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## A 224-bit One-way Hash Function: SHA-224

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### Abstract

This document specifies a 224-bit one-way hash function, called SHA-224. SHA-224 is based on SHA-256, but it uses a different initial value and the result is truncated to 224 bits.

### 1. Introduction

This document specifies a 224-bit one-way hash function, called SHA-224. The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) announced the FIPS 180-2 Change Notice on February 28, 2004 which specifies the SHA-224 one-way hash function. One-way hash functions are also known as message digests. SHA-224 is based on SHA-256, the 256-bit one-way hash function already specified by NIST [SHA2]. Computation of a SHA-224 hash value is two steps. First, the SHA-256 hash value is computed, except that a different initial value is used. Second, the resulting 256-bit hash value is truncated to 224 bits.

NIST is developing guidance on cryptographic key management, and NIST recently published a draft for comment [NISTGUIDE]. Five security levels are discussed in the guidance: 80, 112, 128, 192, and 256 bits of security. One-way hash functions are available for all of these levels except one. SHA-224 fills this void. SHA-224 is a one-way hash function that provides 112 bits of security, which is the generally accepted strength of Triple-DES [3DES].

This document makes the SHA-224 one-way hash function specification available to the Internet community, and it publishes the object identifiers for use in ASN.1-based protocols.

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### 1.1. Usage Considerations

Since SHA-224 is based on SHA-256, roughly the same amount of effort is consumed to compute a SHA-224 or a SHA-256 digest message digest value. Even though SHA-224 and SHA-256 have roughly equivalent computational complexity, SHA-224 is an appropriate choice for a one-way hash function that provides 112 bits of security. The use of a different initial value ensures that a truncated SHA-256 message digest value cannot be mistaken for a SHA-224 message digest value computed on the same data.

Some usage environments are sensitive to every octet that is transmitted. In these cases, the smaller (by 4 octets) message digest value provided by SHA-224 is important.

These observations lead to the following guidance:

- \* When selecting a suite of cryptographic algorithms that all offer 112 bits of security strength, SHA-224 is an appropriate choice for one-way hash function.
- \* When terseness is not a selection criteria, the use of SHA-256 is a preferred alternative to SHA-224.

### 1.2. Terminology

The key words "MUST", "MUST NOT", "REQUIRED", "SHALL", "SHALL NOT", "SHOULD", "SHOULD NOT", "RECOMMENDED", "MAY", and "OPTIONAL" in this document are to be interpreted as described in [STDWORDS].

## 2. SHA-224 Description

SHA-224 may be used to compute a one-way hash value on a message whose length less than  $2^{64}$  bits.

SHA-224 makes use of SHA-256 [SHA2]. To compute a one-way hash value, SHA-256 uses a message schedule of sixty-four 32-bit words, eight 32-bit working variables, and produces a hash value of eight





Internet community. No independent assertion of the security of this one-way hash function is intended by the author for any particular use. However, as long as SHA-256 provides the expected security, SHA-224 will also provide its expected level of security.

## 6. References

### 6.1. Normative References

- [SHA2] Federal Information Processing Standards Publication (FIPS PUB) 180-2, Secure Hash Standard, 1 August 2002.
- [STDWORDS] Bradner, S., "Key words for use in RFCs to Indicate Requirement Levels", BCP 14, RFC 2119, March 1997.

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### 6.2. Informative References

- [3DES] American National Standards Institute. ANSI X9.52-1998, Triple Data Encryption Algorithm Modes of Operation. 1998.
- [CMS] Housley, R., "Cryptographic Message Syntax (CMS)", RFC 3852, July 2004.
- [NISTGUIDE] National Institute of Standards and Technology. Second Draft: "Key Management Guideline, Part 1: General Guidance." June 2002. [<http://csrc.nist.gov/encryption/kms/guideline-1.pdf>]
- [X.208-88] CCITT Recommendation X.208: Specification of Abstract Syntax Notation One (ASN.1). 1988.
- [X.209-88] CCITT Recommendation X.209: Specification of Basic Encoding Rules for Abstract Syntax Notation One (ASN.1). 1988.

## 7. Acknowledgments

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