PEACE OF MIND IN A DANGEROUS WORLD

XIP1213E: MACSEC AES256-GCM

Extreme Speed MACsec (IEEE 802.1AE) IP Core

Product Brief
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Introduction

XIP1213E from Xiphera is an extreme-speed[1] Intellectual Property (IP) core implementing the MACsec protocol as standardized in IEEE Std 802.1AE-2018 [2].

The MACsec protocol defines a security infrastrucure for Layer 2 (as per the OSI model) traffic by assuring that a received frame has been sent by a transmitting station that claimed to send it. Furthermore, the traffic between stations is both encrypted to provide data confidentiality and authenticated to provide data integrity.

XIP1213E uses parallel instantiations[2] of Advanced Encryption Standard [1] with 256 bits long key in Galois Counter Mode (AES-GCM) [3] to protect data confidentiality, data integrity and data origin authentication. The cipher suite is denoted either as GCM-AES-XPN-256 if the eXtended Packet Numbering (XPN)[3] is in use, or as GCM-AES-XPN-256 if XPN is not in use. Both GCM-AES-256 and GCM-AES-XPN-256 use Xiphera's IP core XIP1113H as the underlying building block for AES-GCM.

Key management (including key exchange) lies outside the scope of 802.1AE, and hence the functionality of XIP1213E is based on the assumption that key management is performed by externally to XIP1213E.

XIP1213E has been designed for easy integration with FPGA- and ASIC-based designs in a vendor-agnostic design methodology, and the functionality of XIP1213E does not rely on any vendor manufacturer-specific features. XIP1213E has been designed for easy integration with FPGA- and ASIC-based designs in a vendor-agnostic design methodology, and the functionality of XIP1213E does not rely on any FPGA manufacturer-specific features.

[1] Xiphera's extreme-speed (denoted by 'E' at the end of the ordering code) IP cores are designed to maximize the achievable performance.

[2] In the case of 100G MACsec, the number of parallel AES-GCM cipher engines is four (4) for both transmit and receive directions.

[3] The eXtensible Packet Numbering (XPN), which was added to the MACsec standard in 2013, extends the packet number (PN) to 64 bits from the original 32 bits.

Key Features

- **Moderate** resource requirements: The entire XIP1213E requires very little additional resources in addition to the AES-GCM engine, and does not require any vendor specific functions. For more information please refer to XIP1213E Resource Sheet [4].
- **Constant Latency:** The execution time of XIP1213E is independent of the key value, and consequently provides protection against timing-based side-channel attacks.
- **Databus width:** Streaming databus width can be selected from 128,256,512 and 1024 allowing resource usage optimization depending about needed linerate.
- **Performance:** XIP1213E achieves a throughput in the hundreds of Gbps range[4]
- **Standard Compliance:** XIP1213E is compliant with the MACsec protocol as standardized in IEEE Std 802.1AE-2018 [2]. The cipher suite (GCM-AES-256 or GCM-AES-XPN-256) is fully compliant with the Advanced Encryption Algorithm (AES) standard [1], as well as with the Galois Counter Mode (GCM) standard [3].
- **Test Vector Compliance:** XIP1213E passes the relevant test vectors specified in Annex C of IEEE Std 802.1AE-2018 [2].

Functionality

The functionality of XIP1213E is divided into the transmit (Tx) and receive (Rx) datapaths, which operate independently of each other. The underlying cipher suite of parallelized[2] GCM-AES-(XPN)-256 is consequently instantiated twice, both for the Rx and Tx datapaths. The high-level structure of MACsec frame is presented in Figure 1 with the goal of understanding better the functionality of both datapaths.

MACsec operation is based on the concepts of unidirectional Secure Channels (SC) and Security Associations (SA) within each channel. Each SA uses its own Secure Association Key (SAK); establishing and managing keys is not part of the MACsec standard.

A high-level functionality of the Tx datapath (See also Figure 2) includes the SAK key lookup based on the Association Number (AN)[5] value. Additionally, a monotonically increasing Packet Number (PN)[6] is calculated, and this will be used as the Initialization Vector (IV) by the cipher suite.

The cipher suite in the transmit datapath of XIP1213E operates in the encryption and Integrity Check Value (ICV) calculation mode, meaning that it encrypts the incoming plaintext blocks into ciphertext blocks, and additionally calculates a 128 bits long ICV value from both the incoming plaintext and associated data. The original Ethernet frame is updated by adding a Security Tag (SecTAG)[7] starting with the MACsec type (`0x88E5`), encrypting the original EtherType with the payload, and appending the calculated ICV to the end of the original message.

After receiving an incoming MACsec frame, the first functionality of the Rx datapath is the SAK key[8] lookup. After the right SAK has been identified, the cipher suite in the receive path of XIP1213E operates in the decryption and tag validity checking mode. This means that the cipher

[4]The highest throughput is achieved for long messages.
[5]AN is a two bits long value identifying up to four different SAs within the context of an SC.
[6]PN was originally standardized as 32 bits long, but support for XPN has extended it to 64 bits.
[7]The length of the SecTAG is either 8 or 16 bytes.
[8]The number of SAKs is parameterizable in XIP1213E with the default value being eight (8).

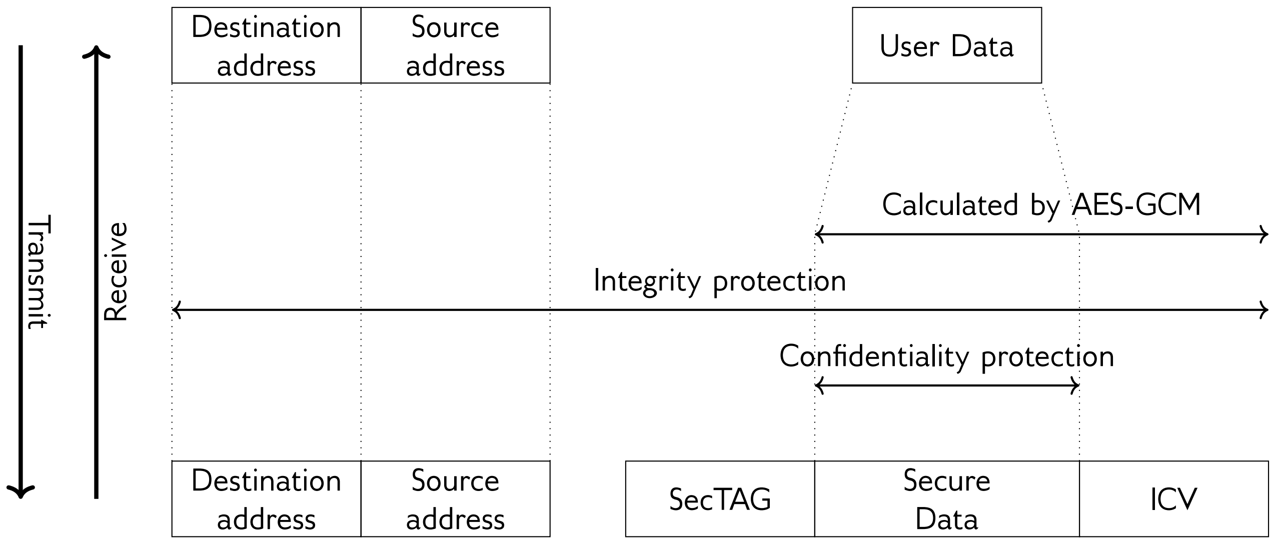

Figure 1: MACsec frame structure. Adapted from Figure 8-1 in [2].

suite decrypts the incoming ciphertext blocks into plaintext blocks, and validates the received ICV by calculating the ICV from the incoming ciphertext and associated data blocks and comparing the resulting value with the received ICV value. As defined by the GCM mode of operation, associated data is included in the ICV calculation. If the ICV checking is successful, the receive datapath returns the original frame by removing the SecTAG and ICV, and replacing the MACsec type with the original EtherType.

XIP1213E also supports the bypass mode, where an incoming packet passes through the XIP1213E unaltered.

Block Diagram

The internal high-level block diagram of XIP1213E is depicted in Figure 2.

Interfaces

The external interfaces of XIP1213E are depicted in Figure 3, and they can be grouped into five logical groups:

- One Control and Status Register interface, I/O signal names beginning with `csr`
- Two Transmit interfaces, I/O signal names beginning with `txin` and `txout`
- Two Receive interfaces, I/O signal names beginning with `rxin` and `rxout`

This Product Brief describes a high-level overview of the functionality and capabilities of XIP1213E. Please contact sales@xiphera.com for a complete datasheet with a detailed description of the input and output signals and an example simulation waveforms.

Example Use Cases

The primary application of XIP1213E is provide for confidentiality and integrity of data as well as source authentication for Layer 2. Consequently, XIP1213E is typically connected via an Ethernet

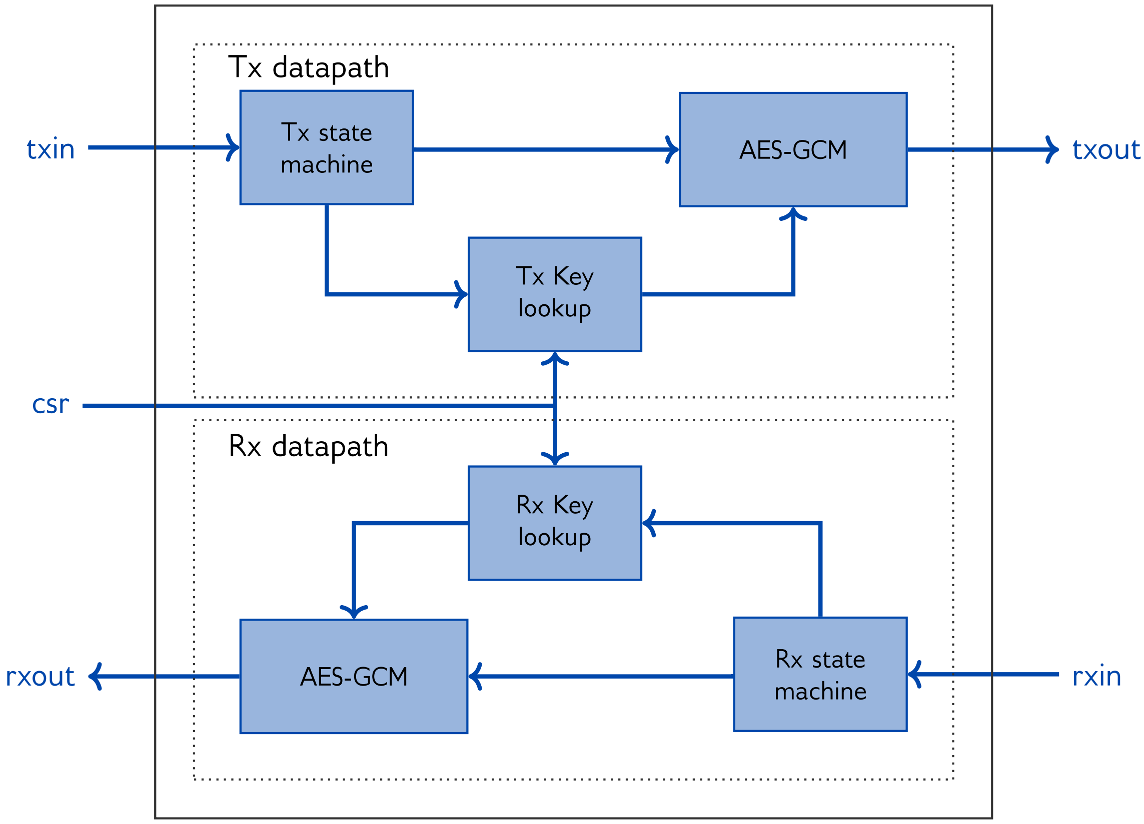

Figure 2: Internal high-level block diagram of XIP1213E

MAC IP core to an external 10/25/40/100/400/800 Gbps link, and the CSR (Control and Status Register) interface is connected to a processor[9]. An example use case is presented in Figure 4.

If the end application requires slower linerates (for example, 1 Gbps), the balanced MACsec IP core XIP1213B from Xiphera are the recommended design choice.

Ordering and Deliverables

Please contact sales@xiphera.com for pricing and your preferred delivery method. XIP1213E can be shipped in a number of formats, including netlist, source code, or encrypted source code. Additionally, synthesis scripts, a comprehensive testbench, and a detailed datasheet including an integration guide are included.

Export Control

XIP1213E protects data confidentiality and is a dual-use product as defined in the Wassenaar Arrangement. Consequently, the export of XIP1213E is controlled by Council Regulation (EC) No 2021/821 and its subsequent changes.

XIP1213E can be immediately shipped to all European Union member states, Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Switzerland, United Kingdom, and the United States.

Export to other countries requires authorization from The Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, and a typical processing time for an export authorization is a few weeks.

[9]The processor can also be an soft processor.

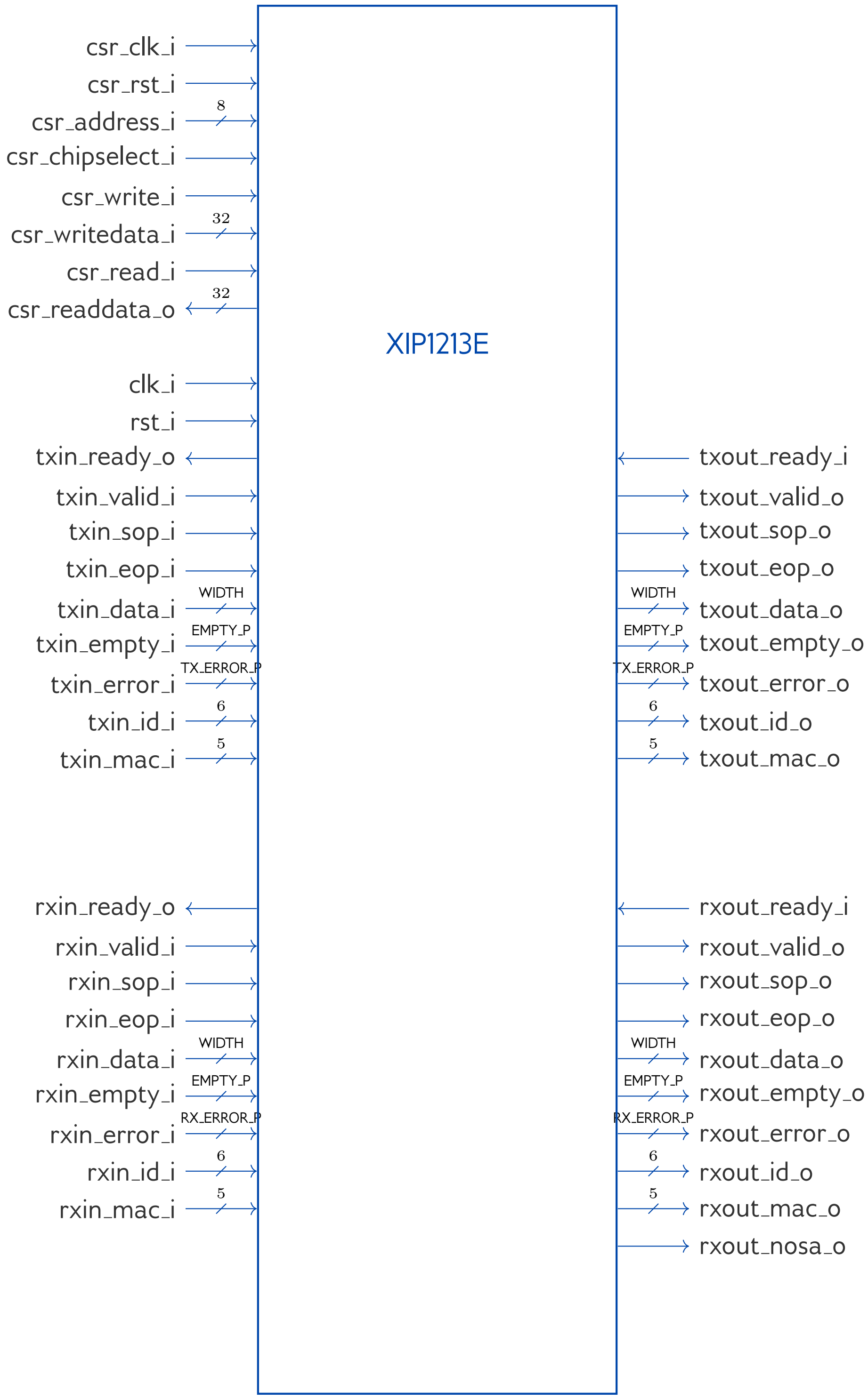

Figure 3: External interfaces of XIP1213E

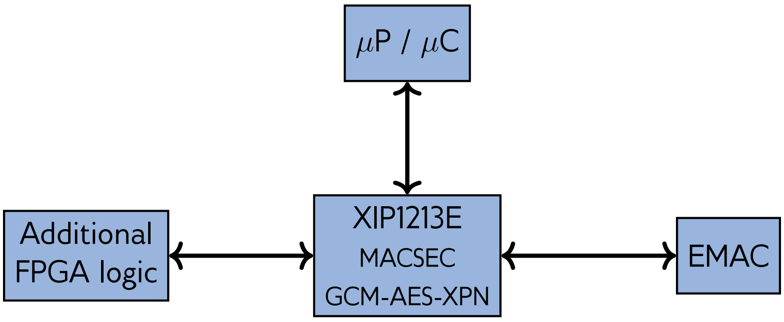

Figure 4: Example use case for XIP1213E.

About Xiphera

Xiphera specializes in secure and efficient implementations of standardized cryptographic algorithms on Field Programmable Gate Arrays (FPGAs) and Application Specific Integrated Circuits (ASICs). Our fully in-house designed product portfolio includes individual cryptographic Intellectual Property (IP) cores, as well as comprehensive security solutions built from a combination of individual IP cores.

Xiphera is a Finnish company operating under the laws of the Republic of Finland, and is fully owned by Finnish citizens and institutional investors.

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References

[1] Specification for the Advanced Encryption Standard (AES). Federal Information Processing Standards Publication 197, 2001.

[2] IEEE Standard for Local and metropolitan area networks-Media Access Control (MAC) Security. *IEEE Std 802.1AE-2018 (Revision of IEEE Std 802.1AE-2006)*, pages 1–239, Dec 2018.

[3] Morris J. Dworkin. SP 800-38D. Recommendation for Block Cipher Modes of Operation: Galois/Counter Mode (GCM) and GMAC. Technical report, Gaithersburg, MD, United States, 2007.

[4] Xiphera Ltd. XIP1213E: 100G MACsec AES256-GCM - Resource Sheet. `https://xiphera.com/xip1213e-rs`.