



Loopback Interfaces

This chapter tells how to configure loopback interfaces.

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About Loopback Interfaces

A loopback interface is a software-only interface that emulates a physical interface. This interface is reachable on IPv4 and IPv6 through multiple physical interfaces. The loopback interface helps to overcome path failures; it is accessible from any physical interface, so if one goes down, you can access the loopback interface from another.

Loopback interfaces can be used for:

- AAA
- BGP
- DNS
- HTTP
- ICMP
- SNMP
- SSH
- Static and dynamic VTI tunnels
- Syslog
- Telnet

The ASA can distribute the loopback address using dynamic routing protocols, or you can configure a static route on the peer device to reach the loopback IP address through one of the ASA's physical interfaces. You cannot configure a static route on the ASA that specifies the loopback interface.

Guidelines for Loopback Interfaces

Failover and Clustering

- No clustering support.

Context Mode

- VTI is supported in single context mode only. Other loopback uses are supported in multiple context mode.

Additional Guidelines and Limitations

- TCP sequence randomization is always disabled for traffic from the physical interface to the loopback interface.

Configure a Loopback Interface

Add a loopback interface.

Procedure

Step 1 Choose **Configuration** > **Device Setup** > **Interface Settings** > **Interfaces**.

Step 2 Choose **Add** > **Loopback Interface**.

The **Add Loopback Interface** dialog box appears.

Step 3 In the **Loopback ID** field, enter an integer between 0 and 10413.

Step 4 If the interface is not already enabled, check the **Enable Interface** check box.

The interface is enabled by default.

Step 5 (Optional) Enter a description in the **Description** field.

Step 6 Configure the name and IP address. See [Routed and Transparent Mode Interfaces](#).

Step 7 Click **OK**.

You return to the **Interfaces** pane.

Step 8 Configure rate-limiting for loopback traffic. See [Rate-Limit Traffic to the Loopback Interface, on page 3](#).

Rate-Limit Traffic to the Loopback Interface

You should rate-limit traffic going to the loopback interface IP address to prevent excessive load on the system. You can add a connection limit rule to the global service policy. This procedure shows adding to the default global policy (global_policy).

Procedure

- Step 1** Choose **Configuration** > **Firewall** > **Service Policy**, and click **Add** > **Add Service Policy Rule**.
- Step 2** Choose the **Global** policy and click **Next**.

Figure 1: Service Policy

Adding a new service policy rule requires three steps:

- Step 1: Configure a service policy.
- Step 2: Configure the traffic classification criteria for the service policy rule.
- Step 3: Configure actions on the traffic classified by the service policy rule.

Create a Service Policy and Apply To:

Only one service policy can be configured per interface or at global level. If a service policy already exists, then you can add a new rule into the existing service policy. Otherwise, you can create a new service policy.

Interface: inside - (create new service policy)

Policy Name: inside-policy

Description:

Drop and log unsupported IPv6 to IPv6 traffic

Global - applies to all interfaces

Policy Name: global_policy *

Description:

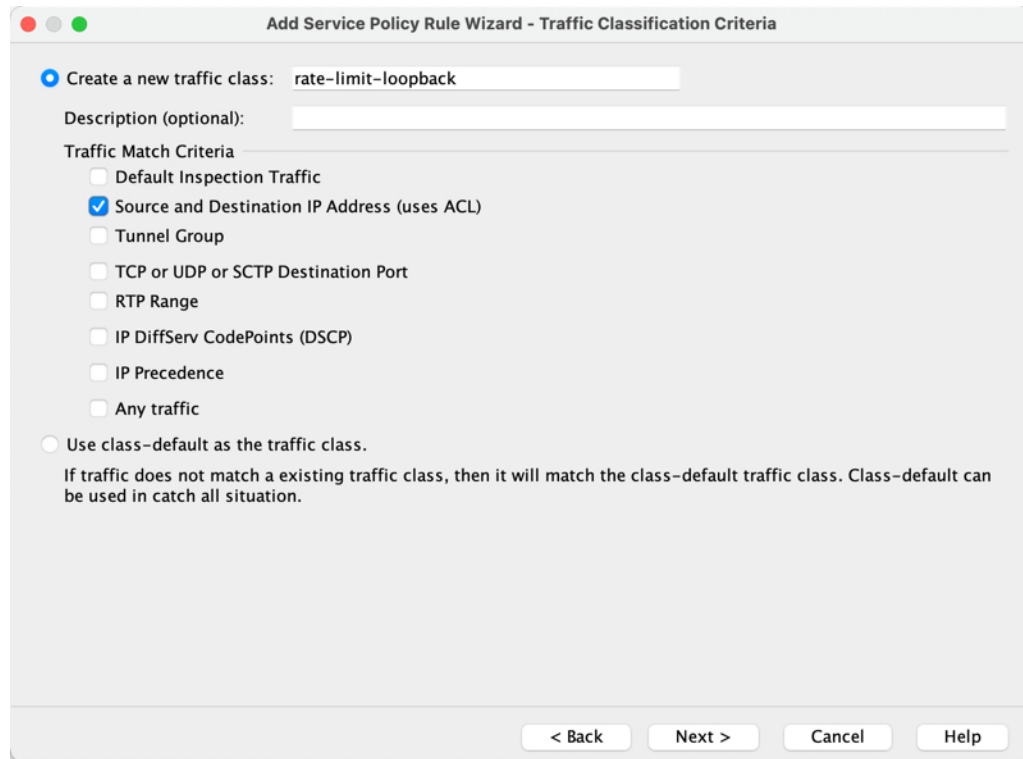
Drop and log unsupported IPv6 to IPv6 traffic

*Only one service policy is allowed. Existing service policy names cannot be changed.

< Back Next > Cancel Help

- Step 3** On the **Traffic Classification Criteria** page, set the following values and click **Next**.

Figure 2: Traffic Classification Criteria



- **Create a new traffic class**—Name the loopback traffic class.
- **Source and Destination IP Address (uses ACL)**

Step 4 On the **Traffic Match - Source and Destination Address** page, define the access control list to specify all IP traffic going to the loopback IP address, and click **Next**.

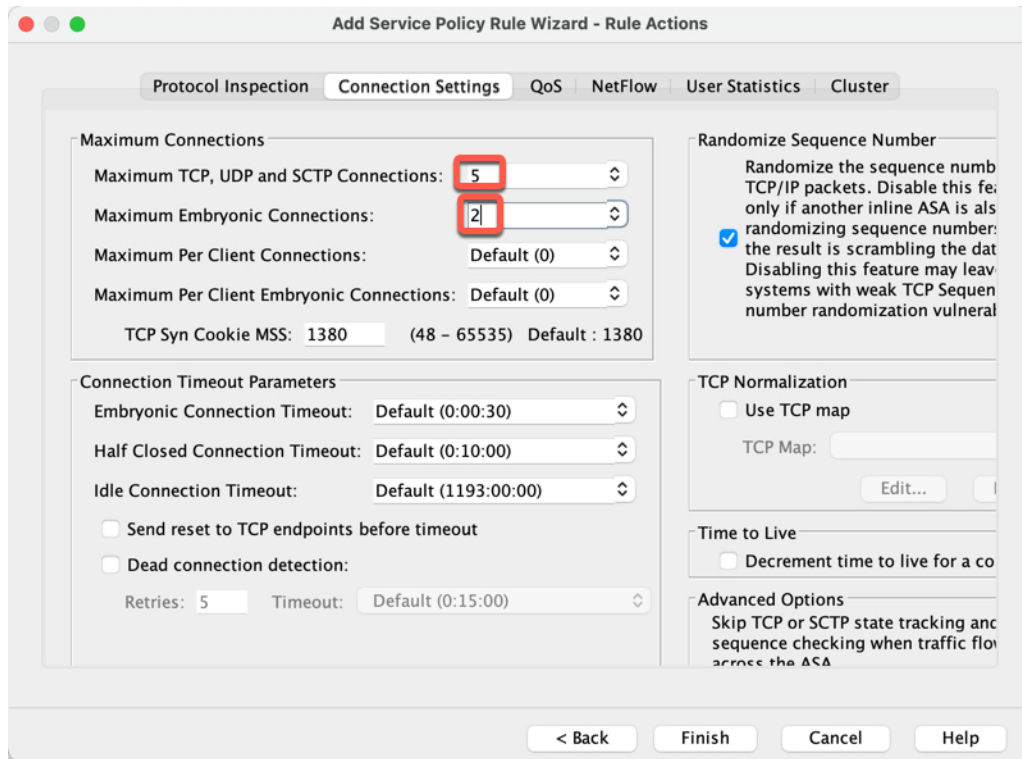
Figure 3: Traffic Match - Source and Destination Address

The screenshot shows a configuration window titled "Add Service Policy Rule Wizard - Traffic Match - Source and Destination Address". The "Action" is set to "Match". Under "Existing ACL", "ExistingACL" is selected. In the "Source Criteria" section, "Source" is set to "any". In the "Destination Criteria" section, "Destination" is set to "loopback1, loopback2" and "Service" is set to "ip". The "Description" field is empty. At the bottom, there are buttons for "< Back", "Next >", "Cancel", and "Help".

- **Action:** Match
- **Source**—any. You can also narrow this access list by specifying the source IP addresses instead of **any**.
- **Destination**—The loopback interface IP addresses
- **Service**—ip

Step 5 On the **Rule Actions** page, click the **Connection Settings** tab, and in the **Maximum Connections** area, set the following values.

Figure 4: Rule Actions



- **Maximum TCP, UDP and SCTP Connections**—Set the maximum connections to the expected number of connections for the loopback interface, and the embryonic connections to a lower number. For example, you can set it to 5/2, or 10/5, or 1024/512, depending on the expected loopback interface sessions you need.
- **Embryonic Connections**—Setting the embryonic connection limit enables TCP Intercept, which protects the system from a DoS attack perpetrated by flooding an interface with TCP SYN packets.

Step 6 Click **Finish**.

The rule is added to the global policy.

Figure 5: Service Policy Rules Table

Name	#	Enabled	Match	Source	Src Security Group	Destination	Dst Security Group	Service	Time	Rule Actions
Global; Policy: global_policy										
inspection_default			Match	any		any		default-in...		Inspect DNS Map p... Inspect ESMTMP (12 more inspect actio...
rate-limit-loopback	1	✓	Match	any		loopback1 loopback2		ip		Max TCP/UDP Con... Max Embryonic Co...

Step 7 Click **Apply**.

History for Loopback Interfaces

Table 1: History for Loopback Interfaces

Feature Name	Version	Feature Information
Loopback interface support for DNS, HTTP, ICMP, and IPsec Flow Offload	9.2(1)	<p>You can now add a loopback interface and use it for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DNS • HTTP • ICMP • IPsec Flow Offload
Loopback interface support for VTI	9.19(1)	<p>A loopback interface provides redundancy of static and dynamic VTI VPN tunnels. You can now set a loopback interface as the source interface for a VTI. The VTI interface can also inherit the IP address of a loopback interface instead of a statically configured IP address. The loopback interface helps to overcome path failures. If an interface goes down, you can access all interfaces through the IP address of the loopback interface.</p> <p>New/Modified screens: Configuration > Device Setup > Interface Settings > Interfaces > Add VTI Interface > Advanced</p>
ASDM support for loopback interfaces	9.19(1)	<p>ASDM now supports loopback interfaces.</p> <p>New/Modified screens: Configuration > Device Setup > Interface Settings > Interfaces > Add Loopback Interface</p>
Support for loopback interface	9.18(2)	<p>You can now add a loopback interface and use it for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BGP • AAA • SNMP • Syslog • SSH • Telnet <p>New/Modified commands: interface loopback, logging host, neighbor update-source, snmp-server host, ssh, telnet</p> <p>No ASDM support.</p>

