

Towards Federation in CADC Authentication, Authorization and Identity (AA&I)

Adrian Damian - Canadian Astronomy Data Centre (CADC)
IVOA InterOp Meeting, June 2025

Federated Identities - Overview

- Current status
- Requirements for federated identity
- Approach
- Conclusion



CADC Authentication & Authorization

A&A has been used for a long time for proprietary data (and metadata) distribution. More recently also used to control access to other resources: disk space (user and project), computing, user catalogues, etc.

- 9-10k user accounts
- AccessControl (ac) - LDAP-backed in-house Web service



Very complex environment:

- Authentication methods: username/password, cookies, X509 Certificates, OpenID (partial)
- Web and command line applications
- Single Sign On (SSO) over 3 domains
- Authorization based on group membership (GMS). Scalable. Group of groups.
- Support for interactive and batch sessions on distributed cloud infrastructure
- Local POSIX identities
- ~~Credential delegation service using X509 Proxy Certificates~~

From SSO to Federated Identity Management (FIM)

SSO: with a Single Organization

FIM: one single digital identity to access multiple enterprises and domains that are part of a federation and share a sense of mutual **trust**

Seamless integration with 2 federations (SKA, Rubin)

Support for OpenID Connect (OIDC) technologies

Maximum flexibility as access policies not clearly defined yet

Considered a few solutions:

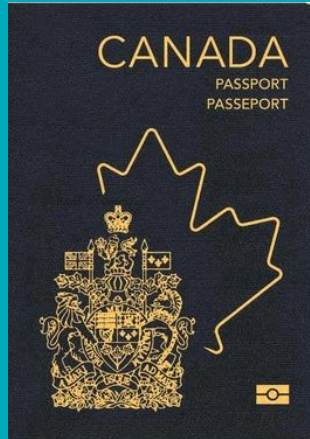
- CILogon (Rubin)
- Indigo IAM (SKA)
- keycloak (Many others)

For now decided to adapt/enhance the CADC ac

X509 Certificates vs OAuth2.0/OIDC Identity Approach

X509 certificates are similar to passports:

- Issued by a local office (authority) on behalf of a central (country) authority with large recognition
- Unique identity within the central authority
- A lot of embedded security
- Long time validity
- Hard to impersonate
- Bulky to use daily
- Certified photocopies used to work (proxy certificates)



Bearer tokens are similar to daily ski passes:

- Issued by a local authority
- Different identities at each ski resort
- Recognized at other ski resorts that participate in a collective
- Valid only for the day/half day
- Easy to use by anyone in its possession (easy to impersonate)
- Not a lot of security embedded (QRCode)
- Sometimes issued for a specific purpose



Big paradigm shift

Implementation Guidelines

Planned features (open to feedback):

1. Support OIDC token in JWT format only (to be able to validate the IdP)
2. Configure trusted Identity Providers (SKA, Rubin) and their GMS services
 - a. Industry solution in the works ([OpenID Federation](#))
3. Automatic CADC account creation when local identities required:
 - a. Resource owner such as UWS Job owner
 - b. POSIX identities (uid and gid)
4. Support for UI authentication with trusted IdPs
5. Ability to link existing CADC account with external identities - preferred
6. Ability to merge existing CADC accounts
7. Implement credential exchange (token->X509, X509->token, token->token)
8. Replace `ac` or just the authorization side with a off the shelf solution (keycloak) - long term

Example of call sequence

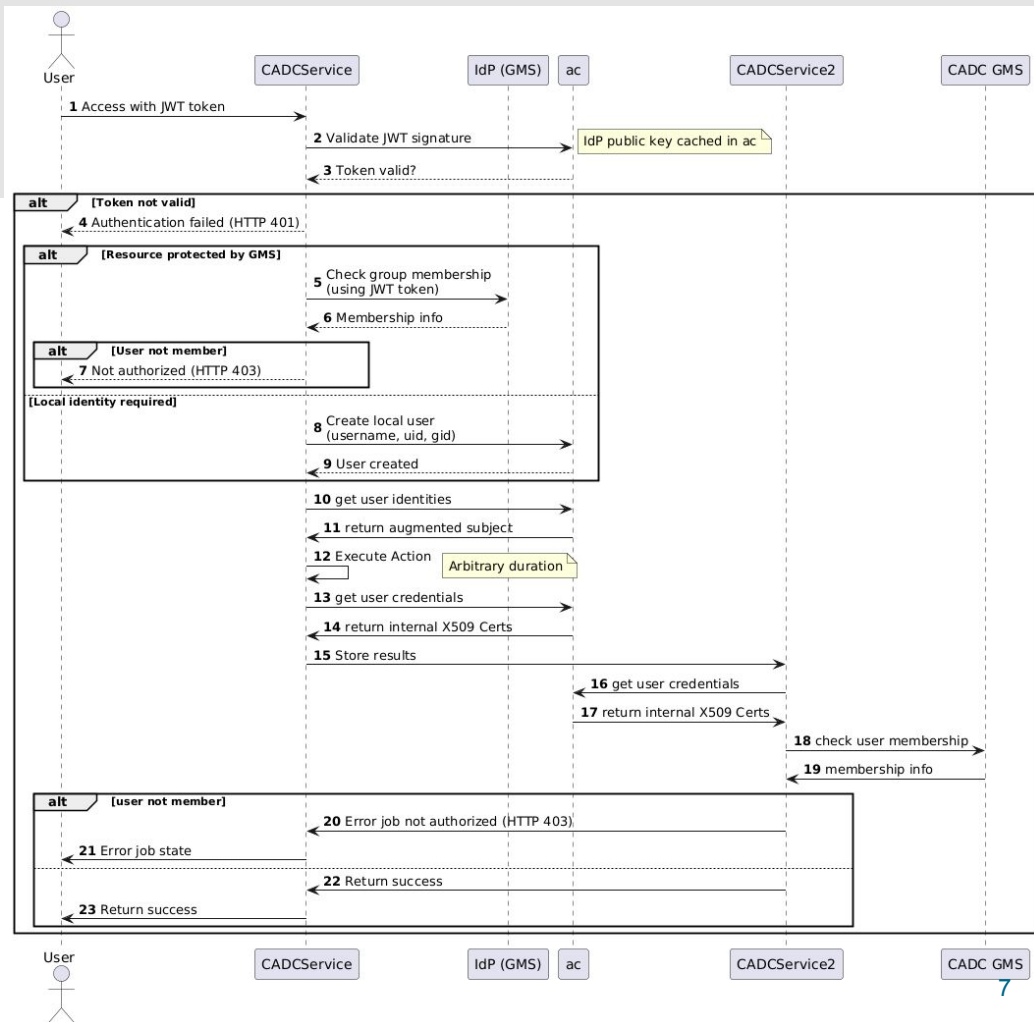
OIDC claims mapping:

Unique OIDC Identity is the `iss` and `sub` mandatory claims combination:

`iss=https://ska-iam.stfc.ac.uk`
`sub=ecaa76d2-964c-4d7a-b6a2-fba67c4b7c31`

`preferred_username` - optional POSIX name

`allowed_origins`, `allowed_domains`,
`audience` - trusted domains?



User info for external vs CADC users

Default User Account:

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<user>
  <internalID>
<uri>ivo://cadc.nrc.ca/gms?00000000-0000-0000-0000-0000000203045</uri>
  </internalID>
  <identities>
    <identity type="HTTP">ska-joedoe</identity>
    <identity type="CADC">00000000-0000-0000-0000-0000000203045</identity>
    <identity type="POSIX">23021</identity>
    <identity type="OPENID">iss=https://ska-iam.stfc.ac.uk
sub=abcd76e2-977c-4d7a-b6a2-fba88d9b7c43</identity>
    <identity type="X500">CN=Joe Doe,OU=myorg,O=Grid,C=CA</identity>
  </identities>
  <personalDetails/>
  <posixDetails>
    <username>ska-doej</username>*
    <uid>23021</uid>
    <gid>23021</gid>
    <homeDirectory>/home/23021</homeDirectory>
  </posixDetails>
</user>
```

*User name filled in only if preferred_username claim is present.

User personal details only filled in when corresponding claims provided

CADC User Account with Linked :

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<user>
  <internalID>
<uri>ivo://cadc.nrc.ca/gms?00000000-0000-0000-0000-0000000203045</uri>
  </internalID>
  <identities>
    <identity type="HTTP">joedoe</identity>
    <identity type="CADC">00000000-0000-0000-0000-0000000203045</identity>
    <identity type="POSIX">23021</identity>
    <identity type="OPENID">iss=https://ska-iam.stfc.ac.uk
sub=abcd76e2-977c-4d7a-b6a2-fba88d9b7c43</identity>
    <identity type="OPENID">iss=https://test.cilogon.org
sub=http://cilogon.org/serverE/users/123456</identity>
    <identity type="X500">CN=Joe Doe,OU=myorg,O=Grid,C=CA</identity>
  </identities>
  <personalDetails>
    <firstName>Joe</firstName>
    <lastName>Doe</lastName>
    <email>Joe.Doe@myemail.com</email>
    <institute>INST</institute>
    <city>Victoria</city>
    <country>Canada</country>
  </personalDetails>
  <posixDetails>
    <username>doej</username>
    <uid>23021</uid>
    <gid>23021</gid>
    <homeDirectory>/home/23021</homeDirectory>
  </posixDetails>
</user>
```


CADC Service to External Service Calls

- Appropriate user credentials must be used for CADC service to external service calls
- Can use the proposed Interoperable Authentication Protocol (IAP) to determine the domain (federation) of the target service and the user credential that are required to access it
- For longer lasting jobs, a new token-based credential delegation service similar to the Credential Delegation Protocol (CDP) is required
- Exchange Credentials Service?
- evil is in the details

Conclusions

- As the new facilities come online, a solution for federated AA&I is required
- Authentication/Authorization is no longer just for data access - resources also need to be protected
- We might need temporary solutions before standards catch up
- User experience is center stage
- We have to go fast but not necessarily alone
- Please be in touch if interested in the subject

Thank you

Adrian Damian • CADC • Adrian.Damian@nrc-cnrc.gc.ca