

Figure 1. Proposed Protocol

6. Performance Analysis

The performance and storage requirements of the protocol are studied in this section.

- **Computational Cost:** All the operations used in this protocol are compliant with ultra-lightweight tags and can be very efficiently implemented in hardware. According to [13], the implementation of the PUF function requires six to eight gates for each input bit; thus a 96-bit PUF function will require at most 768 gates. This means that PUFs are a much better solution than using hash functions that require at least 3500 gates to be implemented.

Furthermore, the rotation operation is also lightweight and can be implemented easily on ultra-lightweight tags.

- **Storage Requirements:** Each tag needs to store two couples of SVT_i and SVR_i , old and updated values, in addition to n_1 . Each of these identifiers has a length of 96 bits in compliance with EPCGlobal. Additionally, the tag needs to store a maximum of five intermediate 96-bit values during the authentication phase. All of these values are stored in a rewritable memory because they change during different authentication sessions. So the total storage requirement on the tag is:

$$10 \times 96 = 960 \text{ bits}$$

- Communication Cost: Assuming that the “hello” message is 5 bytes and knowing that messages A through F and SVT_i all have a length of 96 bits, the total communication cost of this protocol is:

$$7*96 + 5*8 = 712 \text{ bits}$$

Table 1 compares the performance of the different ultra-lightweight protocols surveyed in this work.

Table 1. Performance Comparison

Protocol	Storage Req.(bits)	Communication Cost (bits)
<i>Gossamer</i>	960	520
<i>LMAP</i>	1056	520
<i>SASI</i>	864	520
<i>Work in [12]</i>	864	424
<i>Proposed Work</i>	960	712

The communication cost in this work could be significantly decreased if the update phase is performed separately in the tag and in the reader, but then the updated values would not involve the use of PUFs and hence there is a tradeoff between uniqueness of updated values and communication cost.

7. Implementation

In this section we describe a sample implementation of the security protocol described in Figure 1. We simulated the operation the RFID tag and reader using a client/server program developed in Java. In this simulation model the RFID tag plays the role of the client while the reader assumes the role of the server. The network interaction is realized using Java sockets that abstract a TCP client/server connection. The reader waits for tag connections on a specified IP address and port. Once an RFID tag successfully establishes a connection with the reader, the protocol steps, as specified in Figure 1, are executed resulting in a mutual authentication between the RFID tag and reader. We believe that this simulation model presents a viable proof of concept that demonstrates the correctness of the protocol before future deployment on real RFID tags and readers. The NetBeans v7.0.1 Integrated Development Environment (IDE) [14] is used for developing the client/server program using the Java 7 platform [15]. The server machine runs Ubuntu Linux v 9.04 and having the following hardware specifications:

- Processors: Intel(R) Core(TM) i7 CPU Q 720 running at 1.6 GHz

- Memory: 4GB RAM

The client machine runs Windows 7 with the following hardware specifications:

- Processors: Two Intel(R) Xeon CPUs running at 3.8 GHz
- Memory: 2 GB RAM

The snapshots presented in Figures 2 and 3 respectively demonstrate a sample execution of the RFID tag and reader protocol steps. The diagnostic messages provided by the client and server programs indicate the successful execution of the different protocol steps and the values of the parameters involved in the mutual authentication procedure. To test the validity of the protocol exchanged messages and their full compliance with the protocol specifications; we deployed the Wireshark network protocol analyzer [16] on the server machine to capture the inbound and outbound protocol packets exchanged by the server network interface. Figure 4 shows the details of the “hello” packet sent from the reader to the tag as captured by Wireshark. Figure 5 represents the tag to reader message containing the value of “SVT0”. The Wireshark packet representation of Figures 6 demonstrates the message containing the values of the A, B, and C parameters sent from the reader to the tag. Similarly, the packet representation of Figure 7 indicates the message containing the values of the D, E, and F parameters sent from the tag to the reader.

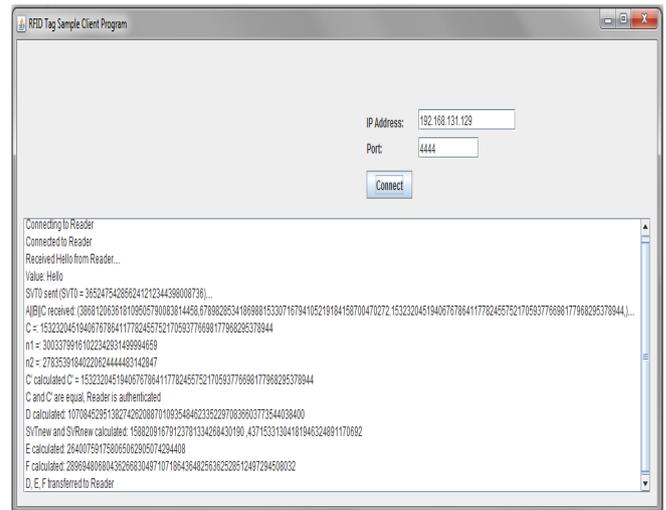


Figure 2. Client-side program executing the tag protocol.



Figure 3. Snapshot of the server-side program executing the RFID reader protocol steps

By comparing the parameter values displayed by the tag and reader diagnostic messages (see Figures 2 and 3) and the packet contents captured by Wireshark (see Figures 4, 5, 6, and 7) we realize that the protocol sample implementation demonstrates a 100% compatibility with the protocol specification.

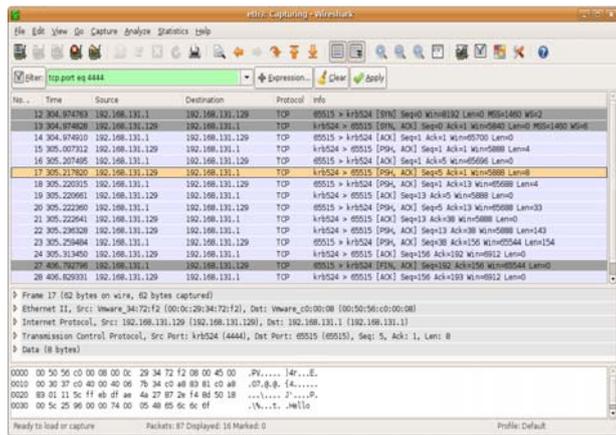


Figure 4. Wireshark capture showing the “hello” message

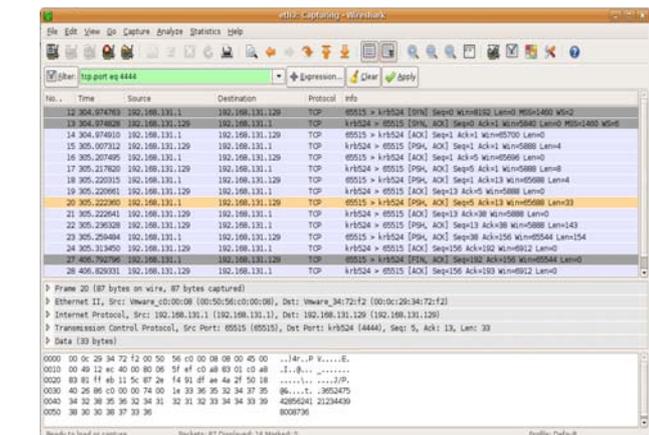


Figure 5. Wireshark capture of the packet representing the “SVT0” message from the tag to the reader

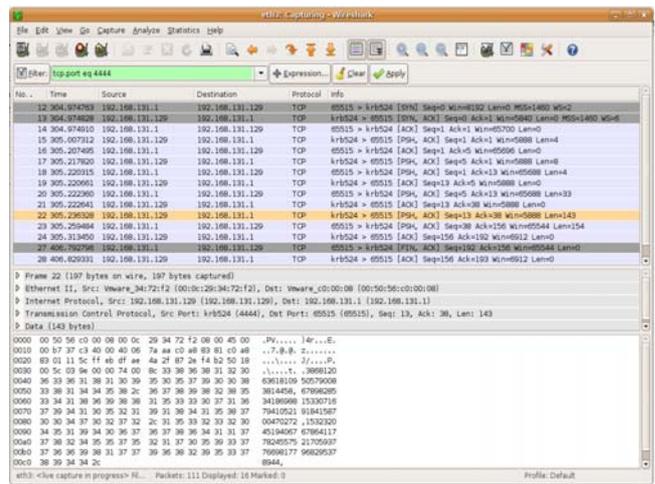


Figure 6. Wireshark capture of the packet representing the “A||B||C” message from the reader to the tag.

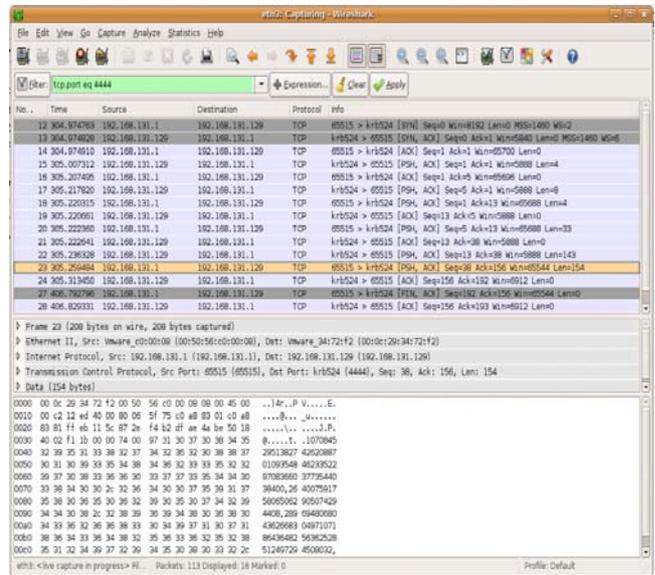


Figure 7. Wireshark capture of the packet representing the “D||E||F” message from the tag to the reader

8. Conclusion

This paper surveyed RFID systems in general stating their architecture and applications. Then, some recently proposed RFID security protocols were presented while focusing on the ultra-lightweight family as those comply with the limited processing power of the most commonly used passive tags. Building on that, a protocol that achieves mutual authentication for ultra-lightweight tags was proposed. The protocol comprises three main stages: tag identification, mutual authentication, and an update phase. It uses light operations and a PUF circuit that only requires about 3000 gated to be implemented and dedicated for security on passive

tags. Finally, the security and performance of the proposed protocol were analyzed leading to the conclusion that the protocol offers immunity against a broad range of attacks while having an excellent performance.

[15] The Java homepage: <http://www.oracle.com/us/technologies/java/>

[16] The Wireshark network protocol analyzer homepage: www.wireshark.org

9. References

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