

Design Space and Challenges in Design of Attested TLS Protocols

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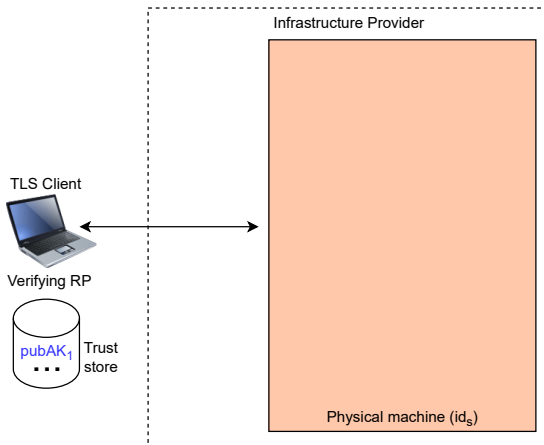
²Co-chair, Trusted Research Environment (TRE) Open Suite,
Global Alliance for Genomics and Health (GA4GH)

December 13, 2025

Outline

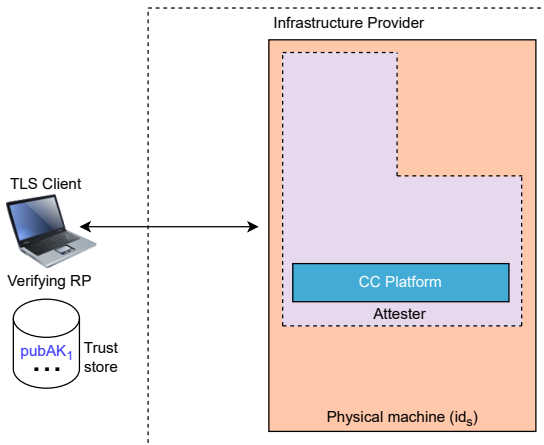
- 1 Quick Reminder from Confidential Computing MC
- 2 Discussion
- 3 Summary
- 4 Backup

Use Case (Confidential Computing)



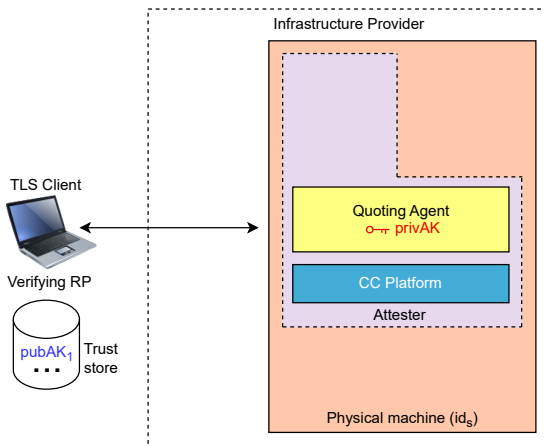
- AK = Attestation Key; pubX = public(X)

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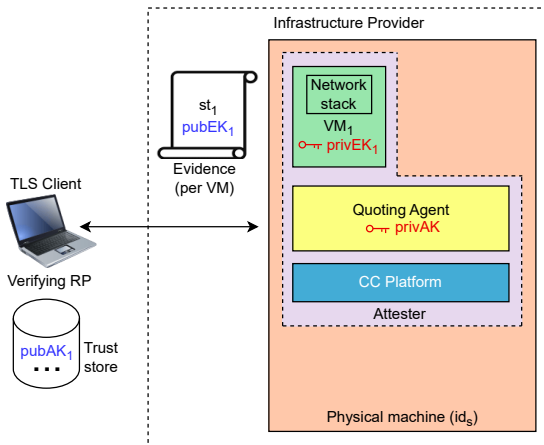
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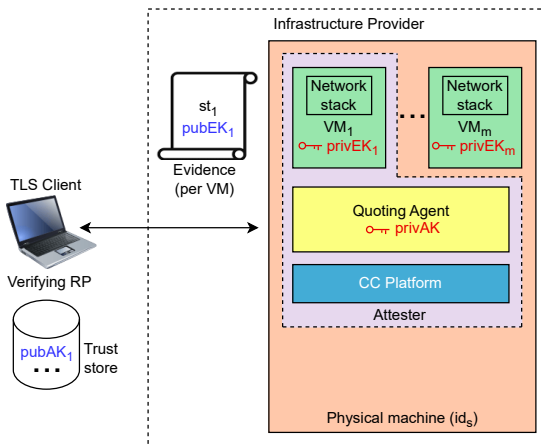
- AK = Attestation Key; **pubX** = public(X); **privX** = private(X)

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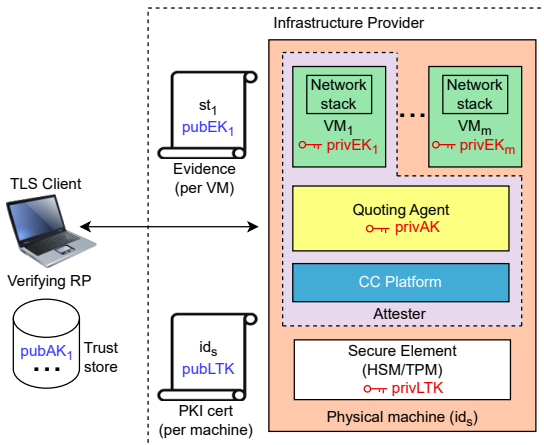
- AK = Attestation Key; $pubX$ = public(X); $privX$ = private(X)
- EK = Ephemeral Key; st = state claims

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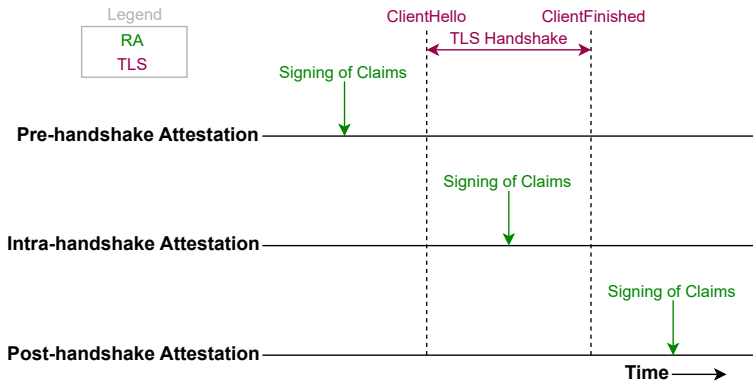
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- EK = Ephemeral Key; st = state claims
- LTK = Long-Term Key; id_s = identity of server

Design Space



- Pre-handshake: Intel's RA-TLS/Interoperable RA-TLS (IRA-TLS)
- Intra-handshake: draft-fossati-tls-attestation (TLS-a)
- Post-handshake: draft-fossati-seat-expat

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- Remote Attestation
 - G-RA1: Integrity of Evidence
 - G-RA2: Freshness of Evidence
 - Binding Evidence to a specific RA interaction
 - Recentness of Evidence generation
 - G-RA3: Establishment of connection with **privAK** known to adversary
 - G-RA4: Establishment of connection with **privEK** known to adversary

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- Standard TLS properties
 - G-TLS1: Establishment of connection with `client_write_key` known to adversary
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 - G-TLS2: Server authentication
- Composition goals
 - G-C1: Evidence is generated by the same server that is authenticated
 - Correlating Evidence to a specific TLS connection: g^{xy} , `htsc`, `atsc`
 - G-C2: Agreement of all Remote Attestation and TLS parameters

Results for Pre- and Intra-handshake Attestation¹

- Pre-handshake attestation: Interoperable RA-TLS (IRA-TLS)
- Intra-handshake attestation: draft-fossati-tls-attestation (TLS-a)

Security goal	IRA-TLS	TLS-a
G-RA1: Integrity of Evidence	✓	✓
G-RA2: Freshness of Evidence	✗	✓
G-RA3: Protection of Attestation Keys	✓	✓
G-RA4: Protection of Ephemeral Keys	✓	✓
G-TLS1: Protection of Client's Write Key	✓	✓
G-TLS2.1: Server Authentication	✗	✗
G-TLS2.2: Server Authentication	✗	✗
G-C1a: Correlation of Evidence to gxy	✗	✗
G-C1b: Correlation of Evidence to htsc	✗	✗
G-C1c: Correlation of Evidence to atsc	✗	✗
G-C2: Agreement of all parameters	✗	✗

✓ = satisfied; ✗ = not satisfied.

¹Details in <https://datatracker.ietf.org/doc/slides-124-ufmrg-formal-analysis-of-attested-tls-protocols>

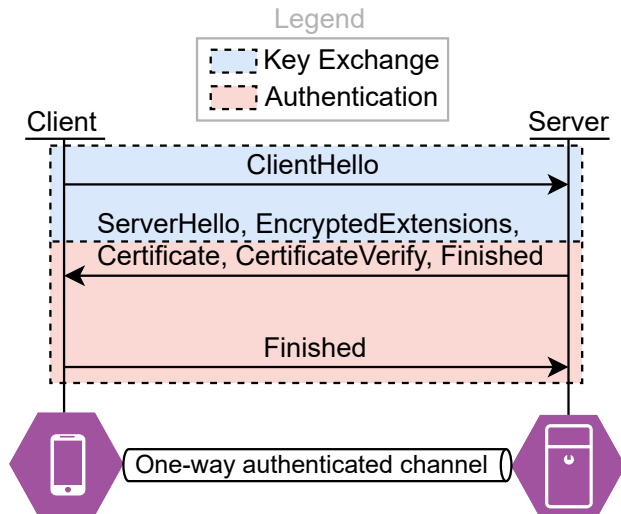
Results for Proposed Solutions in Intra-handshake Attestation

- Sol.1: Modify CertificateVerify message
- Sol.2: Two CertificateVerify messages
- Sol.3: New signature algorithm
- Sol.4: New Attestation message
- Sol.5: Modify CertificateVerify message + define new exporter

Security goal	Sol.1	Sol.2	Sol.3	Sol.4	Sol.5
G-RA1: Integrity of Evidence	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
G-RA2: Freshness of Evidence	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
G-RA3: Protection of Attestation Keys	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
G-RA4: Protection of Ephemeral Keys	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
G-TLS1: Protection of Client's Write Key	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
G-TLS2.1: Server Authentication	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
G-TLS2.2: Server Authentication	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
G-C1a: Correlation of Evidence to gxy	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓
G-C1b: Correlation of Evidence to htsc	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓
G-C1c: Correlation of Evidence to atsc	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
G-C2: Agreement of all parameters	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Standard TLS 1.3 (RFC8446bis)

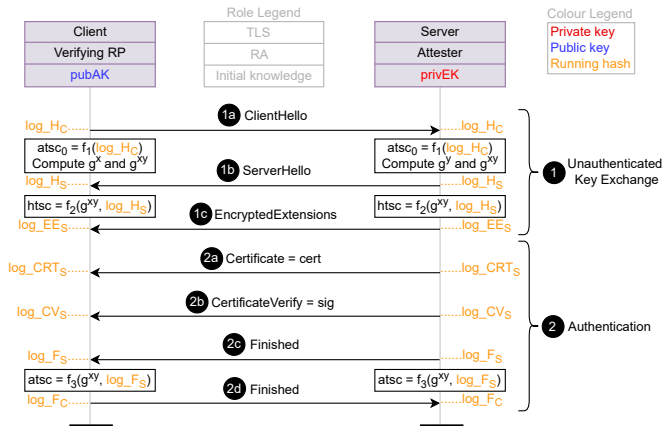
- Server authentication by default
- Optional client authentication



Outline

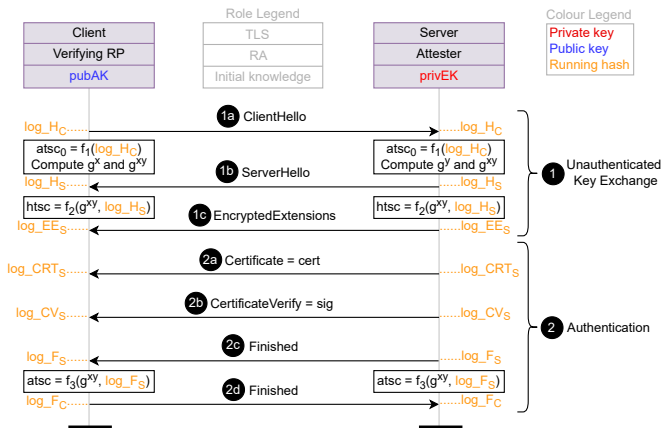
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Strong Binding vs. Relay of Evidence (Abstracted)



- g^{xy} : Shared Diffie-Hellman key; f_1, f_2, f_3 : Key derivation functions
- Discussion**: Correlating Evidence to htsc vs. atsc
 - Running hash $\implies$ atsc transitively includes all contributions in htsc
 - atsc provides stronger binding and avoids relay attacks.

Strong Binding vs. Relay of Evidence (Abstracted)



- $htsc$: used for encryption of clientFinished message (2d).
 - **Irrelevant** for security goals
- $atsc$: used for encryption of application data (client's secret, e.g., decryption key)
 - **Relevant** for security goals

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Summary

- **Pre-** and **intra**-handshake attestation (draft-fossati-tls-attestation) are not suitable choices for standardization. (Formal proof of insecurity)

Summary

- Pre- and intra-handshake attestation (draft-fossati-tls-attestation) are not suitable choices for standardization. (Formal proof of insecurity)
- Key insights
 - Need infrastructure identity to prevent diversion attacks
 - Cryptographic binding of RA and TLS is critical to prevent relay attacks
 - Need VM identity to prevent replication attacks
 - One of the most challenging protocols of the IETF: formal analysis is critical to the success.

Summary

- **Pre-** and **intra**-handshake attestation (draft-fossati-tls-attestation) are not suitable choices for standardization. (Formal proof of insecurity)
- Key insights
 - Need infrastructure identity to prevent **diversion attacks**
 - Cryptographic binding of RA and TLS is critical to prevent **relay attacks**
 - Need VM identity to prevent **replication attacks**
 - One of the **most challenging** protocols of the IETF: **formal analysis** is critical to the success.
- Part of formal analysis accepted at **AsiaCCS**
- WiP: post-handshake attestation, i.e., draft-fossati-seat-expat
 - Formal analysis in ProVerif
 - Implementation in Rustls (Peg Jones)
 - Implementation in BoringSSL (Pavel Nikonorov)
- Questions for discussion:
 - Any other (verifiable) **security goals**?
 - htsc vs. atsc?
 - Any other solution?

Links to Resources

- Wiki page
 - github.com/EuroProofNet/ProgramVerification/wiki/AttestedTLS
- Formal proof of insecurity of pre- and intra-handshake attestation
 - github.com/CCC-Attestation/formal-spec-id-crisis
- Post-handshake attestation draft
 - datatracker.ietf.org/doc/draft-fossati-seat-expat/
- Attestation in Arm CCA and Intel TDX
 - github.com/CCC-Attestation/formal-spec-TEE
- Security considerations of remote attestation
 - datatracker.ietf.org/doc/draft-sardar-rats-sec-cons/
- IETF SEAT WG
 - datatracker.ietf.org/wg/seat/about/
- Technical Concepts
- Validation of TLS 1.3 Key Schedule
- General Approach
- Weekly meetings
 - github.com/tls-attestation#meetings

ACK

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- Meiling Chen (China Mobile)
- Peter Chunchi Liu (Huawei)

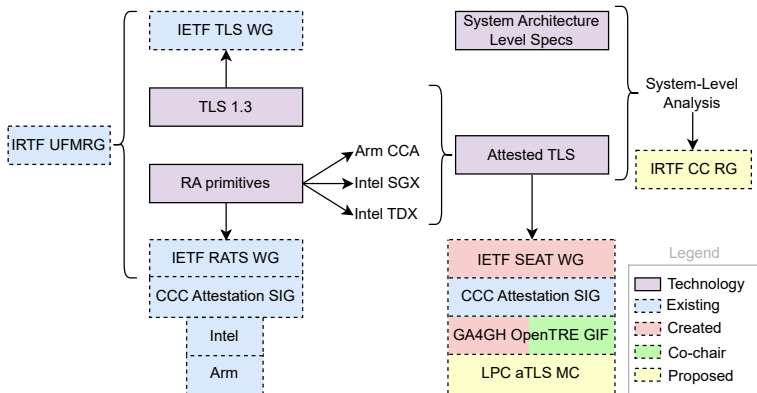
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- Eric Rescorla (Independent)
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- Werner Staub (CORE Association)
- Paul Wouters (Aiven)
- Dennis Jackson (Mozilla)
- Peg Jones (Flashbots)

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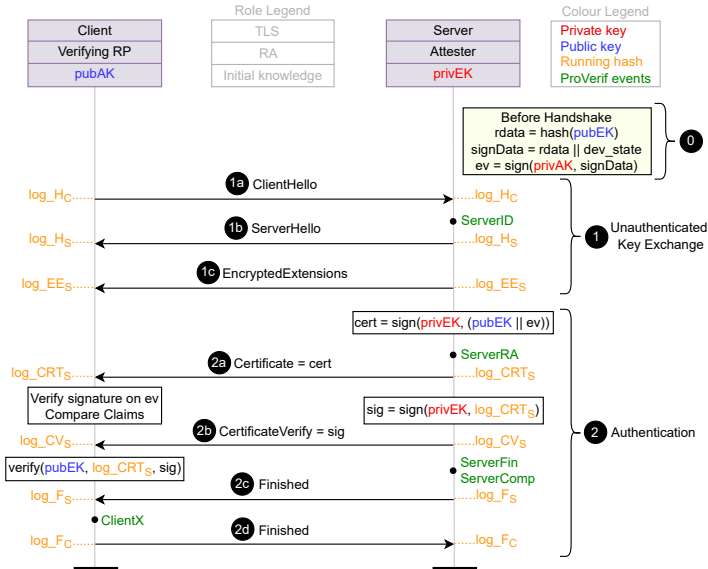
Big Picture



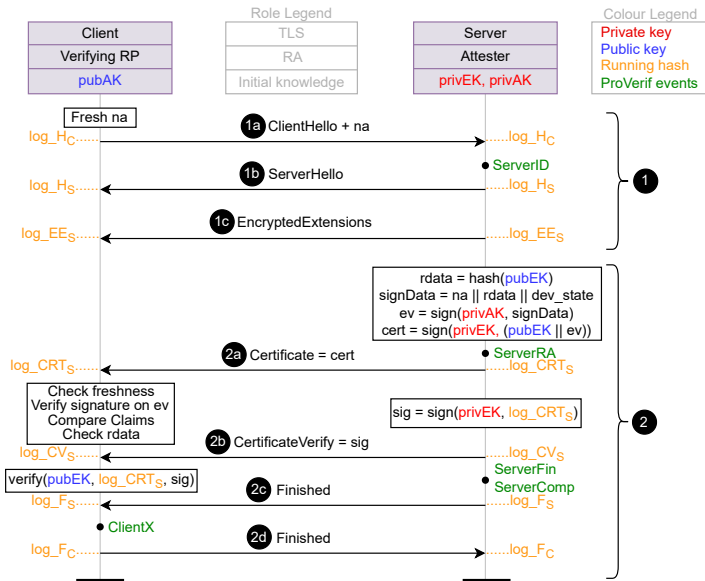
- IETF: Internet Engineering Task Force
- IRTF: Internet Research Task Force
- CCC: Confidential Computing Consortium
- GA4GH: Global Alliance for Genomics and Health
- RATS: Remote ATtestation Procedures
- TLS: Transport Layer Security
- SEAT: Secure Evidence and Attestation Transport

- UFMRG: Usable Formal Methods Research Group
- CC: Confidential Computing
- WG: Working Group
- RG: Research Group
- aTLS: Attested TLS
- SIG: Special Interest Group
- OpenTRE: Trusted Research Environment Open Suite

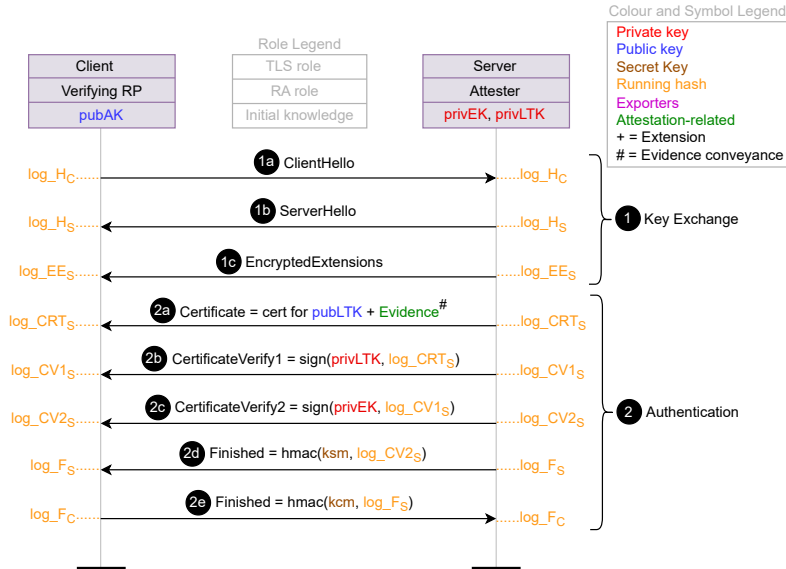
IRA-TLS



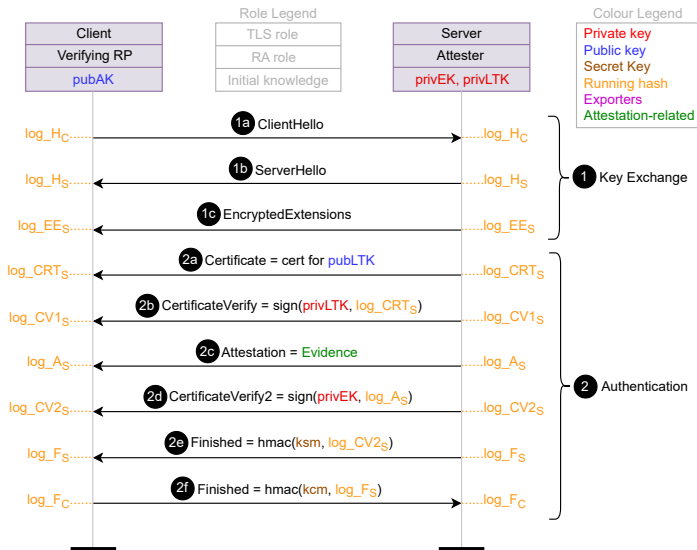
TLS-a



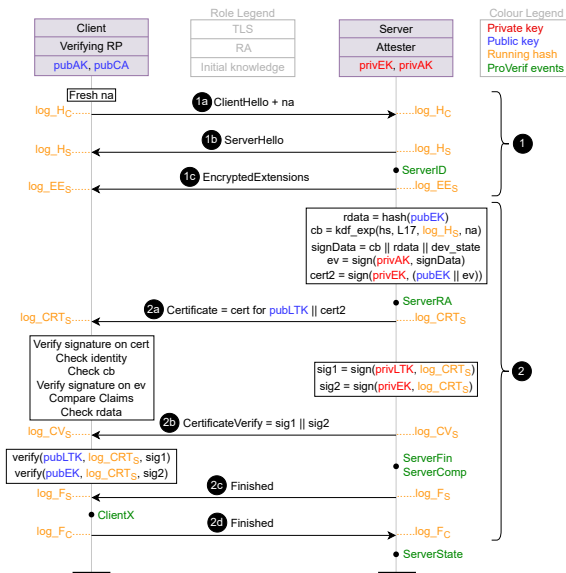
Sol. 2: Two CertificateVerify Messages



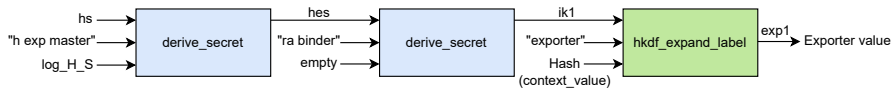
Sol. 4: New Attestation Message



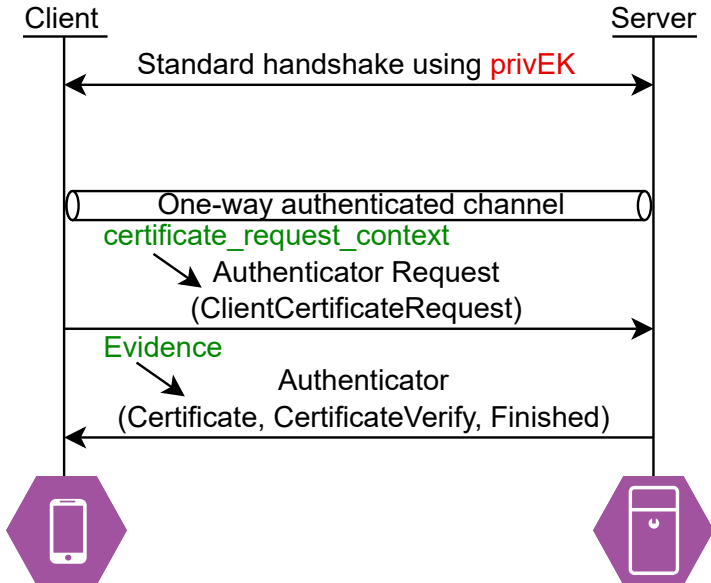
Sol. 5: Cryptographic Binding



Sol. 5 (cont.): Cryptographic Binding



Proposal for Post-handshake Attestation (RFC 9261)



Post-handshake Flow

1. Authenticator Request
 - Unique *certificate_request_context* within connection
2. Evidence based on this context and *Exported Keying Material (EKM)*
3. Authenticator
 - Certificate message extended with Evidence
 - CertificateVerify as in RFC 9261
 - Finished as in RFC 9261
4. Validation: additionally appraise Evidence

