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TCP: Transmission Control Protocol

24.1 Introduction

The Transmission Control Protocol, or TCP, provides a connection-oriented, reliable, byte-stream service between the two end points of an application. This is completely different from UDP's connectionless, unreliable, datagram service.

The implementation of UDP presented in Chapter 23 comprised 9 functions and about 800 lines of C code. The TCP implementation we're about to describe comprises 28 functions and almost 4,500 lines of C code. Therefore we divide the presentation of TCP into multiple chapters.

These chapters are not an introduction to TCP. We assume the reader is familiar with the operation of TCP from Chapters 17–24 of Volume 1.

24.2 Code Introduction

The TCP functions appear in six C files and numerous TCP definitions are in seven headers, as shown in Figure 24.1.

Figure 24.2 shows the relationship of the various TCP functions to other kernel functions. The shaded ellipses are the nine main TCP functions that we cover. Eight of these functions appear in the TCP protosw structure (Figure 24.8) and the ninth is tcp_output.

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File	Description
<pre>netinet/tcp.h netinet/tcp_debug.h netinet/tcp_fsm.h netinet/tcp_seq.h netinet/tcp_timer.h netinet/tcp_var.h netinet/tcpip.h</pre>	tcphdr structure definition tcp_debug structure definition definitions for TCP's finite state machine macros for comparing TCP sequence numbers definitions for TCP timers tcpcb (control block) and tcpstat (statistics) structure definitions TCP plus IP header definition
<pre>netinet/tcp_debug.c netinet/tcp_input.c netinet/tcp_output.c netinet/tcp_subr.c netinet/tcp_timer.c netinet/tcp_usrreq.c</pre>	support for SO_DEBUG socket debugging (Section 27.10) tcp_input and ancillary functions (Chapters 28 and 29) tcp_output and ancillary functions (Chapter 26) miscellaneous TCP subroutines (Chapter 27) TCP timer handling (Chapter 25) PRU_xxx request handling (Chapter 30)

Figure 24.1 Files discussed in the TCP chapters.

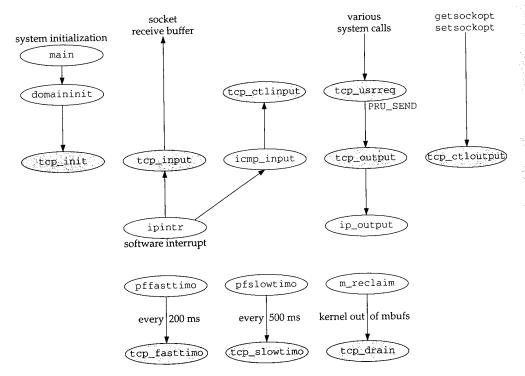


Figure 24.2 Relationship of TCP functions to rest of the kernel.

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Global Variables

Figure 24.3 shows the global variables we encounter throughout the TCP functions.

Variable	Datatype	Description
tcb tcp_last_inpcb	struct inpcb struct inpcb *	head of the TCP Internet PCB list pointer to PCB for last received segment: one-behind cache
tcpstat	struct tcpstat	TCP statistics (Figure 24.4)
tcp_outflags	u_char	array of output flags, indexed by connection state (Figure 24.16)
tcp_recvspace tcp_sendspace	u_long u_long	default size of socket receive buffer (8192 bytes) default size of socket send buffer (8192 bytes)
tcp_iss	tcp_seq	initial send sequence number (ISS)
tcprexmtthresh	int	number of duplicate ACKs to trigger fast retransmit (3)
tcp_mssdflt tcp_rttdflt	int int	default MSS (512 bytes) default RTT if no data (3 seconds)
tcp_do_rfc1323	int u_long	if true (default), request window scale and timestamp options 500 ms counter for RFC 1323 timestamps
tcp_keepidle tcp_keepintvl	int int	keepalive: idle time before first probe (2 hours) keepalive: interval between probes when no response (75 sec) (also used as timeout for connect)
tcp_maxidle	int	keepalive: time after probing before giving up (10 min)

Figure 24.3 Global variables introduced in the following chapters.

Statistics

Various TCP statistics are maintained in the global structure tcpstat, described in Figure 24.4. We'll see where these counters are incremented as we proceed through the code.

Figure 24.5 shows some sample output of these statistics, from the netstat -s command. These statistics were collected after the host had been up for 30 days. Since some counters come in pairs—one counts the number of packets and the other the number of bytes—we abbreviate these in the figure. For example, the two counters for the second line of the table are tcps_sndpack and tcps_sndbyte.

The counter for tcps_sndbyte should be 3,722,884,824, not -22,194,928 bytes. This is an average of about 405 bytes per segment, which makes sense. Similarly, the counter for tcps_rcvackbyte should be 3,738,811,552, not -21,264,360 bytes (for an average of about 565 bytes per segment). These numbers are incorrectly printed as negative numbers because the printf calls in the netstat program use %d (signed decimal) instead of %lu (long integer, unsigned decimal). All the counters are unsigned long integers, and these two counters are near the maximum value of an unsigned 32-bit long integer ($2^{32} - 1 = 4,294,967,295$).



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SNMP

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Figure 24.4 TCP statistics maintained in the tcpstat structure.

netstat -s output	tcpstat members
10,655,999 packets sent	tcps_sndtotal
9,177,823 data packets (-22,194,928 bytes)	tcps_snd{pack,byte}
257,295 data packets (81,075,086 bytes) retransmitted	tcps_sndrexmit{pack,byte}
862,900 ack-only packets (531,285 delayed)	tcps_sndacks,tcps_delack
229 URG-only packets	tcps_sndurg
3,453 window probe packets	tcps_sndprobe
74,925 window update packets	tcps_sndwinup
279,387 control packets	tcps_sndctrl
8,801,953 packets received	tcps_rcvtotal
6,617,079 acks (for -21,264,360 bytes)	tcps_rcvack{pack,byte}
235,311 duplicate acks	tcps_rcvdupack
0 acks for unsent data	tcps_rcvacktoomuch
4,670,615 packets (324,965,351 bytes) rcvd in-sequence	tcps_rcv{pack,byte}
46,953 completely duplicate packets (1,549,785 bytes)	tcps_rcvdup{pack,byte}
22 old duplicate packets	tcps_pawsdrop
3,442 packets with some dup. data (54,483 bytes duped)	tcps_rcvpartdup{pack,byte}
77,114 out-of-order packets (13,938,456 bytes)	tcps_rcvoo{pack,byte}
1,892 packets (1,755 bytes) of data after window	tcps_rcv{pack,byte}afterwin
1,755 window probes	tcps_rcvwinprobe
175,476 window update packets	tcps_rcvwindup
1,017 packets received after close	tcps_rcvafterclose
60,370 discarded for bad checksums	tcps_rcvbadsum
279 discarded for bad header offset fields	tcps_rcvbadoff
0 discarded because packet too short	tcps_rcvshort
144,020 connection requests	tcps_connattempt
92,595 connection accepts	tcps_accepts
126,820 connections established (including accepts)	tcps_connects
237,743 connections closed (including 1,061 drops)	tcps_closed,tcps_drops
110,016 embryonic connections dropped	tcps_conndrops
6,363,546 segments updated rtt (of 6,444,667 attempts)	tcps_{rttupdated,segstimed}
114,797 retransmit timeouts	tcps_rexmttimeo
86 connection dropped by rexmit timeout	tcps_timeoutdrop
1,173 persist timeouts	tcps_persisttimeo
16,419 keepalive timeouts	tcps_keeptimeo
6,899 keepalive probes sent	tcps_keepprobe
3,219 connections dropped by keepalive	tcps_keepdrops
733,130 correct ACK header predictions	tcps_predack
1,266,889 correct data packet header predictions	tcps_preddat
1,851,557 cache misses	tcps_pcbcachemiss

Figure 24.5 Sample TCP statistics.

SNMP Variables

Figure 24.6 shows the 14 simple SNMP variables in the TCP group and the counters from the tcpstat structure implementing that variable. The constant values shown for the first four entries are fixed by the Net/3 implementation. The counter tcpCurrEstab is computed as the number of Internet PCBs on the TCP PCB list.

Figure 24.7 shows tcpTable, the TCP listener table.



DOCKET

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