13 DEC 2002

CLUSTER NODE DISTRESS SIGNAL

ABSTRACT

The preferred embodiment of the invention provides a cluster node distress system (124) and method that improves reliability of a cluster. A cluster node distress signal is produced when a node on the cluster is about to fail. This allows the cluster to better determine whether a non-communicating node has failed or merely been partitioned from the cluster. The system (124) is embedded deeply into the operating system (123) and provides a pre-built node distress signal that can be quickly sent to other nodes in the cluster when an imminent failure of that node is detected, improving the probability that the node distress signal will get out before the node totally fails. Thus, the cluster can accurately determine node failure as opposed to partitioning from the cluster. This allows the cluster to respond correctly, i.e., by assigning other nodes primary responsibility, with less intervention needed by administrators.

FIG 1



G00002



162162