



This Technical Advisory describes an issue which may or may not affect the customer's product

Technical Advisory

TA-0818-1

5200 NE Elam Young Parkway
Hillsboro, OR 97124

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Intel® Blade Server Ethernet Switch Module IXM5414E Potential Loss of Connectivity

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Products Affected

Intel® Blade Server Ethernet Switch Module IXM5414E

Description

Intel has received several field reports from customers using the Intel® Blade Server Ethernet Switch Module IXM5414E. These reports indicate that under some applications a loss of switch connectivity may be experienced, however no data loss is observed when this situation occurs. Intel test labs have confirmed this issue in a lab environment where failures are seen on a limited number of units intermittently. Because customer configurations and applications vary widely, Intel has yet to identify any specific sets of applications or configurations in which the issue may be more likely to occur.

Root Cause

Intel is aggressively working to identify the root cause and a work-around. This issue is extremely difficult to reproduce consistently in a test environment because it appears only intermittently and has a time delay before the failure appears. This issue has also not been reported in all Intel® Blade Server Ethernet Switch Module installations. For these reasons, Intel cannot yet provide an estimated date for the release of a viable workaround or root cause determination.

This TA will be updated as soon as any additional information is available.

Corrective Action / Resolution

To help mitigate the opportunity for loss of connectivity, customers need to ensure the following:

- The switch firmware should be a minimum of version 1.31 (Main Application 1, Build BRISM31)
- The switch "Flow Control" port settings should be set to "Disabled" for all ports.

To confirm the issue, customers experiencing the loss of connectivity should immediately try the following:

1. Ensure the switch module external ports are set to "Enabled".
2. If the Intel® Blade Server Chassis SBCE is fully populated with blades, attempt a blade-to blade communication from any blade in slots 1-6 to any blade in slots 7-14 by using the network Ping command. For example, use the Ping command to ping from the blade in slot 2 to the blade in slot 9. The inability to complete an inter-chassis ping indicates a higher probability that the loss of connectivity is due to the switch module.
3. If the SBCE chassis is not fully populated with server blades, attempt to ping from any blade to any external client device attached to the switch. Loss of connectivity indicates a higher probability that the loss of connectivity is due to the switch module.
4. Finally, reset the switch module and repeat steps 1-3. If normal switch communications return and network pings are successful, the loss of connectivity due to the switch module issue has been confirmed.

In all reported cases, including tests conducted in the lab environment, normal switch module operations is restored by resetting the switch module.

Customers who believe they are experiencing this issue should report the full details of the issue to their Intel technical support representative, who will help determine if the issue experienced is due to a configuration setting or potentially due to this issue.

Please contact your Intel Support Representative and refer to this TA # 08181-1 if you require more specific information about this issue.

Alternative Blade GbE Switches:

- For customers who would prefer to purchase an alternative switch, Intel has two versions to offer. Both of these switches are manufactured and supported by IBM, but are available for order through Intel Corporation.
 1. SBCEGBECM MM# 885291 (Layer 2 Server Connectivity Module)
 2. SBCEGBESWN MM# 885292 (Layer 2/3 switch)
- These two switches may only be purchased from one of Intel's distributors listed below:
 - o ASMO: Synnex, Bell Micro
 - o EMEA: Asbisc Enterprises Limited, Hammer UK, Arrow Rapac
 - o APAC: Esys, Exchannel PRC, Intech (South Korea),

Please contact your Intel Sales Representative if you require more specific information about these products.

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