What is Claimed is:

1. A method for accessing neighbor information, the method comprising:

receiving, from a device, a first request for neighboring network information from a network access server;

sending a second request to an authentication server based on the first request, the second request requesting the neighboring network information;

receiving a response to the second request containing the neighboring network information; and

sending a response to the first request including at least the received neighboring network information.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the first request is transported using an extensible authentication protocol (EAP).

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the second request is transported utilizing an EAP within at least one of a RADIUS protocol or a DIAMETER protocol.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the neighboring network information is contained in the response to the first request using an IEEE 802.21 format.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the device is a mobile terminal.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the second request is sent by an authentication client to the authentication server, and wherein the second request includes an identification of the authentication client.

7. The method of claim 6, wherein the neighboring network information includes one or more network identifications corresponding to one or more wireless communication networks neighboring or within a coverage region of the authentication client.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein the neighboring network information enables the device to perform a hand-off to one or more of the wireless communication networks.

9. A network device for accessing neighbor information, the network device comprising:

a processor configured to:

receive, from a device, a first request for neighboring network information from a network access server;

send a second request to an authentication server based on the first request, the second request requesting the neighboring network information;

receive a response to the second request containing the neighboring network information; and

send a response to the first request including at least the received neighboring network information.

10. The network device of claim 9, wherein the first request is transported using an extensible authentication protocol (EAP).

11. The network device of claim 9, wherein the second request is transported utilizing an EAP within at least one of a RADIUS protocol or a DIAMETER protocol.

12. The network device of claim 9, wherein the neighboring network information is contained in the response to the first request using an IEEE 802.21 format.

13. The network device of claim 9, wherein the device is a mobile terminal.

14. The network device of claim 9, wherein the second request is sent by an authentication client to the authentication server, and wherein the second request includes an identification of the authentication client.

15. The network device of claim 14, wherein the neighboring network information includes one or more network identifications corresponding to one or more wireless communication networks neighboring or within a coverage region of the authentication client.

16. The network device of claim 15, wherein the neighboring network information enables the device to perform a hand-off to one or more of the wireless communication networks.

17. A method for retrieving neighbor information, the method comprising:

receiving a first request for information;

determining that the first request is requesting neighboring network information;

sending a second request requesting the neighboring network information;

receiving a response to the second request containing at least the neighboring network information; and

sending a response to the first request including at least the neighboring network information from the response to the second request.

18. The method of claim 17, wherein the first request is transported using an extensible authentication protocol (EAP) over at least one of a RADIUS protocol or a DIAMETER protocol.

19. The method of claim 17, wherein the second request is transported using an EAP within at least one of a RADIUS protocol or a DIAMETER protocol.

20. The method of claim 17, wherein the second request is received at a mobility server.

21. The method of claim 17, wherein the second request is received at an authentication server.

22. The method of claim 17, wherein the first request is received at a network access server from a mobile terminal.

23. The method of claim 22, wherein the second request includes an identification of the network access server.

24. The method of claim 23, wherein the neighboring network information includes one or more network identifications corresponding to one or more wireless communication networks neighboring or within a coverage region of the network access server based on the identification of the network access server.

25. A network access server for retrieving neighbor information, the network access server comprising:

a processor configured to:

receive a first request for information;

determine that the first request is requesting neighboring network information;

send a second request requesting the neighboring network information;

receive a response to the second request containing at least the neighboring network information; and

send a response to the first request including at least the neighboring network information from the response to the second request.

26. The network access server of claim 25, wherein the first request is transported using an extensible authentication protocol (EAP) over at least one of a RADIUS protocol or a DIAMETER protocol.

27. The network access server of claim 25, wherein the second request is transported using an EAP within at least one of a RADIUS protocol or a DIAMETER protocol.

28. The network access server of claim 25, wherein the second request is received at a mobility server.

29. The network access server of claim 25, wherein the second request is sent to an authentication server.

30. The network access server of claim 25, wherein the first request is received from a mobile terminal.

31. The network access server of claim 25, wherein the second request includes an identification of the network access server.

32. The network access server of claim 31, wherein the neighboring network information includes one or more network identifications corresponding to one or more wireless communication networks neighboring or within a coverage region of the network access server based on the identification of the network access server.

33. A method for retrieving neighboring network information at a mobility server, the method comprising:

receiving a request from an authentication server;

determining neighboring network information requested via the request;

retrieving the neighboring network information based on the request; and

sending a response to the request including at least the neighboring network information.

34. The method of claim 33, wherein the neighboring network information is stored at an IEEE 802.21-based information server.

35. The method of claim 33, wherein the request and the response are transported utilizing at least one of a RADIUS protocol or a DIAMETER protocol.

36. The method of claim 33, wherein the neighboring network information contained in the response utilizes an extensible authentication protocol (EAP).

37. The method of claim 33, wherein the request includes an identification of an authentication client requesting the neighboring network information from the authentication server.

38. The method of claim 37, wherein the neighboring network information includes one or more network identifications corresponding to one or more wireless communication networks neighboring or within a coverage region of the authentication client.

39. The method of claim 38, wherein the neighboring network information enables a mobile terminal to perform a hand-off to one or more of the wireless communication networks.

40. A mobility server for retrieving neighboring network information, the mobility server comprising:

a processor configured to:

receive a request from an authentication server;

determine neighboring network information requested via the request;

retrieve the neighboring network information based on the request; and

send a response to the request including at least the neighboring network information.

41. The mobility server of claim 40, wherein the neighboring network information is stored at an IEEE 802.21-based information server.

42. The mobility server of claim 40, wherein the request and the response are transported utilizing at least one of a RADIUS protocol or a DIAMETER protocol.

43. The mobility server of claim 40, wherein the neighboring network information contained in the response utilizes an extensible authentication protocol (EAP).

44. The mobility server of claim 40, wherein the request includes an identification of an authentication client requesting the neighboring network information from the authentication server.

45. The mobility server of claim 44, wherein the neighboring network information includes one or more network identifications corresponding to one or more wireless communication networks neighboring or within a coverage region of the authentication client.

46. The mobility server of claim 45, wherein the neighboring network information enables a mobile terminal to perform a hand-off to one or more of the wireless communication networks.

47. A method for requesting neighboring network information from a device, the method comprising:

encoding a request for neighboring network information;

sending the request to an authentication server to obtain the neighboring network information;

receiving a response to the request;

retrieving the neighboring network information contained in the response;

decoding the neighboring network information retrieved from the response; and

storing the decoded neighboring network information.

48. The method of claim 47, wherein said encoding is in accordance with an extensible authentication protocol (EAP).

49. The method of claim 47, wherein the encoding is based on an IEEE 802.21 format.

50. The method of claim 47, wherein the request and the response are transported utilizing at least one of an IEEE 802.1X format or an IEEE 802.11u format.

51. The method of claim 47, wherein the sending of the request to the authentication server is performed by a mobile terminal.

52. The method of claim 51, wherein the neighboring network information includes one or more network identifications corresponding to one or more wireless communication networks neighboring or within a coverage region of a network access device in communication with the mobile terminal.

53. The method of claim 52, wherein the neighboring network information enables the mobile terminal to perform a hand-off to one or more of the wireless communication networks.

54. The method of claim 47, wherein the request is transported using an EAP within at least one of a RADIUS protocol or a DIAMETER protocol.

55. A mobile terminal for requesting neighboring network information from a device, the mobile terminal comprising:

a processor configured to:

encode a request for neighboring network information;

send the request to an authentication server to obtain the neighboring network information;

receive a response to the request;

retrieve the neighboring network information contained in the response;

decode the neighboring network information retrieved from the response; and

store the decoded neighboring network information.

56. The mobile terminal of claim 55, wherein said encoding is in accordance with an extensible authentication protocol (EAP).

57. The mobile terminal of claim 55, wherein the encoding is based on an IEEE 802.21 format.

58. The mobile terminal of claim 55, wherein the request and the response are transported utilizing at least one of an IEEE 802.1X format or an IEEE 802.11u format.

59. The mobile terminal of claim 55, wherein the neighboring network information includes one or more network identifications corresponding to one or more wireless communication networks neighboring or within a coverage region of a network access device in communication with the mobile terminal.

60. The mobile terminal of claim 59, wherein the neighboring network information enables the mobile terminal to perform a hand-off to one or more of the wireless communication networks.

61. The mobile terminal of claim 55, wherein the request is transported using an EAP within at least one of a RADIUS protocol or a DIAMETER protocol.

What is claimed is:

[Claim 1]

A method performed by a processor for accessing neighbor information, the method comprising:

receiving, from a device, a first request for neighboring network information from a network access server;

sending a second request to an authentication server based on the first request, the second request requesting the neighboring network information from the authentication server;

receiving a response to the second request containing the neighboring network information; and

sending a response to the first request including at least the received neighboring network information.

[Claim 2]

The method of claim 1, wherein the first request is transported using an extensible authentication protocol (EAP).

[Claim 3]

The method of claim 1, wherein the second request is transported utilizing an EAP within at least one of a RADIUS protocol or a DIAMETER protocol.

[Claim 4]

The method of claim 1, wherein the neighboring network information is contained in the response to the first request using an IEEE 802.21 format.

[Claim 5]

The method of claim 1, wherein the device is a mobile terminal.

[Claim 6]

The method of claim 1, wherein the second request is sent by an authentication client to the authentication server, and wherein the second request includes an identification of the authentication client.

[Claim 7]

The method of claim 6, wherein the neighboring network information includes one or more network identifications corresponding to one or more wireless communication networks neighboring or within a coverage region of the authentication client.

[Claim 8]

The method of claim 7, wherein the neighboring network information enables the device to perform a hand-off to one or more of the wireless communication networks.

[Claim 9]

A network device for accessing neighbor information, the network device comprising:

a processor configured to:

receive, from a device, a first request for neighboring network information from a network access server;

send a second request to an authentication server based on the first request, the second request requesting the neighboring network information from the authentication server;

receive a response to the second request containing the neighboring network information; and

send a response to the first request including at least the received neighboring network information.

[Claim 10]

The network device of claim 9, wherein the first request is transported using an extensible authentication protocol (EAP).

[Claim 11]

The network device of claim 9, wherein the second request is transported utilizing an EAP within at least one of a RADIUS protocol or a DIAMETER protocol.

[Claim 12]

The network device of claim 9, wherein the neighboring network information is contained in the response to the first request using an IEEE 802.21 format.

[Claim 13]

The network device of claim 9, wherein the device is a mobile terminal.

[Claim 14]

The network device of claim 9, wherein the second request is sent by an authentication client to the authentication server, and wherein the second request includes an identification of the authentication client.

[Claim 15]

The network device of claim 14, wherein the neighboring network information includes one or more network identifications corresponding to one or more wireless communication networks neighboring or within a coverage region of the authentication client.

[Claim 16]

The network device of claim 15, wherein the neighboring network information enables the device to perform a hand-off to one or more of the wireless communication networks.

[Claim 17]

A method performed by a processor for retrieving neighbor information, the method comprising:

receiving a first request for information;

determining that the first request is requesting neighboring network information;

sending a second request requesting the neighboring network information from an authentication, authorization, and accounting (AAA) server;

receiving a response to the second request containing at least the neighboring network information; and

sending a response to the first request including at least the neighboring network information from the response to the second request.

[Claim 18]

The method of claim 17, wherein the first request is transported using an extensible authentication protocol (EAP) over at least one of

a RADIUS protocol or a DIAMETER protocol.

[Claim 19]

The method of claim 17, wherein the second request is transported using an EAP within at least one of a RADIUS protocol or a DIAMETER protocol.

[Claim 20]

The method of claim 17, wherein the AAA server retrieves the neighboring network information from a mobility server.

[Claim 21]

The method of claim 17, wherein the first request is received at a network access server from a mobile terminal.

[Claim 22]

The method of claim 21, wherein the second request includes an identification of the network access server.

[Claim 23]

The method of claim 22, wherein the neighboring network information includes one or more network identifications corresponding to one or more wireless communication networks neighboring or within a coverage region of the network access server based on the identification of the network access server.

[Claim 24]

A network access server for retrieving neighbor information, the network access server comprising:

a processor configured to:

receive a first request for information;

determine that the first request is requesting neighboring network information;

send a second request requesting the neighboring network information from an authentication, authorization, and accounting (AAA) server;

receive a response to the second request containing at least the neighboring network information; and

send a response to the first request including at least the neighboring network information from the response to the second request.

[Claim 25]

The network access server of claim 24, wherein the first request is transported using an extensible authentication protocol (EAP) over at least one of a RADIUS protocol or a DIAMETER protocol.

[Claim 26]

The network access server of claim 24, wherein the second request is transported using an EAP within at least one of a RADIUS protocol or a DIAMETER protocol.

[Claim 27]

The network access server of claim 24, wherein the neighboring network information is received from a mobility server.

[Claim 28]

The network access server of claim 24, wherein the first request is received from a mobile terminal.

[Claim 29]

The network access server of claim 24, wherein the second request includes an identification of the network access server.

[Claim 30]

The network access server of claim 29, wherein the neighboring network information includes one or more network identifications corresponding to one or more wireless communication networks neighboring or within a coverage region of the network access server based on the identification of the network access server.

[Claim 31]

A method performed by a processor for retrieving neighboring network information at a mobility server, the method comprising:

receiving a request generated by an authentication server;

determining neighboring network information requested via the request;

retrieving the neighboring network information based on the request; and

sending a response to the request including at least the neighboring network information.

[Claim 32]

The method of claim 31, wherein the neighboring network information is stored at an IEEE 802.21-based information server.

[Claim 33]

The method of claim 31, wherein the request and the response are transported utilizing at least one of a RADIUS protocol or a DIAMETER protocol.

[Claim 34]

The method of claim 31, wherein the neighboring network information contained in the response utilizes an extensible authentication protocol (EAP).

[Claim 35]

The method of claim 31, wherein the request includes an identification of an authentication client requesting the neighboring network information from the authentication server.

[Claim 36]

The method of claim 35, wherein the neighboring network information includes one or more network identifications corresponding to one or more wireless communication networks neighboring or within a coverage region of the authentication client.

[Claim 37]

The method of claim 36, wherein the neighboring network information enables a mobile terminal to perform a hand-off to one or more of the wireless communication networks.

[Claim 38]

A mobility server for retrieving neighboring network information, the mobility server comprising:

a processor configured to:

receive a request generated by an authentication server;

determine neighboring network information requested via the request;

retrieve the neighboring network information based on the request; and

send a response to the request including at least the neighboring network information.

[Claim 39]

The mobility server of claim 38, wherein the neighboring network information is stored at an IEEE 802.21-based information server.

[Claim 40]

The mobility server of claim 38, wherein the request and the

response are transported utilizing at least one of a RADIUS protocol or a DIAMETER protocol.

[Claim 41]

The mobility server of claim 38, wherein the neighboring network information contained in the response utilizes an extensible authentication protocol (EAP).

[Claim 42]

The mobility server of claim 38, wherein the request includes an identification of an authentication client requesting the neighboring network information from the authentication server.

[Claim 43]

The mobility server of claim 42, wherein the neighboring network information includes one or more network identifications corresponding to one or more wireless communication networks neighboring or within a coverage region of the authentication client.

[Claim 44]

The mobility server of claim 43, wherein the neighboring network information enables a mobile terminal to perform a hand-off to one or more of the wireless communication networks.

[Claim 45]

A method performed by a processor for requesting neighboring network information from a device, the method comprising:

encoding a request for neighboring network information;

sending the request to a proxy authentication server associated with a wireless local area network to obtain the neighboring network information from a second authentication server at a second network;

receiving a response to the request, the response generated by the second authentication server;

decoding the neighboring network information retrieved from the response; and

storing the decoded neighboring network information.

[Claim 46]

The method of claim 45, wherein said encoding is in accordance with an extensible authentication protocol (EAP).

[Claim 47]

The method of claim 45, wherein the encoding is based on an IEEE

802.21 format.

[Claim 48]

The method of claim 45, wherein the request and the response are transported utilizing at least one of an IEEE 802.1X format or an IEEE 802.11u format.

[Claim 49]

The method of claim 45, wherein the sending of the request to the proxy authentication server is performed by a mobile terminal.

[Claim 50]

The method of claim 49, wherein the neighboring network information includes one or more network identifications corresponding to one or more wireless communication networks neighboring or within a coverage region of a network access device in communication with the mobile terminal.

[Claim 51]

The method of claim 50, wherein the neighboring network information enables the mobile terminal to perform a hand-off to one or more of the wireless communication networks.

[Claim 52]

The method of claim 45, wherein the request is transported using an EAP within at least one of a RADIUS protocol or a DIAMETER protocol.

[Claim 53]

A mobile terminal for requesting neighboring network information from a device, the mobile terminal comprising:

a processor configured to:

encode a request for neighboring network information;

send the request to a proxy authentication server associated with a wireless local area network to obtain the neighboring network information from a second authentication server at a second network;

receive a response to the request, the response generated by the second authentication server;

decode the neighboring network information retrieved from the response; and

store the decoded neighboring network information.

[Claim 54]

The mobile terminal of claim 53, wherein said encoding is in accordance with an extensible authentication protocol (EAP).

[Claim 55]

The mobile terminal of claim 53, wherein the encoding is based on an IEEE 802.21 format.

[Claim 56]

The mobile terminal of claim 53, wherein the request and the response are transported utilizing at least one of an IEEE 802.1X format or an IEEE 802.11u format.

[Claim 57]

The mobile terminal of claim 53, wherein the neighboring network information includes one or more network identifications corresponding to one or more wireless communication networks neighboring or within a coverage region of a network access device in communication with the mobile terminal.

[Claim 58]

The mobile terminal of claim 57, wherein the neighboring network information enables the mobile terminal to perform a hand-off to one or more of the wireless communication networks.

[Claim 59]

The mobile terminal of claim 53, wherein the request is transported using an EAP within at least one of a RADIUS protocol or a DIAMETER protocol.

[Claim 60]

The method of claim 45, wherein the second network is a core network of a public land mobile network.

[Claim 61]

The mobile terminal of claim 53, wherein the second network is a core network of a public land mobile network.