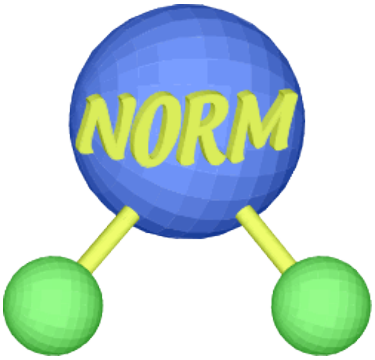

NORM Developer's Guide

Background

This document describes an application programming interface (API) for the Nack-Oriented Reliable Multicast (NORM) protocol implementation developed by the United States Naval Research Laboratory (NRL). The NORM protocol provides general purpose reliable data transport for applications wishing to use Internet Protocol (IP) Multicast services for group data delivery. NORM can also support unicast (point-to-point) data communication and may be used for such when deemed appropriate. The current NORM protocol specification is given in the Internet Engineering Task Force RFC 3940.

The NORM protocol is designed to provide end-to-end reliable transport of bulk data objects or streams over generic IP multicast routing and forwarding services. NORM uses a selective, negative acknowledgement (NACK) mechanism for transport reliability and offers additional protocol mechanisms to conduct reliable multicast sessions with limited "a priori" coordination among senders and receivers. A congestion control scheme is specified to allow the NORM protocol fairly share available network bandwidth with other transport protocols such as Transmission Control Protocol (TCP). It is capable of operating with both reciprocal multicast routing among senders and receivers and with asymmetric connectivity (possibly a unicast return path) from the senders to receivers. The protocol offers a number of features to allow different types of applications or possibly other higher level transport protocols to utilize its service in different ways. The protocol leverages the use of FEC-based repair and other proven reliable multicast transport techniques in its design.

The NRL NORM library attempts to provide a general useful capability for development of reliable multicast applications for bulk file or other data delivery as well as support of stream-based transport with possible real-time delivery requirements. The API allows access to many NORM protocol parameters and control functions to tailor performance for specific applications. While default parameters, where provided, can be useful to a potential wide range of requirements, the many different possible group communication paradigms dictate different needs for different applications. Even with NORM, the developer should have a thorough understanding of the specific application's group communication needs.

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Overview

The NORM API has been designed to provide simple, straightforward access to and control of NORM protocol state and functions. Functions are provided to create and initialize instances of the NORM API and associated transport sessions (*NormSessions*). Subsequently, NORM data transmission (*NormSender*) operation can be activated and the application can queue various types of data (*NormObjects*) for reliable transport. Additionally or alternatively, NORM reception (*NormReceiver*) operation can also be enabled on a per-session basis and the protocol implementation alerts the application of receive events.

By default, the NORM API will create an operating system thread in which the NORM protocol engine runs. This allows user application code and the underlying NORM code to execute somewhat independently of one another. The NORM protocol thread notifies the application of various protocol events through a thread-safe event dispatching mechanism and API calls are provided to allow the application to control NORM operation. (*Note: API mechanisms for lower-level, non-threaded control and execution of the NORM protocol engine will also be provided in the future.*)

The NORM API operation can be roughly summarized with the following categories of functions:

1) API Initialization
2) Session Creation and Control
3) Data Transport
4) Event Notification

Note the order of these categories roughly reflects the order of function calls required to use NORM in an application. The first step is to create and initialize, as needed, at least one instance of the NORM API. Then one or more NORM transport sessions (where a "session" corresponds to data exchanges on a given multicast group and host port number) may be created and controlled. Applications may participate as senders and/or receivers within a NORM session. NORM senders transmit data to the session destination address (usually an IP multicast group) while receivers are notified of incoming data. The NORM API provides and event notification scheme to notify the application of significant sender and receiver events. There are also a number support functions provided for the application to control and monitor its participation within a NORM transport session.

API Initialization

The NORM API requires that an application explicitly create at least one instance of the NORM protocol engine which is subsequently used as a conduit for further NORM API calls. By default, the NORM protocol engine runs in its own operating system thread and interacts with the application in a thread-safe manner through the API calls and event dispatching mechanism. In general, only the thread creating the NORM API instance should invoke API calls referencing that instance or any sessions or state created within that instance (*NOTE: This limitation may change in the future. The current*

implementation is theoretically safe for concurrent access, but this has not been fully tested). Multiple API instances may be created as needed for applications with specific requirements for accessing and controlling participation in multiple NORM sessions from operating system multiple threads.

Session Creation and Control

Once an API instance has been successfully created, the application may then create NORM transport session instances as needed. The application can participate in each session as a sender and/or receiver of data. If an application is participating as a sender, it may enqueue data transport objects for transmission. The control of transmission is largely left to the sender and API calls are provided to control transmission rate, FEC parameters, etc. Applications participating as receivers will be notified via the NORM API's event dispatching mechanism of pending and completed reliable reception of data along with other significant events. Additionally, API controls for some optional NORM protocol mechanisms, such as positive acknowledgment collection, are also provided.

Note when multiple senders are involved, receivers allocate system resources (buffer space) for each active sender. With a very large number of concurrently active senders, this may translate to significant memory allocation on receiver nodes. Currently, the API allows the application to control how much buffer space is allocated for each active sender (*NOTE: In the future, API functions may be provided limit the number of active senders monitored and/or provide the application with finer control over receive buffer allocation, perhaps on a per sender basis*).

NORM Data Transport

The NORM protocol supports transport of three basic types of data content. These include the types `NORM_OBJECT_FILE` and `NORM_OBJECT_DATA` which represent predetermined, fixed-size application data content. The only differentiation with respect to these two types is the implicit "hint" to the receiver to use non-volatile (i.e. file system) storage or memory. This "hint" lets the receiver allocate appropriate storage space with no other information on the incoming data. The NORM implementation reads/writes data for the `NORM_OBJECT_FILE` type directly from/to file storage, while application memory space is accessed for the `NORM_OBJECT_DATA` type. The third data content type, `NORM_OBJECT_STREAM`, represents unbounded, possibly persistent, streams of data content. Using this transport paradigm, traditional, byte-oriented streaming transport service (e.g. similar to that provided by a TCP socket) can be provided. Additionally, NORM has provisions for application-defined message-oriented transport where receivers can recover message boundaries without any "handshake" with the sender. Stream content is buffered by the NORM implementation for transmission/retransmission and as it is received.

NORM Data Transmission

The behavior of data transport operation is largely placed in the control of the NORM sender(s). NORM senders controls their data transmission rate, forward error correction (FEC) encoding settings, and parameters controlling feedback from the receiver group.

Multiple senders may operate in a session, each with independent transmission parameters. NORM receivers learn needed parameter values from fields in NORM message headers.

NORM transport “objects” (file, data, or stream) are queued for transmission by NORM senders. NORM senders may also cancel transmission of objects at any time. The NORM sender controls the transmission rate either manually (fixed transmission rate) or automatically when NORM congestion control operation is enabled. The NORM congestion control mechanism is designed to be "friendly" to other data flows on the network, fairly sharing available bandwidth.

By default, the NORM sender transmits application-enqueued data content, providing repair transmissions (usually in the form of FEC messages) only when requested by NACKs from the receivers. However, the application may also configure NORM to proactively send some amount of FEC content along with the original data content to create a "robust" transmission that, in some cases, may be reliably received without any NACKing activity. This can allow for some degree of reliable protocol operation even without receiver feedback available. NORM senders may also requeue (within the limits of "transmit cache" settings) objects for repeat transmission, and receivers may combine together multiple transmissions to reliably receive content. Additionally, hybrid proactive/reactive FEC repair operation is possible with the receiver NACK process as a "backup" for when network packet loss exceeds the repair capability of the proactive FEC settings.

The NRL NORM implementation also supports optional collection of positive acknowledgment from a subset of the receiver group at application-determined positions during data transmission. The NORM API allows the application to specify the receiver subset ("acking node list") and set "watermark" points for which positive acknowledgement is collected. This process can provide the application with explicit flow control for an application-determined critical set of receivers in the group.

NORM Data Reception

NORM receiver applications learn of active senders and their corresponding pending and completed data transfers, etc via the API event dispatching mechanism. By default, NORM receivers use NACK messages to request repair of transmitted content from the originating sender as needed to achieve reliable transfer. Some API functions are available to provide some additional control over the NACKing behavior, such as initially NACKing for NORM_INFO content only or even to the extent of disabling receiver feedback (silent receiver operation) entirely.

API Event Notification

An asynchronous event dispatching mechanism is provided to notify the application of significant NORM protocol events. The centerpiece of this is the `NormGetNextEvent()` function which can be used to retrieve the next NORM protocol engine event in the form of a `NormEvent` structure. This function will typically block until a `NormEvent` occurs. However, non-blocking operation may be achieved by using the `NormGetDescriptor()` call to get a value (file descriptor

(Unix) or HANDLE (Win32) suitable for use in a asynchronous I/O monitoring functions such as *select()* (Unix) or *MsgWaitForMultipleObjects()* (Win32). The descriptor will be signaled when a `NormEvent` is available. For Win32 platforms, dispatching of a user-defined Windows message for NORM event notification is also planned for a future update to the API.

Build Notes

To build applications that use the NORM library, a path to the "normApi.h" header file must be provided and the linker step needs to reference the NORM library file ("libnorm.a" for Unix platforms and "Norm.lib" for Win32 platforms). NORM also depends upon the NRL Protean Protocol Prototyping toolkit "Protokit" library (a.k.a "Protolib") (static library files "libProtokit.a" for Unix and "Protokit.lib" for Win32). Depending upon the platform, some additional library dependencies may be required to support the needs of NORM and/or Protokit. These are described below.

Unix Platforms

NORM has been built and tested on Linux (various architectures), MacOS (BSD), Solaris, and IRIX (SGI) platforms. The code should be readily portable to other Unix platforms.

To support IPv6 operation, the NORM and the Protokit library must be compiled with the "HAVE_IPV6" macro defined. This is default in the NORM and Protokit Makefiles for platforms that support IPv6. It is important that NORM and Protokit be built with this macro defined the same. With NORM, it is recommended that "large file support" options be enabled when possible.

The NORM API uses threading so that the NORM protocol engine may run independent of the application. Thus the "POSIX Threads" library must be included ("-'pthread") in the linking step. MacOS/BSD also requires the addition of the "-lresolv" (resolver) library and Solaris requires the dynamic loader, network/socket, and resolver libraries ("–lnsl –lsocket –lresolv") to achieve successful compilation. The Makefiles in the NORM source code distribution are a reference for these requirements. Note that MacOS 9 and earlier are not supported.

Additionally, it is critical that the _FILE_OFFSET_BITS macro be consistently defined for the NORM library build and the application build using the library. The distributed NORM Makefiles have –D_FILE_OFFSET_BITS=64 set in the compilation to enable "large file support". Applications built using NORM should have the same compilation option set to operate correctly (The definition of the `NormSize` type in "normApi.h" depends upon this compilation flag).

Win32/WiNCE Platforms

NORM has been built using Microsoft's Visual C++ (6.0 and .NET) and Embedded VC++ 4.2 environments. In addition to proper macro definitions (e.g., HAVE_IPV6, etc) that are included in the respective "Protokit" and "NORM" project files, it is important that common code generation settings be used when building the NORM application.

The NORM and Protokit projects are built with the "Multithreading DLL" library usage set. The NORM API requires multithreading support. This is a critical setting and numerous compiler and linker errors will result if this is not properly set for your application project.

NORM and Protokit also depend on the Winsock 2.0 ("ws2_32.lib" (or "ws2.lib" (WinCE)) and the IP Helper API ("iphlpapi.lib") libraries and these must be included in the project "Link" attributes.

An additional note is that a bug in VC++ 6.0 and earlier compilers (includes embedded VC++ 4.x compilers) prevent compilation of Protokit-based code with debugging capabilities enabled. However, this has been resolved in VC++ .NET and is hoped to be resolved in the future for the WinCE build tools.

API Reference

This section provides a reference to the NORM API variable types, constants and functions.

API Variable Types and Constants

The NORM API defines and enumerates a number of supporting variable types and values which are used in different function calls. The variable types are described here.

`NormInstanceHandle`

The `NormInstanceHandle` type is returned when a NORM API instance is created (see `NormCreateInstance()`). This handle can be subsequently used for API calls which require reference to a specific NORM API instance. By default, each NORM API instance instantiated creates an operating system thread for protocol operation. Note that multiple NORM transport sessions may be created for a single API instance. In general, it is expected that applications will create a single NORM API instance, but some multi-threaded application designs may prefer multiple corresponding NORM API instances. The value `NORM_INSTANCE_INVALID` corresponds to an invalid API instance.

`NormSessionHandle`

The `NormSessionHandle` type is used to reference NORM transport sessions which have been created using the `NormCreateSession()` API call. Multiple `NormSessionHandles` may be associated with a given `NormInstanceHandle`. The special value `NORM_SESSION_INVALID` is used to refer to invalid session references.

`NormSessionId`

The `NormSessionId` type is used by applications to uniquely identify their instance of participation as a sender within a *NormSession*. This type is a parameter to the `NormStartSender()` function. Robust applications can use different `NormSessionId` values when initiating sender operation so that receivers can discriminate when a sender has terminated and restarted (whether intentional or due to

system failure). For example, an application could cache its prior `NormSessionId` value in non-volatile storage which could then be recovered and incremented (for example) upon system restart to produce a new value. The `NormSessionId` value is used for the value of the *instance_id* field in NORM protocol sender messages (see the NORM protocol specification) and receivers use this field to detect sender restart within a *NormSession*.

NormNodeHandle

The `NormNodeHandle` type is used to reference state kept by the NORM implementation with respect to other participants within a *NormSession*. Most typically, the `NormNodeHandle` is used by receiver applications to dereference information about remote senders of data as needed. The special value `NORM_NODE_INVALID` corresponds to an invalid reference.

NormNodeId

The `NormNodeId` type corresponds to a 32-bit numeric value which should uniquely identify a participant (node) in a given *NormSession*. The `NormNodeGetId()` function can be used to retrieve this value given a valid `NormNodeHandle`. The special value `NORM_NODE_NONE` corresponds to an invalid (or null) node while the value `NORM_NODE_ANY` serves as a wildcard value for some functions.

NormObjectHandle

The `NormObjectHandle` type is used to reference state kept for data transport objects being actively transmitted or received. The state kept for NORM transport objects is temporary, but the NORM API provides a function to persistently retain state associated with a sender or receiver `NormObjectHandle` (see `NormObjectRetain()`) if needed. For sender objects, unless explicitly retained, the `NormObjectHandle` can be considered valid until the referenced object is explicitly canceled (see `NormObjectCancel()`) or purged from the sender transmission queue (see the event *`NORM_TX_OBJECT_PURGED`*). For receiver objects, these handles should be treated as valid only until a subsequent call to `NormGetNextEvent()` unless, again, specifically retained. The special value *`NORM_OBJECT_INVALID`* corresponds to an invalid transport object reference.

NormObjectType

The `NormObjectType` type is an enumeration of possible NORM data transport object types. As previously mentioned, valid types include:

1) *`NORM_OBJECT_FILE`*
2) *`NORM_OBJECT_DATA`*, and
3) *`NORM_OBJECT_STREAM`*

Given a `NormObjectHandle`, the application may determine an object's type using the `NormObjectGetType()` function call. A special `NormObjectType` value, *`NORM_OBJECT_NONE`*, indicates an invalid object type.

NormSize

The NormSize is the type used for *NormObject* size information. For example, the NormObjectGetSize() function returns a value of type NormSize. The range of NormSize values depends upon the operating system and NORM library compilation settings. With "large file support" enabled, as is the case with distributed NORM library "Makefiles", the NormSize type is a 64-bit integer. However, some platforms may support only 32-bit object sizes.

NormObjectTransportId

The NormObjectTransportId type is a 16-bit numerical value assigned to *NormObjects* by senders during active transport. These values are temporarily unique with respect to a given sender within a *NormSession* and may be "recycled" for use for future transport objects. NORM sender nodes assign these values in a monotonically increasing fashion during the course of a session as part of protocol operation. Typically, the application should not need access to these values, but an API call NormObjectGetTransportId() is provided to retrieve these values if needed. (*Note this type may be deprecated – it may not be needed at all if the NormObjectRequeue() function (TBD) is implemented using handles only, but _some_ applications requiring persistence even after a system reboot may need the ability to recall previous transport ids?*)

NormEventType

The NormEventType is an enumeration of NORM API events. "Events" are used by the NORM API to signal the application of significant NORM protocol operation events (e.g., receipt of a new receive object, etc). A description of possible NormEventType values and their interpretation is given below. The function call NormGetNextEvent() is used to retrieve events from the NORM protocol engine.

NormEvent

The NormEvent type is a structure used to describe significant NORM protocol events. This structure is defined as follows:

```
typedef struct
{
    NormEventType     type;
    NormSessionHandle session;
    NormNodeHandle    node;
    NormObjectHandle  object;
} NormEvent;
```

The type field indicates the NormEventType and determines how the other fields should be interpreted. Note that not all NormEventType fields are relevant to all events. The session, node, and object fields indicate the applicable NormSessionHandle, NormNodeHandle, and NormObjectHandle, respectively, to which the event applies. NORM protocol events are made available to the application via the NormGetNextEvent() function call.

NormDescriptor

The NormDescriptor type provides reference to a file descriptor (Unix) or HANDLE (Win32). For a given NormInstanceHandle, the NormGetDescriptor() function can be used to retrieve a NormDescriptor value that may, in turn, used in appropriate system calls (e.g. *select()* or *MsgWaitForMultipleObjects()*) to asynchronously monitor the NORM protocol engine for notification events (see NormEvent description).

API Initialization and Operation

The first step in using the NORM API is to create an "instance" of the NORM protocol engine. Note that multiple instances may be created by the application if necessary, but generally only a single instance is required since multiple *NormSessions* may be managed under a single NORM API instance.

NormCreateInstance()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

NormInstanceHandle NormCreateInstance(bool priorityBoost = false);
```

Description

This function creates an instance of a NORM protocol engine and is the necessary first step before any other API functions may be used. With the instantiation of the NORM protocol engine, an operating system thread is created for protocol execution. The returned NormInstanceHandle value may be used in subsequent API calls as needed, such NormCreateSesssion(), etc. The optional priorityBoost parameter, when set to a value of *true*, specifies that the NORM protocol engine thread be run with higher priority scheduling. On Win32 platforms, this corresponds to *THREAD_PRIORITY_TIME_CRITICAL* and on Unix systems with the sched_setscheduler() API, an attempt to get the maximum allowed *SCHED_FIFO* priority is made. The use of this option should be carefully evaluated since, depending upon the application's scheduling priority and NORM API usage, this may have adverse effects instead of a guaranteed performance increase!

Return Values

A value of NORM_INSTANCE_INVALID is returned upon failure. The function will only fail if system resources are unavailable to allocate the instance and/or create the corresponding thread.

NormDestroyInstance()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

void NormDestroyInstance(NormInstanceHandle instance);
```

Description

The `NormDestroyInstance()` function immediately shuts down and destroys the NORM protocol engine instance referred to by the `instance` parameter. The application should make no subsequent references to the indicated `NormInstanceHandle` or any other API handles or objects associated with it. However, the application is still responsible for releasing any object handles it has retained (see `NormObjectRetain()` and `NormObjectRelease()`).

Return Values

The function has no return value.

NormSetCacheDirectory()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

bool NormSetCacheDirectory(NormInstanceHandle instance,
                           const char*        cachePath);
```

Description

This function sets the directory path used by receivers to cache newly-received *NORM_OBJECT_FILE* objects. This function must be called before any file objects may be received and thus should be called before any calls to `NormStartReceiver()` are made. However, note that the cache directory may be changed even during active NORM reception. In this case, the new specified directory path will be used for subsequently-received files. Any files received before a directory path change will remain in the previous cache location. Note that the `NormFileRename()` function may be used to rename, and thus potentially move, received files after reception has begun.

The `instance` parameter specifies the NORM protocol engine instance (all NormSessions associated with that `instance` share the same cache path) and the `cachePath` is a string specifying a valid (and writable) directory path. The function returns *true* on success and *false* on failure. The failure conditions are that the indicated directory does not exist or the process does not have permissions to write.

NormGetNextEvent()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

bool NormGetNextEvent(NormInstanceHandle instance,
                      NormEvent*         theEvent);
```

Description

This function retrieves the next available NORM protocol event from the protocol engine. The `instance` parameter specifies the applicable NORM protocol engine, and the `theEvent` parameter must be a valid pointer to a `NormEvent` structure capable of receiving the NORM event information. For expected reliable protocol operation, the application should make every attempt to retrieve and process NORM notification events in a timely manner.

Note that this is currently the only blocking call in the NORM API. But non-blocking operation may be achieved by using the `NormGetDescriptor()` function to obtain a descriptor (or HANDLE for WIN32) suitable for asynchronous input/output (I/O) notification using such system calls as *`select()`* (UNIX) or *`WaitForMultipleObjects()`* (WIN32). The descriptor is signaled when a notification event is pending and a call to `NormGetNextEvent()` will not block.

NORM Notification Event Types

The following table enumerates the possible `NormEvent` values and describes how these notifications should be interpreted as they are retrieved by the application via the `NormGetNextEvent()` function call.

Sender Notification Event Types:

`NORM_TX_QUEUE_VACANCY`	This event indicates that there is room for additional transmit objects to be enqueued, or, if the handle of *`NORM_OBJECT_STREAM`* is given in the event "object" field, the application may successfully write to the indicated stream object.
`NORM_TX_QUEUE_EMPTY`	This event indicates the NORM protocol engine has no new data pending transmission and the application may enqueue additional objects for transmission.

NORM_TX_FLUSH_COMPLETED	This event indicates that the flushing process the NORM sender observes when it no longer has data ready for transmission has completed. The completion of the flushing process is a reasonable indicator (with a sufficient NORM "robust factor" value) that the receiver set no longer has any pending repair requests. Note the use of NORM's optional positive acknowledgement feature is more deterministic in this regards, but this notification is useful when there are non-acking (NACK-only) receivers. The default NORM robust factor of 20 (20 flush messages are sent at end-of-transmission) provides a high assurance of reliable transmission, even with packet loss rates of 50%.
NORM_TX_OBJECT_SENT	This event indicates that the transport object referenced by the event's "object" field has completed at least one pass of total transmission. Note that this does not guarantee that reliable transmission has yet completed; only that the entire object content has been transmitted. Depending upon network behavior, several rounds of NACKing and repair transmissions may be required to complete reliable transfer.
NORM_TX_OBJECT_PURGED	This event indicates that the NORM protocol engine will no longer refer to the transport object identified by the event's "object' field. Typically, this will occur when the application has enqueued more objects than space available within the set sender transmit cache bounds (see `NormSetTransmitCacheBounds()`). Posting of this notification means the application is free to free any resources (memory, files, etc) associated with the indicated "object". After this event, the given "object" handle (`NormObjectHandle`) is no longer valid unless it is specifically retained by the application.

NORM_LOCAL_SERVER_CLOSED	This event is posted when the NORM protocol engine completes the "graceful shutdown" of its participation as a sender in the indicated "session" (see `NormStopSender()`).

Receiver Notification Event Types:

NORM_REMOTE_SERVER_NEW	This notification is posted when a receiver first receives messages from a specific remote NORM server. This marks the beginning of the interval during which the application may reference the provided "node" handle (`NormNodeHandle`).
NORM_REMOTE_SERVER_ACTIVE	This event is posted when a previously inactive (or new) remote server is detected operating as an active sender within the session.
NORM_REMOTE_SERVER_INACTIVE	This event is posted after a significant period of inactivity (no sender messages received) of a specific NORM sender within the session. The NORM protocol engine frees buffering resources allocated for this sender when it becomes inactive.
NORM_REMOTE_SERVER_PURGED	This event is posted when the NORM protocol engine frees resources for, and thus invalidates the indicated "node" handle.
NORM_RX_OBJECT_NEW	This event is posted when reception of a new transport object begins and marks the beginning of the interval during which the specified "object" (`NormObjectHandle`) is valid.
NORM_RX_OBJECT_INFO	This notification is posted when the NORM_INFO content for the indicated "object" is received.
NORM_RX_OBJECT_UPDATED	This event indicates that the identified receive "object" has newly received data content.

NORM_RX_OBJECT_COMPLETED	This event is posted when a receive object is completely received, including available NORM_INFO content. Unless the application specifically retains the "object" handle, the indicated `NormObjectHandle` becomes invalid and must no longer be referenced.
NORM_RX_OBJECT_ABORTED	This notification is posted when a pending receive object's transmission is aborted by the remote sender. Unless the application specifically retains the "object" handle, the indicated `NormObjectHandle` becomes invalid and must no longer be referenced.

Miscellaneous Notification Event Types

NORM_EVENT_INVALID	This NormEventType indicates an invalid or "null" notification which should be ignored.

Return Values

This function generally blocks the thread of application execution until a `NormEvent` is available and returns *`true`* when a `NormEvent` is available. However, there are some exceptional cases when the function may immediately return even when no event is pending. In these cases, the return value is *`false`*.

WIN32 Note: A future version of this API will provide an option to have a user-defined Window message posted when a NORM API event is pending. (Also some event filtering calls may be provided (e.g. avoid the potentially numerous `NORM_RX_OBJECT_UPDATED` *events if undesired)).*

`NormGetDescriptor()`

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

NormDescriptor NormGetDescriptor(NormInstanceHandle instance);
```

Description

This function is used to retrieve a `NormDescriptor` (integer file descriptor (UNIX) or HANDLE (WIN32)) suitable for asynchronous I/O notification to avoid blocking calls to `NormGetNextEvent()`. A `NormDescriptor` is available for each protocol engine `instance`. The descriptor (or WIN32 HANDLE) is suitable for use as an input (or "read") descriptor which is signaled when a NORM protocol event is ready for retrieval via `NormGetNextEvent()`. Hence, a call to `NormGetNextEvent()` will not block when the descriptor has been signaled. The *`select()`* system call (UNIX) (or

WaitForMultipleObjects() (WIN32)) can be used to detect when the returned `NormDescriptor` is signaled. For the `select()` call usage, the NORM descriptor should be treated as a "read" descriptor.

Return Values

A descriptor is returned which is valid until a call to `NormDestroyInstance()` is made. Upon error, a value of *NORM_DESCRIPTOR_INVALID* is returned.

Session Creation and Control

`NormCreateSession()`

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

NormSessionHandle NormCreateSession(NormInstanceHandle instance,
                                    const char*        address,
                                    unsigned short     port,
                                    NormNodeId         localId);
```

Description

This function creates a NORM reliable multicast session (*NormSession*) using the address parameters provided. While session state is allocated and initialized, active session participation does not begin until a call is made to `NormStartSender()` and/or `NormStartReceiver()` to join the specified multicast group (if applicable) and start protocol operation. The following parameters are required in this function call:

`instance` This must be a valid `NormInstanceHandle` previously obtained with a call to `NormCreateInstance()`.

`address` This points to a string containing an IP address (e.g. dotted decimal IPv4 address (or IPv6 address) or name resolvable to a valid IP address. The specified `address` (along with the `port` number) determines the destination of NORM messages sent. For multicast sessions, NORM senders and receivers must use a common multicast address and port number. For unicast sessions, the sender and receiver must use a common port number, but specify the other node's IP address as the session address (Although note that receiver-only unicast nodes who are providing unicast feedback to senders will not generate any messages to the session IP address and the `address` parameter value is thus inconsequential for this special case).

`port` This must be a valid, unused port number corresponding to the desired NORM session address. See the `address` parameter description for more details.

`localId` The `localId` parameter specifies the `NormNodeId` that should be used to identify the application's presence in the *NormSession*. All participant's in a *NormSession* should use unique `localId` values.

The application may specify a value of *NORM_NODE_ANY* or *NORM_NODE_ANY* for the `localId` parameter. In this case, the NORM implementation will attempt to pick an identifier based on the host computer's "default" IP address (based on the computer's default host name). Note there is a chance that this approach may not provide unique node identifiers in some situations and the NORM protocol does not currently provide a mechanism to detect or resolve *NormNodeId* collisions. Thus, the application should explicitly specify the `localId` unless there is a high degree of confidence that the default IP address will provide a unique identifier.

Return Values

The returned `NormSessionHandle` value is valid until a call to `NormDestroySession()` is made. A value of *NORM_SESSION_INVALID* is returned upon error.

NormDestroySession()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

void NormDestroySession(NormSessionHandle session);
```

Description

This function immediately terminates the application's participation in the *NormSession* identified by the `session` parameter and frees any resources used by that session. An exception to this is that the application is responsible for releasing any explicitly retained `NormObjectHandles` (See `NormObjectRetain()` and `NormObjectRelease()`).

Return Values

This function has no returned values.

NormSetUserData()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

void NormSetUserData(NormSessionHandle session, const void* userData);
```

Description

This function allows the application to attach a value to the previously-created *NormSession* instance specified by the `session` parameter. This value is not used or interpreted by NORM, but is available to the application for use at the programmer's

discretion. The set `userData` value can be later retrieved using the `NormGetUserData()` function call.

Return Values

This function has no returned values.

`NormGetUserData()`

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

const void* NormGetUserData(NormSessionHandle session);
```

Description

This function retrieves the "user data" value set for the specified session with a prior call to `NormSetUserData()`.

Return Values

This function returns the user data value set for the specified session. If no user data value has been previously set a *`NULL`* (i.e., *`(const void*)0`*) value is returned.

`NormGetLocalNodeId()`

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

NormNodeId NormGetLocalNodeId(NormSessionHandle session);
```

Description

This function retrieves the `NormNodeId` value used for the application's participation in the *NormSession* identified by the `session` parameter. The value may have been explicitly set during the `NormCreateSession()` call or derived using the host computer's "default" IP network address.

Return Values

The returned value indicates the *NormNode* identifier used by the NORM protocol engine for the local application's participation in the specified *NormSession*.

NormSetTxPort()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

void NormSetTxPort(NormSessionHandle session,
                   unsigned short    txPort);
```

Description

This function is used to force NORM to use a specific port number for UDP packets sent for the specified `session`. By default, NORM uses separate port numbers for packet transmission and session packet reception (the receive port is specified as part of the `NormCreateSession()` call), allowing the operating system to pick a freely available port for transmission. This call allows the application to pick a specific port number for transmission, and furthermore allows the application to even specify the same port number for transmission as is used for reception. However, the use of separate transmit/receive ports allows NORM to discriminate when unicast feedback is occurring and thus it is not generally recommended that the transmit port be set to the same value as the `session` receive port. This call *must* be made *before* any calls to `NormStartSender()` or `NormStartReceiver()` to succeed.

Return Values

This function has no return values.

NormSetMulticastInterface()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

bool NormSetMulticastInterface(NormSessionHandle session,
                               const char*       interfaceName);
```

Description

This function specifies which host network interface is used for IP Multicast transmissions and group membership. This should be called *before* any call to `NormStartSender()` or `NormStartReceiver()` is made so that the IP multicast group is joined on the proper host interface. However, if a call to `NormSetMulticastInterface()` is made *after* either of these function calls, the call will not affect the group membership interface, but only dictate that a possibly different network interface is used for transmitted NORM messages. Thus, the code:

```
NormSetMulticastInterface(session, "interface1");
NormStartReceiver(session, ...);
NormSetMulticastInterface(session, "interface2");
```

will result in NORM group membership (i.e. multicast reception) being managed on "interface1" while NORM multicast transmissions are made via "interface2".

Return Values

A return value of *true* indicates success while a return value of *false* indicates that the specified interface was valid. This function will always return *true* if made before calls to `NormStartSender()` or `NormStartReceiver()`. However, those calls may fail if an invalid interface is specified.

`NormSetTTL()`

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

bool NormSetTTL(NormSessionHandle session,
                unsigned char     ttl);
```

Description

This function specifies the time-to-live (`ttl`) for IP Multicast datagrams generated by NORM for the specified `session`. The IP TTL field limits the number of router "hops" that a generated multicast packet may traverse before being dropped. For example, if TTL is equal to one, the transmissions will be limited to the local area network (LAN) of the host computers network interface. Larger TTL values should be specified to span large networks. Also note that some multicast router configurations use artificial "TTL threshold" values to constrain some multicast traffic to an administrative boundary. In these cases. the NORM TTL setting must also exceed the router "TTL threshold" in order for the NORM traffic to be allowed to exit the administrative area.

Return Values

A return value of *true* indicates success while a return value of *false* indicates that the specified `ttl` could not be set. This function will always return *true* if made before calls to `NormStartSender()` or `NormStartReceiver()`. However, those calls may fail if the desired `ttl` value cannot be set..

`NormSetTOS()`

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

bool NormSetTOS(NormSessionHandle session,
                unsigned char     tos);
```

Description

This function specifies the type-of-service (`tos`) field value used in IP Multicast datagrams generated by NORM for the specified `session`. The IP TOS field value can be used as an indicator that a "flow" of packets may merit special Quality-of-Service (QoS) treatment by network devices. Users should refer to applicable QoS information for their network to determine the expected interpretation and treatment (if any) of packets with explicit TOS marking.

Return Values

A return value of *true* indicates success while a return value of *false* indicates that the specified tos could not be set. This function will always return *true* if made before calls to NormStartSender() or NormStartReceiver(). However, those calls may fail if the desired tos value cannot be set..

NormSetLoopback()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

void NormSetLoopback(NormSessionHandle session,
                     bool              loopbackEnable);
```

Description

This function enables or disables loopback operation for the indicated NORM session. If loopbackEnable is set to *true*, loopback operation is enabled which allows the application to receive its own message traffic. Thus, an application which is both actively receiving and sending may receive its own transmissions. Note it is expected that this option would be principally be used for test purposes and that applications would generally not need to transfer data to themselves. If loopbackEnable is *false*, the application is prevented from receiving its own NORM message transmissions. By default, loopback operation is disabled when a *NormSession* is created.

Return Values

This function has no return values.

NORM Sender Functions

NormStartSender()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

bool NormStartSender(NormSessionHandle sessionHandle
                     NormSessionId     sessionId
                     unsigned long     bufferSpace
                     unsigned short    segmentSize,
                     unsigned char     blockSize,
                     unsigned char     numParity);
```

Description

The application's participation as a sender within a specified *NormSession* begins when this function is called. This includes protocol activity such as congestion control and/or group round-trip timing (GRTT) feedback collection and application API activity such as

posting of sender-related *NormEvents*. The parameters required for this function call include:

`sessionHandle` This must be a valid `NormSessionHandle` previously obtained with a call to `NormCreateSession()`.

`sessionId` Application-defined value used as the *instance_id* field of NORM sender messages for the application's participation within a session. Receivers can detect when a sender has terminated and restarted if the application uses different `sessionId` values when initiating sender operation. For example, a robust application could cache previous `sessionId` values in non-volatile storage and gracefully recover (without confusing receivers) from a total system shutdown and reboot by using a new `sessionId` value upon restart.

`bufferSpace` This specifies the maximum memory space the NORM protocol engine is allowed to use to buffer any sender calculated FEC segments and repair state for the session. The optimum `bufferSpace` value is function of the network topology *bandwidth*delay* product and packet loss characteristics. If the `bufferSpace` limit is too small, the protocol may operate less efficiently as the sender is required to possibly recalculate FEC parity segments and/or provide less efficient repair transmission strategies (resort to explicit repair) when state is dropped due to constrained buffering resources. However, note the protocol will still provide reliable transfer. A large `bufferSpace` allocation is safer at the expense of possibly committing more memory resources.

`segmentSize` This parameter sets the maximum *payload* size (in bytes) of NORM sender messages (*not* including any NORM message header fields). A sender's `segmentSize` value is also used by receivers to limit the payload content of some feedback messages (e.g. NORM_NACK message content, etc.) generated in response to that sender. Note different senders within a *NormSession* may use different `segmentSize` values. Generally, the appropriate segment size to use is dependent upon the types of networks forming the multicast topology, but applications may choose different values for other purposes. Note that application designers MUST account for the size of NORM message headers when selecting a `segmentSize`. For example, the NORM_DATA message header for a *`NORM_OBJECT_STREAM`* with full header extensions is 48 bytes in length. In this case, the UDP payload size of these messages generated by NORM would be up to (48 + `segmentSize`) bytes.

`blockSize` This parameter sets the number of source symbol segments (packets) per coding block, for the systematic Reed-Solomon FEC code used in the current NORM implementation. For traditional

systematic block code "*(n,k)*" nomenclature, the `blockSize` value corresponds to "*k*". NORM logically segments transport object data content into coding blocks and the `blockSize` parameter determines the number of source symbol segments (packets) comprising a single coding block where each source symbol segment is up to `segmentSize` bytes in length.. A given block's parity symbol segments are calculated using the corresponding set of source symbol segments. The maximum `blockSize` allowed by the 8-bit Reed-Solomon codes in NORM is 255, with the further limitation that (`blockSize` + `numParity`) ≤ 255.

`numParity` — This parameter sets the maximum number of parity symbol segments (packets) the sender is willing to *calculate* per FEC coding block. The parity symbol segments for a block are calculated from the corresponding `blockSize` source symbol segments. In the "*(n,k)*" nomenclature mention above, the `numParity` value corresponds to "*n-k*". A property of the Reed-Solomon FEC codes used in the current NORM implementation is that one parity segment can fill any one erasure (missing segment (packet)) for a coding block. For a given `blockSize`, the maximum `numParity` value is (255 – `blockSize`). However, note that computational complexity increases significantly with increasing `numParity` values and applications may wish to be conservative with respect to `numParity` selection, given anticipated network packet loss conditions and group size scalability concerns. Additional FEC code options may be provided for this NORM implementation in the future with different parameters, capabilities, trade-offs, and computational requirements.

These parameters are currently immutable with respect to a sender's participation within a *NormSession*. Sender operation must be stopped (see `NormStopSender()`) and restarted with another call to `NormStartSender()` if these parameters require alteration. The API may be extended in the future to support additional flexibility here, if required. For example, the NORM protocol "*sessionId*" field may possibly be leveraged to permit a node to establish multiple virtual presences as a sender within a *NormSession* in the future. This would allow the sender to provide multiple concurrent streams of transport, with possibly different FEC and other parameters if appropriate within the context of a single *NormSession*. Again, this extended functionality is not yet supported in this implementation.

Return Values

A value of *`true`* is returned upon success and *`false`* upon failure. The reasons failure may occur include limited system resources or that the network sockets required for communication failed to open or properly configure. *(TBD – Provide a `NormGetError(NormSessionHandle session)` function to retrieve a more specific error indication for this and other functions.)*

NormStopSender()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

void NormStopSender(NormSessionHandle session,
                    bool              graceful = false);
```

Description

This function terminates the application's participation in a *NormSession* as a sender. By default, the sender will immediately exit the session without notifying the receiver set of its intention. However a "graceful shutdown" option is provided to terminate sender operation gracefully, notifying the receiver set its pending exit with appropriate protocol messaging. A *NormEvent*, ***NORM_LOCAL_SERVER_CLOSED,*** is dispatched when the graceful shutdown process has completed.

*(NOTE: The "**graceful**" parameter is currently not available, and the current behavior of this API call corresponds to the default behavior of **graceful** =* `false`*). The functionality described here will soon be supported in the API.*

Return Values

This function has no return values.

NormSetTransmitRate()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

void NormSetTransmitRate(NormSessionHandle session,
                         double            rate);
```

Description

This function sets the transmission rate limit (in bits per second (bps)) used for *NormSender* transmissions. For fixed-rate transmission of ***NORM_OBJECT_FILE*** or ***NORM_OBJECT_DATA***, this limit determines the data rate at which NORM protocol messages and data content. For ***NORM_OBJECT_STREAM*** transmissions, this is the maximum rate allowed for transmission. Note that the application will need to consider the overhead of NORM protocol headers when determining an appropriate transmission rate for its purposes. When NORM congestion control is enabled (see `NormSetCongestionControl()`), the rate set here will be set, but congestion control operation may quickly readjust the rate unless disabled.

Return Values

This function has no return values.

NormSetTxSocketBuffer()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

bool NormSetTxSocketBuffer(NormSessionHandle session,
                           unsigned int      bufferSize);
```

Description

This function can be used to set a non-default socket buffer size for the UDP socket used by the specified NORM `session` for data transmission. The `bufferSize` parameter specifies the desired socket buffer size in bytes. Large transmit socket buffer sizes may be necessary to achieve high throughput rates when NORM, as a user-space process, is unable to precisely time its packet transmissions. Similarly, NORM receivers may need to set large receive socket buffer sizes to achieve sustained high data rate reception (see `NormSetRxSocketBuffer()`).

Return Values

This function returns *`true`* upon success and *`false`* upon failure. Possible failure modes include an invalid session parameter, a call to `NormStartReceiver()` or `NormStartSender()` has not yet been made for the session, or an invalid `bufferSize` was given. Note some operating systems may require additional configuration to use non-standard socket buffer sizes.

NormSetCongestionControl()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

void NormSetTransmitRate(NormSessionHandle session,
                         bool              enable);
```

Description

This function enables (or disables) the NORM sender congestion control operation for the session designated by the `session` parameter. For best operation, this function should be called before the call to `NormStartSender()` is made, but congestion control operation can be dynamically enabled/disabled during the course of sender operation. If the value of `enable` is *`true`*, congestion control operation is enabled while it is disabled for `enable` equal to *`false`*. When congestion control operation is enabled, the NORM sender automatically adjusts its transmission rate based on feedback from receivers. If bounds on transmission rate have been set (see `NormSetTransmitRateBounds()`) the rate adjustment will remain within any set bounds. The rate set by `NormSetTransmitRate()` has no effect when congestion control operation is enabled. NORM's congestion algorithm provides rate adjustment to fairly compete for available network bandwidth with other TCP, NORM, or similarly governed traffic flows.

Return Values

This function has no return values.

NormSetTransmitRateBounds()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

bool NormSetTransmitRateBounds(NormSessionHandle session,
                               double            rateMin,
                               double            rateMax);
```

Description

This function sets the range of sender transmission rates within which the NORM congestion control algorithm is allowed to operate. By default, the NORM congestion control algorithm operates with no lower or upper bound on its rate adjustment. This function allows this to be limited where `rateMin` corresponds to the minimum transmission rate (bps) and `rateMax` corresponds to the maximum transmission rate. One or both of these parameters may be set to values less than zero to remove one or both bounds. For example "`NormSetTransmitRate(session, -1.0, 64000.0)`" will set an upper limit of 64 kbps for the sender transmission rate with no lower bound. These rate bounds apply only when congestion control operation is enabled (see `NormSetCongestionControl()`). If the current congestion control rate falls outside of the specified bounds, the sender transmission rate will be adjusted to stay within the set bounds.

Return Values

This function returns *`true`* upon success. If both `rateMin` and `rateMax` are greater than or equal to zero, but (`rateMax` < `rateMin`), the rate bounds will remain unset or unchanged and the function will return *`false`*.

NormSetTransmitCacheBounds()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

void NormSetTransmitCacheBounds(NormSessionHandle session,
                                NormSize          sizeMax,
                                unsigned int      countMin,
                                unsigned int      countMax);
```

Description

This function sets limits that define the number and total size of pending transmit objects a NORM sender will allow to be enqueued by the application. Setting these bounds to large values means the NORM protocol engine will keep history and state for previously transmitted objects for a larger interval of time (depending upon the transmission rate)

when the application is actively enqueueing additional objects in response to NORM_TX_QUEUE_EMPTY notifications. This can allow more time for receivers suffering degraded network conditions to make repair requests before the sender "purges" older objects from its "transmit cache" when new objects are enqueued. A NORM_TX_OBJECT_PURGED notification is issued when the enqueuing of a new transmit object causes the NORM transmit cache to overflow, indicating the NORM sender no longer needs to reference the designated old transmit object and the application is free to release related resources as needed.

The `sizeMax` parameter sets the maximum total size, in bytes, of enqueued objects allowed, providing the constraints of the `countMin` and `countMax` parameters are met. The `countMin` parameter sets the minimum number of objects the application may enqueue, regardless of the objects' sizes and the `sizeMax` value. For example, the default `sizeMax` value is 20 Mbyte and the default `countMin` is 8, thus allowing the application to always have at least 8 pending objects enqueued for transmission if it desires, even if their total size is greater than 20 Mbyte. Similarly, the `countMax` parameter sets a ceiling on how many objects may be enqueued, regardless of their total sizes with respect to the `sizeMax` setting. For example, the default `countMax` value is 256, which means the application is never allowed to have more than 256 objects pending transmission enqueued, even if they are 256 very small objects. *Note that `countMax` must be greater than or equal to `countMin` and `countMin` is recommended to be at least two.*

Note that in the case of NORM_OBJECT_FILE objects, some operating systems impose limits (e.g. 256) on how many open files a process may have at one time and it may be appropriate to limit the `countMax` value accordingly. In other cases, a large `countMin` or `countMax` may be desired to allow the NORM sender to act as virtual cache of files or other data available for reliable transmission. Future iterations of the NRL NORM implementation may support alternative NORM receiver "group join" policies that would allow the receivers to request transmission of cached content.

Return Values

This function has no return value.

`NormSetAutoParity()`

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

void NormSetAutoParity(NormSessionHandle sessionHandle,
                       unsigned char     autoParity);
```

Description

This function sets the quantity of proactive "auto parity" NORM_DATA messages sent at the end of each FEC coding block. By default (i.e., `autoParity` = 0), FEC content is sent *only* in response to repair requests (NACKs) from receivers. But, by setting a non-zero value for `autoParity`, the sender can automatically accompany each coding

block of transport object source data segments (NORM_DATA messages) with the set number of FEC segments. The number of source symbol messages (segments) per FEC coding block is determined by the `blockSize` parameter used when `NormStartSender()` was called for the given `sessionHandle`.

The use of proactively-sent "auto parity" may eliminate the need for any receiver NACKing to achieve reliable transfer in networks with low packet loss. However, note that the quantity of "auto parity" set adds overhead to transport object transmission. In networks with a predictable level of packet loss and potentially large round-trip times, the use of "auto parity" may allow lower latency in the reliable delivery process. Also, its use may contribute to a smaller amount of receiver feedback as only receivers with exceptional packet loss may need to NACK for additional repair content.

The value of `autoParity` set must be less than or equal to the `numParity` parameter set when `NormStartSender()` was called for the given `sessionHandle`.

Return Values

This function has no return values.

`NormSetGrttEstimate()`

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

void NormSetGrttEstimate(NormSessionHandle session,
                         double            grtt);
```

Description

This function sets the sender's estimate of group round-trip timing (GRTT). This function is expected to most typically used to initialize the sender's GRTT estimate prior to the call to `NormStartSender()` when the application has *a priori* confidence that the default initial GRTT value of 0.5 second is inappropriate. The sender GRTT estimate will be updated during normal sender protocol operation after sender startup or if this call is made while sender operation is active. For experimental purposes (or very special application needs), this API provides a mechanism to control or disable the sender GRTT update process (see `NormSetGrttProbing()`). The `grtt` value will be limited to the maximum GRTT as set (see `NormSetGrttMax()`) or the default maximum of 10 seconds.

The sender GRTT is advertised to the receiver group and is used to scale various NORM protocol timers. The default NORM GRTT estimation process dynamically measures round-trip timing to determine an appropriate operating value. An overly-large GRTT estimate can introduce additional latency into the reliability process (resulting in a larger virtual *delay*bandwidth* product for the protocol and potentially requiring more buffer space to maintain reliability). An overly-small GRTT estimate may introduce the potential for feedback implosion, limiting the scalability of group size.

Return Values

This function has no return values.

NormAddAckingNode()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

bool NormAddAckingNode(NormSessionHandle session,
                       NormNodeId        nodeId);
```

Description

When this function is called, the specified `nodeId` is added to the list of *NormNodes* used when NORM sender operation performs positive acknowledgement (ACK) collection for the specified `session`. The optional NORM positive acknowledgement collection occurs when a specified transmission point (see `NormSetWatermark()`) is reached or for specialized protocol actions such as positively-acknowledged application-defined commands (*TBD*).

Return Values

The function returns *`true`* upon success and *`false`* upon failure. The only failure condition is that insufficient memory resources were available. If a specific `nodeId` is added more than once, this has no effect.

NormRemoveAckingNode()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

void NormRemoveAckingNode(NormSessionHandle session,
                          NormNodeId        nodeId);
```

Description

This function deletes the specified `nodeId` from the list of *NormNodes* used when NORM sender operation performs positive acknowledgement (ACK) collection for the specified `session`.

Return Values

The function has no return values.

NormFileEnqueue()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

NormObjectHandle NormFileEnqueue(NormSessionHandle session,
                                 const char*       filename,
                                 const char*       infoPtr = NULL,
                                 unsigned int      infoLen = 0);
```

Description

This function enqueues a file for transmission within the specified NORM `session`. Note that `NormStartSender()` must have been previously called before files or any transport objects may be enqueued and transmitted. The `fileName` parameter specifies the path to the file to be transmitted. The NORM protocol engine read and writes directly from/to file system storage for file transport, potentially providing for a very large virtual "repair window" as needed for some applications. While relative paths with respect to the current working directory may be used, it is recommended that full paths be used when possible. The optional `infoPtr` and `infoLen` parameters are used to associate NORM_INFO content with the sent transport object. The maximum allowed `infoLen` corresponds to the `segmentSize` used in the prior call to `NormStartSender()`. The use and interpretation of the NORM_INFO content is left to the application's discretion. Example usage of NORM_INFO content for *`NORM_OBJECT_FILE`* might include file name, creation date, MIME-type or other information which will enable NORM receivers to properly handle the file when reception is complete.

The application is allowed to enqueue multiple transmit objects within in the "transmit cache" limits (see `NormSetTxCacheLimits()`) and enqueued objects are transmitted (and repaired as needed) within the limits determined by automated congestion control (see `NormSetCongestionControl()`) or fixed rate (see `NormSetTxRate()`) parameters.

Return Values

A `NormObjectHandle` is returned which the application may use in other NORM API calls as needed. This handle can be considered valid until the application explicitly cancels the object's transmission (see `NormObjectCancel()`) or a *`NORM_TX_OBJECT_PURGED`* event is received for the given object. Note the application may use the `NormObjectRetain()` method if it wishes to refer to the object after the *`NORM_TX_OBJECT_PURGED`* notification. In this case, the application, when finished with the object, must use `NormObjectRelease()` to free any resources used or else a memory leak condition will result. A value of *`NORM_OBJECT_INVALID`* is return upon error. Possible failure conditions include the specified `session` is not operating as a *NormSender*, insufficient memory resources were available, or the "transmit cache" limits have been reached and all previously enqueued NORM transmit objects are pending transmission. Also the call will fail if the `infoLen` parameter exceeds the local *NormSender* `segmentSize` limit.

NormDataEnqueue()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

NormObjectHandle NormDataEnqueue(NormSessionHandle session,
                                 const char*       dataPtr,
                                 unsigned int      dataLen,
                                 const char*       infoPtr = NULL,
                                 unsigned int      infoLen = 0);
```

Description

This function enqueues a segment of application memory space for transmission within the specified NORM `session`. Note that `NormStartSender()` must have been previously called before files or any transport objects may be enqueued and transmitted. The `dataPtr` parameter must be a valid pointer to the area of application memory to be transmitted and the `dataLen` parameter indicates the quantity of data to transmit. The NORM protocol engine read and writes directly from/to application memory space so it is important that the application does not modify (or deallocate) the memory space during the time the NORM protocel engine may access this area. The optional `infoPtr` and `infoLen` parameters are used to associate NORM_INFO content with the sent transport object. The maximum allowed `infoLen` corresponds to the `segmentSize` used in the prior call to `NormStartSender()`. The use and interpretation of the NORM_INFO content is left to the application's discretion. Example usage of NORM_INFO content for *NORM_OBJECT_DATA* might include application-defined data typing or other information which will enable NORM receiver applications to properly interpret the received data when reception is complete. Of course, it is possible that the application may embed such typing information in the object data content itself. This is left to the application's discretion.

The application is allowed to enqueue multiple transmit objects within in the "transmit cache" limits (see `NormSetTxCacheLimits()`) and enqueued objects are transmitted (and repaired as needed) within the limits determined by automated congestion control (see `NormSetCongestionControl()`) or fixed rate (see `NormSetTxRate()`) parameters.

Return Values

A `NormObjectHandle` is returned which the application may use in other NORM API calls as needed. This handle can be considered valid until the application explicitly cancels the object's transmission (see `NormObjectCancel()`) or a *NORM_TX_OBJECT_PURGED* event is received for the given object. Note the application may use the `NormObjectRetain()` method if it wishes to refer to the object after the *NORM_TX_OBJECT_PURGED* notification. In this case, the application, when finished with the object, *must* use `NormObjectRelease()` to free any resources used or else a memory leak condition will result. A value of *NORM_OBJECT_INVALID* is return upon error. Possible failure conditions include the specified `session` is not operating as a *NormSender*, insufficient memory resources

were available, or the "transmit cache" limits have been reached and all previously enqueued NORM transmit objects are pending transmission. Also the call will fail if the `infoLen` parameter exceeds the local *NormSender* `segmentSize` limit.

`NormStreamOpen()`

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

NormObjectHandle NormStreamOpen(NormSessionHandle session,
                                unsigned int      bufferSize,
                                const char*       infoPtr = NULL,
                                unsigned int      infoLen = 0);
```

Description

This function opens a *`NORM_OBJECT_STREAM`* sender object and enqueues it for transmission within the indicated `session`. NormStream objects provide reliable, in-order delivery of data content written to the stream by the sender application. Note that no data is sent until subsequent calls to `NormStreamWrite()` are made unless NORM_INFO content is specified for the stream with the `infoPtr` and `infoLen` parameters. Example usage of NORM_INFO content for *`NORM_OBJECT_STREAM`* might include application-defined data typing or other information which will enable NORM receiver applications to properly interpret the received stream as it is being received. The NORM protocol engine buffers data written to the stream for original transmission and repair transmissions as needed to achieve reliable transfer. The `bufferSize` parameter controls the size of the stream's "repair window" which limits how far back the sender will "rewind" to satisfy receiver repair requests.

NORM, as a NACK-oriented protocol, currently lacks a mechanism for receivers to *explicitly* feedback flow control status to the sender unless the sender leverages NORM's optional positive acknowledgement (ACK) features. Thus, the `bufferSize` selection plays an important role in NORM's reliability. Generally, a larger `bufferSize` value is safer with respect to reliability, but some applications may wish to limit how far the sender rewinds to repair receivers with poor connectivity with respect to the group at large. Such applications may set a smaller `bufferSize` to avoid the potential for large latency in data delivery. This may result in breaks in the reliable delivery of stream data to some receivers, but this form of quasi-reliability while limiting latency may be useful for some types of applications (e.g. reliable real-time messaging, video or sensor data transport). Note that NORM receivers can "resync" to the sender after such breaks if the application leverages the message boundary recovery features of NORM (see `NormStreamMarkEom()`).

Note that the current implementation of NORM is designed to support only one active stream per session, and that any *`NORM_OBJECT_DATA`* or *`NORM_OBJECT_FILE`* objects enqueued for transmission will not begin transmission until an active stream is closed. Applications requiring multiple streams or concurrent file/data transfer should instantiate multiple *NormSessions* as needed.

Note there is no corresponding "open" call for receiver streams. Receiver *NORM_OBJECT_STREAMs* are automatically opened by the NORM protocol engine and the receiver applications is notified of new streams via the *NORM_RX_OBJECT_NEW* notification (see NormGetNextEvent()).

Return Values

A NormObjectHandle is returned which the application may use in other NORM API calls as needed. This handle can be considered valid until the application explicitly cancels the object's transmission (see NormObjectCancel()) or a *NORM_TX_OBJECT_PURGED* event is received for the given object. Note the application may use the NormObjectRetain() method if it wishes to refer to the object after the *NORM_TX_OBJECT_PURGED* notification. In this case, the application, when finished with the object, *must* use NormObjectRelease() to free any resources used or else a memory leak condition will result. A value of *NORM_OBJECT_INVALID* is return upon error. Possible failure conditions include the specified session is not operating as a *NormSender*, insufficient memory resources were available, or the "transmit cache" limits have been reached and all previously enqueued NORM transmit objects are pending transmission. Also the call will fail if the infoLen parameter exceeds the local *NormSender* segmentSize limit.

NormStreamClose()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

bool NormStreamClose(NormObjectHandle streamHandle,
                     bool             graceful = false);
```

Description

This function halts transfer of the stream specified by the streamHandle parameter and releases any resources used unless the associated object has been explicitly retained by a call to NormObjectRetain(). No further calls to NormStreamWrite() will be successful for the given streamHandle. The optional graceful parameter, when set to a value of *true*, may be used by NORM senders to initiate "graceful" shutdown of a transmit stream. In this case, the sender application will be notified that stream has (most likely) completed reliable transfer via the *NORM_TX_OBJECT_PURGED* notification upon completion of the graceful shutdown process. When the graceful option is set, receivers are notified of the stream end via a "FLAG_STREAM_END" flag in NORM_DATA message (*Note the NRL NORM implementation uses a portion of the NORM_DATA::payload_reserved field for this purpose and proposes that this type of funtionality be added to subsequent versions of the NORM protocol specification*) and will receive a *NORM_RX_OBJECT_COMPLETED* notification after all received stream content has been read. Otherwise, the stream is immediately terminated, regardless of receiver state. In this case, this function is equivalent to the NormObjectCancel() routine and may be used for sender or receiver streams. So, it is expected this function (NormStreamClose()) will typically be used for transmit streams by NORM senders.

Return Values

This function has no return values.

NormStreamWrite()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

unsigned int NormStreamWrite(NormObjectHandle streamHandle
                             const char*      buffer,
                             unsigned int     numBytes);
```

Description

This function enqueues data for transmission within the NORM stream specified by the `streamHandle` parameter. The `buffer` parameter must be a pointer to the data to be enqueued and the `numBytes` parameter indicates the length of the data content. Note this call does not block and will return immediately. The return value indicates the number of bytes copied from the provided buffer to the internal stream transmission buffers. Calls to this function will be successful unless the stream's transmit buffer space is fully occupied with data pending original or repair transmission if the stream's "push mode" is set to *`false`* (default, see `NormStreamSetPushMode()` for details). If the stream's "push mode" is set to true, a call to `NormStreamWrite()` will always result in copying of application data to the stream at the cost of previously enqueued data pending transmission (original or repair) being dropped by the NORM protocol engine. While NORM NACK-based reliability does not provide explicit flow control, there is some degree of implicit flow control in limiting writing new data to the stream against pending repairs.

Return Values

This function returns the number of bytes of data successfully enqueued for NORM stream transmission.

NormStreamFlush()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

void NormStreamFlush(NormObjectHandle streamHandle,
                     bool             eom = false,
                     NormFlushMode    flushMode = NORM_FLUSH_PASSIVE);
```

Description

This function causes an immediate "flush" of the transmit stream specified by the `streamHandle` parameter. Normally, unless `NormSetAutoFlush()` has been invoked, the NORM protocol engine buffers data written to a stream until it has accumulated a sufficient quantity to generate a NORM_DATA message with a full

payload (as designated by the segmentSize parameter of the NormStartSender() call). This results in most efficient operation with respect to protocol overhead. However, for some NORM streams, the application may not wish wait for such accumulation when critical data has been written to a stream. The default stream "flush" operation invoked via NormStreamFlush() for flushMode equal to *NORM_FLUSH_PASSIVE* causes NORM to immediately transmit all enqueued data for the stream (subject to session transmit rate limits), even if this results in NORM_DATA messages with "small" payloads. If the optional flushMode parameter is set to *NORM_FLUSH_ACTIV*, the application can achieve reliable delivery of stream content up to the current write position in an even more proactive fashion. In this case, the sender additionally, *actively* transmits NORM_CMD(FLUSH) messages after any enqueued stream content has been sent. This immediately prompt receivers for repair requests which reduces latency of reliable delivery, but at a cost of some additional messaging. Note any such "active" flush activity will be terminated upon the next subsequent write to the stream. If flushMode is set to *NORM_FLUSH_NONE*, this call has no effect other than the optional end-of-message marking described here.

The optional eom parameter, when set to *true*, allows the sender application to mark an end-of-message indication (see NormStreamMarkEom()) for the stream and initiate flushing in a single function call. The end-of-message indication causes NORM to mark the first NORM_DATA message generated following a subsequent write to the stream with the NORM_FLAGS_MSG_START flag. This mechanism provide a means for message boundary recovery when receivers join or re-sync to a sender mid-stream.

Note that frequent flushing, particularly for *NORM_FLUSH_ACTIVE* operation, may result in more NORM protocol activity than usual, so care must be taken in application design and deployment when scalability to large group sizes is expected.

Return Values

This function has no return values.

NormStreamSetAutoFlush()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

void NormStreamSetAutoFlush(NormObjectHandle streamHandle
                            NormFlushMode    flushMode);
```

Description

This function sets "*automated* flushing" for the NORM transmit stream indicated by the streamHandle parameter. By default, a NORM transmit stream is "flushed" only when explicitly requested by the application (see NormStreamFlush()). However, to simplify programming, the NORM API allows that automated flushing be enabled such that the "flush" operation occurs every time the *full* requested buffer provided to a NormStreamWrite() call is successfully enqueued. This may be appropriate for messaging applications where the provided buffers corresponds to an application

messages requiring immediate, full transmission. This may make the NORM protocol perhaps more "chatty" than its typical "bulk transfer" form of operation, but can provide a useful capability for some applications.

Possible values for the `flushMode` parameter include *`NORM_FLUSH_NONE`*, *`NORM_FLUSH_PASSIVE`*, and *`NORM_FLUSH_ACTIVE`*. The default setting for a NORM stream is *`NORM_FLUSH_NONE`* where no flushing occurs unless explicitly requested via `NormStreamFlush()`. By setting the automated `flushMode` to *`NORM_FLUSH_PASSIVE`*, the only action taken is to immediately transmit any data that has been written to the stream, even if "runt" NORM_DATA messages (with payloads less than the *NormSender* `segmentSize` parameter) are generated as a result. If *`NORM_FLUSH_ACTIVE`* is specified, the automated flushing operation is further augmented with the additional transmission of NORM_CMD(FLUSH) messages to proactively excite the receiver group for repair requests.

Return Values

This function has no return values.

`NormStreamSetPushEnable()`

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

void NormStreamSetPushEnable(NormObjectHandle streamHandle
                             bool             pushEnable);
```

Description

This function controls how the NORM API behaves when the application attempts to enqueue new stream data for transmission when the associated stream's transmit buffer is fully occupied with data pending original or repair transmission. By default (`pushEnable` == *`false`*), a call to `NormStreamWrite()` will return a zero value under this condition, indicating it was unable to enqueue the new data. However, if `pushEnable` is set to *`true`* for a given `streamHandle`, the NORM protocol engine will discard the oldest buffered stream data (even if it is pending repair transmission or has never been transmitted) as needed to enqueue the new data. Thus a call to `NormStreamWrite()` will never fail to copy data. This behavior may be desirable for applications where it is more important to quickly delivery new data than to reliably deliver older data written to a stream. The default behavior for a newly opened stream corresponds to `pushEnable` equals *`false`*. This limits the rate to which an application can write new data to the stream to the current transmission rate and status of the reliable repair process.

Return Values

This function has no return values.

NormStreamHasVacancy()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

bool NormStreamHasVacancy(NormObjectHandle streamHandle);
```

Description

This function can be used to query whether the transmit stream, specified by the `streamHandle` parameter, has buffer space available so that the application may successfully make a call to `NormStreamWrite()`. Normally, a call to `NormStreamWrite()` itself can be used to make this determination, but this function can be useful when "push mode" has been enabled (see the description of the `NormStreamSetPushEnable()` function) and the application wants to avoid overwriting data previously written to the stream that has not yet been transmitted. Note that when "push mode" is enabled, a call to `NormStreamWrite()` will always succeed, overwriting previously-enqueued data if necessary. Normally, this function will return true after a NORM_TX_QUEUE_VACANCY notification has been received for a given NORM stream object.

Return Values

This function returns a value of *`true`* when there is transmit buffer space to which the application may write and *`false`* otherwise.

NormStreamMarkEom()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

void NormStreamMarkEom(NormObjectHandle streamHandle);
```

Description

This function allows the application to indicate to the NORM protocol engine that the last data successfully written to the stream indicated by `streamHandle` corresponded to the end of an application-defined message boundary. If the stream is either explicitly flushed at this point (see `NormStreamFlush()`) or the last write had exactly filled a *NormSender* `segmentSize` NORM_DATA message payload, the beginning of the next write will correspond to the beginning of a new NORM_DATA message. The end-of-message indication given here will cause the NORM protocol engine to flag this new message with NORM_FLAG_MSG_START which allows receivers to recover message boundary synchronization even when beginning reception mid-stream. Note that the marking is most effective when explicit flushing is used which forces alignment of application message boundaries with NORM_DATA messages. It is anticipated that future versions of the NORM protocol specification (and/or the NRL implementation) will provide additional, more flexible stream control mechanisms (e.g. mid-segment message boundary alignment) that allow for more robust message boundary recovery.

It is recommended that the NormStreamMarkEom() should be used with automated flushing modes (see NormStreamSetAutoFlush()) while the optional eom parameter of NormStreamFlush() is instead used when explicit flushing is practiced. End-of-message marking *may* be used when no flushing is done, but note then there is no guarantee of message boundary to NORM_DATA message alignment unless the application message sizes correspond to multiples of the configured *NormSender* segmentSize. Again, note future versions of NORM and this implementation may provide more flexibility here.

Return Values

This function has no return values.

NormSetWatermark()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

bool NormSetWatermark(NormSessionHandle session,
                      NormObjectHandle  object);
```

Description

This function specifies a "watermark" transmission point at which NORM sender protocol operation should perform positive acknowledgment collection for a given session. For *NORM_OBJECT_FILE* and *NORM_OBJECT_DATA* transmissions, the positive acknowledgement collection will begin when the specified object has been completely transmitted. The object parameter must be a valid handle to a previously-created sender object (see NormEnqueueFile(), NormEnqueueData(), or NormStreamOpen()). For *NORM_OBJECT_STREAM* transmission, the positive acknowledgment collection begins immediately, using the current position (last data written) of the sender stream as a reference.

As the acknowledgment collection proceeds, *NORM_ACK_FAILED* events will be posted for individual receiver *NormNodes* which fail to acknowledge the request. The NormEvent::node field contains a NormNodeHandle for the failed node and NormNodeGetId() can be used to retrieve the failing node's NormNodeId. When the sender acknowledgment collection process has completed, the *NORM_ACK_COMPLETE* event is posted and the application may assume that the remaining nodes (those for which there was no *NORM_ACK_FAILED* event) successfully acknowledged the request.

If a subsequent call is made to NormSetWatermark() before the prior acknowledgement request has completed, the pending acknowledgment request is canceled and new one may begin.

Note that the sender may still enqueue *NormObjects* for transmission (or write to the existing stream) and the positive acknowledgement collection will be multiplexed with the ongoing data transmission. However, the sender application may wish to defer sending more data until a *NORM_ACK_COMPLETE* event is received for the session.

This provides a form of explicit sender->receiver(s) flow control (with respect to the current list of "acking" receivers) which does not exist in NORM's default NACK-only operation.

Return Values

The function returns *true* upon successful establishment of the watermark point. The function may return *false* upon failure (*why would it fail? – TBD*).

NORM Receiver Functions

NormStartReceiver()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

bool NormStartReceiver(NormSessionHandle session,
                       unsigned long     bufferSpace);
```

Description

This function initiates the application's participation as a receiver within the *NormSession* identified by the session parameter. The receiver will respond with appropriate protocol messages (unless NormSetSilentReceiver(*true*) is invoked) and begin providing the application with receiver-related *NormEvent* notification. The bufferSpace parameter is used to set a limit on the amount of bufferSpace allocated by the receiver per active *NormSender* within the session. The appropriate bufferSpace to use is a function of expected network *delay*bandwidth* product and packet loss characteristics. A discussion of trade-offs associated with NORM transmit and receiver buffer space selection is provided later in this document. An insufficient bufferSpace allocation will result in potentially inefficient protocol operation, even though reliable operation may be maintained. In some cases of a large *delay*bandwidth* product and/or severe packet loss, a small bufferSpace allocation (coupled with the lack of explicit flow control in NORM) may result in the receiver "re-syncing" to the sender, resulting in "outages" in the reliable transmissions from a sender (this is similar to the conditions resulting in a TCP connection timeout failure).

Return Values

A value of *true* is returned upon success and *false* upon failure. The reasons failure may occur include limited system resources or that the network sockets required for session communication failed to open or properly configure.

NormStopReceiver()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

void NormStopReceiver(NormSessionHandle session,
                      unsigned int      gracePeriod = 0);
```

Description

This function ends the application's participation as a receiver in the *NormSession* specified by the `session` parameter. By default, all receiver-related protocol activity is immediately halted and all receiver-related resources are freed (except for those which have been specifically retained (see `NormObjectRetain()`). However, and optional `gracePeriod` parameter is provided to allow the receiver an opportunity to inform the group of its intention. This is applicable when the local receiving *NormNode* has been designated as an active congestion control representative (i.e. current limiting receiver (CLR) or potential limiting receiver (PLR)). In this case, a non-zero `gracePeriod` value provides an opportunity for the receiver to respond to the applicable sender(s) so the sender will not expect further congestion control feedback from this receiver. The `gracePeriod` integer value is used as a multiplier with the largest sender GRTT to determine the actual time period for which the receiver will linger in the group to provide such feedback (i.e. "grace time" = (`gracePeriod` * *GRTT*)). During this time, the receiver will not generate any requests for repair or other protocol actions aside from response to applicable congestion control probes. When the receiver is removed from the current list of receivers in the sender congestion control probe messages (or the `gracePeriod` expires, whichever comes first), the NORM protocol engine will post a *NORM_LOCAL_RECEIVER_CLOSED* event for the applicable `session`, and related resources are then freed.

Return Values

This function has no return values.

NormSetRxSocketBuffer()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

bool NormSetRxSocketBuffer(NormSessionHandle session,
                           unsigned int      bufferSize);
```

Description

This function allows the application to set an alternative, non-default buffer size for the UDP socket used by the specified NORM `session` for packet reception. This may be necessary for high speed NORM sessions where the UDP receive socket buffer becomes a bottleneck when the NORM protocol engine (which is running as a user-space process) doesn't get to service the receive socket quickly enough resulting in packet loss when the

socket buffer overflows. The bufferSize parameter specifies the socket buffer size in bytes. Different operating systems and sometimes system configurations allow different ranges of socket buffer sizes to be set. Note that a call to NormStartReceiver() (or NormStartSender()) must have been previously made for this call to succeed (i.e., the socket must be already open).

Return Values

This function returns *true* upon success and *false* upon failure. Possible reasons for failure include, 1) the specified session is not valid, 2) that NORM "receiver" (or "sender") operation has not yet been started for the given session, or 3) an invalid bufferSize specification was given.

NormSetSilentReceiver()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

void NormSetSilentReceiver(NormSessionHandle session,
                           bool              silent);
```

Description

This function provides the option to configure a NORM receiver application as a "silent receiver". This mode of receiver operation dictates that the host does not generate any protocol messages while operating as a receiver within the specified session. Setting the silent parameter to *true* enables silent receiver operation while setting it to *false* results in normal protocol operation where feedback is provided as needed for reliability and protocol operation. Silent receivers are dependent upon proactive FEC transmission (see NormSetAutoParity()) or using repair information requested by other non-silent receivers within the group to achieve reliable transfers.

Return Values

This function has no return values.

NormSetDefaultUnicastNack()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

void NormSetDefaultUnicastNack(NormSessionHandle session,
                               bool              state);
```

Description

This function controls the default behavior determining the destination of receiver feedback messages generated while participating in the session. If *state* is true, "unicast NACKing" is enabled for *new* remote senders while it is disabled for *state* equal to false. The NACKing behavior for current remote senders is not affected. When

"unicast NACKing" is disabled (default), NACK messages are sent to the session address (usually a multicast address) and port, but "unicast NACKing", when enabled, causes receiver feedback messages to be sent to the unicast address (and port) based on the source address of sender messages received. For unicast NORM sessions, it is recommended that "unicast NACKing" be enabled. Note that receiver feedback messages subject to the state of "unicast NACKing" include NACK-messages as well as some ACK messages such as congestion control feedback. Explicitly solicited ACK messages, such as those used to satisfy sender watermark acknowledgement requests (see `NormSetWatermark()`) are always unicast to the applicable sender. (TBD – provide API option so that *all* messages are multicast.) The default session-wide behavior for unicast NACKing can be overridden via the `NormNodeSetUnicastNack()` function for individual remote senders.

Return Values

This function has no return values.

`NormNodeSetUnicastNack()`

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

void NormNodeSetUnicastNack(NormNodeHandle senderNode,
                            bool           state);
```

Description

This function controls the the destination address of receiver feedback messages generated in response to a specific remote NORM sender.. If ***`state`*** is true, "unicast NACKing" is enabled while it is disabled for ***`state`*** equal to false. See the description of `NormSetDefaultUnicastNack()` for details on 'unicast NACKing" behavior.

Return Values

This function has no return values.

`NormSetDefaultNackingMode()`

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

void NormSetDefaultNackingMode(NormSessionHandle session,
                               NormNackingMode   nackingMode);
```

Description

This function sets the default "nacking mode" used when receiving objects. This allows the receiver application some control of its degree of participation in the repair process. By limiting receivers to only request repair of objects in which they are really interested

in receiving, some overall savings in unnecessary network loading might be realized. Available nacking modes include:

NORM_NACK_NONE	Do not transmit any repair requests for the newly received object.
NORM_NACK_INFO_ONLY	Transmit repair requests for NORM_INFO content only as needed.
NORM_NACK_NORMAL	Transmit repair requests for entire object as needed.

This function specifies the default behavior with respect to any *new* sender or object. This default behavior may be overridden for specific sender nodes or specific object using `NormNodeSetNackingMode()` or `NormObjectSetNackingMode()`, respectively. The receiver application's use of *NORM_NACK_NONE* essentially disables a guarantee of reliable reception, although the receiver may still take advantage of sender repair transmissions in response to other receivers' requests. When the sender provides, NORM_INFO content for transmitted objects, the *NORM_NACK_INFO_ONLY* mode may allows the receiver to reliably receive object context information from which it may choose to "upgrade" its nacking mode for the specific object via the `NormObjectSetNackingMode()` call. Similarly, the receiver may changes its default nacking mode with respect to specific senders via the `NormNodeSetNackingMode()` call. The default "default nacking mode" when this call is not made is *NORM_NACK_NORMAL*.

Return Values

This function has no return values.

`NormNodeSetNackingMode()`

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

void NormNodeSetNackingMode(NormNodeHandle  nodeHandle,
                            NormNackingMode nackingMode);
```

Description

This function sets the default "nacking mode" used for receiving new objects from a specific sender as identified by the `nodeHandle` parameter. This overrides the default nacking mode set for the receive session. See `NormSetDefaultNackingMode()` for a description of possible `nackingMode` parameter values and other related information.

Return Values

This function has no return values.

NormObjectSetNackingMode()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

void NormObjectSetNackingMode(NormObjectHandle objectHandle,
                              NormNackingMode  nackingMode);
```

Description

This function sets the "nacking mode" used for receiving a specific transport object as identified by the objectHandle parameter. This overrides the default nacking mode set for the applicable sender node. See NormSetDefaultNackingMode() for a description of possible nackingMode parameter values and other related information.

Return Values

This function has no return values.

NormSetDefaultRepairBoundary()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

void NormSetDefaultRepairBoundary(NormSessionHandle  sessionHandle,
                                  NormRepairBoundary repairBoundary);
```

Description

This function allows the receiver application to customize, for a given sessionHandle, at what points the receiver initiates the NORM NACK repair process during protocol operation. Normally, the NORM receiver initiates NACking for repairs at the FEC code block and transport object boundaries. For smaller block sizes, the NACK repair process is often/quickly initiated and the repair of an object will occur, as needed, during the transmission of the object. This default operation corresponds to repairBoundary equal to *NORM_BOUNDARY_BLOCK*. Using this function, the application may alternatively, setting repairBoundary equal to *NORM_BOUNDARY_OBJECT*, cause the protocol to defer NACK process initiation until the current transport object has been completely transmitted. This mode of operation may be useful when it is desirable to allow receivers with high quality network connectivity (perhaps requiring only a little (or even no) "auto parity" (see NormSetAutoParity()) to achieve reliable transfer) receive object transmission before any extensive repair process that may be required to satisfy other receivers with poor network connectivity. The repair boundary can also be set for individual remote senders using the NormNodeSetRepairBoundary() function.

Return Values

This function has no return values.

NormNodeSetRepairBoundary()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

void NormNodeSetRepairBoundary(NormNodeHandle     nodeHandle,
                               NormRepairBoundary repairBoundary);
```

Description

This function allows the receiver application to customize, for the specific remote sender referenced by the `nodeHandle` parameter, at what points the receiver initiates the NORM NACK repair process during protocol operation. See the description of `NormSetDefaultRepairBoundary()` for further details on the impact of setting the NORM receiver repair boundary and possible values for the `repairBoundary` parameter.

Return Values

This function has no return values.

NormStreamRead()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

bool NormStreamRead(NormObjectHandle streamHandle,
                    char*            buffer
                    unsigned int*    numBytes);
```

Description

This function can be used by the receiver application to read any available data from an incoming NORM stream. NORM receiver applications "learn" of available NORM streams via *NORM_RX_OBJECT_NEW* notification events. The `streamHandle` parameter here must correspond to a valid `NormObjectHandle` value provided during such a prior *NORM_RX_OBJECT_NEW* notification. The `buffer` parameter must be a pointer to an array where the received data can be stored of a length as referenced by the `numBytes` pointer. On successful completion, the `numBytes` storage will be modified to indicate the actual number of bytes copied into the provided `buffer`. If the `numBytes` storage is modified to a zero value, this indicates that no stream data was currently available for reading.

Note that `NormStreamRead()` is never a blocking call and only returns failure (*false*) when a break in the integrity of the received stream occurs. The *NORM_RX_OBJECT_UPDATE* provides an indication to when there is stream data available for reading. When such notification occurs, the application *should* repeatedly read from the stream until the `numBytes` storage is set to zero, even if a *false* value is returned. Additional *NORM_RX_OBJECT_UPDATE* notifications might not be posted until the application can has read all available data.

Return Values

This function normally returns a value of *true*. However, if a break in the integrity of the reliable received stream occurs (or the stream has been ended by the sender), a value of *false* is returned to indicate the break. Unless the stream has been ended (and the receiver application will receive *NORM_RX_OBJECT_COMPLETED* notification for the stream in that case), the application may continue to read from the stream as the NORM protocol will automatically "resync" to streams, even if network conditions are sufficiently poor that breaks in reliability occur. If such a "break" and "resync" occurs, the application may be able to leverage other NORM API calls such as `NormStreamSeekMsgStart()` or `NormStreamGetOffset()` if needed to recover its alignment with received stream content. This depends upon the nature of the application and its stream content.

`NormStreamSeekMsgStart()`

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

bool NormStreamSeekMsgStart(NormObjectHandle streamHandle);
```

Description

This function advances the read offset of the receive stream referenced by the `streamHandle` parameter to align with the next available message boundary. Message boundaries are defined by the sender application using the `NormStreamMarkEom()` call. Note that any received data prior to the next message boundary is discarded by the NORM protocol engine and is not available to the application (i.e., there is currently no "rewind" function for a NORM stream). Also note this call cannot be used to skip messages. Once a valid message boundary is found, the application *must* read from the stream using `NormStreamRead()` to further advance the read offset. The current offset (in bytes) for the stream can be retrieved via `NormStreamGetReadOffset()`.

Return Values

This function returns a value of *true* when start-of-message is found. The next call to `NormStreamRead()` will retrieve data aligned with the message start. If no new message boundary is found in the buffered receive data for the stream, the function returns a value of *false*. In this case, the application should defer repeating a call to this function until a subsequent *NORM_RX_OBJECT_UPDATE* notification is posted.

NormStreamGetReadOffset()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

unsigned long NormStreamGetReadOffset(NormObjectHandle streamHandle);
```

Description

This function retrieves the current read offset value for the receive stream indicated by the `streamHandle` parameter. Note that for very long-lived streams, this value may wrap. Thus, in general, applications should not be highly dependent upon the stream offset, but this feature may be valuable for certain applications which associate some application context with stream position.

Return Values

This function returns the current read offset in bytes. The return value is undefined for sender streams. There is no error result.

NORM Object Functions

The functions described in this section may be used for sender or receiver purposes to manage transmission and reception of NORM transport objects. In most cases, the receiver will be the typical user of these functions to retrieve additional information on newly-received objects. All of these functions require a valid `NormObjectHandle` argument which specifies the applicable object. Note that `NormObjectHandle` values obtained from a `NormEvent` notification may be considered valid *only* until a subsequent call to `NormGetNextEvent()`, unless explicitly retained by the application (see `NormObjectRetain()`). `NormObjectHandle` values obtained as a result of `NormFileEnqueue()`, `NormDataEnqueue()`, or `NormOpenStream()` calls can be considered valid only until a corresponding *`NORM_TX_OBJECT_PURGED`* notification is posted or the object is dequeued using `NormCancelObject()`, unless, again, otherwise explicitly retained (see `NormObjectRetain()`).

NormObjectGetType()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

NormObjectType NormObjectGetType(NormObjectHandle objectHandle);
```

Description

This function can be used to determine the object type (*`NORM_OBJECT_DATA`*, *`NORM_OBJECT_FILE`*, or *`NORM_OBJECT_STREAM`*) for the NORM transport object identified by the `objectHandle` parameter. The `objectHandle` *must* refer to a current, valid transport object.

Return Values

This function returns the NORM object type. Valid NORM object types include *NORM_OBJECT_DATA*, *NORM_OBJECT_FILE*, or *NORM_OBJECT_STREAM*. A type value of *NORM_OBJECT_NONE* will be returned for an objectHandle value of *NORM_OBJECT_INVALID*.

NormObjectHasInfo()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

bool NormObjectHasInfo(NormObjectHandle objectHandle);
```

Description

This function can be used to determine if the sender has associated any NORM_INFO content with the transport object specified by the `objectHandle` parameter. This can even be used *before* the NORM_INFO content is delivered to the receiver and a *NORM_RX_OBJECT_INFO* notification is posted.

Return Values

A value of *true* is returned if NORM_INFO is (or will be) available for the specified transport object. A value of *false* is returned otherwise.

NormObjectGetInfoLength()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

unsigned short NormObjectGetInfoLength(NormObjectHandle objectHandle);
```

Description

This function can be used to determine the length of currently available NORM_INFO content (if any) associated with the transport object referenced by the `objectHandle` parameter.

Return Values

The length of the NORM_INFO content, in bytes, of currently available for the specified transport object is returned. A value of *0* is returned if no NORM_INFO content is currently available or associated with the object.

NormObjectGetInfo()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

unsigned short NormObjectGetInfo(NormObjectHandle objectHandle,
                                 char*            buffer,
                                 unsigned short   bufferLen);
```

Description

This function copies any NORM_INFO content associated (by the sender application) with the transport object specified by `objectHandle` into the provided memory space referenced by the `buffer` parameter. The `bufferLen` parameter indicates the length of the `buffer` space in bytes. If the provided `bufferLen` is less than the actual NORM_INFO length, a partial copy will occur. The actual length of NORM_INFO content available for the specified object is returned. However, note that until a *NORM_RX_OBJECT_INFO* notification is posted to the receive application, no NORM_INFO content is available and a zero result will be returned, even if NORM_INFO content may be subsequently available. The `NormObjectHasInfo()` call can be used to determine if any NORM_INFO content will ever be available for a specified transport object (i.e., determine if the sender has associated any NORM_INFO with the object in question).

Return Values

The actual length of *currently available* NORM_INFO content for the specified transport object is returned. This function can be used to determine the length of NORM_INFO content for the object even if a *NULL* `buffer` value and zero `bufferLen` is provided. A zero value is returned if NORM_INFO content has not yet been received (or is non-existent) for the specified object.

NormObjectGetSize()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

NormSize NormObjectGetSize(NormObjectHandle objectHandle);
```

Description

This function can be used to determine the size (in bytes) of the transport object specified by the `objectHandle` parameter. NORM can support large object sizes for the *NORM_OBJECT_FILE* type, so typically the NORM library is built with any necessary, related macros defined such that operating system large file support is enabled (e.g., "`#define _FILE_OFFSET_BITS 64`" or equivalent). The `NormSize` type is defined accordingly, so the application should be built with the same large file support configuration.

For objects of type *NORM_OBJECT_STREAM*, the size returned here corresponds to the stream buffer size set by the sender application when opening the referenced stream object.

Return Values

A size of the data content of the specified object, in bytes, is returned. Note that it may be possible that some objects have zero data content, but do have NORM_INFO content available.

NormObjectGetBytesPending()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

NormSize NormObjectGetBytesPending(NormObjectHandle objectHandle);
```

Description

This function can be used to determine the progress of reception of the NORM transport object identified by the `objectHandle` parameter. This function indicates the number of bytes that are pending reception (I.e., when the object is completely received, "bytes pending" will equal ZERO). This function is not necessarily applicable to objects of type NORM_OBJECT_STREAM which do not have a finite size. Note it is possible that this function might also be useful to query the "transmit pending" status of sender objects, but it does not account for pending FEC repair transmissions and thus may not produce useful results for this purpose.

Return Values

A number of object source data bytes pending reception (or transmission) is returned.

NormObjectCancel()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

void NormObjectCancel(NormObjectHandle objectHandle);
```

Description

This function immediately cancels the transmission of a local sender transport object or the reception of a specified object from a remote sender as specified by the `objectHandle` parameter. The `objectHandle` must refer to a currently valid NORM transport object. Any resources used by the transport object in question are immediately freed unless the object has been otherwise retained by the application via the `NormObjectRetain()` call. Unless the application has retained the object in such fashion, the object in question should be considered invalid and the application must not again reference the `objectHandle` after this call is made.

If the canceled object is a sender object not completely received by participating receivers, the receivers will be informed of the object's cancellation via the NORM protocol NORM_CMD(SQUELCH) message in response to any NACKs requesting repair or retransmission of the applicable object. In the case of receive objects, the NORM receiver will not make further requests for repair of the indicated object, but furthermore, *will* acknowledge the object as completed with respect to any associated positive acknowledgement requests (see `NormSetWatermark()`).

Return Values

This function has no return value.

`NormObjectRetain()`

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

void NormObjectRetain(NormObjectHandle objectHandle);
```

Description

This function "retains" the `objectHandle` and any state associated with it for further use by the application even when the NORM protocol engine may no longer require access to the associated transport object. Normally, the application is guaranteed that a given `NormObjectHandle` is valid only while it is being actively transported by NORM (i.e., for sender objects, from the time an object is created by the application until it is canceled by the application or purged (see the *`NORM_TX_OBJECT_PURGED`* notification) by the protocol engine, or, for receiver objects, from the time of the object's *`NORM_RX_OBJECT_NEW`* notification until its reception is canceled by the application or a *`NORM_RX_OBJECT_COMPLETED`* or *`NORM_RX_OBJECT_ABORTED`* notification is posted). Note that an application may refer to a given object after any related notification until the application makes a subsequent call to `NormGetNextEvent()`.

When the application makes a call to `NormObjectRetain()` for a given `objectHandle`, the application may use that `objectHandle` value in any NORM API calls until the application makes a call to `NormObjectRelease()` for the given object. Note that the application *MUST* make a corresponding call to `NormObjectRelease()` for each call it has made to `NormObjectRetain()` in order to free any system resources (i.e., memory) used by that object. Also note that retaining a receive object also automatically retains any state associated with the `NormNodeHandle` corresponding to the remote sender of that receive object so that the application may use NORM node API calls for the value returned by `NormObjectGetSender()` as needed.

Return Values

This function has no return value.

NormObjectRelease()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

void NormObjectRelease(NormObjectHandle objectHandle);
```

Description

This function complements the `NormObjectRetain()` call by immediately freeing any resources associated with the given `objectHandle`, assuming the underlying NORM protocol engine no longer requires access to the corresponding transport object. Note the NORM protocol engine retains/releases state for associated objects for its own needs and thus it is very unsafe for an application to call `NormObjectRelease()` for an `objectHandle` for which it has not previously explicitly retained via `NormObjectRetain()`.

Return Values

This function has no return value.

NormFileGetName()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

bool NormFileGetName(NormObjectHandle fileHandle)
                     char*            nameBuffer,
                     unsigned int     bufferLen);
```

Description

This function copies the name, as a NULL-terminated string, of the file object specified by the `fileHandle` parameter into the `nameBuffer` of length `bufferLen` bytes provided by the application. The `fileHandle` parameter must refer to a valid `NormObjectHandle` for an object of type NORM_OBJECT_FILE. If the actual name is longer than the provided `bufferLen`, a partial copy will occur. Note that the file name consists of the entire path name of the specified file object and the application should give consideration to operating system file path lengths when providing the `nameBuffer`.

Return Values

This function returns true upon success and false upon failure. Possible failure conditions include the `fileHandle` does not refer to an object of type *`NORM_OBJECT_FILE`*.

NormFileRename()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

bool NormFileRename(NormObjectHandle fileHandle)
                    const char*      fileName);
```

Description

This function renames the file used to store content for the *NORM_OBJECT_FILE* transport object specified by the `fileHandle` parameter. This allows receiver applications to rename (or move) received files as needed. NORM uses temporary file names for received files until the application explicitly renames the file. For example, sender applications may choose to use the NORM_INFO content associated with a file object to provide name and/or typing information to receivers. The `fileName` parameter must be a NULL-terminated string which should specify the full desired path name to be used. NORM will attempt to create sub-directories as needed to satisfy the request. Note that existing files of the same name may be overwritten.

Return Values

This function returns true upon success and false upon failure. Possible failure conditions include the case where the `fileHandle` does not refer to an object of type *NORM_OBJECT_FILE* and where NORM was unable to successfully create any needed directories and/or the file itself.

NormDataAccessData()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

const char* NormDataAccessData(NormObjectHandle objectHandle)
```

Description

This function allows the application to access the data storage area associated with a transport object of type *NORM_OBJECT_DATA*. For example, the application may use this function to copy the received data content for its own use. Alternatively, the application may establish "ownership" for the allocated memory space using the `NormDataDetachData()` function if it is desired to avoid the copy.

If the object specified by the `objectHandle` parameter has no data content (or is not of type *NORM_OBJECT_DATA*), a NULL value may be returned. The application MUST NOT attempt to modify the memory space used by *NORM_OBJECT_DATA* objects during the time an associated `objectHandle` is valid. The length of data storage area can be determined with a call to `NormObjectGetSize()` for the same `objectHandle` value.

Return Values

This function returns a pointer to the data storage area for the specified transport object. A NULL value may be returned if the object has no associated data content or is not of type *NORM_OBJECT_DATA*.

NormDataDetachData()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

char* NormDataDetachData(NormObjectHandle objectHandle)
```

Description

This function allows the application to disassociate data storage allocated by the NORM protocol engine for a receive object from the *NORM_OBJECT_DATA* transport object specified by the `objectHandle` parameter. It is important that this function is called *after* the NORM protocol engine has indicated it is finished with the data object (i.e., after a *NORM_TX_OBJECT_PURGED*, *NORM_RX_OBJECT_COMPLETED*, or *NORM_RX_OBJECT_ABORTED* notification event). But the application must call `NormDataDetachData()` *before* a call is made to `NormObjectCancel()` or `NormObjectRelease()` for the object if it plans to access the data content afterwards. Otherwise, the NORM protocol engine will free the applicable memory space when the associated *NORM_OBJECT_DATA* transport object is deleted and the application will be unable to access the received data unless it has previously copied the content.

Once the application has used this call to "detach" the data content, it is the application's responsibility to subsequently free the data storage space as needed.

Return Values

This function returns a pointer to the data storage area for the specified transport object. A NULL value may be returned if the object has no associated data content or is not of type *NORM_OBJECT_DATA*.

NormObjectGetSender()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

NormNodeHandle NormObjectGetSender(NormObjectHandle objectHandle)
```

Description

This function retrieves the `NormNodeHandle` corresponding to the remote sender of the transport object associated with the given `objectHandle` parameter. Note that the returned `NormNodeHandle` value is only valid for the same period that the `objectHandle` is valid. The returned `NormNodeHandle` may optionally be retained

for further use by the application using the NormNodeRetain() function call. The returned value can be used in the NORM Node Functions described later in this document.

Return Values

This function returns the NormNodeHandle corresponding to the remote sender of the transport object associated with the given objectHandle parameter. A value of NORM_NODE_INVALID is returned if the specified objectHandle references a locally originated, sender object.

NORM Node Functions

The functions described in this section may be used for NORM sender or receiver (most typically receiver) purposes to retrieve additional information about a *NormNode*, given a valid NormNodeHandle. Note that, unless specifically retained (see NormNodeRetain()), a NormNodeHandle provided in a NormEvent notification should be considered valid only until a subsequent call to NormGetNextEvent() is made. NormNodeHandles retrieved using NormObjectGetSender() can be considered valid for the same period of time as the corresponding NormObjectHandle is valid.

NormNodeGetId()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

NormNodeId NormNodeGetId(NormNodeHandle nodeHandle)
```

Description

This function retrieves the NormNodeId identifier for the remote participant referenced by the given nodeHandle value. The NormNodeId is a 32-bit value used within the NORM protocol to uniquely identify participants within a NORM session. The participants identifiers are assigned by the application or derived (by the NORM API code) from the host computers default IP address.

Return Values

This function returns the NormNodeId value associated with the specified nodeHandle. In the case nodeHandle is equal to *NORM_NODE_INVALID*, the return value will be *NORM_NODE_NONE*.

NormNodeGetAddress()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

NormNodeId NormNodeGetAddress(NormNodeHandle nodeHandle)
```

Description

This function retrieves the `NormNodeId` identifier for the remote participant referenced by the given `nodeHandle` value. The NormNodeId is a 32-bit value used within the NORM protocol to uniquely identify participants within a NORM session. The participants identifiers are assigned by the application or derived (by the NORM API code) from the host computers default IP address.

Return Values

This function returns the `NormNodeId` value associated with the specified `nodeHandle`. In the case `nodeHandle` is equal to *NORM_NODE_INVALID*, the return value will be *NORM_NODE_NONE*.

NormNodeRetain()

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>

void NormNodeRetain(NormNodeHandle nodeHandle)
```

Description

In the same manner as the `NormObjectRetain()` function, this function allows the application to retain state associated with a given `nodeHandle` value even when the underlying NORM protocol engine might normally free the associated state and thus invalidate the `NormNodeHandle`. If the application uses this function, it must make a corresponding call to `NormNodeRelease()` when finished with the node information to avoid a memory leak condition. `NormNodeHandle` values (unless retained) are valid from the time of a *NORM_REMOTE_SERVER_NEW* notification until a complimentary *NORM_REMOTE_SERVER_PURGED* notification. During that interval, the application will receive *NORM_REMOTE_SERVER_ACTIVE* and *NORM_REMOTE_SERVER_INACTIVE* notifications according to the server's message transmission activity within the session.

It is important to note that, if the NORM protocol engine posts a *NORM_REMOTE_SERVER_PURGED* notification for a given `NormNodeHandle`, the NORM protocol engine could possibly, subsequently establish a new, different `NormNodeHandle` value for the same remote server (i.e., one of equivalent `NormNodeId`) if it again becomes active in the session. A new `NormNodeHandle` may likely be established even if the application has retained the previous `NormNodeHandle` value. Therefore, to the application, it might appear that two

different servers with the same `NormNodeId` are participating if these notifications are not carefully monitored. This behavior is contingent upon how the application has configured the NORM protocol engine to manage resources when there is potential for a large number of remote servers within a session (related APIs are TBD). For example, the application may wish to control which specific remote servers for which it keeps state (or limit the memory resources used for remote servers state, etc) and the NORM API may be extended in the future to control this behavior.

Return Values

This function has no return value.

`NormNodeRelease()`

Synopsis

```
#include <normApi.h>
void NormNodeRelease(NormNodeHandle nodeHandle)
```

Description

In complement to the `NormNodeRetain()` function, this API call releases the specified `nodeHandle` so that the NORM protocol engine may free associated resources as needed. Once this call is made, the application should no longer reference the specified `NormNodeHandle`, unless it is still valid.

Return Values

This function has no return value.