



1

2 **Web Services Security**

3 **UsernameToken Profile 1.1**

4 **OASIS Standard Specification, 1 February 2006**

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19 **Abstract:**

20 This document describes how to use the UsernameToken with the Web Services
21 Security (WSS) specification.

22 **Status:**

23 This is an OASIS Standard document produced by the Web Services Security Technical
24 Committee. It was approved by the OASIS membership on 1 February 2006. Check the
25 current location noted above for possible errata to this document.

26 Technical Committee members should send comments on this specification to the
27 technical Committee's email list. Others should send comments to the Technical
28 Committee by using the "Send A Comment" button on the Technical Committee's web
29 page at www.oasisopen.org/committees/wss.

30 For patent disclosure information that may be essential to the implementation of this
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90 1 Introduction

91 This document describes how to use the UsernameToken with the WSS: SOAP Message
92 Security specification [WSS]. More specifically, it describes how a web service consumer can
93 supply a UsernameToken as a means of identifying the requestor by "username", and optionally
94 using a password (or shared secret, or password equivalent) to authenticate that identity to the
95 web service producer.

96

97 This section is non-normative. Note that Sections 2.1, 2.2, all of 3, 4 and indicated parts of 6 are
98 normative. All other sections are non-normative.

99 2 Notations and Terminology

100 This section specifies the notations, namespaces, and terminology used in this specification.

101 2.1 Notational Conventions

102 The keywords "MUST", "MUST NOT", "REQUIRED", "SHALL", "SHALL NOT", "SHOULD",
103 "SHOULD NOT", "RECOMMENDED", "MAY", and "OPTIONAL" in this document are to be
104 interpreted as described in [RFC 2119].

105

106 When describing abstract data models, this specification uses the notational convention used by
107 the XML Infoset. Specifically, abstract property names always appear in square brackets (e.g.,
108 [some property]).

109

110 When describing concrete XML schemas [XML-Schema], this specification uses the notational
111 convention of WSS: SOAP Message Security. Specifically, each member of an element's
112 [children] or [attributes] property is described using an XPath-like [XPath] notation (e.g.,
113 /x:MyHeader/x:SomeProperty/@value1). The use of {any} indicates the presence of an element
114 wildcard (<xs:any/>). The use of @{any} indicates the presence of an attribute wildcard
115 (<xs:anyAttribute/>).

116

117 Commonly used security terms are defined in the Internet Security Glossary [SECGLO]. Readers
118 are presumed to be familiar with the terms in this glossary as well as the definition in the Web
119 Services Security specification.

120 2.2 Namespaces

121 Namespace URIs (of the general form "some-URI") represents some application-dependent or
122 context-dependent URI as defined in RFC 3986 [URI]. This specification is designed to work with
123 the general SOAP [SOAP11, SOAP12] message structure and message processing model, and
124 should be applicable to any version of SOAP. The current SOAP 1.1 namespace URI is used

125 herein to provide detailed examples, but there is no intention to limit the applicability of this
126 specification to a single version of SOAP.

127

128 The namespaces used in this document are shown in the following table (note that for brevity, the
129 examples use the prefixes listed below but do not include the URIs – those listed below are
130 assumed).

131

Prefix	Namespace
S11	http://schemas.xmlsoap.org/soap/envelope/
S12	http://www.w3.org/2003/05/soap-envelope
wsse	http://docs.oasis-open.org/wss/2004/01/oasis-200401-wss-wssecurity-secext-1.0.xsd
wsse11	http://docs.oasis-open.org/wss/oasis-wss-wssecurity-secext-1.1.xsd
wsu	http://docs.oasis-open.org/wss/2004/01/oasis-200401-wss-wssecurity-utility-1.0.xsd

132

133 The URLs provided for the *wsse* and *wsu* namespaces can be used to obtain the schema files.
134 URI fragments defined in this specification are relative to a base URI of the following unless
135 otherwise stated:

136 [http://docs.oasis-open.org/wss/2004/01/oasis-200401-wss-username-token-](http://docs.oasis-open.org/wss/2004/01/oasis-200401-wss-username-token-profile-1.0)
137 [profile-1.0](http://docs.oasis-open.org/wss/2004/01/oasis-200401-wss-username-token-profile-1.0)

138

139 The following table lists the full URI for each URI fragment referred to in this specification.

140

URI Fragment	Full URI
#PasswordDigest	http://docs.oasis-open.org/wss/2004/01/oasis-200401-wss-username-token-profile-1.0#PasswordDigest
#PasswordText	http://docs.oasis-open.org/wss/2004/01/oasis-200401-wss-username-token-profile-1.0#PasswordText
#UsernameToken	http://docs.oasis-open.org/wss/2004/01/oasis-200401-wss-username-token-profile-1.0#UsernameToken

141 2.3 Acronyms and Abbreviations

142 The following (non-normative) table defines acronyms and abbreviations for this document.

143

Term	Definition
SHA	Secure Hash Algorithm
SOAP	Simple Object Access Protocol
URI	Uniform Resource Identifier
XML	Extensible Markup Language

144 3 UsernameToken Extensions

145 3.1 Usernames and Passwords

146 The <wsse:UsernameToken> element is introduced in the WSS: SOAP Message Security
147 documents as a way of providing a username.

148

149 Within <wsse:UsernameToken> element, a <wsse>Password> element may be specified.
150 Passwords of type PasswordText and PasswordDigest are not limited to actual
151 passwords, although this is a common case. Any password equivalent such as a derived
152 password or S/KEY (one time password) can be used. Having a type of PasswordText merely
153 implies that the information held in the password is "in the clear", as opposed to holding a "digest"
154 of the information. For example, if a server does not have access to the clear text of a password
155 but does have the hash, then the hash is considered a *password equivalent* and can be used
156 anywhere where a "password" is indicated in this specification. It is not the intention of this
157 specification to require that all implementations have access to clear text passwords.

158

159 Passwords of type PasswordDigest are defined as being the Base64 [XML-Schema] encoded,
160 SHA-1 hash value, of the UTF8 encoded password (or equivalent). However, unless this digested
161 password is sent on a secured channel or the token is encrypted, the digest offers no real
162 additional security over use of wsse>PasswordText.

163

164 Two optional elements are introduced in the <wsse:UsernameToken> element to provide a
165 countermeasure for replay attacks: <wsse:Nonce> and <wsu:Created>. A nonce is a
166 random value that the sender creates to include in each UsernameToken that it sends. Although
167 using a nonce is an effective countermeasure against replay attacks, it requires a server to
168 maintain a cache of used nonces, consuming server resources. Combining a nonce with a
169 creation timestamp has the advantage of allowing a server to limit the cache of nonces to a
170 "freshness" time period, establishing an upper bound on resource requirements. If either or both
171 of <wsse:Nonce> and <wsu:Created> are present they MUST be included in the digest value
172 as follows:

173

174 Password_Digest = Base64 (SHA-1 (nonce + created + password))

175

176 That is, concatenate the nonce, creation timestamp, and the password (or shared secret or
177 password equivalent), digest the combination using the SHA-1 hash algorithm, then include the
178 Base64 encoding of that result as the password (digest). This helps obscure the password and
179 offers a basis for preventing replay attacks. For web service producers to effectively thwart replay
180 attacks, three counter measures are RECOMMENDED:

181

- 182 1. It is RECOMMENDED that web service producers reject any UsernameToken *not*
183 using *both* nonce *and* creation timestamps.
- 184 2. It is RECOMMENDED that web service producers provide a timestamp “freshness”
185 limitation, and that any UsernameToken with “stale” timestamps be rejected. As a
186 guideline, a value of five minutes can be used as a minimum to detect, and thus
187 reject, replays.
- 188 3. It is RECOMMENDED that used nonces be cached for a period at least as long as
189 the timestamp freshness limitation period, above, and that UsernameToken with
190 nonces that have already been used (and are thus in the cache) be rejected.

191

192 Note that the nonce is hashed using the octet sequence of its decoded value while the timestamp
193 is hashed using the octet sequence of its UTF8 encoding as specified in the contents of the
194 element.

195

196 Note that `PasswordDigest` can only be used if the plain text password (or password
197 equivalent) is available to both the requestor and the recipient.

198

199 Note that the secret is put at the end of the input and not the front. This is because the output of
200 SHA-1 is the function's complete state at the end of processing an input stream. If the input
201 stream happened to fit neatly into the block size of the hash function, an attacker could extend
202 the input with additional blocks and generate new/unique hash values knowing only the hash
203 output for the original stream. If the secret is at the end of the stream, then attackers are
204 prevented from arbitrarily extending it -- since they have to end the input stream with the
205 password which they don't know. Similarly, if the nonce/created was put at the end, then an
206 attacker could update the nonce to be nonce+created, and add a new created time on the end to
207 generate a new hash.

208

209 The countermeasures above do not cover the case where the token is replayed to a different
210 receiver. There are several (non-normative) possible approaches to counter this threat, which
211 may be used separately or in combination. Their use requires pre-arrangement (possibly in the
212 form of a separately published profile which introduces new password type) among the
213 communicating parties to provide interoperability:

214

- 215 • including the username in the hash, to thwart cases where multiple user accounts
216 have matching passwords (e.g. passwords based on company name)

- 217 including the domain name in the hash, to thwart cases where the same
218 username/password is used in multiple systems
- 219 including some indication of the intended receiver in the hash, to thwart cases where
220 receiving systems don't share nonce caches (e.g., two separate application clusters
221 in the same security domain).

222

223 The following illustrates the XML syntax of this element:

224

```
225 <wsse:UsernameToken wsu:Id="Example-1">
226   <wsse:Username> ... </wsse:Username>
227   <wsse:Password Type="..."> ... </wsse:Password>
228   <wsse:Nonce EncodingType="..."> ... </wsse:Nonce>
229   <wsu:Created> ... </wsu:Created>
230 </wsse:UsernameToken>
```

231

232 The following describes the attributes and elements listed in the example above:

233

234 /wsse:UsernameToken/wsse:Password

235 This optional element provides password information (or equivalent such as a hash). It is
236 RECOMMENDED that this element only be passed when a secure transport (e.g.
237 HTTP/S) is being used or if the token itself is being encrypted.

238

239 /wsse:UsernameToken/wsse:Password/@Type

240 This optional URI attribute specifies the type of password being provided. The table
241 below identifies the pre-defined types (note that the URI fragments are relative to the URI
242 for this specification).

243

URI	Description
#PasswordText (default)	The actual password for the username, the password hash, or derived password or S/KEY. This type should be used when hashed password equivalents that do not rely on a nonce or creation time are used, or when a digest algorithm other than SHA1 is used.
#PasswordDigest	The digest of the password (and optionally nonce and/or creation timestamp) for the username using the algorithm described above.

244

245 /wsse:UsernameToken/wsse:Password/@{any}

246 This is an extensibility mechanism to allow additional attributes, based on schemas, to be
247 added to the element.

248

249 /wsse:UsernameToken/wsse:Nonce

250 This optional element specifies a cryptographically random nonce. Each message
251 including a <wsse:Nonce> element MUST use a new nonce value in order for web
252 service producers to detect replay attacks.

253

254 /wsse:UsernameToken/wsse:Nonce/@EncodingType

255 This optional attribute URI specifies the encoding type of the nonce (see the definition of
256 <wsse:BinarySecurityToken> for valid values). If this attribute isn't specified then
257 the default of Base64 encoding is used.

258

259 /wsse:UsernameToken/wsui:Created

260 The optional <wsui:Created> element specifies a timestamp used to indicate the
261 creation time. It is defined as part of the <wsui:Timestamp> definition.

262

263 All compliant implementations MUST be able to process the <wsse:UsernameToken> element.
264 Where the specification requires that an element be "processed" it means that the element type
265 MUST be recognized to the extent that an appropriate error is returned if the element is not
266 supported.

267

268 Note that <wsse:KeyIdentifier> and <ds:KeyName> elements as described in the WSS:
269 SOAP Message Security specification are not supported in this profile.

270

271 The following example illustrates the use of this element. In this example the password is sent as
272 clear text and therefore this message should be sent over a confidential channel:

273

```
274 <S11:Envelope xmlns:S11="..." xmlns:wsse="...">  
275   <S11:Header>  
276     ...  
277     <wsse:Security>  
278       <wsse:UsernameToken>  
279         <wsse:Username>Zoe</wsse:Username>  
280         <wsse:Password>IloveDogs</wsse:Password>  
281       </wsse:UsernameToken>  
282     </wsse:Security>  
283     ...  
284   </S11:Header>  
285   ...  
286 </S11:Envelope>
```

287

288 The following example illustrates using a digest of the password along with a nonce and a
289 creation timestamp:

290

291
292
293
294
295
296
297
298
299
300
301
302
303
304
305
306
307

```
<S11:Envelope xmlns:S11="..." xmlns:wss="..." xmlns:wsu="...">
  <S11:Header>
    ...
    <wsse:Security>
      <wsse:UsernameToken>
        <wsse:Username>NNK</wsse:Username>
        <wsse:Password Type="...#PasswordDigest">
          weYI3nXd8LjMNVksCKFV8t3rgHh3Rw==
        </wsse:Password>
        <wsse:Nonce>WScqanjCEAC4mQoBE07sAQ==</wsse:Nonce>
        <wsu:Created>2003-07-16T01:24:32Z</wsu:Created>
      </wsse:UsernameToken>
    </wsse:Security>
    ...
  </S11:Header>
  ...
</S11:Envelope>
```

308

309 3.2 Token Reference

310 When a UsernameToken is referenced using `<wsse:SecurityTokenReference>` the
311 `ValueType` attribute is not required. If specified, the value of `#UsernameToken` MUST be
312 specified.

313

314 The following encoding formats are pre-defined (note that the URI fragments are relative to
315 [http://docs.oasis-open.org/wss/2004/01/oasis-200401-wss-username-token-](http://docs.oasis-open.org/wss/2004/01/oasis-200401-wss-username-token-profile-1.0)
316 [profile-1.0](http://docs.oasis-open.org/wss/2004/01/oasis-200401-wss-username-token-profile-1.0)):

317

URI	Description
#UsernameToken	UsernameToken

318

319 When a UsernameToken is referenced from a `<ds:KeyInfo>` element, it can be used to derive
320 a key for a message authentication algorithm as described in Section 4 Key Derivation

321

322 There is no definition of a `KeyIdentifier` for a UsernameToken. Consequently, `KeyIdentifier`
323 references MUST NOT be used when referring to a UsernameToken.

324

325 Similarly, there is no definition of a `KeyName` for a UsernameToken. Consequently, `KeyName`
326 references MUST NOT be used when referring to a UsernameToken.

327

328 All references refer to the `wsu:Id` for the token.

329 3.3 Error Codes

330 Implementations may use custom error codes defined in private namespaces if needed. But it is
331 RECOMMENDED that they use the error handling codes defined in the WSS: SOAP Message
332 Security specification for signature, decryption, and encoding and token header errors to improve
333 interoperability.

334

335 When using custom error codes, implementations should be careful not to introduce security
336 vulnerabilities that may assist an attacker in the error codes returned.

337 4 Key Derivation

338 The password associated with a username may be used to derive a shared secret key for the
339 purposes of integrity or confidentiality protecting message contents. This section defines schema
340 extensions and a procedure for deriving such keys. This procedure MUST be employed when
341 keys are to be derived from passwords in order to ensure interoperability.

342

343 It must be noted that passwords are subject to several kinds of attack, which in turn will lead to
344 the exposure of any derived keys. This key derivation procedure is intended to minimize the risk
345 of attacks on the keys, to the extent possible, but it is ultimately limited by the insecurity of a
346 password that it is possible for a human being to remember and type on a standard keyboard.
347 This is discussed in more detail in the security considerations section of this document.

348

349 Two additional elements are required to enable the derivation of a key from a password. They are
350 `<wsse11:Salt>` and `<wsse11:Iteration>`. These values are not secret and MUST be
351 conveyed in the UsernameToken when key derivation is used. When key derivation is used the
352 password MUST NOT be included in the UsernameToken. The receiver will use its knowledge of
353 the password to derive the same key as the sender.

354

355 The following illustrates the syntax of the `<wsse11:Salt>` and `<wsse11:Iteration>`
356 elements.

```
357 <wsse:UsernameToken wsse:Id="..." >  
358   <wsse:Username>...</wsse:Username>  
359   <wsse11:Salt>...</wsse11:Salt>  
360   <wsse11:Iteration>...</wsse11:Iteration>  
361 </wsse:UsernameToken>
```

362 The following describes these elements.

363

364 `/wsse11:UsernameToken/wsse:Salt`

365 This element is combined with the password as described below. Its value is a 128 bit
366 number serialized as `xs:base64Binary`. It MUST be present when key derivation is
367 used.

368
369 /wsse11:UsernameToken/wsse11:Iteration
370 This element indicates the number of times the hashing operation is repeated when
371 deriving the key. It is expressed as a `xs:unsignedInteger` value. If it is not present, a
372 value of 1000 is used for the iteration count.
373
374 A key derived from a password may be used either in the calculation of a Message Authentication
375 Code (MAC) or as a symmetric key for encryption. When used in a MAC, the key length will
376 always be 160 bits. When used for encryption, an encryption algorithm **MUST NOT** be used
377 which requires a key of length greater than 160 bits. A sufficient number of the high order bits of
378 the key will be used for encryption. Unneeded low order bits will be discarded. For example, if the
379 AES-128 algorithm is used, the high order 128 bits will be used and the low order 32 bits will be
380 discarded from the derived 160 bit value.
381
382 The `<wsse11:Salt>` element is constructed as follows. The high order 8 bits of the Salt will
383 have the value of 01 if the key is to be used in a MAC and 02 if the key is to be used for
384 encryption. The remaining 120 low order bits of the Salt should be a random value.
385
386 The key is derived as follows. The password (which is UTF-8 encoded) and Salt are
387 concatenated in that order. Only the actual octets of the password are used, it is not padded or
388 zero terminated. This value is hashed using the SHA1 algorithm. The result of this operation is
389 also hashed using SHA1. This process is repeated until the total number of hash operations
390 equals the Iteration count.
391
392 In other words: $K1 = \text{SHA1}(\text{password} + \text{Salt})$
393 $K2 = \text{SHA1}(K1)$
394 ...395 $Kn = \text{SHA1}(Kn-1)$
396 Where + means concatenation and n is the iteration count.
397
398 The resulting 160 bit value is used in a MAC function or truncated to the appropriate length for
399 encryption

400 5 Security Considerations

401 The use of the UsernameToken introduces no additional threats beyond those already identified
402 for other types of SecurityTokens. Replay attacks can be addressed by using message
403 timestamps, nonces, and caching, as well as other application-specific tracking mechanisms.
404 Token ownership is verified by use of keys and man-in-the-middle attacks are generally
405 mitigated. Transport-level security may be used to provide confidentiality and integrity of both the
406 UsernameToken and the entire message body.

407

408 When a password (or password equivalent) in a <UsernameToken> is used for authentication,
409 the password needs to be properly protected. If the underlying transport does not provide enough
410 protection against eavesdropping, the password SHOULD be digested as described in this
411 document. Even so, the password must be strong enough so that simple password guessing
412 attacks will not reveal the secret from a captured message.

413

414 When a password is encrypted, in addition to the normal threats against any encryption, two
415 password-specific threats must be considered: replay and guessing. If an attacker can
416 impersonate a user by replaying an encrypted or hashed password, then learning the actual
417 password is not necessary. One method of preventing replay is to use a nonce as mentioned
418 previously. Generally it is also necessary to use a timestamp to put a ceiling on the number of
419 previous nonces that must be stored. However, in order to be effective the nonce and timestamp
420 must be signed. If the signature is also over the password itself, prior to encryption, then it would
421 be a simple matter to use the signature to perform an offline guessing attack against the
422 password. This threat can be countered in any of several ways including: don't include the
423 password under the signature (the password will be verified later) or sign the encrypted
424 password.

425

426 The reader should also review Section 13 of WSS: SOAP Message Security document for
427 additional discussion on threats and possible counter-measures.

428

429 The security of keys derived from passwords is limited by the attacks available against passwords
430 themselves, such as guessing and brute force. Because of the limited size of password that
431 human beings can remember and limited number of octet values represented by keys that can
432 easily be typed, a typical password represents the equivalent of an entropy source of a maximum
433 of only about 50 bits. For this reason a maximum key size of only 160 bits is supported. Longer
434 keys would simply increase processing without adding to security.

435

436 The key derivation algorithm specified here is based on one described in RFC 2898. It is referred
437 to in that document as PBKDF1. It is used instead of PBKDF2, because it is simpler and keys
438 longer than 160 bits are not required as discussed previously.

439

440 The purpose of the salt is to prevent the bulk pre-computation of key values to be tested against
441 distinct passwords. The Salt value is defined so that MAC and encryption keys are guaranteed to
442 have distinct values even when derived from the same password. This prevents certain
443 cryptanalytic attacks.

444

445 The iteration count is intended to increase the work factor of a guessing or brute force attack, at a
446 minor cost to normal key derivation. An iteration count of at least 1000 (the default) SHOULD
447 always be used.

448

449 This section is non-normative.

6 References

450

451 The following are normative references:

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453 **[RFC2119]** S. Bradner, "Key words for use in RFCs to Indicate Requirement Levels,"
454 RFC 2119, Harvard University, March 1997
455 **[WSS]** OASIS standard, "WSS: SOAP Message Security," TBD.
456 **[SOAP11]** W3C Note, "SOAP: Simple Object Access Protocol 1.1," 08 May 2000.
457 **[SOAP12]** W3C Recommendation, "SOAP Version 1.2 Part 1: Messaging
458 Framework", 23 June 2003
459 **[URI]** T. Berners-Lee, R. Fielding, L. Masinter, "Uniform Resource Identifiers
460 (URI): Generic Syntax," RFC 3986, MIT/LCS, Day Software, Adobe
461 Systems, January 2005..
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463 W3C Recommendation, "XML Schema Part 2: Datatypes," 2 May 2001.
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466 (WS-Security 2004), OASIS Standard, [http://docs.oasis-](http://docs.oasis-open.org/wss/2004/01/oasis-200401-wss-soap-message-security-1.1.pdf)
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468 1.1.pdf.
469

470 The following are non-normative references included for background and related material:

- 471
472 **[XML-C14N]** W3C Recommendation, "Canonical XML Version 1.0," 15 March 2001
473 **[EXC-C14N]** W3C Recommendation, "Exclusive XML Canonicalization Version 1.0," 8
474 July 2002.
475 **[XML-Encrypt]** W3C Working Draft, "XML Encryption Syntax and Processing," 04 March
476 2002
477 W3C Recommendation, "Decryption Transform for XML Signature", 10
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Appendix B. Revision History

Rev	Date	By Whom	What
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