

Chapter 1

Overview of the SAE

This chapter gives an overview of the features of the SAE. It contains the following sections:

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Role of the SAE

The SAE is the core manager of the SDX network. It interacts with other systems, such as Juniper Networks routers, cable modem termination system (CMTS) devices, directories, Web application servers, and RADIUS servers, to retrieve and disseminate data in the SDX environment. The SAE authorizes, activates and deactivates, and tracks subscriber and service sessions. It also collects accounting information about subscribers and services.

The SAE makes decisions about the deployment of policies on JUNOSe routers and JUNOS routing platforms. When a subscriber's IP interface comes up on the router, the SAE determines whether it manages the interface. If the interface is managed—or controlled—by the SAE, the SAE sends the subscriber's default policy configuration to the router. These default policies define the subscriber's initial network access. When the subscriber activates a value-added service, the SAE translates the service into lists of policies and sends them to the router.

The SAE also provides plug-ins and application programming interfaces (APIs) that extend the capabilities of the SDX software.

Connections to Managed Devices

This section describes the connections between the SAE and Juniper Networks routers, CMTS devices, and the Juniper Policy Server (JPS).

COPS Connection Between JUNOSe Routers and the SAE

The SAE and JUNOSe routers communicate using the Common Open Policy Service (COPS) protocol. The SAE supports two versions of COPS:

- COPS usage for policy provisioning (COPS-PR)
- COPS External Data Representation Standard (XDR) mode

The version of COPS that you use depends on the version of COPS that your JUNOSe router supports. When you set up your JUNOSe router to work with the SAE, you enable either COPS-PR mode or COPS XDR mode. There are no configuration differences on the SAE between COPS-PR and COPS XDR.

The following SDX features require the use of COPS-PR:

- Policy sharing on JUNOSe routers
- Multiple classify traffic conditions in policy lists

For more information, see *Chapter 3, Using JUNOSe Routers in the SDX Network*.

Beep Connection Between JUNOS Routing Platforms and the SAE

The SAE interacts with a JUNOS software process, referred to as the SDX software process, on a JUNOS routing platform. The SAE and the SDX software process communicate using the Blocks Extensible Exchange Protocol (BEEP).

When a JUNOS routing platform that the SAE manages goes online, it initiates a BEEP session for the SAE. The SAE gets configuration information from the router, and then it builds and installs the policies that control the router's behavior. If the policies are subsequently modified in the directory, the SAE builds a new configuration and reconfigures the interface on the JUNOS routing platform.



NOTE: The SAE manages interfaces on JUNOS routing platforms only when the interfaces are configured in the global configuration and the router sends added, changed, or deleted notifications to the SAE. Router administrators should not manually change the configuration of interfaces that the SAE is managing. If you manually change a configuration, you must remove the SAE from the system.

When there are configuration changes on the router, the router sends a notification to the SAE through the BEEP connection. The notification does not include the content of the configuration changes. When the SAE receives the notification, it uses its JUNOScript client to get the changed configuration from the router.

Interfaces that have been deleted from the router along with their associated objects (sessions, policies) remain on the router until state synchronization occurs.

For more information, see *Chapter 4, Using JUNOS Routing Platforms in the SDX Network*

COPS Connection Between CMTS Devices and the SAE

The SAE uses the COPS protocol as specified in the PacketCable Multimedia Specification PKT-SP-MM-103-051221 to manage *PacketCable Multimedia Specification* (PCMM)-compliant CMTS devices in a cable network environment. The SAE connects to the CMTS device by using a COPS over Transmission Control Protocol (TCP) connection.

In cable environments, the SAE manages the connection to the CMTS device. The CMTS device does not provide address requests or notify the SAE of new subscribers, subscriber IP addresses, or any other attributes. IP address detection and all other subscriber attributes are collected outside of the COPS connection to the CMTS device. The SAE uses COPS only to push policies to the CMTS device and to learn about the CMTS status and usage data.

Because the CMTS device does not have the concept of interfaces, the SDX software uses pseudointerfaces to model CMTS subscriber connections similar to subscriber connections for JUNOS routing platforms and JUNOSe routers.

For more information, see *SDX Solutions Guide, Chapter 4, Providing Premium Services in a PCMM Environment*.

COPS Connection Between Juniper Policy Servers and the SAE

When the SAE is acting as an application manager in a PCMM environment, it connects to the JPS through an interface on the JPS. The JPS uses the COPS protocol as specified in the PacketCable Multimedia Specification PKT-SP-MM-103-051221 for its interface connections. The JPS communicates with the application manager by using a COPS over TCP connection.

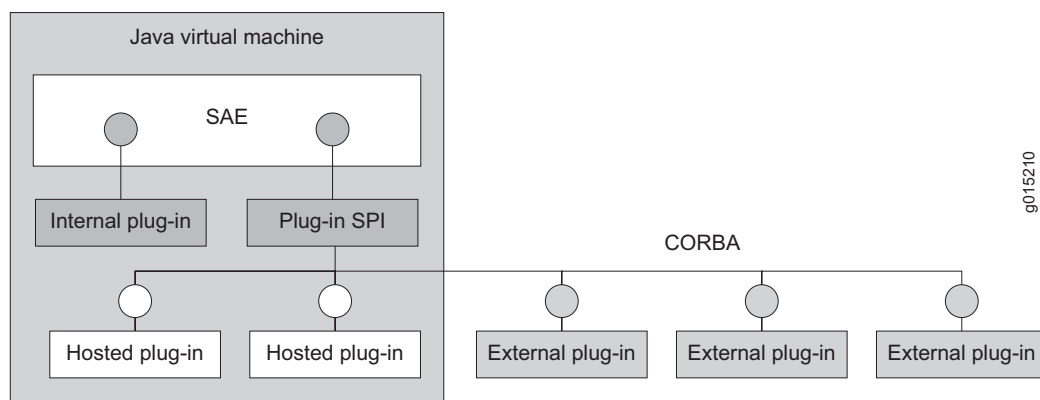
For more information, see *SDX Solutions Guide, Chapter 5, Using PCMM Policy Servers*.

SAE Plug-Ins

Plug-ins are software programs that extend the capabilities of existing programs and make them more flexible. SDX plug-ins provide authentication, authorization, and tracking capabilities.

There are three types of plug-ins: internal, hosted, and external. Internal plug-ins communicate directly with the SAE. Hosted and external plug-ins implement a published Common Object Request Broker Architecture (CORBA)-based service provider interface (SPI), which means that anyone with access to the interface specification can create plug-ins that work with the SDX software. Figure 1 gives an overview of the plug-in architecture.

Figure 1: SAE Plug-In Architecture



Internal Plug-Ins

The SDX software provides internal plug-ins that perform a range of authentication, authorization, and tracking functions. With these plug-ins, you can, for example, authenticate subscribers, authorize subscriptions and sessions, authorize IP address requests from DHCP clients, track subscriber activity and service use, track quality of service (QoS) services and attach and remove QoS profiles as needed, and limit the number of authenticated subscribers who connect to an IP interface on the router.

Internal plug-ins implement an interface that communicates directly with the SAE. They have the following characteristics:

- Run within the SAE's Java Virtual Machine (JVM)
- Are started and stopped with the SAE
- Are implemented in Java

The core SDX software provides a set of internal plug-ins. See *SDX Subscribers and Subscriptions Guide, Chapter 5, Overview of Plug-Ins Included with the SAE*

External Plug-Ins

The SDX software includes the SAE CORBA plug-in SPI. This SPI allows you to implement external plug-ins in any language that supports CORBA (for example, Java, C + +, Python), which makes it easy to integrate the SAE with operations support system (OSS) software written in a wide variety of languages and distributed across a variety of hardware and operating system platforms.

External plug-ins link a service provider's OSS with the SAE so that the OSS is notified of events in the life cycle of SAE sessions. For example, plug-ins can be notified when a subscriber attempts to log in and begins the authentication and authorization process. This notification makes it possible for the plug-in to consult general data and resource allocation information that is available to the OSS, and use that information to make authorization decisions.

The SPI also sends session-tracking events when sessions start, on an interim basis, and when sessions stop. Plug-ins can set session timeouts as a response to both session start and interim events. This capability enables the development of prepaid applications where the plug-in consults the subscriber's current account balance before it makes the decision to extend or reduce a session timeout.

External plug-ins have the following characteristics:

- Run outside the SAE's JVM, either in the same or in a different server
- Are implemented in any language that supports CORBA
- Communicate with the SAE using CORBA
- Support the admission control or prepaid demo plug-in, which can be purchased separately from the SDX software.

To configure the SAE for external plug-ins, see *SDX Subscribers and Subscriptions Guide, Chapter 6, How to Configure SAE Plug-Ins*.

The interface definition language (IDL) code and online documentation for the SAE CORBA Plug-In SPI is on the Juniper Networks Web site at <http://www.juniper.net/techpubs/software/management/sdx/api-index.html>

The IDL code is also in the SDX software distribution in the file *SDK/idl/sspPlugin.idl*. Online documentation for the *sspPlugin.idl* file is at */SDK/doc/idl/sspPlugin/html/index.html*.

Hosted Plug-Ins

Hosted plug-ins, like the external ones, implement the CORBA interface. Unlike the external ones, hosted plug-ins are instantiated (that is, hosted) by the SAE. As a result, they live in the same JVM process as the host SAE, which means that hosted plug-ins must be implemented in Java.

Hosted plug-ins have the following characteristics:

- Run within the SAE's JVM
- Communicate with SAE using CORBA

- Are started and stopped with SAE
- Are implemented using a published interface

To configure the SAE for hosted plug-ins, see *SDX Subscribers and Subscriptions Guide, Chapter 6, How to Configure SAE Plug-Ins*.

Tracking and Controlling Subscriber and Service Sessions with SAE APIs

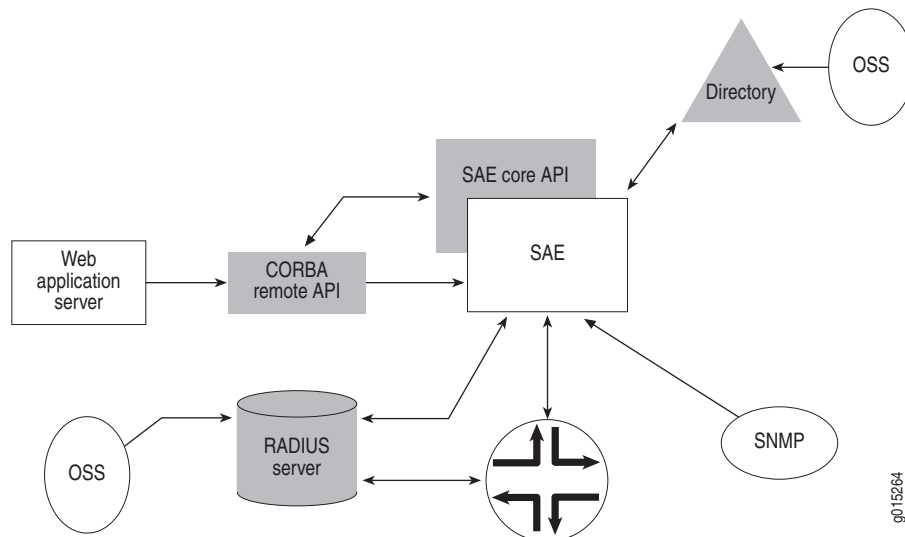
The SAE provides two public APIs:

- SAE core API
- SAE CORBA remote API

Through these interfaces, an external application can track and control subscriber and service sessions.

Figure 2 illustrates the SAE APIs.

Figure 2: SDX SAE APIs



SAE Core API

The SAE core API is used to control the behavior of the SDX software. There are many uses of the SAE core API. For example, it can be used to provide:

- Subscriber credentials (username/password)
- Requests for service activation/deactivation for a subscriber

This API can be used by a Java application running in the same JVM as the SAE. For example, you can access the SAE core API from plug-ins that are hosted by the SAE, or you can use the SAE core API to write your own extensions of the SAE remote interface by using CORBA or the SAE script interface modules.

SAE CORBA Remote API

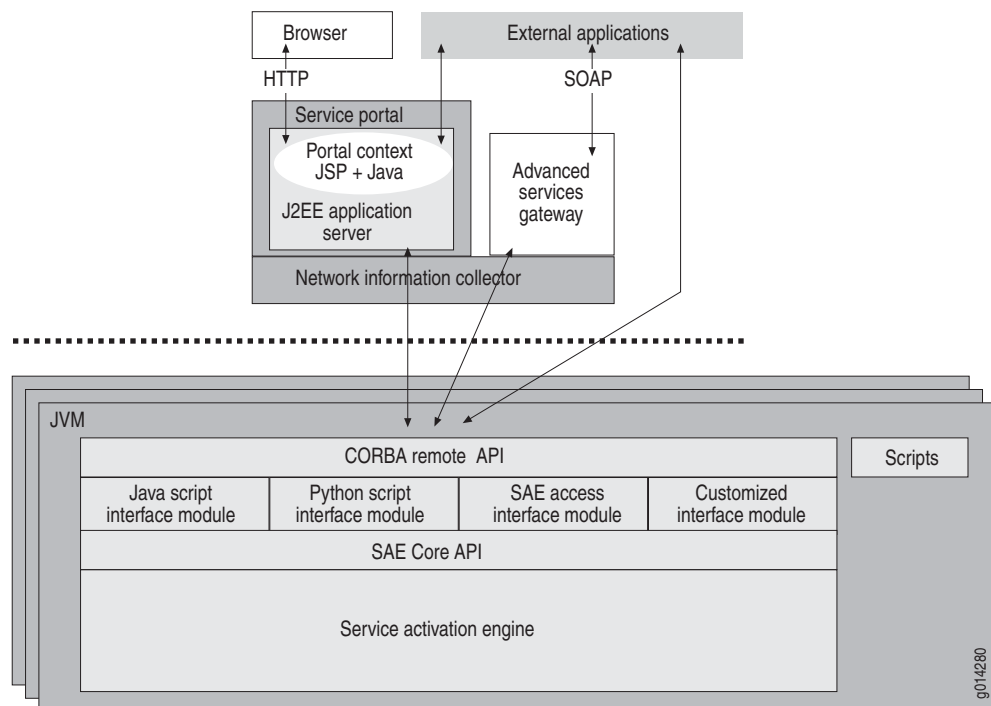
This API provides a way to use external applications with the SDX software (see Figure 3). All functions that are available through the SAE core API are available through the CORBA remote API. The remote API provides several remote interfaces that allow customization of the API for special needs. The remote interface comprises an interface module manager and a set of interface modules. We provide the following interface modules with the SDX software:

- SAE access interface module—Provides remote access to the SAE core API
- Java script interface module—Allows you to control the SAE with a Java script
- Python script interface module—Allows you to control the SAE with a Python script
- Event notification interface module—Allows you to integrate the SAE with external IP address managers

You can also create custom interface modules that allow external applications to extend the capabilities of the SAE. To do so, you must define the interface module in CORBA IDL and implement it in Java.

The remote interface publishes one object reference that acts as the interface module manager. External applications communicate through CORBA with the interface module manager to retrieve a particular interface module. That interface module runs in the same JVM as the SAE and has full access to the SAE core API.

Figure 3: Remote Interface on the SAE



For more information about the SAE CORBA remote API, including the interfaces, properties, and methods, see the online documentation on the Juniper Networks Web site at <http://www.juniper.net/techpubs/software/management/sdx/api-index.html> or in the SDX software distribution in *SDK/doc/idl/sae/html/index.html*.

SAE Accounting

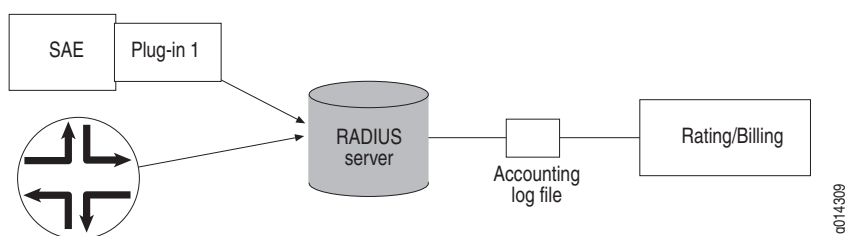
The router and the SAE generate RADIUS accounting records when subscribers access the Internet and use value-added services. The records are sent to RADIUS accounting servers and are logged in accounting log files, or they are sent to accounting flat files. External systems collect the accounting log files and feed them to a rating and billing system.

The SDX software allows a variety of accounting deployments. This section shows the standard deployment that we supply, a second option that does not depend on a RADIUS server, and a third option in which customers develop their own deployment by choosing a CORBA plug-in.

In the standard SDX deployment (see Figure 4), the router and the SAE are clients of the RADIUS accounting server. They pass subscriber accounting information to a designated RADIUS accounting server in an accounting request. The RADIUS accounting server receives the accounting request and creates accounting log files.

The SDX software works with other AAA RADIUS servers; however, we validate the SDX software only with Merit, Interlink RAD-Series AAA RADIUS Server, or Juniper Networks Steel-Belted Radius/SPE server.

Figure 4: Sending Accounting Data to a RADIUS Server



A second option, shown in Figure 5, uses an accounting flat file generated directly by the SAE, without a RADIUS server.

Figure 5: Sending Accounting Data to an Accounting File

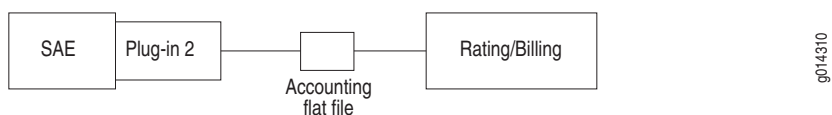
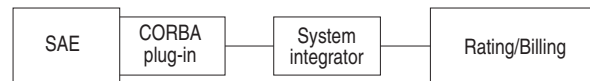


Figure 6 illustrates a third possibility, one in which the customer uses a CORBA plug-in of his or her own choice.

Figure 6: Customer Choice for SDX Accounting Deployment



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Accounting Policy

The SAE defines the policies that control the network traffic for the subscriber based on the subscriber's subscriptions. It also determines the accounting statistics collected for the subscribed service.

While defining the policies for a service, the SAE can choose the policy rules to be used for accounting per interface direction (ingress and egress). Statistics are collected for the chosen policy rules for the service and are sent to the RADIUS accounting server. The SAE can also decide not to collect any policy rule-specific statistics for the service. In this case, only session times are sent to the accounting system when the service is deactivated. When choosing multiple policy rules on traffic direction for statistics collection, the SAE summarizes the statistics by adding the individual values.

Subscription Process

After an outsourced service has been set up, subscribers can order primary access or value-added services from retailers, who in turn notify the wholesaler of the new end subscription. Conversely, accounting data is collected by the wholesaler and communicated to the retailer to provide enough data for the retailer to bill the subscriber.

The overall subscription process is simplified:

- The subscriber has no need to interact with another party or a device other than the router.
- When the subscriber goes to the Web portal and selects the service, the subscription activation is triggered.
- The subscriber's portal page adjusts to display the new service.
- Accounting data is generated, identifying the service being tracked for the subscriber.

Tracking Subscriber Sessions

The intelligent service accounting function of the SDX software tracks the subscription activity for each subscriber and each service session. It collects usage information and passes the information to the appropriate rating and billing system.

Multiple service sessions can be activated simultaneously for a subscriber and can be tracked separately from an accounting standpoint.

Events are generated when service sessions are activated and deactivated, and during interim accounting updates.

Accounting Plug-Ins

Plug-ins allow service providers to easily extend the capabilities of their systems through the use of plug-in software. See *SAE Plug-Ins* on page 6.

Interim Accounting

The router and SAE generate interim accounting records for broadband primary services (through PPP) and value-added services, respectively. RADIUS servers log the interim records in their accounting log files when interim accounting is enabled.

The external rating system calculates the charges by using interim records instead of stop records for timeout sessions. The calculation occurs when the last record is interim and for open sessions whose last record at the end of a billing cycle is interim.

An accounting interim interval is defined for each service and applied to all subscriptions to that service. The router and SAE generate accounting requests with a status of interim for every period of time specified with the interim value.

The router receives an accounting interim value for a session through a RADIUS server when the router makes an authentication request. If the RADIUS server does not provide a value, then the router does not generate interim accounting records.

The SAE obtains an accounting interim value from the directory. When the accounting interim value is not stored, the SAE uses global values. When a value equals zero, the SAE does not generate interim accounting records.