

WCTP 1.1 Corrections and Clarifications

Technical Note #4

Clarification of messageID in StatusInfo

Revision: 1.1
Release Date: 2001-September-7

Status: Released
Document ID: wctp-v1r1-tn04.doc



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1 Purpose

The purpose of this technical note is to clarify the StatusInfo packet. The role of messageID in the StatusInfo operation is confusing.

2 The role of messageID

The wctp-StatusInfo operation contains a wctp-ResponseHeader, which is specified in the wctp-MessageReply operation. The wctp-ResponseHeader contains a wctp-MessageControl packet, which is specified in the wctp-SubmitRequest operation. The wctp-MessageControl contains a messageID field, which is required. Use Case #13 (in the Use Case Companion) step e is a fine example of the wctp-StatusInfo element. The problem with this example is that it shows the responseToMessageID field in the wctp-ResponseHeader and the messageID field in the wctp-MessageControl as having different values.

The responseToMessageID field must match the messageID field of the original message. The natural question is what is the messageID in the response message? A messageID has been defined as a message identifier, and in response messages it identifies the particular response. As such, it can be used to correlate responses to responses. For example, wctp-MessageReply can be issued in response to a wctp-MessageReply. Also, the delivery of a wctp-MessageReply message can be tracked the same way as the delivery of a wctp-SubmitRequest message.

However, it should be noted that wctp-StatusInfo messages do not allow any responses or delivery tracking. Message loops of sending a failure notification to a deliver notification to a deliver failure notification, etc must be prohibited. If there is no reason to track the delivery of wctp-StatusInfo message, the messageID field in such a message is extraneous.

Therefore, there is no need or use for the required messageID field. To satisfy the DTD definition, it will continue to be provided. It will contain the messageID of the original message from the enterprise host. So the responseToMessageID and the messageID fields will contain the same value - the messageID of the original message. As a matter of good practice, developers should always use the responseToMessageID field to match to the original message and ignore the messageID in wctp-StatusInfo messages.

The question for WCTP 2.0 is should the messageID field be removed from wctp-StatusInfo or should the specification simply document that the messageID is to be ignored. If the field is removed, the DTD must be changed. The specification could document the confusion and this resolution with a paragraph in section 4.6 WCTP Status Info Operation and by updating each StatusInfo packet in the use cases to show the responseToMessageID and messageID fields containing the same values.