined by building a distinct security layer, residing above the transport layer (therefore, it directly connects the transport to the application layer, because session- and presentation layer are empty, as defined by the **KNX** specifications, see Section 4.2).

The design distinguishes three different types of modes:

- In the configuration phase, every device that wants to participate in the secure network generates an asymmetric key pair, which is sent to the **ETS** over a secure channel (for example, by transmitting the data over a direct, serial connection between the **ETS** host and the **KNX** device). The **ETS**, acting as **Certification Authority (CA)**, signs the combination of **IP** and public key with its own private

key, thus generating a certificate, which is sent back to the device, along with the public key of the **ETS**.

- After that, the key set distribution phase starts, where a unicast and a multicast scenario are differentiated: in the unicast case, the device initiating the communication - called client - obtains the key set from the target device by a 2-step handshake: at first, mutual entity authenticity is established by utilizing the certificate provided by the **ETS**. Afterwards the keyset is obtained from the target, which concludes the second phase.
- In the last step, secure communication can take place, i.e., the client is able to encrypt the data with the obtained key and sends it to the target device.

For the multicast scenario, a distinct coordinator, responsible for maintaining the group key, is necessary. Every powered-up device identifies the coordinator as soon as possible by broadcasting "hello" requests, adopting the coordinator role if no replies are received in time. To actually send a payload, the group key is obtained from the coordinator and the data is sent to the group, analog to the unicast case. By adding mechanisms to detect "dead" coordinators and delegating the coordinator role to a different device, the design avoids a **Single Point of Failure (SPOF)**.

## 4.4 Summary

When examining the security mechanisms for **KNX**, it shows up that only rudimentary precautions were defined in the basic standard simply because they were not considered necessary.

This perspective changed and different extensions were introduced. Modes for application-transparent encryption and authentication were introduced with "KNX Application Note 158". Securing **IP** based **KNX** backbones is possible by using "KNX IP Security".

Despite the **KNX** extensions, no solution providing high availability exists. Therefore, this work proposes a solution which brings together cryptographic measurements with redundancy mechanisms, allowing its deployment in more demanding environments.



# CHAPTER 5

## Concept

### 5.1 Basic assumptions

The aim of this work is to propose a **KNX** prototype, applicable for environments with increased availability demands. The prototype should be designed in a transparent way, utilizing a "plug and play" functionality to build a secure **KNX** network. This means that a device outside of this network, unaware of the secured **KNX** network, should be able to deliver through and receive messages from such a secured network without any prerequisites. Every device with one connection to an unsecured **KNX** network (called cleartext **KNX** line) and two distinct connections to a secured **KNX** network (called secure lines), running the master daemon, will work as a security gateway. Thus, the presence of at least two of these security gateways connected to each other by two secure lines will constitute a secured **KNX** area, bridging between areas with increased security demands, as shown in Figure 5.1.

The basic tasks of such a security gateway consist of:

- establishing keys with its communication partners within the secured **KNX** network (the security gateways)
- providing redundant communication lines, achieving improved availability by encrypting and authenticating all messages which are received on the unsecured line, and delivering them to the proper security gateways which act as border device for the given group address, using both secure lines
- checking all messages which are received on the secured lines for integrity and authenticity, removing duplicates, unwrapping and delivering them to the unsecured area

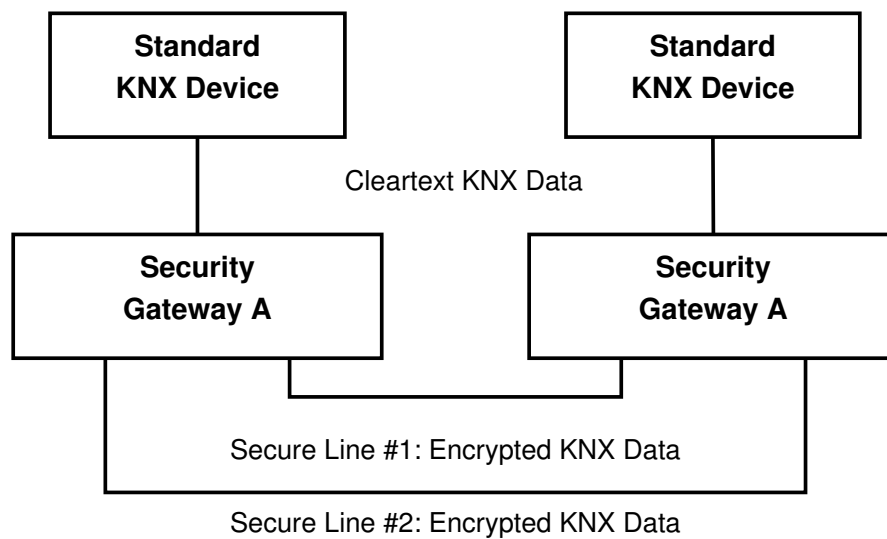


Figure 5.1: Secure Area

## Security related architectural overview

As stated in Section 4.2, different possibilities for communication within a **KNX** network are possible: point to point, multicast and broadcast. To introduce as little additional traffic into the network as possible, a sound concept for translating clear- to secure-**KNX** addresses (and vice versa) has to be defined. While in principle it would be possible to use the communication modes in a transparent way (i.e., point-to-point in unsecured **KNX** translates to point-to-point in secured **KNX**, and vice versa, and so on), this approach leads to some serious problems, rendering this solution impracticable: due to the topology of **KNX**, it is impossible to know a priori the exact physical location of a device (i.e., its **IA**). Additionally, every device can be member of an arbitrary number of group addresses (bounded by the maximum number of group addresses), which also is not known in advance. Group-membership may also be subject to change and therefore complicates the situation. Finally, devices can leave or join the network at every moment by powering the device up or down.

Therefore, a device which receives a message on its unsecured **KNX** line, examining the destination address, simply does not know which device(s), if any, will be the gateway(s) responsible for delivering this datagram one hop toward its final destination, regardless if the destination address is a **IA** or a **GA**.

A straightforward solution to this problem would be to wrap every datagram which enters the secured **KNX** network via a security gateway into a new, properly secured broadcast datagram, and delivering this new package to the secured **KNX** network. Then, the package would be available to all other security gateways, which will unwrap

it and forward the resulting inner datagram to its unsecured **KNX** line. If the destination address (group or individual) of the actual payload is assigned to a device connected to the unsecured **KNX** network, the device holding this **IA** or **GA** will recognize it and the package will reach its destination. Otherwise it will simply be discarded.

A serious constraint rising from this broadcast approach is that a single, global network key must be used, because every security gateway must be able to decrypt and check every package which it receives on its secured lines, even if it does not serve as gateway to the wanted group address. The key of course can be renegotiated among the security gateways at every time, but this approach is considered unsecure because an attacker can target *any* of the security gateways constituting the secure network. An adversary breaking one single device gains access to the network traffic of all devices. This could be achieved by physical access to any of the security gateways, for example by reading out the memory of the device, and thus obtaining the globally used network key. This way, the network traffic can be decrypted by the adversary as long as no new key is renegotiated. Another problem is that multi-party key negotiation is a costly task if a public-private key scheme is to be used: as shown in Figures 2.21 and 2.22, a lot of messages have to be exchanged before an encryption can be done.

To encounter these problems, different keys must be used, thus achieving pairwise end-to-end encryption between all devices. Figure 5.2 shows the logical connections within a **KNX** network using end-to-end encryption. An attack of node *A* can only compromise keys known to the device, thus effectively separating communication between the nodes *B*, *C*, and *D* from the attacker.

As stated above, to be able to use different keys every security gateway has to know how to reach a given address so that the data can be encrypted exclusively for the responsible gateway. The solution to this problem is to maintain some kind of routing table, mapping **GAs** and **IAs** of unsecured **KNX** devices to **IAs** of responsible security gateways. Such a routing table can be built statically at setup time, with the obvious disadvantage that the exact topology of the applied network has to be known in advance, thus reducing the flexibility. Here, every security gateway holds a static table which consists of mappings between **IAs** or **GAs** of unsecured **KNX** devices and **IAs** of security gateways at the border between the secured and the unsecured **KNX** network, as well as all keys used for the particular security level the gateway belongs to. This table would be generated once, after the topology of the network has been fixed, and must be equipped with the proper keys and can then be copied to the security gateways constituting the secured **KNX** area. New security gateways can be deployed as long as they only introduce sending unsecured **KNX** devices, whose recipients are already known group addresses behind existing security gateways. A new group address, introduced by a newly installed device behind an already existing security gateway, will not

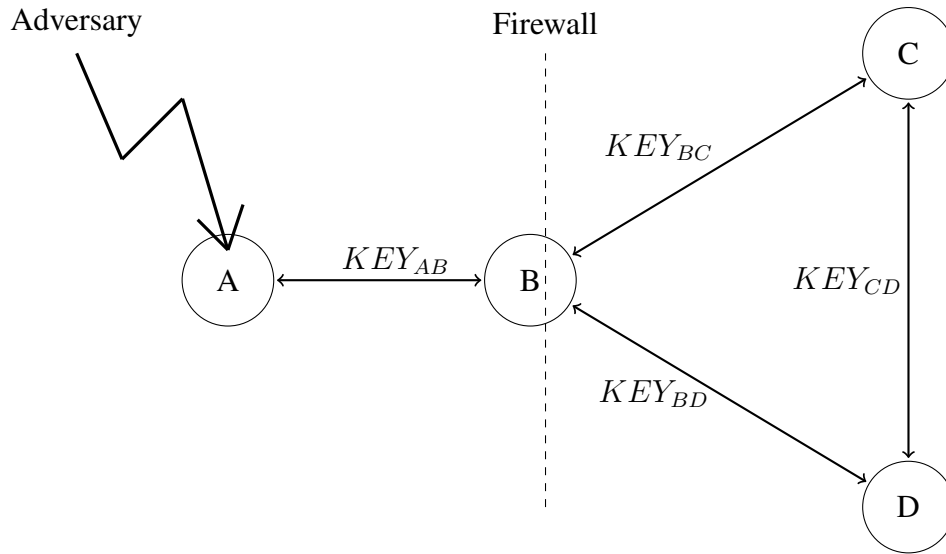


Figure 5.2: Firewall

be reachable, simply because the routing information is not available. Another disadvantage is that the deployment of new security gateways, connecting devices with new or already known **GAs**, is impossible as the **IA** of the new gateway - which of course must be unique - is unknown to the existing setup, thus making the new unsecured **KNX** devices unreachable.

To tackle this problem, another approach would be to build this mapping table dynamically. Therefore, every security gateway must periodically poll on its unsecured lines for **KNX** devices, thus populating a list of reachable **KNX** devices. Whenever a device wants to send data to a group address, it has to process a lookup first to obtain the **IAs** of the responsible security gateways: the lookup must contain the wanted group address, as well as the sender's public key. Every gateway which finds the wanted group address in its group list must reply with an according message to the requester, thus announcing that it is responsible for delivering data to the wanted group address, and must also publish its own public key, thus allowing pairwise end-to-end encryption. This procedure requires no a priori knowledge of the network topology, so security gateways can be added to the network as well as unsecured **KNX** devices behind new or existing gateways at any time. This flexibility of course has to be purchased with increased complexity as well as additional traffic introduced into the network.

A middle course is chosen: the reachable group address list is generated whenever a new security gateway is added to the network, handling discovery of these **GAs** as described above. This allows to deploy new security gateways with connected unsecured devices, thus achieving a compromise between flexibility and complexity.

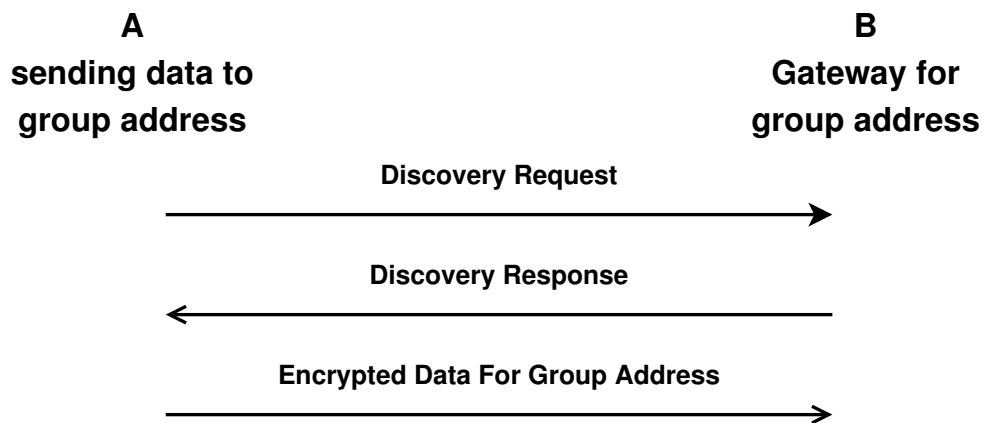


Figure 5.3: Communication schema

Sending data to a group address therefore follows the triad discovery request, discovery response and data transfer, shown in Figure 5.3. Broadcast messages are depicted as solid end of the arrow, the rest denoting unicast messages. To enable multiple devices to announce responsibility for a group address, the device wanting to transmit data to this group address must accept discovery responses following its request message for a short time window.

The discovery messages generated by security gateways should be encrypted, too. Although these datagrams don't contain **KNX** data per se, they allow a listening adversary to learn the topology of the network, knowledge which can be valuable for developing an attack strategy, as well as generating meta data. For example, if an attacker learns that a particular security gateway is responsible for only one group address and further gets knowledge that this group address is responsible for switching a light (i.e., by visual observation), the attacker afterwards may be able to derive a personal profile just by detecting packages for this group address, although the payload of the datagrams to the responsible security gateway are encrypted. If the discovery messages are encrypted too the adversary doesn't know how many and what group addresses are behind a specific gateway, and it will be harder to derive personal profiles or to gather knowledge of the network topology.

Discovery request messages must be broadcast messages, readable by all security gateways. To limit the protocol overhead, a global network key is used here.

To provide authenticity, all datagrams passing the secure **KNX** network must contain a **MAC** to prevent modification of them.

Defense against replay attacks is achieved by counters. These must be strictly monotonically increasing and must not overflow. The counters can be compared to an initial-

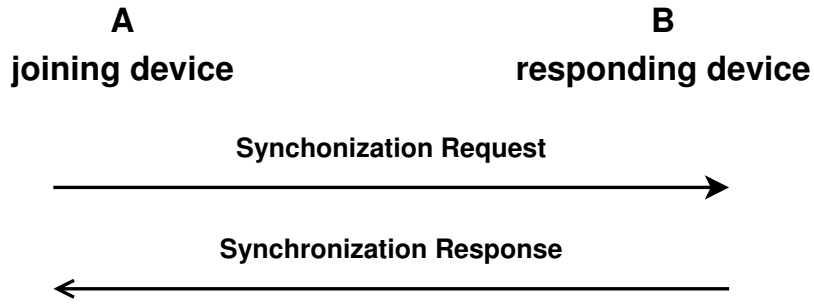


Figure 5.4: Synchronization service

ization vector that prevents the mapping of same cleartext messages to same ciphertext messages under the same encryption key.

Two different types of counters are used: one global counter  $Ctr_{global}$ , used for avoiding replay attacks against discovery messages. A second kind of counter is used for the actual data transfer. Beside avoiding replay attacks, this counter is necessary to detect and delete duplicates, caused by the redundant network.

Usage of the global counter  $Ctr_{global}$  raises another question, namely how a new device gets knowledge of the actual value of  $Ctr_{global}$ . Therefore, a synchronization service must be defined, allowing a newly powered up device that wants to join the network to synchronize with the rest of the network, as shown in Figure 5.4. Replay attacks are mitigated by including the current time into MAC calculation. Low temporal resolution relaxes time-synchronization issues between different devices.

### Key management

While it would be possible to use a centralized concept, no trusted on-line party is used in this work. A centralized approach would need fall-back key servers which inherit the task of generating and distributing keys and parameters in case of a master key server failure. Otherwise, the network would suffer from a single point of failure in case no such fall-back mechanism is applied, an assumption that would clearly disqualify the design as highly available.

The following key management is proposed:

- A long-term key known to all security gateways is defined. As already stated, this key must be copied to every device at setup time. This pre-shared key  $k_{psk}$  is used for symmetric encryption and serves different purposes: first, it authenticates synchronization messages. Secondly, this key  $k_{psk}$  is used to encrypt discovery requests and discovery responses.
- Asymmetric keys are used for end-to-end encryption of the actual data packages between 2 security gateways. Elliptic Curve Diffie-Hellman (ECDH) serves as

key negotiation algorithm. To protect against man-in-the-middle attacks, authenticity of the **D-H** parameters must be assured.

- This is the task of the third kind of keys: another pre-shared key is used to authenticate the **D-H** parameters.

## Redundancy related architectural overview

Whenever a **KNX** packet is generated by a device on an unsecured line (called client), the connected security gateway will read, duplicate and encapsulate it into another **KNX** frame and then send it over both lines. If both lines are available, i.e., there is, for example, no shortcut, the security gateway responsible for forwarding the frame will receive two different **KNX** frames encapsulating the same payload, which itself is the **KNX** frame generated by the **KNX** client device in the first place. One message must be discarded to avoid duplicates. This is achieved with a monotonically increasing counter that also guards against replay attacks. Whenever a package, generated by a client, enters the network, a counter for outgoing packages is incremented, called  $Ctr_{out}$ , and is sent along the message. This counter must be unambiguously referenced by the origin cleartext message. The receiving side must maintain a counter for incoming packets, called  $Ctr_{in}$ , which will be updated by the received counter value as soon as the first frame is received if the received value is higher than the saved one. Subsequent delivery of the duplicate can be detected because the containing counter value equals the saved counter value.

To identify duplicate frames, basically various possibilities exist:

Referencing both  $Ctr_{out}$  and  $Ctr_{in}$  by the **GA** of the origin cleartext message does only work if for every destination **GA** in the network, at most one sending client device exists. Assuming client device *A* and afterwards client device *B* want to send the first message to the same destination **GA**, the delivery of the message originating from device *A* will trigger an update of the corresponding counter  $Ctr_{in}$  at the responsible gateway, but device *B* will use its own counter for the outgoing message. Because device's *B* outgoing counter is less than the gateway's actual incoming counter, both frames will be discarded by the gateway. Therefore, this is no viable solution.

It shows that the easiest way to unambiguously identify duplicates is by referencing both  $Ctr_{out}$  and  $Ctr_{in}$  by the **IA** of the origin cleartext message. This solution works despite potential network failures on one or both secure lines, provided that each client device is identified by a unique **IA**. This is argued as follows:

For simplicity, assume that three security gateways *A*, *B* and *C* are connected to each other by two distinct, secured **KNX** lines, and each gateway is connected to an arbitrary number of client devices through their cleartext lines, each with a unique **IA**. Addi-

tionally, each client device is destination for an arbitrary number of **GA**s. If a security gateway receives a cleartext message, it will at first check the counter value  $Ctr_{out}$  for the **IA** and increment it. After that, the discovery phase takes place. This discovery request can be answered by zero, one or two other security gateways. If at least one reply is received, the package is duplicated, encrypted, fitted into a unicast data frame together with  $Ctr_{out}$  and sent on both lines.

Every gateway answering the discovery request will be sent 2 duplicate messages, one on each secure line. Now, there are three possibilities:

- If both secure lines are available, one data frame will be handled first and the contained counter will be saved as actual  $Ctr_{in}$  for the **IA** of the inner frame. When handling the second frame, the contained counter will be equal the saved counter, and thus the frame can be discarded.
- If only one secure line is available, no duplicate will arrive, but the receiving gateway(s) will nevertheless update the received counter value for the **IA**.
- If both lines are unavailable, the responsible gateways cannot update the corresponding value for  $Ctr_{in}$ . Nevertheless, the sending side will increment and update the outgoing counter  $Ctr_{out}$ . As soon as the responsible gateways are reachable again, new data frames will bear an even higher counter than saved on the receiving side, thus allowing data transfer to the **GA** again.

## Operational constraints

The introduction of encapsulating security gateways implicates that some timing constraints, defined by **KNX**, cannot be met:

- Acknowledgement frames, used in point-to-point communication, as defined in **KNX** and introduced in Section 4.2, cannot be guaranteed to be delivered within the specified deadlines: whenever a new **KNX** datagram is generated by a client, at first the discovery phase has to occur. Only after that the to-acknowledged frame is sent. So there are multiple delays introduced, stalling the delivery: the first delay is caused by sending of the discovery package. After that, a second delay occurs because the security gateway must wait for the discovery response(s), possibly retransmitting the discovery request in case of a timeout. After receiving discovery responses, the third delay is caused by sending the actual, encapsulated client package to the responsible security gateway(s), which then must check the datagram, unpack it and forward it on their unsecured lines. Only after that, all addressed, unsecured clients would be able to acknowledge the received frames to their local security gateways, which must forward the acknowledgement frame to the origin security gateway, causing another delay. Finally, the acknowledgement



frame must be forwarded to the sender of the origin data frame, causing another delay. These delays will always occur, and most of them cannot be restricted, thus destroying the tight timing constraints for acknowledgement frames, as defined by the **KNX** standard. This will most likely result in multiple retransmissions of the same **KNX** packages by the client because the client's timer will generate a timeout.

The only way to avoid a retransmission by a client is to immediately acknowledge a client frame by the security gateway that it is connected to, regardless of whether the destination device is reachable or not. The receiving security gateway will use a reliable transport mechanism to transfer the encrypted frame to all recipient gateways, which must acknowledge reception. Finally, the gateway on the receiving side will forward the contained frame to the client, who may generate an acknowledge frame, depending on the transport mode chosen by the sending device. This process is shown in Figure 5.5.

- Similar arguments avoid the processing of Poll-Data Frames. Here, even more stringent timing constraints are to be met, see Section 4.2.

Apart from the data service, handling the actual data transfer of the **KNX** payloads, two additional services are necessary, following the assumptions above. These two services, handling synchronization and discovery, are defined as following and are summarized as management services. To distinguish the different frame formats, a 8 bit secure header field uniquely identifies every frame - see Section 5.2 for details.

## 5.2 Services

### Synchronization service

As stated, a new gateway, joining the network, must get knowledge of the actual value of  $Ctr_{global}$ . This is achieved by sending a broadcast message on every secure line, serving as synchronization request. The frame contains the device's local time in seconds. The header flags in the secure header are set accordingly, identifying the frame as synchronization request, see Figure 5.7.

Every device receiving such a request checks the integrity of the message first by recalculating the **MAC**. Afterwards, freshness is checked by comparing the supplied time with its local time. If the timing information equals the device's own local time, the device sends a unicast synchronization response frame, containing its local time and the actual counter value. See Figure 5.8 for the layout of such a synchronization response. The accuracy of the time comparison is deliberately reduced by defining a window of

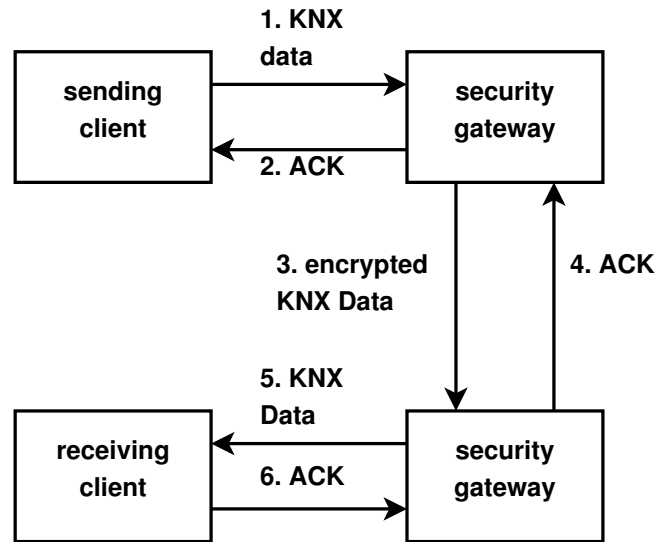


Figure 5.5: Acknowledgement of KNX data

allowed deviation. This allows a new device to join the network even if its local time and the local time of the answering device are not perfectly synchronized. If no synchronization response is received within 500ms, up to 2 retries are executed. After that, the device assumes that it is the first device in the network and resets the global counter  $Ctr_{global}$ .

The **MAC** is calculated over all frame fields except the trailing frame check fields and parts of the header field.

## Discovery service

Whenever a gateway receives a message on its cleartext line, two distinct discovery broadcast messages are sent, one for each secured line. The frame format is shown in Figure 5.9. DH-A is the newly chosen **ECDH** - parameter of the requesting device. The **PSK** encrypted field contains the group address, CTR contains the incremented global counter  $Ctr_{global}$ . Every device in the network first checks the authenticity of the received frame by recalculating the **MAC**. If the value differs from the received one, the frame is discarded. Otherwise, the requested group address is obtained by decrypting the corresponding field, and every device recognizing the group address prepares a unicast response frame as shown in Figure 5.10, with DH-B as its own newly chosen **ECDH** parameter and the incremented global counter in the CTR field. The requested group address is also sent, allowing the requester to identify the response message.

Integrity of the discovery messages is achieved by generating a **MAC** over all frame

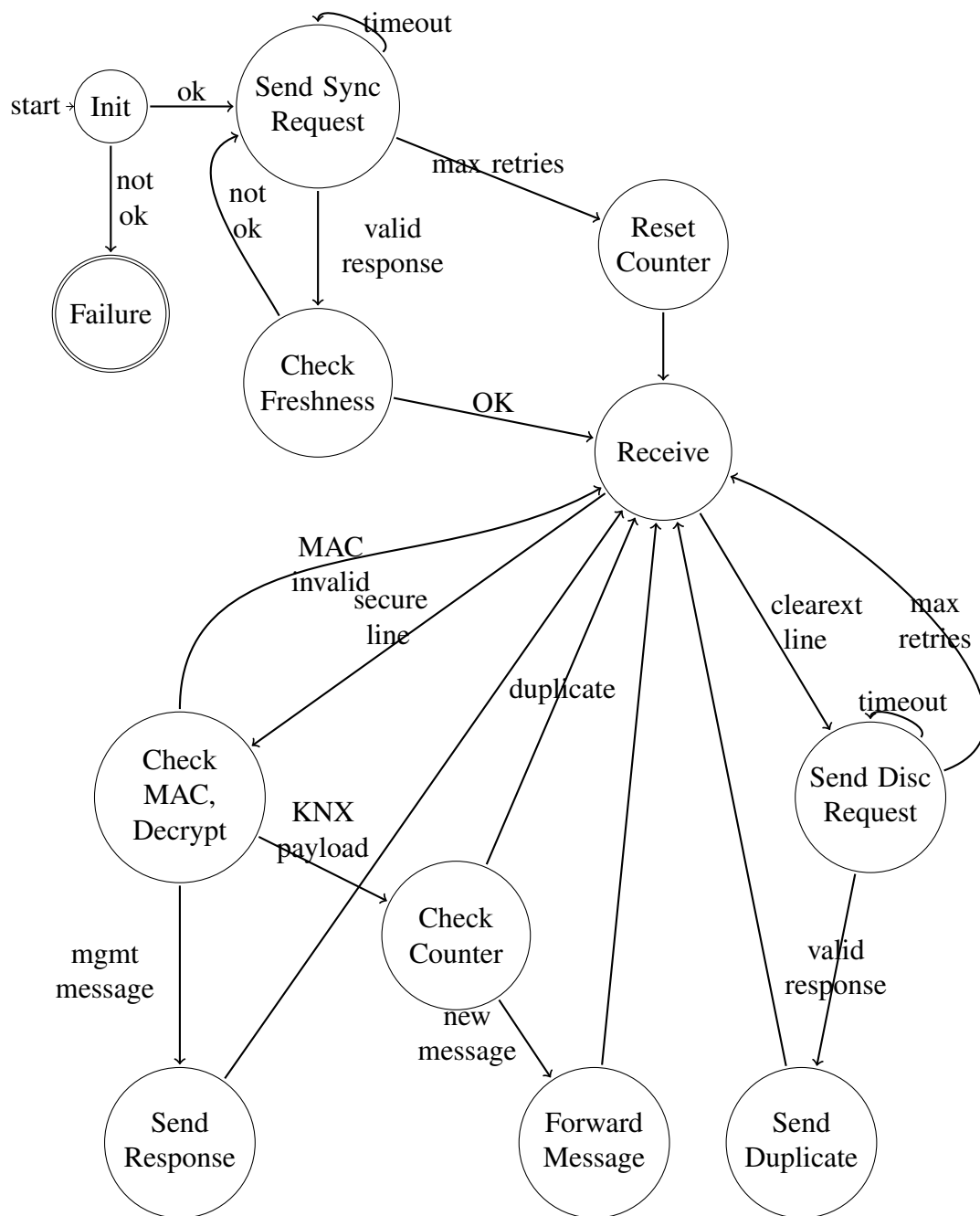


Figure 5.6: State machine of the program logic

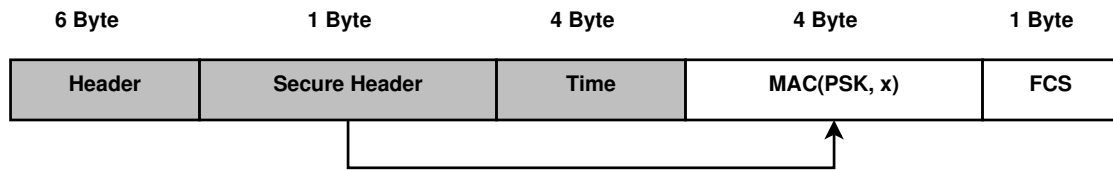


Figure 5.7: Synchronization request frame layout

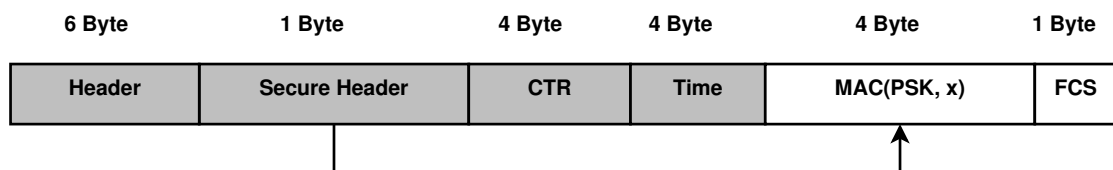


Figure 5.8: Synchronization response frame layout

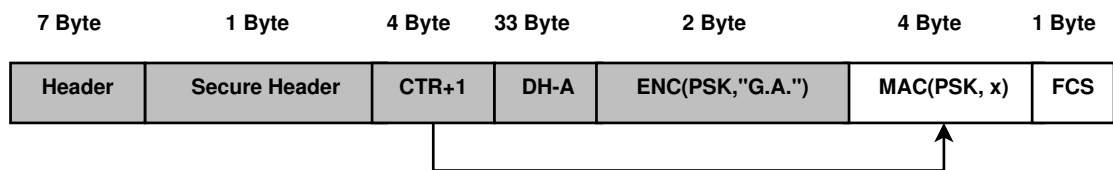


Figure 5.9: Discovery request frame layout

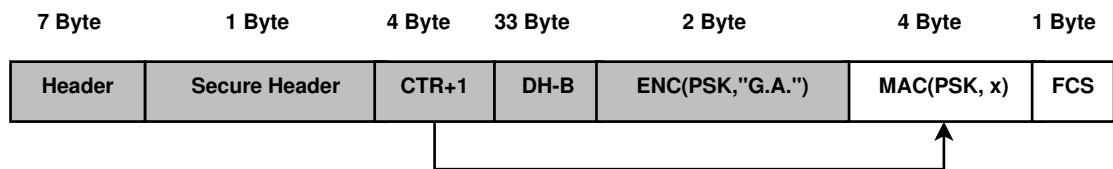


Figure 5.10: Discovery response frame layout

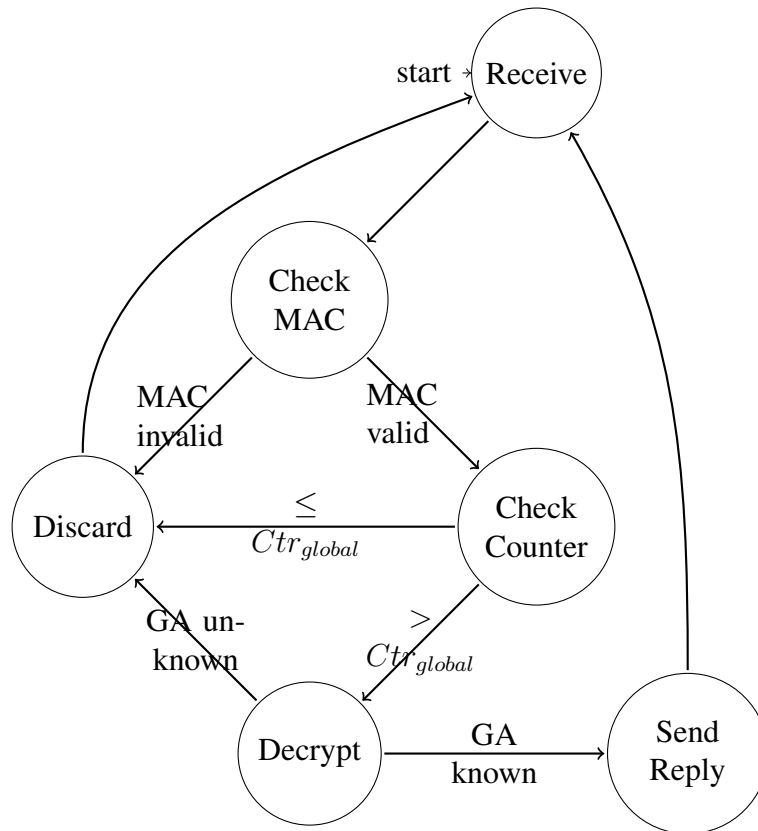


Figure 5.11: State machine for processing discovery requests

fields except the frame check field and parts of the header field.

The main logic from the discovery request receiver's point of view is shown in the state machine in Figure 5.11.

## Data service

After receiving one or more discovery responses on one or both secure line, the device which wants to send the **KNX** payload (called requester) now knows the **IAs** which are responsible for delivering messages to the wanted **GA**. The requester can also derive pairwise shared secrets with all responsible gateways, based on **ECDH**. From this shared secret, a key is derived which is used to encrypt the origin **KNX** frame and inserted into the frame after the counter value. This counter  $CTR - Ind$  is an individual counter, maintained by the gateway forwarding the **KNX** frame received over the cleartext line. Authenticity is guaranteed by calculating a **MAC** over all frame fields except the frame check field. The key used for the **MAC** is also derived from the shared secret.

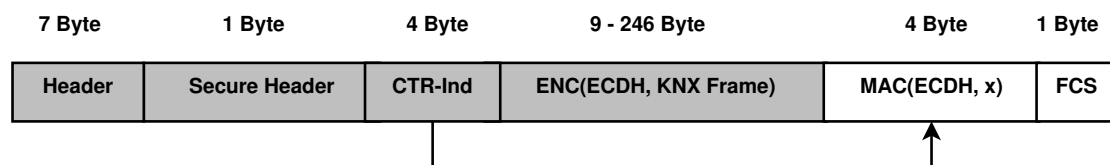


Figure 5.12: Data frame layout

Figure 5.12 shows the layout of such a data frame.

## Data structures

The used data structures, referenced above, are introduced in more detail below.

### Secure header

Every frame sent by a security gateway contains a 8 bit header, uniquely determining the type of the frame. Implicitly, this information also determines the exact type of authentication or authenticated encryption mode used.

bytevalue	frame type	encryption	authentication
0000 0000	invalid	x	x
0000 0001	invalid	x	x
0000 0010	synchronization request	no	yes
0000 0011	synchronization response	no	yes
0000 0100	discovery request	yes	yes
0000 0101	discovery response	yes	yes
0000 1000	data service	yes	yes
0000 1001	reserved	x	x
...	...	...	...
1111 1111	reserved	x	x

Values 0x09 - 0xFF are not used - frames containing such values should be discarded.

### Global counter

The global counter  $Ctr_{global}$ , obtained by the synchronization service and used in the discovery messages, is a 4 byte integer, allowing  $2^{32} \approx 4,3$  billion discovery request or response messages to be sent before overflowing. This amount is assumed sufficiently high, argued as follows: each discovery messages consists of a frame containing 53 bytes, sent with 9600 bps, resulting in about 44 milliseconds transfer duration. Therefore, the absolute lower bound of the duration after that  $Ctr_{global}$  overflows, assumed

the **KNX** network is occupied by discovery messages only, is about two years, a very conservative estimate.

### Individual counter

Every individual counter is a 4 byte integer, responsible for duplicate detection. Two distinct types of individual counters are used:  $Ctr_{out}$ , referenced by an **IA**, and  $Ctr_{in}$ , also referenced by an **IA**. Figure 5.13 shows the state machine describing every security gateway's behavior from a high-level perspective.

Whenever a new **KNX** frame is received on the cleartext line and the gateway knows which gateway(s) are responsible for the contained **GA**, the sending gateway determines the outgoing counter value  $Ctr_{out}[IA]$ . If an outgoing counter value for this **IA** exists, this means that the device already sent at least one data frame to a **GA**, otherwise this is the first frame. For the first case, the counter value  $Ctr_{out}[IA]$  is incremented and saved, otherwise it is set to 1. Afterwards, it is used as value for  $Ctr_{ind}$ . After that, the cleartext frame is encrypted and inserted into a new unicast data frame, one for each secure line.

Upon reception (the green transition in Figure 5.13), at first the validity of the **MAC** is checked - if valid, the receiver checks its incoming individual counter value, referenced by the **IA** of the inner frame. If the received counter value  $Ctr_{ind}$  is greater than  $Ctr_{in}[IA]$ ,  $Ctr_{ind}$  is saved as  $Ctr_{in}[IA]$  and the contained frame (i.e., the **KNX** data frame) is forwarded. The second frame, which will be handled afterwards will bear the counter value  $Ctr_{ind} = Ctr_{in}[IA]$  and will be discarded, thus eliminating the duplicate.

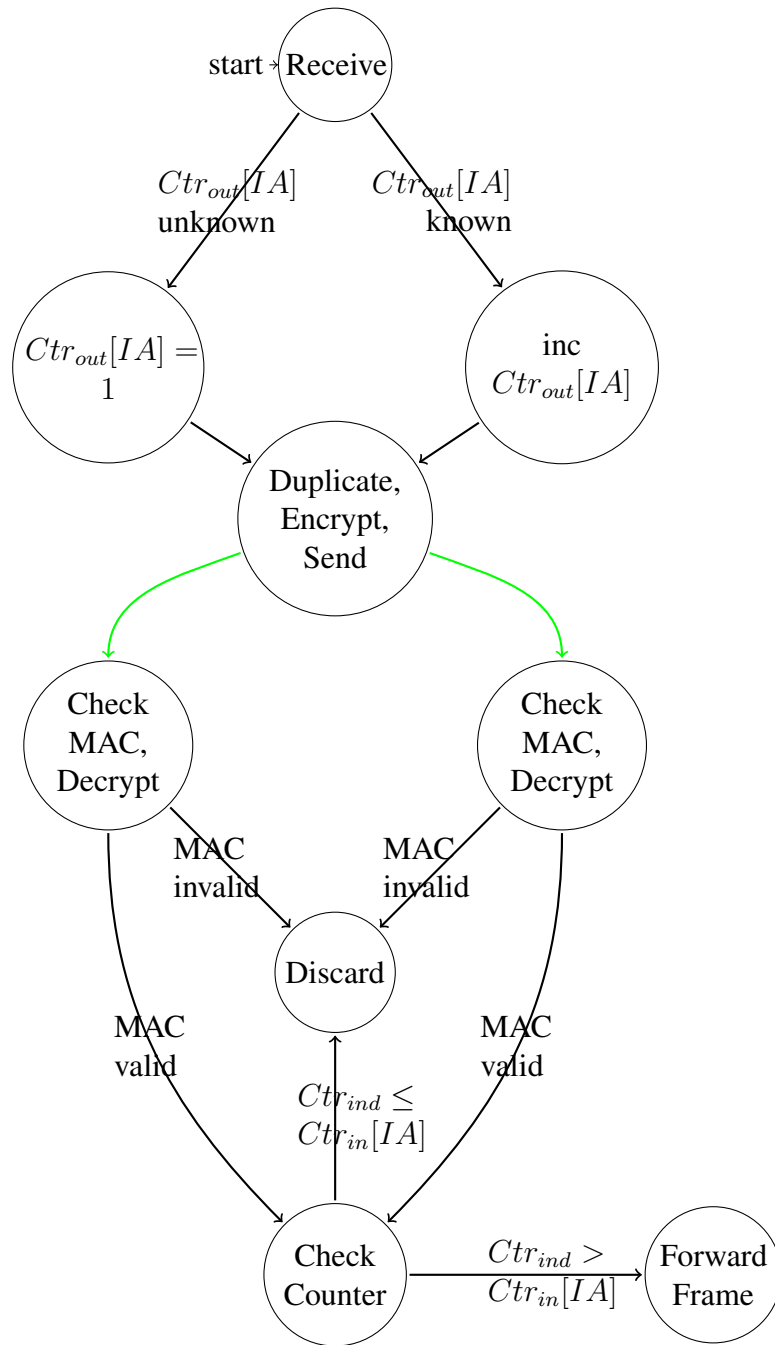


Figure 5.13: State machine of the duplicate detection logic



# CHAPTER 6

## Evaluation

To be able to evaluate the proposed solution in a real-life scenario, a prototype based on the concept presented was built. This chapter introduces the implementation from a high level view, followed by the evaluation of the result. Afterwards, the results are discussed and improvements are suggested.

### 6.1 Implementation

#### Bus interface

The necessary software, running on each platform, is written in the programming language "C". To interface with **KNX**, an **Application Programming Interface (API)** named **European Installation Bus Daemon (EIBD)** is used, providing functions to send **KNX** frames to and receive frames from the bus. **EIBD** offers synchronous as well as asynchronous calls for sending and receiving frames. While the first kind of call will block until the operation finished, the second kind of call will return immediately, the status of such calls can be checked by another special **EIBD** call. Because it is not possible to use callbacks with asynchronous calls, the implementation uses the synchronous functions.

#### Reading frames from the bus

**EIBD** provides a function to monitor the bus, this way all frames are available to the application.

```
1 EIBConnection *fd;  
2 fd = EIBSocketURL(socketPath);  
3 EIBOpenVBusmonitor(fd);
```

```
4 len = EIBGetBusmonitorPacket (fd, BUFSIZE, buffer);
```

Listing 6.1: Reading **KNX** frames

## Writing frames to the bus

To write frames to the bus **EIBD** offers distinct functions for addressing individual devices or all devices in the segment. A connection must be first by calling the corresponding function, afterwards the data can be written to the bus:

```
1 // open an individual connection
2 EIBOpenT_Individual(fd, destination, 0);
3 // or a broadcast connection
4 EIBOpenT_Broadcast(fd, 0);
5 // finally, send the data
6 EIBSendAPDU(fd, len, (const uint8_t *)buf);
```

Listing 6.2: Writing to **KNX** frames

## KNX addressing scheme

Care must be taken that no duplicate **KNX** addresses are used within the network. Therefore, the following addressing convention is proposed: While it would be possible to use the same addresses on both lines per gateway, a different scheme is proposed. For the secured network, the address ranges starting at address 1.1.1 to address 1.1.15 and 1.2.1 to 1.2.15 are reserved for secure line number 1 and 2 respectively, which allows a maximum of 15 gateways. Different addresses are used mainly because it facilitates debugging. On the unsecured lines, every gateway uses an address from the range 1.0.1 - 1.0.15. Addresses are assigned in a linearly ascending way, so gateway number 1 uses addresses 1.1.1 and 1.2.1 for secure lines 1 and 2, and 1.0.1 for its unsecured line.

## Concurrency

Every platform possesses three distinct interfaces to the bus (two interfaces form the redundant "secure" part of the network, one is connected to a standard **KNX** network), so care must be taken that no frames are missed or delayed due to a blocking call to **EIBD**. This can be achieved by splitting the main program into different processes or alternatively, threads, where for each critical task, a distinct part is responsible. While threads share the same address space, facilitating communication with each other, processes rely on special system calls to share information. Additionally, thread-creation and switching between threads consumes less computing resources. Therefore, it was decided to choose the multi-threaded approach. Consequently, at least three different threads - one for each communication interface - are needed. Nevertheless, because every thread must

be able to write to or receive frames from the bus at unpredictable moments, seven different threads are used: the main thread only handles argument processing and creates the other threads. For the remaining threads, two pairs are responsible for the interfaces to the secured network, while the remaining thread pair interfaces to the unsecured part of the network. This setup is shown in Figure 6.1. This design allows to assign one

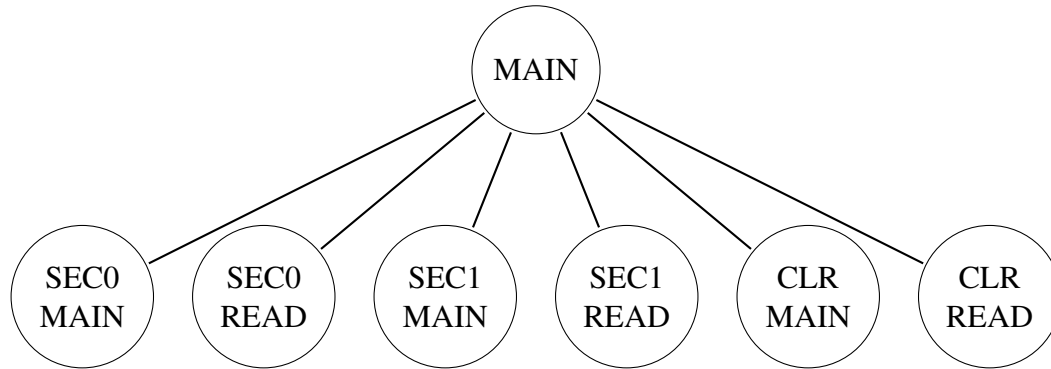


Figure 6.1: Threads used in the implementation

timing-critical task to every thread: every READ thread immediately opens its corresponding bus interface in "monitor" mode, allowing it to read all the bus traffic on the corresponding line. After that, it enters a loop, performing a blocking read call to **EIBD** on every iteration. This will set the whole thread to "blocked", and the operating system will set another thread or process as runnable. Whenever data is available to the blocked thread, the operating system will buffer the received data and eventually set the thread runnable again. Thus, no frames will be missed.

The main-threads of the secure lines (i.e., SEC0 MAIN and SEC1 MAIN) will start the synchronization sequence, as described in Section 5.2, and send out the synchronization messages. After that, the main threads will enter the READY state and listen for discovery messages.

Whenever the CLR READ thread receives new data, the frame will be forwarded to both SEC MAIN threads together with the counter for the unique source address, contained in the frame. Both SEC MAIN threads will send discovery requests, independently from each other, each containing newly chosen **ECDH** parameters. Responsible gateways (i.e., gateways which are connected to the wanted destination address through their cleartext lines) will compute a new **ECDH** parameter, derive distinct shared secrets for both lines, save them and send the parameters contained in the discovery responses back to the requesting device. The requester then derives the same shared secrets, and sends the encrypted frame, contained in extended **KNX** frames, to the destination gateways, which will check and decrypt them and forward both decrypted frames and the

corresponding global counter values to the CLR MAIN thread. Here, the duplicate will be discarded and one frame will be sent to its final destination.

A thread can be created in C with the function *pthread\_create()*. The function expects four parameters:

- a variable of type *pthread\_t*
- attributes for the new thread, or NULL for default values
- a function pointer, serving as entry-point for the new thread
- parameters for the function pointer, or NULL

```
1 if((pthread_create(&sec1MasterThread, NULL, (void *)secMasterStart, &
   threadEnvSec[0])) != 0)
2 {
3   printf("sec1Thread thread init failed, exit\n");
4   return -1;
5 }
```

Listing 6.3: Creating a new thread

If the call to *pthread\_create()* succeeds, the new thread will start executing the function provided via the function pointer, and the main thread which called *pthread\_create()* will continue. Which of the threads is running first and in which order the threads are assigned to the processor is unknown and determined by the operating system.

## Thread-to-thread communication

To pass data from one thread to another, different ways are possible. While the easiest way would be to use global data structures, the implementation uses **Portable Operating System Interface (POSIX)**-pipes instead, mainly because with pipes, timeouts can be implemented easily. Such timeouts are used when waiting for synchronization replies, as well as for cleanup tasks.

How to create a new pipe is shown in Listing 6.4.

```
1 int pipefd[2];
2 if(pipe(pipefd) == -1)
3 {
4   printf("pipe() failed, exit\n");
5   exit(-1);
6 }
```

Listing 6.4: Creating a pipe

Every pipe possesses two file descriptors, providing a uni-directional data channel: data can be written to the pipe by performing a `write()` - operation to the *write*-end of the pipe (index 1), while the data can be read from the pipe by calling `read()` with the *read*-end of the pipe (index 0). Basically, the `read()` operation will block until new data can be read - in combination with the `select()` system call, a maximum time for the blocking operation can be set, as shown in Listing 6.5.

```
1 fd_set set;
2 struct timeval timeout;
3 int selectRC;
4 ...
5 FD_ZERO(&set);
6 FD_SET(fileDescriptor, &set);
7 timeout.tv_sec = 2;    // set timeout to 2 seconds
8 timeout.tv_usec = 0;
9 selectRC = select(FD_SETSIZE, set, NULL, NULL, timeout);
10 if(selectRC == 0)
11 {
12     // timeout occurred
13 }
14 else if(selectRC < 0)
15 {
16     // error occurred
17 }
18 else
19 {
20     // data arrived – read it:
21     read(pipefd[READEND], buffer, len);
22 }
```

Listing 6.5: Blocking read with timeout

In this example, `FD_ZERO` at first clears the set containing the file handles to be watched, `FD_SET()` then adds the file handle we are interested in (allowing to watch multiple file descriptors). The timeout is then set to two seconds (microseconds granularity is supported, nevertheless the timing precision is limited by the system clock granularity and kernel scheduling delays), and `select()` is called. If no data is received within 2 seconds, the `if`-branch is executed. If data is received in time, the `else`-branch is executed instead, and the waiting data can be obtained by performing a standard `read()` call.

## Race conditions

Software race conditions occur whenever an application, using shared resources, depends on the timing of its processes or threads. Because the exact time when a particular process or thread is scheduled by the processor is unknown in advance, such conditions must be avoided. An example of a program containing a race condition would be as following:

```
1 for ( int i = 0; i < 1000000; i++ )
2 {
3   x = x + 1;
4 }
5 // x = ?
```

Listing 6.6: Race condition

For a single-threaded program, this would produce the value  $x = 1000000$  after the loop, while for a 2-threaded program, the resulting value will depend on the exact scheduling of the threads and very likely differ from the expected value  $x = 2000000$ . The reason is that the statement incrementing  $x$  is no atomic operation. Instead, the operation will consist of several statements on machine language level, forming a *critical region*:

1. load value from address into register
2. add 0x01 to the register
3. write value from register to address

If thread 1 gets interrupted after the second step and thread 2 afterwards finishes, thread 1 will overwrite the value just written by thread 2 and thus produce a false result.

Such a critical region must be protected such that only one thread can enter it, a requirement also called mutex, short for *mutual exclusion*. The implementation uses the **POSIX** *pthread mutex* to lock critical regions, as shown in Listing 6.7.

```
1 if(pthread_mutex_init(&globalMutex, NULL) != 0)
2 {
3   printf("mutex init failed, exit");
4   return -1;
5 }
6 pthread_mutex_lock(&globalMutex);
7 /*
8   CRITICAL REGION
9 */
10 pthread_mutex_unlock(&globalMutex);
```

Listing 6.7: Locking a critical region

*globalMutex* is a global variable of type *pthread\_mutex\_t*, shared between all threads which are accessing the shared resource. After calling *pthread\_mutex\_lock()*, there are two possibilities: if the mutex is unlocked, the call will lock it and continue the program flow. If it is already locked, the call to *pthread\_mutex\_lock()* will block and the corresponding thread will be set to blocking. If the mutex is unlocked by the possessing thread, the blocked thread will be set active, lock for his part and continue execution.<sup>1</sup>

Communication between the CLR and SEC0/SEC1 threads is achieved by pipes, as introduced above. Because data exchanged by pipes does not possess any internal structure, accessing them must be done in a consistent way, which is the task of *globalMutex*. If one thread wants to write data to another thread, it first locks the mutex, writes the data to the pipe and finally releases the mutex. The reading thread, waiting for data in state "blocked", will be set running by the operating system, immediately lock the mutex and read the data. Finally, it will unlock the mutex again.

## Cryptographic functions

To use the needed cryptographic functions, the open source library "OpenSSL" is utilized. The **API** supports a wide range of symmetric and asymmetric encryption, decryption, signing and key negotiation algorithms through two different kind of interfaces: a high level "EVP" interface, hiding much of the complexity, and a low level interface. If possible, the high level interface should be used, but for the key derivation function it turned out that the low level interface was easier to use.

Documentation and code snippets can be found on <https://wiki.openssl.org>, another important source of information are the man-pages (available under Debian after installing the package *libssl-doc*) and the header files.

It is noted that in the examples below no error checking of the return codes returned by the OpenSSL calls is executed. These checks are omitted here just for clarity, nevertheless it is imperative to always check for error conditions.

### Key derivation

To obtain a shared secret between two security gateways, **ECDH** over the curve "NID X9 62 prime256v1" is used. This is a **NIST** elliptic curve defined over the 256 bit prime  $p_{256} = 2^{256} - 2^{224} + 2^{192} + 2^{96} - 1$ , thus the resulting points will have coordinates of size 256 bits each. The uncompressed form of such a point consists of 65 bytes: 1 byte for a leading tag, 32 bytes for the x and 32 bytes for the y coordinate of the point. Because of

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<sup>1</sup>Of course, *pthread\_mutex\_lock()* must be executed in an atomic way, otherwise introducing a race condition on another level.

the quadratic form of the curve (see Section 2.2 for a recap), it suffices to transmit only the x coordinate and one byte, determining the sign of the solution. The corresponding y coordinate can then be recovered.

Whenever a security gateway receives a new frame on its cleartext line, it generates a new **ECDH** parameter, i.e., it generates a new key pair, the public key is then sent to all other security gateways in the segment:

```
1 EC_KEY *pkey;
2 pkey = EC_KEY_new_by_curve_name(NID_X9_62_prime256v1)
3 EC_POINT *ecPoint = NULL;
4 size_t ecPoint_size;
5 const EC_GROUP *group;
6 EC_KEY_generate_key(pkey);
7 EC_KEY_set_conv_form(pkey, POINT_CONVERSION_COMPRESSED);
8 ecPoint = (EC_POINT *) EC_KEY_get0_public_key(pkey);
9 group = (EC_GROUP *) EC_KEY_get0_group(pkey);
10 ecPoint_size = EC_POINT_point2oct(group, ecPoint,
    EC_KEY_get_conv_form(pkey), buf, BUFSIZE, NULL);
11 if(!EC_POINT_is_on_curve(group, ecPoint, NULL))
12 {
13     printf("ERROR: point not on curve\n");
14     exit(-1);
15 }
```

Listing 6.8: Generating an **ECDH** parameter

The new key pair is generated in line 6, the public key is obtained and converted to a hexadecimal string in lines 8 and 10. Finally, it is checked if the new point indeed is part of the curve.

The receiving side performs the same operations to obtain its own key pair which is sent back to the requester, and immediately derives the shared secret as shown in Listing 6.9.

```
1 size_t secret_len;
2 unsigned char *secret;
3 EC_POINT *peerEcPoint = NULL;
4 EC_KEY *peerEcKey = NULL;
5 const EC_GROUP *group = NULL;
6 peerEcKey = EC_KEY_new_by_curve_name(NID_X9_62_prime256v1);
7 group = EC_KEY_get0_group(peerEcKey);
8 peerEcPoint = EC_POINT_new(group);
9 EC_POINT_oct2point(group, peerEcPoint, peerPubKey, (size_t)33, NULL))
10 EC_KEY_set_public_key(peerEcKey, peerEcPoint))
```



```

11 secret = OPENSSL_malloc(32);
12 secret_len = ECDH_compute_key(secret, 32, EC_KEY_get0_public_key(
    peerEcKey), pkey, NULL);

```

Listing 6.9: Deriving a shared secret

Here, the public key received (the pointer *peerPubKey*) must be first converted from a hexadecimal string into point representation, and finally into an EC\_KEY object (lines 9 and 10). The actual key derivation is shown in line 12.

This derived secret must be fed into a secure hashing function, for example **SHA-256** because the shared secret may not be uniformly distributed. By appending different strings it is also possible to derive an encryption and a **MAC** key in one run.

### MAC generation

For this task, a **SHA-256** based **HMAC** is used, producing a 32 byte **MAC**. To reduce the overhead, only 4 bytes are used and contained in the messages. The usage of the high-level **API** is shown in Listing 6.10.

```

1 size_t req = 0;
2 EVP_MD_CTX* ctx = EVP_MD_CTX_create();
3 const EVP_MD* md = EVP_get_digestbyname("SHA256");
4 EVP_DigestInit_ex(ctx, md, NULL);
5 EVP_DigestSignInit(ctx, NULL, md, NULL, pkey);
6 EVP_DigestSignUpdate(ctx, msg, mlen);
7 EVP_DigestSignFinal(ctx, NULL, &req);
8 *sig = OPENSSL_malloc(req);
9 *slen = req;
10 EVP_DigestSignFinal(ctx, *sig, slen);
11 EVP_MD_CTX_destroy(ctx);

```

Listing 6.10: Generating an **HMAC**

Line 2 allocates and initializes a digest context, a digest structure for **SHA-256** is obtained in line 3 and initialized in line 4. Line 5 sets up the signing context for the underlying digest function. The actual signing of the input message string pointed to by *msg* is done in line 6. Afterwards, the length of the signature is obtained by the first call to `EVP_DigestSignFinal()`, the signature is written to the newly allocated memory and the context memory is deallocated.

### Encryption and decryption

As cipher, **AES-256** in **CTR** mode is utilized. This mode has the advantage that no fixed block size must be transmitted, but only the actual size of the ciphertext. Encryption

with the OpenSSL high level interface is shown in Listing 6.11. As with the **HMAC**, a context must be created and initialized.

```
1 EVP_CIPHER_CTX *aesCtx = NULL;
2 int cipherLen, len=0, i=0;
3 aesCtx = EVP_CIPHER_CTX_new();
4 EVP_EncryptInit_ex(aesCtx, EVP_aes_256_ctr(), NULL, key, ctrFull);
5 EVP_EncryptUpdate(aesCtx, &cipherBuf[0], &len, msg, msgLen);
6 cipherLen = len;
7 EVP_EncryptFinal_ex(aesCtx, cipherBuf + len, &cipherLen);
8 cipherLen += len;
9 EVP_CIPHER_CTX_free(aesCtx);
```

Listing 6.11: **AES** encryption

## 6.2 Evaluation

The proposed solution was evaluated by showing that it can resist against the attacks defined in Section 2.1, and is robust against temporarily or permanent failure of one out of two secure **KNX** lines.

Failure of one secure communication line does not imply failure of the whole system: as long as the other secured line is still functional, synchronization, discovery and data services will be handled by the functional line alone. As soon as the broken line is available again, discovery and data service messages will be sent on both lines.

For malicious attacks, it is assumed that an attacker only has polynomially bounded processing powers and is able to passively read frames from and inject arbitrary frames into both secure communication lines. In contrast, it is assumed that the cleartext **KNX** lines are out of reach of an attacker, as well as the hardware running the master daemons, especially the memory holding the long-term encryption and authentication keys. Attacking the hardware itself would allow the attacker to obtain these keys and thus present itself as legitimate gateway.

The overall aim is to show that the communication network is able to withstand maliciously introduced faults, as well as unintended faults happening randomly, resulting in a **KNX** network with improved availability. In the case of **DOS** attacks, it is stated that the proposed solution can withstand such an attack against **one** of its two secure communication lines because of the duplicate and independent sending of the corresponding messages. An attacker interrupting both lines will obviously cripple the data exchange in total. Such a **DOS** attack can be conducted for example by shortcutting the **TP** lines, or by permanently driving the bus line into the dominant level.

## Synchronization phase

### Passive attacks

Packages in the synchronization phase are not encrypted, allowing a passive adversary to learn the value of the global counter value  $Ctr_{global}$ . Nevertheless, this counter is only used to avoid deterministic encryption (see Section 2.3) and is of no use for the attacker. Additionally, the attacker is able to learn all header fields, in particular the device addresses of all active security gateways, but this is considered inevitable and also of little use for the attacker.

### Active attacks

An active attacker can inject new synchronization request and response messages, but will fail to produce a correct **MAC** for the actual time stamp with probability  $1 - \frac{1}{2^{32}}$  because the **MAC** equals a random 32 bit number for the given header and payload. Such a **MAC** forgery will be detected by all active security gateways, and the corresponding frame will be discarded.

Opening a window for tolerating clock deviations allows an active attacker to replay captured synchronization request and response packages within that time window. Nevertheless, this is considered uncritical: for synchronization request messages, the attacker can trigger a new synchronization response message by a legitimate security gateway, which will re-send the actual counter value to the source address of the replayed message. The corresponding device however has already finished synchronization phase and will just drop the message.

When replaying a synchronization response message within the valid time window there are two possibilities: if a joining device is waiting for a response message the replayed message will be handled as legitimate response, and the newly joined device concludes the synchronization phase. On the other hand, if no device is waiting for a synchronization response, the message will simply get dropped.

## Discovery phase

### Passive attacks

In this phase, a passive attacker is able to learn the global counter value  $Ctr_{global}$ , as well as the **ECDH** parameters exchanged by requester and responder. Both is considered unproblematic: for the first case, the same arguments as given for the synchronization phase hold. To derive the key used by two parties in the subsequent data transmission

from the **D-H** parameters the attacker would need to solve the **ECDLP**, as shown in Section 2.2.

Additionally, the attacker can learn the *encrypted* value of the requested group address and also learns which gateway(s) are responsible for the encrypted gateway. It is argued that it is impossible for the attacker to learn the underlying cleartext group address because of the 256 bit **AES** encryption, assuming that the attacker does not know the long term encryption key. Nevertheless, the attacker is able to derive communication profiles, i.e., which devices behind which security gateways are communicating with each other, and therefore enables the attacker to derive the basic topology of the network.

### Active attacks

Injecting new or replaying old messages is useless from an attacker's point of view, argued as following: for newly generated, injected discovery request messages, the attacker must at first generate the encryption for the wanted group address. Lacking the encryption key, the attacker can produce the correct encryption for the 2 byte group address with probability  $1 - 2^{-16}$ . Afterwards, the attacker additionally must guess the correct lowest 4 bytes of the 256 bit **MAC** for the header fields and payload (again provided that the attacker does not know the key used for **MAC** generation). Failure to forge the correct **MAC** will be detected by all receiving devices.

Similar arguments hold for discovery response messages.

Replaying discovery messages is considered pointless because of the freshness property provided by  $Ctr_{global}$ : such repeated frames will be detected by the security gateways because of the outdated value of  $Ctr_{global}$ , which will just drop the replayed frame.

Attacking alternating secure communication lines will also fail: for example, the attacker could at first shortcut one secure communication line such that the discovery message will not reach its recipient(s). Receiving the discovery message on the other line and injecting the frame to the previously blocked line would result in a fresh counter value. Nevertheless, such frames will bear the wrong secure line number as part of the source address (for discovery request messages, with the destination field set to the broadcast address) or source- and destination address, and will thus be detected. Alternating the source- and/or destination-addresses will invalidate the **MAC**, forcing the attacker again to forge the **MAC**, an infeasible task as already stated.

## Data transmission phase

### Passive attacks

An eavesdropping attacker will be able to learn source- and destination addresses of the security gateways exchanging the frame, as well as the length of the inner frame and the individual counter  $Ctr_{ind}$ . Again, the meta data can be used to generate communication profiles, a fact considered inevitable. The individual counter is used as freshness property and to detect the duplicate frames on the receiving side. Therefore, an attacker does not benefit from knowing this counter value.

Decrypting the contained inner frame is considered impossible based on the following facts: firstly, encryption is based on **AES**-256, therefore trying all possible keys is infeasible. Secondly, the attacker is unable to get knowledge of the key because of the key agreement protocol used in the discovery phase.

### Active attacks

An attacker, trying to inject a new data frame, again must succeed in forging the correct **MAC**. Failure to do so will be detected by the receiving gateway. A replayed message will be correctly verified and decrypted by the receiving device, but because of the outdated counter value  $Ctr_{ind}$  the message will be discarded.

## Conclusion

### 7.1 Contribution

To be able to deploy a communication system in more demanding environments, it is necessary to achieve informational security combined with mechanisms for improved availability. For **KNX**, extensions for securing a network against malicious attacks exist, but these extension are not able to handle a fault concerning the communication medium, as well as **DOS** attacks. Therefore, this work proposes a way to protect against transient hardware failures, as well as active and passive adversaries. For the latter, the proposal is able to resist restricted **DOS** attacks, too. This is achieved by using security gateways which are connected to each other in a redundant way. Standard **KNX** devices are connected through these gateways, which copy the client's frames into two properly secured frames and send them over both communication lines. The receiving side will check the received frames for modification, discard one of the two copies and forward the remaining one to the destined standard **KNX** device.

It was shown that the proposed solution can withstand malicious attacks, as well as transient hardware failures of one of the secured lines. Therefore, the solution allows to connect standard **KNX** devices which are spatially divided in a secure manner, bridging over areas where malicious behavior cannot be ruled out. The proposed solution can be deployed in a 'plug-and-play' manner, as long as the constraints defined in Section 5.1 are regarded. Thus, it is possible to add confidentiality, integrity and availability to a **KNX** network just where needed, coexisting with segments with low security demands. By using more than 2 secured lines, the solution can easily be extended to use  $n$  instead of 2 secure threads and communication lines, increasing availability to an even higher level.

## 7.2 Outlook

The following improvements to the prototype solution are proposed:

- Using a cache for the mapping of group address to security gateways and encryption keys. A gateway receiving data from a client would send a discovery message once and cache the address(es) of the responsible gateway(s), together with the corresponding encryption key(s). Subsequent data transfer can be executed without the need for sending discovery messages first, reducing the bus load. Of course, a reasonable caching time has to be found after which a cached entry is deleted because newly connected clients may not be reachable within this duration.
- Obfuscating the size of the data service messages, which can be achieved by adding an additional length field and corresponding padding, chosen randomly. This makes it harder to derive communication profiles.
- Attacks can be detected if frames with forged **MACs** are received, allowing to send an alert to an operator. For the used platform, this can be achieved easily by connecting the RaspberryPis to a restricted **IP** network and sending the alarm, for example, by mail or **Simple Network Management Protocol (SNMP)**. Additionally, the address of the attacking device can be added to a blacklist such that traffic coming from this address is discarded immediately.

### Restrictions

During development, the follow restrictions were found. Of course, the constraining assumptions made in Section 5.1 are still valid.

- While **EIBD** can send extended frames, it does not support receiving frames with payload  $\geq 56$  byte. While this clearly violates the **KNX** specification, no efforts were made to debug this behavior.
- With the current **EIBD API**, sending raw frames is not possible, but only application- or transport layer data units. This implies that it is not possible to set the source address of a written frame. Frames delivered by a security gateway are therefore sent with the gateway's device address, instead of the origin device address. To make the security gateways appear fully transparent to client devices, the **API** must be extended.

## Setup of the base system

The base system consists of RaspberryPi boards running the Raspbian operating system (a Debian variant), **EIBD**, shared libraries which are used by **EIBD** and the master daemon. The operating system is based on the Debian project. The kernel, libraries and binaries are ported to the ARM platform, so it is possible to benefit from using a full-scale operating system, e.g. by using the comfortable packet manager called *aptitude* provided by Debian. A short introduction to the most important commands is given below as they are needed.

### A.1 Raspbian

To obtain a running system for deploying the secure **KNX** daemon, a prebuilt Debian image is used, which can be downloaded from the RaspberryPi homepage.

[http://downloads.raspberrypi.org/raspbian\\_latest.torrent](http://downloads.raspberrypi.org/raspbian_latest.torrent)

The image must be unzipped and copied to a suitable memory card. First-generation RaspberryPis (model 'A') have SD slots, while all later models come with micro-SD slots. To copy the basic operating system to the memory card, the Linux command "dd" can be used. To find the correct device to write the image to, the following command can be used:

```
1 # tail -f /var/log/kern.log
```

After inserting the memorycard into a cardreader, look for output like that:

```
1 [1004111.533698] sdb: detected capacity change from 7909408768  
   to 0  
2 [1004114.055840] sd 6:0:0:0: [sdb] 15448064 512-byte logical  
   blocks: ...
```



Here, the proper device to use is the device `/dev/sdb`. **Pay attention to use the correct device in the following command - this device will be overwritten:**

```
1 # dd if=<Path to Image> of=<Device to overwrite>
```

After the write-command has finished, the memory card is ready to use. For first time setup, a display must be connected via HDMI. Powering up the RaspberryPi opens a ncurses configuration dialogue. First thing to do is to resize the root partition to maximum size and set a password for the administrative account. Optionally, different options like keyboard layout can be set. To be able to operate the RaspberryPi without external display, it is necessary to start a **SSH** server under *Advanced Options* and assign a fixed **IP** to the host by editing the file `/etc/network/interfaces`, as shown in example **B.1**. This way it is possible to connect to the RaspberryPi with a **SSH** client. For password less logins, create an unprivileged user and a **SSH** public/private key pair for that user by executing these commands on the RaspberryPi:

```
1 # groupadd <usergroup>
2 # useradd -g <usergroup> -m <username>
3 # su <username>
4 # ssh-keygen
```

The program generates the user and the corresponding key pair and saves public and private key in the subdirectory `/.ssh/` of the actual user. When asked for a passphrase, it is possible to use a password-less keypair, an option that should only be used in restricted areas. To actually use the keypair for logging into the RaspberryPi, the public key must be saved in the file `/.ssh/authorized_keys`. Additionally, the private key must be copied to every host from that **SSH** connections to the RaspberryPi want to be opened. After that, it is possible to load the private key into memory with the command `ssh-add` and to connect to the host without a password:

```
1 # ssh-add // only necessary when non-empty password is used for
    keypair
2 # ssh <username>@<host-ip|host-dns-name>
```

It is also advisable to update the operating system at this time by running the following commands as user root:

```
1 # apt-get update
2 # apt-get install
```

This will install the latest package versions of all installed packages. New software can be installed from the command line with these commands:

```
1 # apt-cache search <pattern> // print a list matching packages for <
    pattern>
2 # apt-get install <packagename>
```

## A.2 EIBD

The maintainer of **EIBD** provides binary packages for the i386 architecture only. Therefore, the daemon and its prerequisites must be built from source to get suitable binaries and shared libraries for the ARM environment. Building software under GNU Linux or \*nix from source always follows this scheme:

1. Downloading and extracting the source code.
2. If possible, comparing the developer supplied hash code with the hash code of the downloaded source files with *sha256* or one of its variants to verify that no modified software has been downloaded.
3. Optionally, apply patches to the source code (not necessary here).
4. Set the make-options by calling *./configure <options>*, overriding default compilation options by setting the corresponding command line parameters. *./configure --help* should print a list of valid options.
5. Compiling the source code by calling *make*.
6. Copying the generated binaries and shared libraries into their correct place by calling *make install*. This last step must always be executed as user root because the generated files will be copied into system directories which are not writeable by unprivileged users.

**EIBD** and the needed library *pthsem* are available from these locations:

[https://www.auto.tuwien.ac.at/~mkoegler/pth/pthsem\\_2.0.8.tar.gz](https://www.auto.tuwien.ac.at/~mkoegler/pth/pthsem_2.0.8.tar.gz)  
<http://sourceforge.net/projects/bcusdk/>

After copying the archives to the RaspberryPi, they must be unpacked and compiled. First the *pthsem* shared library, offering user mode multi threading with semaphores, must be compiled because it is used by **EIBD**.

```
1 # tar -xvzf pthsem-2.0.8.tar.gz
2 # cd pthsem-2.0.8
3 # ./configure
4 # make
5 # make install // must be executed as root
```

This will, among other things, generate the shared library *libpthsem.so.20* in the directory */usr/local/lib*. */usr/local* is by convention the destination where self compiled

software should reside. Now that pthsem is available, **EIBD** itself is ready for compilation:

```
1 # tar -xvzf bcusdk-0.0.5.tar.gz
2 # cd bcdusk-0.0.5
3 # ./configure --without-pth-test --enable-onlyeibd --enable-
  tpuarts
4 # make
5 # make install // must be executed as root
```

These steps generate the binary *eibd* and lots of helper programs in the directories */usr/local/bin*, and the shared object */usr/local/lib/libeibclient.so.0* that provides the **EIBD API** and therefore is needed to be linked to the master daemon.

Additionally, the development files for interfacing with the OpenSSL **API** must be installed by executing the following command:

```
1 # aptitude install libssl-dev
```

## A.3 Revision control

The source of the master daemon is managed by GIT. GIT is a decentralized version-control system and is available under Debian/Raspbian after installing the package 'git'. The command **A.3** fetches the latest version and creates a directory called 'knxSec' which contains all the needed source files, a proper makefile **B.3** for the project, as well as all other needed files.

```
1 # git clone git@github.com:hglanzer/knxSec.git
```

## A.4 Busware USB couplers

To access the **KNX** TP1 bus, i.e., to write datagrams to and receive datagrams from the bus, **USB** dongles as shown in Figure ?? from the company *Busware* are used. Depending on the revision, the bus couplers creates a new device which is used as **Uniform Resource Locator (URL)** by the **EIBD**. The coupler will be accessible by */dev/ttyACMx*, where x is the number of the device. It may be necessary to flash the bus couplers with the correct firmware first. The easiest way to check this is to use command **A.1** and look for output similar to listing **A.4** when plugging the coupler into a **USB** slot.

```
1 ... usb 1-1.2: new full-speed USB device number 19 using ehci_hcd
2 ... usb 1-1.2: New USB device found, idVendor=03eb, idProduct=204b
3 ... usb 1-1.2: New USB device strings: Mfr=1, Product=2, SerialNumber
  =220
4 ... usb 1-1.2: Product: TPUART
```

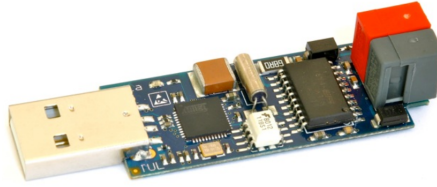


Figure A.1: Busware KNX-USB coupler

```
5 ... usb 1-1.2: Manufacturer: busware.de
6 ... usb 1-1.2: SerialNumber: 7543034373135130C140
7 ... cdc_acm 1-1.2:1.0: ttyACM0: USB ACM device
```

If no such line like 7 appears, the correct firmware is available as file *firmware/TPUARTtransparent.hex* inside the git project. To actually flash the coupler, the programming button on the bottom of the device must be kept pressed while connecting it to an **USB** slot. Afterwards, the commands shown in [A.4](#) must be executed.

```
1 # apt-get install dfu-programmer
2 # dfu-programmer atmega32u4 erase
3 # dfu-programmer atmega32u4 flash TPUARTtransparent.hex
4 # dfu-programmer atmega32u4 reset
```

## A.5 UDEV

To obtain a consistent naming scheme for the busware dongles, udev rules are provided. This way it is possible to always use the same device file for the distinct bus lines, no matter in which ordering the dongles are connected to the RaspberryPi.

```
1 udevadm info --name=/dev/ttyACM0 --attribute-walk
```

## A.6 Test setup

The test environment consists of 2 RaspberryPis, as shown in [Figure 5.1](#).

## Code snippets and configuration files

```
1 # device: eth0
2 auto eth0
3 iface eth0 inet static
4 address 192.168.0.2
5 broadcast 192.168.0.255
6 netmask 255.255.255.0
7 gateway 192.168.0.1
```

Listing B.1: Raspbian configuration for static **IP** address

```
1 # device: eth0
2 iface eth0 inet dhcp
```

Listing B.2: Raspbian configuration for dynamic **IP** address

```
1 CFLAGS=-Wall
2 LIBS=-leibclient -lcrypto -lm
3 #LIBS=-lgmp -lcrypto -llibeibclient
4
5 all: clean
6     gcc $(CFLAGS) master.c sec.c clr.c knx.c cryptoHelper.c -o
7     master -pthread $(LIBS)
8
9 debug: clean
10     gcc $(CFLAGS) master.c clr.c sec.c knx.c cryptoHelper.c -o
11     master -pthread -DDEBUG $(LIBS)
12
13 clean:
```

```

12      clear
13      rm -rf *.o
14      rm -f master
15
16 drun: debug
17      @echo "starts master daemon in debug mode, with KNX device
18          addr 1"
19      ../start.sh 1
20
21 run: all
22      ../start.sh 1
23
24 update:
25      git commit -a --allow-empty
26      git pull
27      git push

```

Listing B.3: Makefile for the master daemon

```

1 #!/bin/bash
2
3 OPT="--tpuarts-ack-all-group --tpuarts-ack-all-individual"
4
5 echo "*****"
6 echo "*ignoring dev - file for CLR device*"
7 echo "*****"
8
9 #if [ -a /dev/knxSEC1 ] && [ -a /dev/knxSEC2 ]
10 if [ -a /dev/knxCLR ] && [ -a /dev/knxSEC1 ] && [ -a /dev/knxSEC2 ]
11 then
12     echo "device files exist - OK"
13 else
14     echo "device file(s) missing - THIS IS BAD!"
15     #exit 1
16 fi
17
18 if [ $# -eq 1 ]
19 then
20     if [ "$1" -gt "0" ] && [ "$1" -lt "16" ]
21     then
22         killall -9 eibd
23         killall -9 eibd
24
25         rm /tmp/knxCLR

```

```

26      rm /tmp/knxSEC1
27      rm /tmp/knxSEC2
28
29      cd src
30
31      #eibd tpuarts:/dev/knxSEC1 --listen--local=/tmp/
32      knxSEC1 $OPT &
33      eibd -e 1.0.$1 tpuarts:/dev/knxSEC1 --listen--local=/
34      tmp/knxSEC1 $OPT &
35      #sleep 1
36      #eibd tpuarts:/dev/knxSEC2 --listen--local=/tmp/
37      knxSEC2 $OPT &
38      eibd -e 1.1.$1 tpuarts:/dev/knxSEC2 --listen--local=/
39      tmp/knxSEC2 $OPT &
40      #sleep 1
41      #eibd tpuarts:/dev/knxCLR --listen--local=/tmp/knxCLR
42      $OPT &
43      eibd -e 1.2.$1 tpuarts:/dev/knxCLR --listen--local=/
44      tmp/knxCLR $OPT &
45
46      echo "starting master daemon"
47      sleep 1
48      #./master --clrSocket local:/tmp/knxCLR --
49      sec1Socket /tmp/knxSEC1 --sec2Socket /tmp/
50      knxSEC2 --addr $1
51      ./master --clrSocket local:/tmp/knxCLR --sec1Socket
52      local:/tmp/knxSEC1 --sec2Socket local:/tmp/
53      knxSEC2 --addr $1
54
55  else
56      echo "usage: "
57  fi
58 else
59      clear
60      echo "usage: ./start.sh <device addr> "
61      echo
62      echo
63  fi

```

Listing B.4: Start script

# Glossary

**3DES** Triple Data Encryption Standard. 22–24

**ACU** Advanced Coupler Unit. 63

**AE** Authenticated Encryption. 2, 30

**AES** Advanced Encryption Standard. 24, 39, 62, 63, 89, 90, 92, 93

**AIL** Application Interface Layer. 62

**APDU** Application Layer Protocol Data Unit. 60, 62

**API** Application Programming Interface. 81, 87, 89, 95, 99

**BbC** Backbone Coupler. 55

**bps** bits per second. 55, 78

**CA** Certification Authority. 63

**CA** Collision Avoidance. 56

**CBC** Cipher Block Chaining. 25–27, 31–33, 62

**CCM** Counter with CBC MAC. 33, 62

**CFB** Cipher Feedback Mode. 28

**CPA** Chosen Plaintext Attack. 26

**CRC** Cyclic Redundancy Check. 30, 63

**CSMA** Courier Sense Multiple Access. 56

**CTR** Counter Mode. 26, 27, 33, 39, 62, 63, 89



**CTRL** Extended Control Field. 57

**D-H** Diffie-Hellman. 14, 16, 35–37, 71, 92

**DANP** Doubly Attached Node with PRP. 51

**DES** Data Encryption Standard. 22, 23

**DLP** Discrete Logarithm Problem. 14, 16, 35

**DOS** Denial of Service. 1, 4, 45, 90, 94

**DP** Data Point. 53

**DPT** Data Point Type. 53, 60

**DSA** Digital Signature Algorithm. 39

**EC** Elliptic Curve. 14, 16–18, 35, 36

**ECB** Electronic Code Book. 25, 26

**ECC** Elliptic Curve Cryptography. 35, 39

**ECDH** Elliptic Curve Diffie-Hellman. 70, 74, 77, 83, 87, 88, 91

**ECDLP** Elliptic Curve Discrete Logarithm Problem. 18, 36, 39, 92

**ECDSA** Elliptic Curve Digital Signature Algorithm. 39

**EHS** European Home Systems Protocol. 53

**EIB** European Installation Bus. 53–55

**EIBD** European Installation Bus Daemon. 81–83, 95, 96, 98, 99

**EIS** EIB interworking standard. 53

**ETS** Engineering Tool Software. 53, 62–64

**FDSK** Factory Default Setup Key. 62

**GA** Group Address. 58, 59, 66–68, 71, 72, 77, 79

**HA** High Availability. 42, 43, 45

**HBAS** Home and Building Automation System. iii, 1–3, 53, 61, 62

**HGA** Heim- und Gebäudeautomation. [iv](#)

**HMAC** Keyed-Hash Message Authentication Code. [31](#), [89](#), [90](#)

**HSR** High Availability Seamless Redundancy. [51](#), [52](#)

**HVAC** Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning. [iii](#), [1](#), [2](#)

**IA** Individual Address. [56](#), [58](#), [59](#), [66–68](#), [71](#), [72](#), [77](#), [79](#)

**ICD** Interconnection Device. [2](#), [3](#)

**IEEE** Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers. [48](#), [50](#)

**IP** Internet Protocol. [1](#), [3](#), [51](#), [55](#), [61](#), [63](#), [64](#), [95](#), [97](#), [101](#)

**IPSec** Internet Protocol Security. [3](#)

**IPv4** Internet Protocol version 4. [59](#)

**ISO** International Organization for Standardization. [53](#)

**IV** Initialization Vector. [13](#), [25](#), [26](#), [28](#), [33](#), [62](#)

**KNX** Konnex. [iii](#), [iv](#), [1](#), [3–5](#), [52–56](#), [58–69](#), [71–73](#), [77](#), [79](#), [81–83](#), [90](#), [94–96](#), [99](#)

**LAN** Local Area Network. [51](#)

**LC** Line Coupler. [55](#)

**LFSR** Linear Feedback Shift Register. [20](#), [21](#)

**LLC** logical link control. [56](#)

**LRE** Link Redundancy Entity. [51](#)

**LSDU** Link Service Data Unit. [51](#), [57](#)

**MAC** Message Authentication Code. [10](#), [25](#), [29–31](#), [33](#), [38](#), [62](#), [69](#), [70](#), [73](#), [74](#), [77](#), [79](#), [89](#), [91–93](#), [95](#)

**MAC** Medium Access. [49](#), [51](#), [56](#)

**MAU** Medium Access Unit. [56](#)

**MD** Management Device. [2](#), [3](#)

**MRP** Media Redundancy Protocol. 50

**MTTF** Mean Time To Failure. 41, 52

**MTTR** Mean Time To Repair. 41, 42

**NIST** National Institute of Standards and Technology. 22, 24, 31, 39, 87

**NSA** National Security Agency. 23

**OFB** Output Feedback Mode. 28

**OSI** Open System Interconnection Model. 48, 51, 53, 54, 59

**OTP** One Time Pad. 19

**PDU** Protocol Data Unit. 62

**POSIX** Portable Operating System Interface. 84, 86

**PRNG** Pseudo Random Number Generator. 13, 14, 20

**PRP** Parallel Redundancy Protocol. 51, 52

**PSK** Pre Shared Key. 63, 74

**RAID** Redundant Array of Independent Disks. 45

**RF** Radio Frequency. 55

**RSTP** Rapid Spanning Tree Protocol. 50

**S-AL** Secure-Application Layer. 62

**SACs** Sensors, Actuators and Controllers. 2, 3

**SAN** Single Attached Node. 51

**SHA** Standard Hashing Algorithm. 31, 89

**SLA** Service Level Agreement. 41

**SNMP** Simple Network Management Protocol. 95

**SP** Substitution-Permutation. 22

**SPOF** Single Point of Failure. 64

**SSH** Secure Shell. 30, 33, 97

**SSL** Secure Sockets Layer. 33

**STP** Spanning Tree Protocol. 48–50

**TCP** Transport Control Protocol. 59

**TK** Tool Key. 62

**TLS** Transport Layer Security. 3, 63

**TMR** Triple Modular Redundancy. 46

**TP** Twisted Pair. 4, 54–56, 90

**TPCI** Transport Layer Protocol Control Information. 59, 62

**TPDU** Transport Layer Protocol Data Unit. 59

**TRNG** True Random Number Generator. 14

**TTL** Time To Live. 59

**URL** Uniform Resource Locator. 99

**USB** Universal Serial Bus. 4, 99, 100

**VLAN** Virtual Local Area Network. 49

**VPN** Virtual Private Network. 3, 61

**XOR** Exclusive-Or. 19, 20, 22–24, 26, 28

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