

# Secure Hop-by-Hop Aggregation of End-to-End Concealed Data in Wireless Sensor Networks

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**Abstract**—In-network data aggregation is an essential technique in mission critical wireless sensor networks (WSNs) for achieving effective transmission and hence better power conservation. Common security protocols for aggregated WSNs are either hop-by-hop or end-to-end, each of which has its own encryption schemes considering different security primitives. End-to-end encrypted data aggregation protocols introduce maximum data secrecy with in-efficient data aggregation and more vulnerability to active attacks, while hop-by-hop data aggregation protocols introduce maximum data integrity with efficient data aggregation and more vulnerability to passive attacks.

In this paper, we propose a secure aggregation protocol for aggregated WSNs deployed in hostile environments in which dual attack modes are present. Our proposed protocol is a blend of flexible data aggregation as in hop-by-hop protocols and optimal data confidentiality as in end-to-end protocols. Our protocol introduces an efficient  $O(1)$  heuristic for checking data integrity along with cost-effective heuristic-based divide and conquer attestation process which is  $O(\ln n)$  in average  $-O(n)$  in the worst scenario- for further verification of aggregated results.

## I. INTRODUCTION

A wireless sensor network is usually a collection of hundreds or thousands of resource-constrained devices with small memories, low bandwidth and limited power resources. They are deployed in fields where persistent human monitoring and surveillance are either impossible or infeasible. These small detectors can be used to sense events ranging from simple readings (e.g. sensing room temperature) to more important and sensitive measures (e.g. intruder detection in military applications, detecting wildfire or signs of any catastrophic phenomena). Raw data collected using these limited sensors are usually queried by a more powerful device called base station (BS) -which may be far away from sensing fields- for further analysis and event-based reactions [16].

Since wireless sensor networks are energy constrained and bandwidth limited, reducing communications between sensors and base stations has a significant effect on power conservation and bandwidth utilization [7]. Aggregated sensor networks serve this purpose by introducing designated nodes called aggregators that provide efficient data collection and transmission. An aggregator can sense its own data while aggregating received results from children nodes, which in turn may be leaf sensors or aggregators as well.

Aggregated wireless sensor networks provide better power conservation and efficient use of communication channels but

introduce additional security concerns. A passive adversary may capture sensitive results of aggregated data that represents a large partition of the aggregated WSN if the key of the root aggregator of that partition is compromised. On the other hand, an active adversary can forge aggregated data of a partition by compromising the parent node of that partition. Many security protocols for aggregated WSNs were introduced to solve these security problems. These security protocols can be classified according to their underlying encryption schemes into end-to-end and hop-by-hop secure data aggregation protocols.

The paper is organized as follows. In Section II, we present previous work on secure aggregation on WSNs and we define our problem. In Section III, we present our network model and its design goals, along with attacker model. In Sections IV and V, we demonstrate our security protocol and provide analysis of its complexity. The paper is concluded in Section VIII.

## II. RELATED WORK

In this section, we give a short background on previous work of secure aggregation protocols in WSNs, which are classified as end-to-end and hop-by-hop.

In end-to-end encryption schemes [1], [4], [10], [15], intermediate aggregators apply some aggregation functions on encrypted data which they can't decrypt. This is because these intermediate aggregators don't have access to the keys that are only shared between data originators (usually leaf sensor nodes) and the BS. In CDA [4] sensor nodes share a common symmetric key with the BS that is kept hidden from middle-way aggregators. In [1] each leaf sensor share a distinct long-term key with the BS. This key is originally derived from the master secret only known to the BS. These protocols show that aggregation of end-to-end encrypted data is possible through using additive Privacy Homomorphism (PH) as the underlying encryption scheme. Although these protocols are supposed to provide maximum data secrecy across the paths between leaf sensor nodes and their sink, overall secrecy resilience of a WSN becomes in danger if an adversary gains access to the master key in [1], or compromises only a single leaf sensor node in CDA to acquire the common symmetric key shared between all leaf nodes.

In [10], [15] public key encryption based on elliptic curves is used to conceal transient data from leaf sensors to the BS. These schemes enhance secrecy resilience of WSNs against

individual sensor attacks, since compromising a single or a set of sensor nodes won't reveal the decryption key that only the BS knows. An attracting feature of [10] is the introduction of data integrity in end-to-end encrypted WSNs through Merkle hash trees of Message Authentication Codes (MACs). However, both schemes raise power consumption concerns, since computation requirements for public key encryption is still considered high for WSNs [12].

Many hop-by-hop aggregation protocols in WSNs like [3], [6], [9], [13], [17], provide more efficient aggregation operations and highly consider data integrity. However, since sensed data being passed to non-leaf aggregators are revealed for the sake of middle-way aggregation, hop-by-hop aggregation protocols represent weaker model of data confidentiality perspective than end-to-end aggregation protocols. Data secrecy can be revoked of a partition if a passive adversary has obtained the key of the root aggregator of that partition.

#### A. Problem Statement

The challenge is to find a general security protocol for aggregated WSNs that is not limited to certain topology and provides strong data confidentiality comparable to those in secure end-to-end communication protocols. Also, it can provide efficient data aggregation and integrity comparable to those in hop-by-hop aggregation, taking into account the presence of active and passive adversaries. So, when some nodes of the aggregated WSN are physically compromised, compromiser must not gain more information or have influence on aggregated results beyond the effects of its compromised nodes. For these purposes, we propose our security protocol that provides end-to-end data concealment using data diffusion, and in the same time, it provides secure and flexible hop-by-hop aggregation with efficient data integrity test followed by attestation process when forged data are detected in order to eliminate and exclude contributions of any compromised nodes that might be the source of the forged data.

### III. SYSTEM MODEL

#### A. Notations

We use the following notations to describe our protocol:

- BS refers to the Base Station.
- $S = \{S_1, S_2, \dots, S_n\}$  represents the set of sensor/aggregator nodes in the WSN. Since in our model sensors have the aggregation capabilities, the term sensor will be used to refer to a sensor that aggregates as well.
- $ID_{S_i}$  refers to the node ID of sensor node  $S_i$ .
- $K_{S_i, S_j}$  denotes a pairwise symmetric key between node  $S_i$  and node  $S_j$ .  $K_{S_i}$  and  $K'_{S_i}$  are two pairwise symmetric keys of node  $S_i$  shared with the BS, and  $\mathcal{K}$  is a set of all keys.
- $m_{S_i}$  denotes a sensed data read by sensor  $S_i$ .  $m_{S_i}$  is a bounded real value, i.e.  $m_{S_i} \in \mathcal{D} = [u, v]$  for maximum and minimum sensible values  $v$  and  $u$ , respectively.
- $Enc_K(m)$  denotes an encryption of a message  $m$  using a key  $K$ .

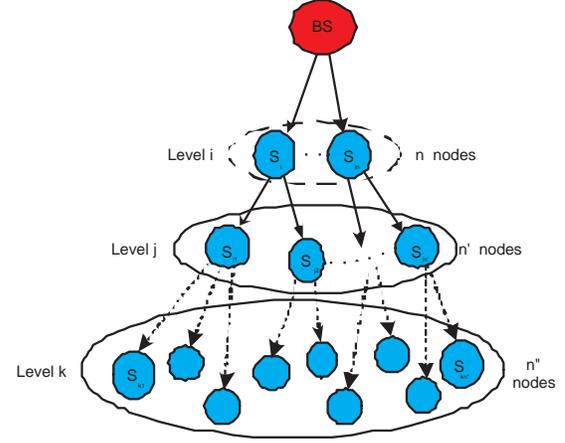


Fig. 1. Network Model (Aggregated WSN).

- $MAC(K_{S_i}, m_{S_i})$  denotes a message authentication code of  $m_{S_i}$  that is sensed by sensor  $S_i$ , this code is generated using the symmetric key  $K_{S_i}$  that is shared between  $S_i$  and the BS.
- $F_K(m)$  refers to a diffusion algorithm that is a public knowledge in the WSN. It takes as input a key  $K$  and a data  $m$ , the result is a diffused value  $D \in [u, v]$ .
- $S_i \rightarrow S_j$  represents a one (or more) hop communication from sensor node  $S_i$  to  $S_j$ .

#### B. Network Model

We assume a general aggregated multi-hop WSN consisting of a large collection of resource-constrained sensor/aggregator nodes (MICA motes [5] for example) connected in a tree topology rooted at a powerful node called the Base Station (BS). An illustration of this model is depicted in Fig. 1. We don't impose any restrictions on the topology as long as it is a connected tree rooted at the BS. We don't require a specific aggregation tree construction algorithm, any efficient tree construction algorithm like TaG [8] can be used in our model. The BS may initially issue aggregation queries or it may be connected to an off-network distant querier which is in this case considered data consumer, and the BS is considered its query server. Aggregation queries represents the union of all sensor readings along the paths of the WSN to its root, i.e. the BS.

We assume that every sensor node  $S_i$  is deployed with two unique symmetric keys  $K_{S_i}$  and  $K'_{S_i}$  shared with the BS, using a secure key deployment protocol, like MIB [11]. A secure broadcast authentication protocol is assumed for authenticating messages, an example of such protocol is  $\mu$ TESLA [12]. Secure key distribution between adjacent nodes is also assumed, some can be found in [2].

#### C. Attacker Model

We assume a dual operational mode adversary (both passive and active) who is interested in revealing in-network data

secrecy and injecting forged data. In our model, we consider effective attacks, where an adversary physically compromises  $k \ll n$  nodes to gain the advantage that would result of attacking  $m$  nodes where  $k < m \leq n$  without the need of attempting such attack on these  $m$  nodes directly. That is, with few compromised nodes, an adversary can endanger the security of an aggregated WSN as if it had physically compromised much larger collection of nodes. When we denote a node as being physically compromised, we mean that an adversary gained control over the node's operation, having access to all its memory, keys, and resources, and is capable to reprogram such a compromised node with attacking code. Attacker is not limited to a single place, it can compromise scattered partitions of nodes in which every partition may have nodes in parent/children relationship.

In this work, we don't consider preventing attacks that disrupt the regular operation of a WSN such as denial-of-service (DoS) attack [14] or underlying routing protocol attacks. We are interested in preventing attacks that aim to acquire aggregation results or tamper them rather than attacks that aim to prevent a querier from being served.

#### D. Design Goals

We designed our protocol to protect against spy-out and false data injection attacks, for that, we considered the following security perspectives:

- **Resilience:** An adversary who compromises few nodes of an aggregated WSN must not spy-out or gain any impact on the final aggregation outcome beyond the influence of the readings and results of its compromised nodes.
- **Efficient Data Integrity, Commitment and Attestation:** Aggregation result must be verified to be the authentic union of sensor readings and intermediate results. Such verification and attestation processes should not impose significant overhead over the WSN that is over aggregation communication overhead.
- **Generality:** The protocol should apply to any aggregated WSN with arbitrary tree topology, moreover, the protocol should support expandable WSNs without any extra reconfiguration.
- **Status Monitoring:** BS must determine when a sensor node becomes dead or unreachable, by knowing and maintaining a list of all nodes contributed in every aggregation query.

### IV. EFFICIENT AND SECURE DATA AGGREGATION PROTOCOL

In this section, we present our proposed protocol that resolves the compromise between data secrecy and efficient aggregation. An overview of the protocol will be presented first, then it will be followed by discussing the protocol details.

#### A. Overview

Our protocol is designed over the approach of data diffusion that preserves the mathematical relationships between different values which are all bounded by a defined range. By preserving

mathematical relationships we can perform efficient hop-by-hop aggregation of collected diffused data. The information of these mathematical relationships are kept concealed end-to-end to maintain complete communication path secrecy. Beside maintaining the mathematical relationships, the diffusion algorithm must not increase the size of encrypted data. Based on this, we can achieve efficient secure hop-by-hop aggregation of end-to-end concealed data in aggregated WSNs.

#### B. Network Setup and Query Dissemination

After field deployment, communication paths should be established. An efficient algorithm like TaG [8] can be used for tree topology construction. Communication channels are secured using pairwise encryption keys between every parent/children nodes, this is the same technique used in many hop-by-hop protocols (e.g. [17]) for securing communication channels.

After tree construction, every sensor node  $S_i$  sends its  $ID_{S_i}$  and an initial random reading  $m_i^0 \in [u, v]$  to the BS in a message encrypted using pairwise symmetric key  $K_{S_i}$ . The initial random reading  $m_i^0$  serves in data diffusion algorithm as we will see later.

When the BS receives a query from a querier, it disseminates this query through the WSN paths. This query contains the desired aggregation function to be performed.

#### C. Data Diffusion

The purpose of the data diffusion process is to consolidate transient data from intermediate aggregators while giving them flexibility and efficiency while applying aggregation functions on these concealed data. Data diffusion serves also in data integrity check as we will see later. Every sensor node diffuses its sensed data before transmission. Middle-way aggregation of diffused data occurs before the final result reaches the BS, which is the only one who can revert diffused result to its actual value.

Assume  $S = \{S_1, S_2, \dots, S_n\}$  be the set of sensor nodes and every node  $S_i$  reads a value  $m_{S_i}$ . Every sensor node  $S_i$  uses a diffusion function  $F_K(m_{S_i})$ , using the keys  $K_{S_i}$  and  $K'_{S_i}$  to generate a pair of diffused data, where  $K_{S_i}, K'_{S_i}$  are two shared keys between  $S_i$  and the base station (BS). We define the diffusion function  $F_{K_{S_i}}(m_{S_i})$  as follows:

*Definition 1:* Assume  $PS : \mathcal{D} \times \mathcal{K} \rightarrow \mathcal{D}$  be a public generator map (i.e., one way function) to produce

$$D_j = PS(K_{S_i}, D_{j-1}) \quad (1)$$

where  $D_j \in \mathcal{D}$ ,  $D_0 = m_{S_i}^0$ , and  $K_{S_i} \in \mathcal{K}$  for  $j \geq 1$  and  $1 \leq i \leq n$ . Let  $F : \mathcal{D} \times \mathcal{D} \rightarrow \mathcal{D}$  be a diffusion function defined as

$$F_{K_{S_i}}(m_{S_i}^j) = PS(K_{S_i}, D_{j-1}) \odot m_{S_i}^j, \quad (2)$$

The value of the generator sequence  $PS$  is taken as an input along with the sensed reading  $m_{S_i}^j$  to the mathematical operand  $\odot$  which generates a diffused value  $F_{K_{S_i}}(m_{S_i}^j) \in \mathcal{D}$ . There is no strict definition of operand  $\odot$ , it refers to any reversible operation that takes two inputs and produces an

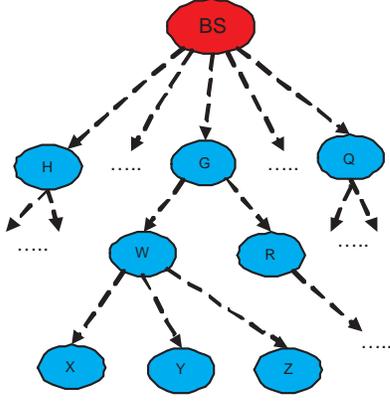


Fig. 2. An example of an aggregated WSN tree.

output that belongs to  $\mathcal{D}$ . Examples of  $\odot$  could vary between trivial operators such as simple addition "+" to more complex bijection functions.  $D'_j$  is generated symmetrically to  $D_j$ , but using key  $K'_{S_i}$  instead of  $K_{S_i}$ .

Since the BS shares the private key  $K_{S_i}$  and initial random reading  $m_{S_i}^0$  of every sensor node  $S_i$ , the BS is able to generate the diffusion value  $D^j$  of every transmission phase. This means that the BS can revert every diffused reading  $D^j_{S_i}$  sent by a sensor  $S_i$  in the WSN to its actual value.

#### V. THE $SUM$ AGGREGATION

In this section, we propose the  $SUM$  aggregation function in our secure aggregation protocol. The algorithm that performs the  $SUM$  aggregation SumAgg is illustrated in algorithm 1. When the BS receives a query of  $SUM$  aggregation function, it broadcasts this request through the WSN. Whenever a sensor node gets this request, it passes such a request to its children nodes, this goes on until reaching leaf level. A leaf sensor node receiving this request will send its diffused reading to its parent. For illustration purposes, let us consider the network in Fig. 2. Leaf sensor  $X$  sends the following packet to its immediate parent  $W$ :

$$X \longrightarrow W : ID_X, IV_{X,W}, Enc_{K_{X,W}} \left( F_{K_X}(m_X), F_{K'_X}(m_X) \right), MAC_X \quad (3)$$

where

$$MAC_X = MAC \left( K_X, F_{K_X}(m_X) || F_{K'_X}(m_X) \right) \quad (4)$$

As we can see, node  $X$  sends its  $ID_X$  and an encrypted pair of its diffused sensed data  $m_X$  to its parent  $W$ .  $X$  also sends a pairwise counter  $IV_{X,W}$  to protect against replay attacks. Finally,  $X$  sends a MAC of its reading using its private key and attach it at the end of the packet for authentication purposes as we shall see later.

The sensor node  $W$  receives similar packets from its other children, i.e.  $Y$  and  $Z$ . Now  $W$  needs to aggregate data received from its children along with its own sensed data  $m_W$ . This is done through applying the  $SUM$  aggregation function

**Input:** A WSN with set  $S$  of  $n$  nodes and BS.

**Output:**  $SUM$  aggregation result.

BS broadcasts  $SUM$  aggregation query in the WSN

**for**  $\forall S_i \in S$  **do**

$list_{S_i} = \{ID_{S_i}\}$

Sense  $m_{S_i}$

$DSUM_{S_i} = F_{K_{S_i}}(m_{S_i})$

$DSUM'_{S_i} = F_{K'_{S_i}}(m_{S_i})$

**for**  $\forall S_j$  that is an immediate child of  $S_i$  **do**

$DSUM_{S_i} = DSUM_{S_i} + DSUM_{S_j}$

$DSUM'_{S_i} = DSUM'_{S_i} + DSUM'_{S_j}$

$list_{S_i} = list_{S_i} \cup list_{S_j}$

**end for**

**end for**

BS sums aggregation of its immediate children nodes.

**if** IPET check for final aggregation result in the BS passes

**then**

return  $SUM$

**else**

Call ComAtt /\*Commitment and Attestation Algo.\*/

**end if**

**Algorithm 1:** SumAgg:  $SUM$  Aggregation Algorithm

as we can see in the following packet that  $W$  sends to its parent  $G$ :

$$W \longrightarrow G : list_W, IV_{W,G}, Enc_{K_{W,G}} \left( \sum_{S_i \in list_W} F_{K_{S_i}}(m_{S_i}), \sum_{S_i \in list_W} F_{K'_{S_i}}(m_{S_i}) \right), MAC_W \quad (5)$$

where

$$MAC_W = MAC \left( K_W, \sum_{S_i \in list_W} F_{K_{S_i}}(m_{S_i}) || \sum_{S_i \in list_W} F_{K'_{S_i}}(m_{S_i}) \right) \oplus MAC_X \oplus MAC_Y \oplus MAC_Z \quad (6)$$

Here  $list_W$  represents the list of all  $ID$ s of the children of  $W$  who contributed in the aggregation, including  $ID_W$ . As we can see,  $W$  sends its  $ID_W$  and  $ID$ s of all its children who contributed in the aggregation, and the aggregated  $SUM$  of their data. As shown above,  $W$  sums all pairs of data in order, i.e. all first elements of every pair are summed together, the same thing happens to second elements of all pairs. This scenario continues until the BS receives from every immediate child a packet that contains the  $ID$ s of all nodes participated in the  $SUM$  aggregation on the partition rooted by that child, along with its diffused aggregation pair. The BS then computes the final aggregation pair  $(DSUM, DSUM')$  of diffused summation:

$$(DSUM, DSUM') = \left( \sum_{i \in list_*} F_{K_i}(m_{S_i}), \sum_{i \in list_*} F_{K'_i}(m_{S_i}) \right) \quad (7)$$

where

$$list_* = list_H \cup \dots \cup list_G \cup \dots \cup list_Q \quad (8)$$

The actual values of this diffused pair  $(DSUM, DSUM')$  should refer to the same output, but since they are diffused differently, they look different. Because the BS knows  $K_{S_i}$  and  $K'_{S_i}$  for every node  $S_i$ , the BS is able to generate the diffusion values that every node contributed in the aggregation has used to diffuse its reading, the BS can revert the pair  $(DSUM, DSUM')$  to their actual values. This is done by finding the summations of all diffusion values that were applied along the path of aggregation, and using these summations when applying the reverse diffusion function on counter parts results  $DSUM$  and  $DSUM'$ :

$$\begin{aligned} (SUM, SUM') &= \left( DSUM \bar{\odot} \sum_{i \in list_*} D_i, \right. \\ &\quad \left. DSUM' \bar{\odot} \sum_{i \in list_*} D'_i \right) \quad (9) \end{aligned}$$

Here, the operand  $\bar{\odot}$  refers to the reverse of the diffusion operation. Now the BS revealed the actual result of  $SUM$  and  $SUM'$  aggregation, it needs to check the integrity of this result. The BS checks the equality of reverted pair  $SUM$  and  $SUM'$ , if they are equal then the aggregation result is accepted (unless the BS doubts it), otherwise the result is rejected and attestation process will start to detect the path and the source of the outliers as explained in Section VI.

The test that uses equation 9 then checks the equality of resulted pair is called Identical Pair Equality Test (IPET). IPET is an  $O(1)$  heuristic that gives us a quick initial indication about the integrity of the aggregation result.

*Lemma 2:* The complexity of SumAgg algorithm with data diffusion is  $O(n \ln(n))$  on average, and the BS needs  $O(1)$  to verify the integrity of the final aggregation result.

Other aggregation functions like *MEAN* and *MAX* can be derived from above description of *SUM* aggregation with slight modifications.

## VI. COMMITMENT AND ATTESTATION

In this section we turn our attention to verifying sensor's commitments of aggregation, and attestation for finding outlier or compromised nodes. Note that we don't consider detecting the case where a compromised node tries to forge its own data, this is because such a situation is hard to detect if forged data belongs to normal data range and this resembles node malfunction. In contrast, we are interested in detecting compromised nodes that are trying to forge aggregation data of their non-compromised children. The divide and conquer algorithm for commitment and attestation ComAtt is presented in algorithm 2, this algorithm uses IPET check as a heuristic to reconstruct only those branches of the network MAC tree which are necessary for the attestation process, avoiding unnecessary reconstruction of the whole MAC tree of the WSN. When the BS discovers that the final aggregation result fails the IPET check, it starts the attestation process by adding its immediate children who contributed in the aggregation to the set  $Q$  -which is the set containing nodes to be tested- for verification. For every node  $S_i \in Q$ , the BS checks  $S_i$  as follows. The BS asks from every node  $S_i \in Q$  to resend

**Input:**  $list_*$  (list of  $IDs$  of all nodes contributed in an aggregation),  $MAC_{Agg}$  (MAC of final aggregation result)

**Output:**  $list_L$  (list of  $IDs$  of outliers)

$list_L = \emptyset, list_C = \emptyset$

$Q = \{S_i : \forall S_i \in list_* \wedge S_i \text{ is immediate children of BS}\}$

**while**  $Q \neq \emptyset$  **do**

    Pick a node  $S_i$  from  $Q$

$S_i \rightarrow BS : list_{S_i}, IV_{S_i}, (DSUM_{S_i}, DSUM'_{S_i}), MAC_{S_i}$

$MAC_{S_i}^{Calc} = \text{Reconstructed } MAC_{S_i} \text{ in BS using collected data and } MAC_{Agg}$

**if**  $MAC_{S_i}^{Calc} \neq MAC_{S_i}$  OR IPET check of  $S_i$  packet fails

**then**

**if**  $S_i$  is not committed to its previous aggregation packet

**then**

$list_C = list_C \cup S_i$

**end if**

$list_L = list_L \cup S_i$

$Q = Q \cup \{S_j : \forall S_j \in list_* \wedge S_j \text{ is immediate children of } S_i\}$

**end if**

$Q = Q - S_i$

**end while**

**for**  $\forall S_i \in list_L - list_C$  **do**

$list_{S_i} = (list_{S_i} - list_L) \cup S_i$

$S_i \rightarrow BS :$

$list'_{S_i}, IV_{S_i},$

$(\sum_{j \in list'_{S_i}} F_{K_j}(m_j), \sum_{j \in list'_{S_i}} F_{K'_j}(m_j)), MAC_{S_i}$

**if** IPET check of aggregation pair of  $S_i$  passes **then**

$list_L = list_L - S_i$

**end if**

**end for**

    RETURN  $list_L$

**Algorithm 2:** ComAtt: Commitment and Attestation Algo.

its aggregation packet. The BS then checks the commitment of  $S_i$  by constructing its authentication code  $MAC_{S_i}^{Calc}$  with the help of the final aggregation result authentication code  $MAC_{Agg}$  and collected data. If  $MAC_{S_i}^{Calc}$  is identical to  $MAC_{S_i}$ , then the BS knows that  $S_i$  is committed to its previously sent aggregation packet. If  $S_i$  is committed and its aggregation pair passes the IPET check then it is assumed honest -unless the BS doubts its result as we shall see later- and its descendants will be excluded from further verifications. On the other hand, if  $S_i$  appeared not to be committed to its previously sent aggregation, or its aggregation pair fails the IPET test, then  $S_i$  is added to the list of outliers  $list_L$ , and every children  $S_j$  of  $S_i$  is added to the set  $Q$  for further investigation. For the case when commitment test of  $S_i$  fails,  $S_i$  is also added to the list of not committed nodes  $list_C$ .

After processing all nodes in  $Q$ ,  $list_L$  will be having suspected nodes that either not committed or failed the IPET check. Non-committed nodes in  $list_L$  are directly considered dishonest or compromised without any further investigation. However, it might be the case that an honest committed node in  $list_L$  failed the IPET check because one or more of its children were compromised. We need to eliminate such honest nodes from  $list_L$ , this is done by further investigation of committed nodes that fail IPET check, i.e.  $S_i \in list_L - list_C$ .

For every such node  $S_i$ , the BS requests a new aggregation of  $S_i$  that excludes data from any node  $S_j \in list_L$ , that is, the BS is giving  $S_i$  a chance to prove its honesty by finding the aggregation of its only honest children. If the new aggregation of  $S_i$  passes the IPET check, then  $S_i$  is removed from  $list_L$ , otherwise, it is kept there. Finally, the ComAtt algorithm returns  $list_L$  that contains the set of outliers or compromised nodes.

*Lemma 3:* The commitment process in ComAtt algorithm is  $O(c \ln n)$  in average for some constant  $c$ , and  $O(n)$  in the worst case.

*Proof:* The proof is a direct consequence from the binary tree search algorithm, considering the height (depth) of aggregation equals  $\ln n$  in average ■

## VII. SECURITY ANALYSIS

In this section, we show how our security protocol could be compared to hop-by-hop and end-to-end protocols in terms of security level and efficiency of data integrity check.

### A. Node Attacks

We consider the logical hypothesis that a node  $S_i$  is attacked by an intruder (attacker)  $I$ . This attacker  $I$  can gain access to all information of this node including  $K_{S_i}$ ,  $list_{S_i}$  and  $m_{S_i}$ . In this case, it can alter the message  $m_{S_i}$  to  $m_I$  and encrypt it using the key  $K_{S_i}$ . We show that the only influence such an attacker can have on final aggregation result is sending forged aggregation of attacked nodes. If the attacker attempts to change the aggregation values of its children without knowing their dual diffusion seeds, then this attempt will be quickly caught by the IPET test. So, an attacker in this case won't be able to forge its aggregation except by changing its own reading  $m_I$  and aggregations of its children which their dual diffusion seeds are known to the attacker. That is, if an attacker wants to forge the aggregation of  $n$  nodes and not get caught by IPET, then this attacker must compromise or acquire private data of  $n$  nodes.

*Lemma 4:* Our aggregation protocol represents a security model against spy-out attacks that is better or at least as good as hop-by-hop aggregation protocols.

*Proof:* Our protocol has an advantage over hop-by-hop protocols because of transient data diffusion. Only when a passive adversary succeeds in breaking the diffused data of all children of a hop, our protocol becomes vulnerable to spy-out attacks as any other hop-by-hop protocol. ■

*Lemma 5:* Our protocol performs either more efficient or at least as good as end-to-end aggregation protocols in checking data integrity.

*Proof:* In our protocol, we use IPET heuristic to reconstruct the only necessary branches of the MAC tree for testing data integrity. In the worst case, we will need to reconstruct the whole MAC tree, which is the case in end-to-end protocols. ■

## VIII. CONCLUSIONS

In this paper, we demonstrated a model for secure data aggregation in WSNs, which is a blend of hop-by-hop operational efficiency and end-to-end data secrecy. We showed that this model has low computational complexity and the BS uses  $O(1)$  heuristic to verify final aggregation result of sensed data and it needs  $O(\ln n)$  in average to detect an attacked node. We plan to perform simulation and further security analysis of this model in our future work.

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