

# FlexConnect Catalyst Wireless Branch Deployment Guide



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# Introduction

This document describes how to deploy a Cisco FlexConnect wireless branch solution on the Catalyst wireless platform. The Catalyst wireless platform are available in two flavors, the virtual form factor and a hardware appliance

The Virtual form factor can be deployed on any x86 server that supports hypervisor such as - VMware ESXi, KVM etc. To get the list of supported hypervisors and the versions, please refer the deployment guide of the catalyst wireless family. The Virtual form factor can be deployed on prem with an enterprise or can be installed on cloud providers such as AWS.

The Catalyst 9800 Wireless Controller is the hardware appliance for the Catalyst wireless family. Catalyst 9800WC and virtual cloud controller runs on the IOS-XE software base, utilizing the flexibility and modularity available with the platform.

Refer the following documentation on bring up of the catalyst 9800 and cloud based virtual wireless Lan controller.

https://www.cisco.com/c/en/us/td/docs/wireless/controller/technotes/8-

8/b\_c9800\_wireless\_controller\_virtual\_dg.html

https://www.cisco.com/c/en/us/td/docs/wireless/controller/technotes/8-

8/b\_c9800\_wireless\_controller\_series\_web\_dg.html The documents covers the features that is supported on the following platforms and releases.

# **Supported Platforms**

Catalyst wireless platforms

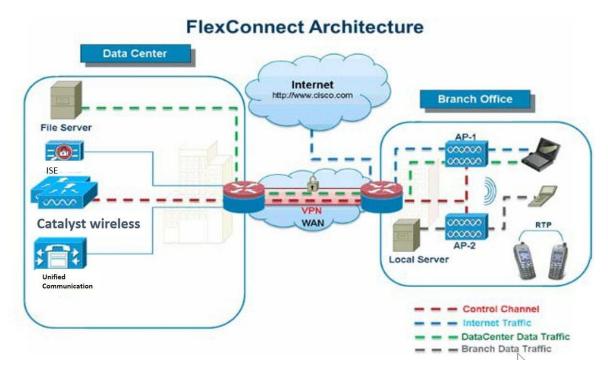
11ac Wave 1 and Wave 2 Access Points

AP18xx, 2802, 3802, 4800, 1540, 1560, 1700, 2700, 3700, 1570

# **Supported releases**

IOS-XE -16.10

### FlexConnect Architecture



FlexConnect is a wireless solution for branch office and remote office deployments.

The FlexConnect solution enables the customer to:

- Centralize control and manage traffic of APs from the Data Center.
- Distribute the client data traffic at each Branch Office.

# **Advantages of Centralizing Access Point Control Traffic**

- Single pane of monitoring and troubleshooting.
- Ease of management.
- Secured and seamless mobile access to Data Center resources.
- Reduction in branch footprint.
- Increase in operational savings.

# **Advantages of Distributing Client Data Traffic**

- No operational downtime (survivability) against complete WAN link failures or controller unavailability.
- Mobility resiliency within branch during WAN link failures.
- Increase in branch scalability. Supports branch size that can scale up to 100 APs and 250,000 square feet (5000 sq. feet per AP).

The Cisco FlexConnect solution also supports Central Client Data Traffic, the table below defines the supported layer 2 and layer 3 security types only for central switched and local switched users.

Table 1: L2 Security Support for Centrally and Locally Switched Users

WLAN L2 Security	Туре	Result
None	N/A	Allowed
WPA + WPA2	802.1x	Allowed
	CCKM	Allowed
	802.1x + CCKM	Allowed
	PSK	Allowed
802.1x	WEP	Allowed
Static WEP	WEP	Allowed
WEP + 802.1x	WEP	Allowed

Table 2: L3 Security Support for Centrally and Locally Switched Users

WLAN L3 Security	Туре	Result
Web Authentication	Internal	Allowed
	External	Allowed
	Customized	Allowed
Web Pass-Through	Internal	Allowed
	External	Allowed
	Customized	Allowed
Conditional Web Redirect	WEP	Allowed
Splash Page Web Redirect	WEP	Allowed

# **FlexConnect Modes of Operation**

FlexConnect Mode	Description
	A FlexConnect is said to be in Connected Mode when its CAPWAP control plane back to the controller is up and operational, meaning the WAN link is not down.

FlexConnect Mode	Description
Standalone	Standalone mode is specified as the operational state the FlexConnect enters when it no longer has the connectivity back to the controller.  FlexConnect APs in Standalone mode will continue to function with last known configuration, even in the event of power failure and WLC or WAN failure.

## **WAN Requirements**

FlexConnect APs are deployed at the Branch site and managed from the Data Center over a WAN link. The maximum transmission unit (MTU) must be at least 500 bytes.

<b>Deployment Type</b>	WA Bandwidth (Min)	WAN RTT Latency (Max)	Max APs per Branch	Max Clients per Branch
Data	64 Kbps	300 ms	5	25
Data	640 Kbps	300 ms	50	1000
Data	1.44Mbps	1 sec	50	1000
Data + Voice	128 Kbps	100 ms	5	25
Data + Voice	1.44Mbps	100 ms	50	1000
Monitor	64 Kbps	2 sec	5	N/A
Monitor	640 Kbps	2 sec	50	N/A



Note

It is highly recommended that the minimum bandwidth restriction remains 12.8 Kbps per AP with the round trip latency no greater than 300 ms for data deployments and 100 ms for data + voice deployments.

#### **Feature Matrix**

Refer the flexconnect matrix document on the below link to validate the list of supported feature.

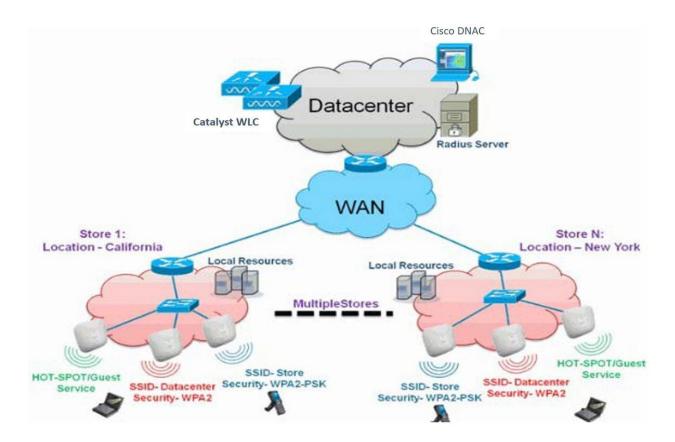
# Wireless Branch Network Design

The rest of this document highlights the guidelines and describes the best practices for implementing secured distributed branch networks. FlexConnect architecture is recommended for wireless branch networks that meet the following design requirements.

# **Primary Design Requirements**

- Branch size that can scale up to 100 APs and 250,000 square feet (5000 sq. feet per AP)
- Central management and troubleshooting

- No operational downtime
- Client-based traffic segmentation
- Seamless and secured wireless connectivity to corporate resources
- PCI compliant
- Support for guests



#### **Overview**

Branch customers find it increasingly difficult and expensive to deliver full-featured scalable and secure network services across geographic locations. In order to support customers, Cisco is addressing these challenges by introducing the FlexConnect deployment mode.

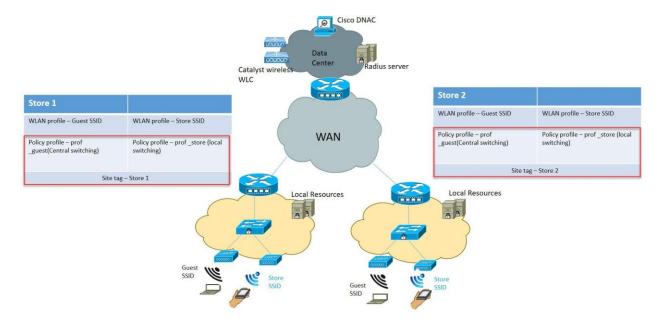
The FlexConnect solution virtualizes the complex security, management, configuration, and troubleshooting operations within the data center and then transparently extends those services to each branch. Deployments using FlexConnect are easier for IT to set up, manage and, most importantly, scale.

# **Advantages**

- Increase scalability with 6000 AP support.
- Increased resiliency using FlexConnect Fault Tolerance

- Increase segmentation of traffic using FlexConnect (Central and Local Switching).
- Ease of management by replicating store designs using different policy profiles and site tags per store while maintaining the same WLAN profile as seen in figure below:

Figure 1: Design replication across stores by mapping different site tags and policy tags



# **Features Addressing Branch Network Design**

The rest of the sections in the guide captures feature usage and recommendations to realize the typical branch network design.

Features	Highlights
New config model on catalyst wireless family.	Ability to decouple and modularize the configuration entities. This enables to have the same configuration across different stores by having the same profiles across stores and using a different tags for each store.
Fault Tolerance	Improves the wireless branch resiliency and provides no operational downtime.
Client Limit per WLAN	Limiting total guest clients on branch network.
Auto-convert APs in FlexConnect	Assigning a Site tag which has a flex profile will autoconvert the AP to flexconnect mode without user intervention.
Efficient AP image upgrade	Reduces downtime when upgrading your branch and efficient AP upgrade saves WAN bandwidth and enables a branch AP to upgrade at a much faster pace.
Guest Access	Continue existing Cisco's Guest Access Architecture with FlexConnect by having a central switched SSID which is tunnel to a controller in the DMZ zone.

Features	Highlights
URL ACL	Ability to support use cases of BYOD at the branch
Back up radius server	Provides resiliency at the branch due to WAN outage
AAA override	Provides segmentation and polices per user

# **Cisco Catalyst Wireless Config Model**

This section describes the new config model introduced in the Catalyst wireless platforms.

The new config model goes towards Modularized and Reusable model with Logical decoupling of configuration entities

The model introduces the uses of tags and profiles. The below tables gives an overview of the tags and profile used within the new catalyst wireless products.

Table 3: Tags and Profiles

Tags and Profile	Highlights	
WLAN profile	Creation of WLAN with the corresponding security. Addition of AAA entities and configuring the advanced capabilities of the WLAN	
Policy profile	Defines the policy of the WLAN such as central /local switching, ACL , VLAN mapping for the WLAN , QOS , AAA policy and export anchor	
Policy Tag	Defines the mapping of the WLAN to the Policy profile.	
Flex profile	Flex profile defines the WLAN to VLAN mapping, for flex deployment, ACL mapping and radius server configuration.	
AP Join profile	Defines the CAPWAP and AP parameters related to join procedures	
RF profile /RF tag	RF characteristics of the site mapped to an RF tag	
Site Tag	Site tags maps the flex profile and the AP join profile	
AP tag	Maps the policy tag, site and RF tag on to the AP	

The model follows the design and provision theme.

The design phase involves creating the elements necessary for the wireless networks such as wireless SSID, policy management, RF tagging flex profile etc. The deployment phase is where the designed elements are provisioned on the AP.

# **Profiles and tags**

Profiles represent a set of attributes that are applied to the clients associated to the APs .Profiles are reusable entities which can be used across tags. Profiles (used by Tags) define the properties of the AP or associated clients.

There are different kinds of profiles depending on the characteristic of the entities they define. These profiles are in turn part of a larger construct called a Tag.

A Tag's property is defined by the property of the profiles associated to it. This property is in turn inherited by an associated client/AP. There are various type of tags, each associated to different profiles.

No two types of Tags include profiles having common properties. This helps eliminate the precedence amongst the configuration entities to a large extent. Every Tag has a default that is created when the system boots up.

#### **WLAN Profile**

WLAN profile defines the properties of a WLAN such as Profile Name, Status, WLAN ID, L2 and L3 Security parameters, AAA Server associated with this SSID and other parameters that are specific to a particular WLAN.

#### **Policy Profile**

Policy profile is an entity that constitutes of the all network and switching polices for a client with the exception of QoS which constitute the AP policies as well.

Policy profile is a reusable entity across tags. Anything that is a policy for the client applied on the AP/controller is moved to the policy profile. For example, VLAN, ACL, QOS, Session timeout, Idle timeout, AVC profile, Bonjour profile, Local profiling, Device classification etc.

The WLAN Profile and Policy Profile are both part a Policy Tag and define the characteristics and policy definitions of a set of WLANs. The intent of decoupling the policies from the SSID even though it is a one-to-one mapping, is to give more flexibility to the admin in configuring site based policies(local or remote) while keeping the WLAN definition common.

#### **Policy Tag**

S.

Policy tag constitutes the mapping of WLAN Profiles to Policy profiles. The policy profile defines the network policies and the switching policies for a client (with the exception of QoS which constitutes the AP Policy as well as client policy)

A default policy tag with WLAN Profiles with WLAN ID < 16 is mapped to a default policy profile.

# Components of Policy Tag



#### **AP Join Profile**

Following parameters will be part of the AP join profile – CAPWAP IPV4/IPV6, UDP Lite, High availability, Retransmit config parameters, global AP failover, Hyper location config parameters, Telnet/SSH, 11u parameters etc. For AP join profile changes, a small subset requires CAPWAP connection to be reset since these parameters pertain to the characteristic of the AP.

#### Flex Profile

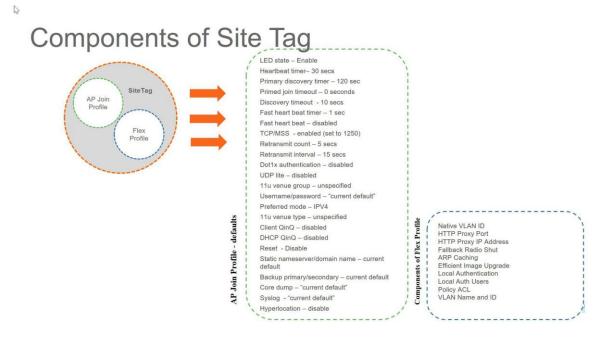
The flex profile contains the remote site specific parameters. For example, the master and slave AP list, the EAP profiles which can be used for the case where AP acts as an authentication server, local radius server information, VLAN-ACL mapping etc. There is no default flex profile, however a custom flex-profile can be added to the default Site Tag.

The AP Join Profile and Flex Profile are both part a Site Tag and define the characteristics of a local or remote site.

#### Site tag

Site tag constitutes of two profiles, the flex profile and the AP join profile. The site tag defines the properties of a site, both central as well as remote (FlexConnect) site. The attributes of a site that are common across central and remote site are part of the AP Join profile. The attributes that are specific to flex/remote site are part of the flex profile.

Default Site Tag constitutes of the default AP Join profile. There is no default flex profile. The default AP join profile values will be same as that for the global AP parameters today plus few parameters from the AP group in today's configuration like "preferred mode", 802.11u parameters, Location etc.



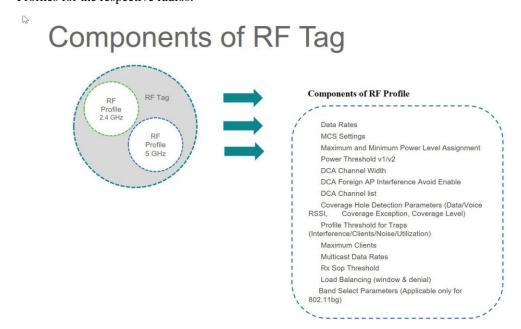
#### **RF Profile**

By default, there exists two default RF Profiles (one for 802.11a and one for 802.11b). RF profiles constitute the RF specific configurations such as Data rates, MCS settings, Power assignment, DCA parameters, CHDM variables and HDX features. One 802.11a RF profile and one 802.11b RF profile can be added to an RF Tag.

#### **RF Tag**

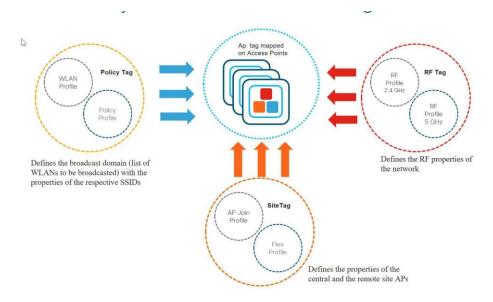
RF tag constitutes of the 11a and 11b RF profiles Default RF Tag constitutes of the default 802.11a RF profile and the default 802.11b RF Profile.

The default 11a RF profile and 11b RF profile contains default values for global RF Profiles for the respective radios.



#### **AP Tag**

Access Points are tagged based on the SSIDs and the associated policies it broadcasts by associating a policy with the AP, the site it belongs to and the RF characteristics desired for that access point by mapping the respective tags. Once tagged, the AP gets a list of WLANs to be broadcasted along with the properties of the respective SSIDs, properties of the local/remote site and the RF properties of the network.



There are three different options for an administrator to accomplish the flow of creating profiles and tags.

- Use of the Basic wireless setup wizard
- Use of advance wireless setup wizard
- Manual configuration

Please refer the controller deployment guide for controller bring up, SVI creation and management GUI access.

The following sections will cover the method and ways a profile and tags can be configured on the catalyst wireless platforms.

An example of a store which has the following deployment model will be used to show case the configuration model.

A store SSID which has a WPA-PSK security enabled, to connect the handhelds used in a store .The SSID would be locally switched SSID

A guest SSID which is centrally switched

An enterprise SSID for employees which has got dot1x enabled and uses radius server for authentication.

SSID	Security	Switching
Store-SSID	WPA-PSK	Local
Guest SSID	Web-auth	Central
Enterprise SSID	Wpa-2/dot1x	Local

## **Basic wireless setupwizard**

In the basic wireless setup wizard, we will cover the use of creating a store SSID with WP-PSK security.

#### **Procedure**

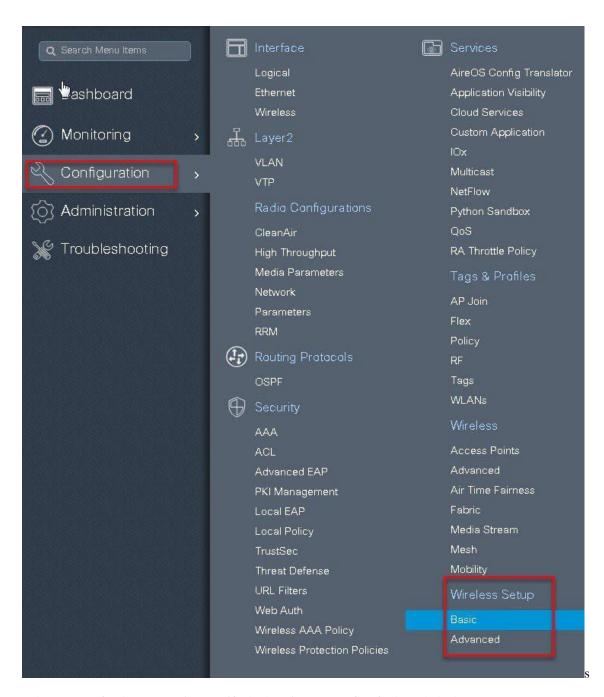
**Step1** Click on the wireless setup wizard.



**Step2** Select the basic setup wizard from the drop down box and click on "Add".



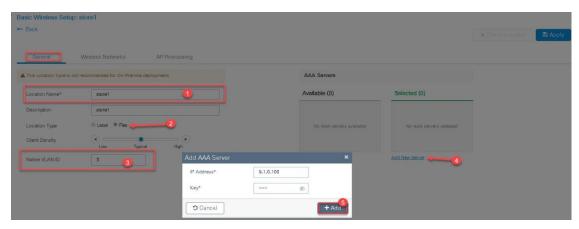
An Administrator can also start the wizard by navigating to Configuration7wireless setup 7basic



**Step3** Select a name for the remote site, specify the location type as flex for branch deployments.

The native VLAN id refers to the Native vlan id pushed to the AP, the AAA server defines the radius server address pushed to the AP in the branch for local authentication.

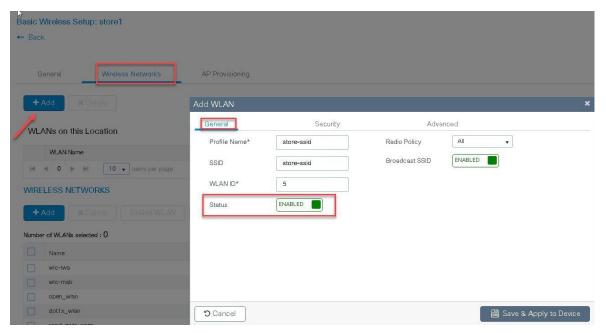
To add a new server click on "Add New server" and specify an IP address and a secret key

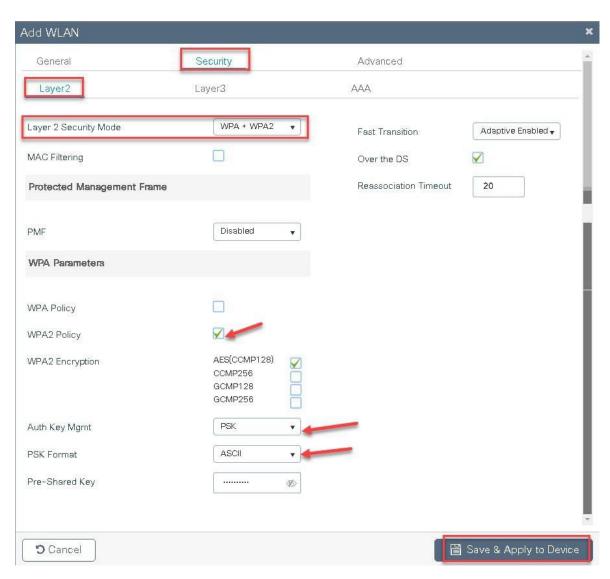


**Step 4** Click on the wireless network to create an SSID along with the policy.

To create a new WLAN click on "define new".

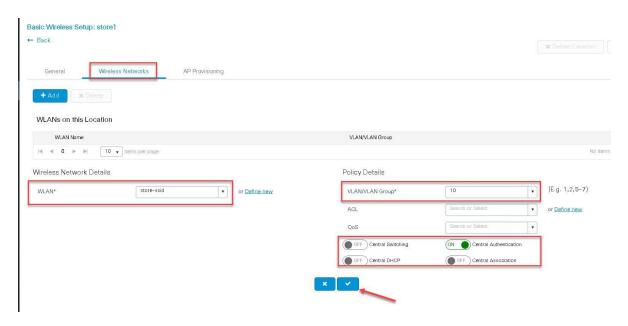
Define the security for the WLAN, for reference an SSID with PSK is created here.





**Step5** Define the policy for the WLAN.

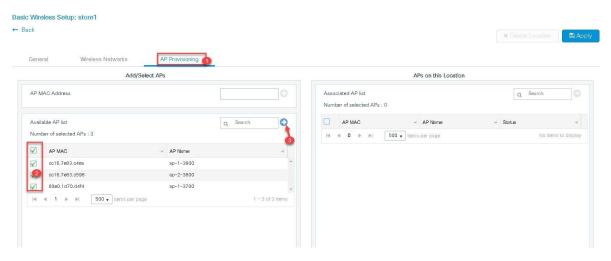
The VLAN/VLAN group defines the VLAN used by the SSID.



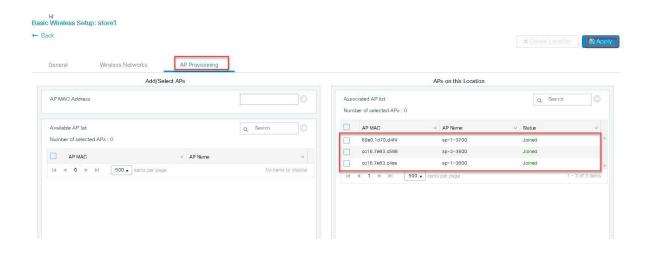
#### **Step6** Click on the AP provisioning to provision the SSID and policy profile on the selected AP.

Once the AP is provisioned the AP gets converted to flex mode based on the site tag assigned to the AP.

If the AP is already in flex mode, there is no conversion. If the AP is in local mode, ap would reboot to boot in flex connect mode.



**Step7** Click apply to complete the wizard.



## Advanced wireless setup wizard

In this section, the advance config wizard is used to create a Guest SSID with web-authentication which would be central switched through a WLC at the datacenter.

#### **Procedure**

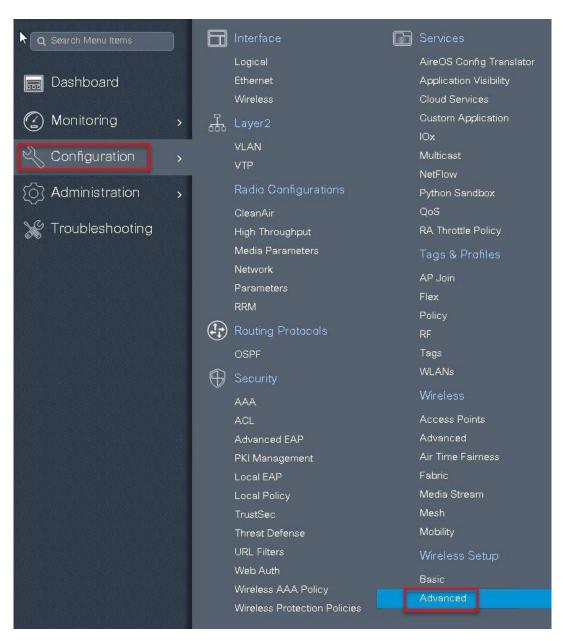
**Step1** Click on the wireless setup wizard.



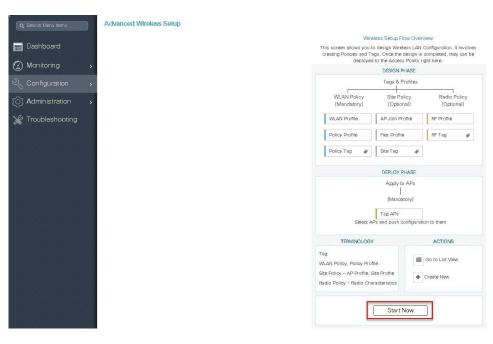
**Step2** Select the advanced option.



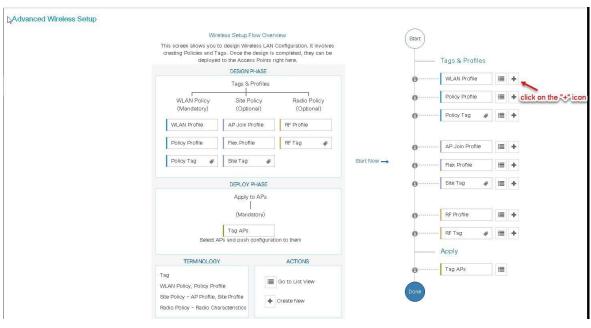
An Administrator can also start the wizard by navigating to Conifguration > wireless setup > advanced.



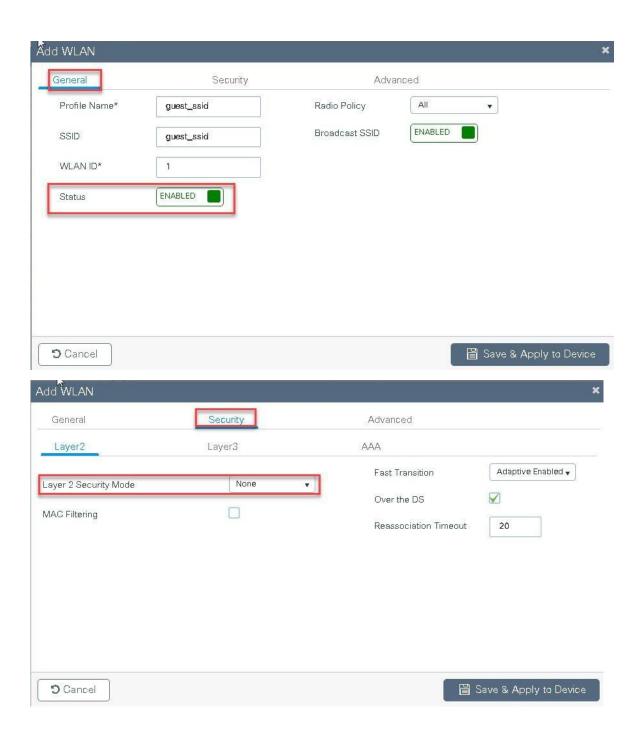
**Step 3** The Advanced config wizard gives an overview of the flow of tag and policies. Click on the "Start Now" button to start the wizard.

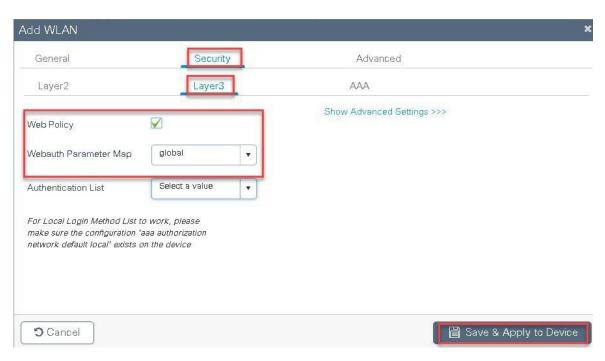


**Step4** click on the "+" icon to start creating the WLAN.



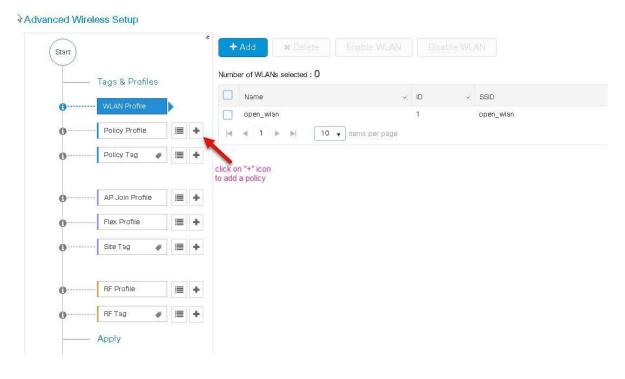
**Step5** Define the SSID name and security type for the WLAN.

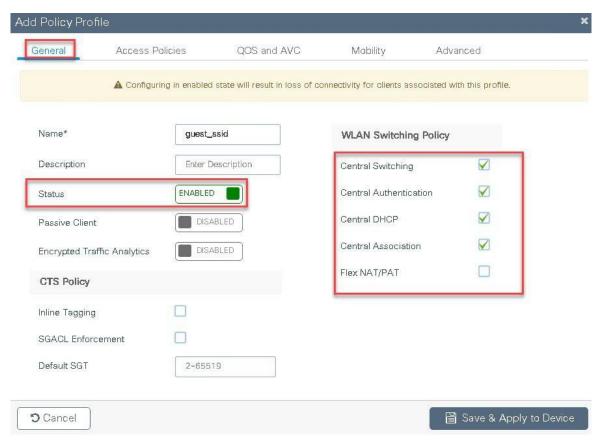




#### **Step 6** Create a policy profile for the SSID.

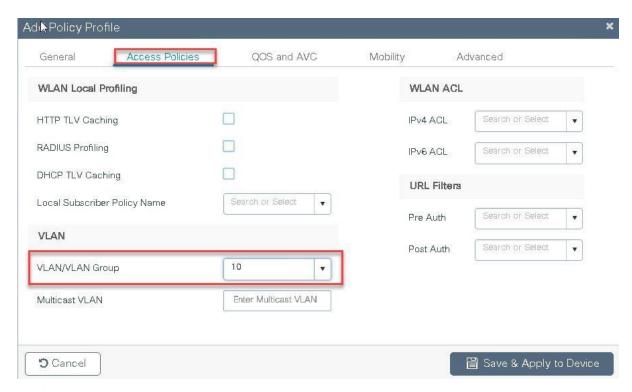
Define the policy profile to be central switched and central authentication.





**Step7** Define a VLAN for the SSID under the access policies, in the example below the VLAN 10 is mapped on the policy profile.

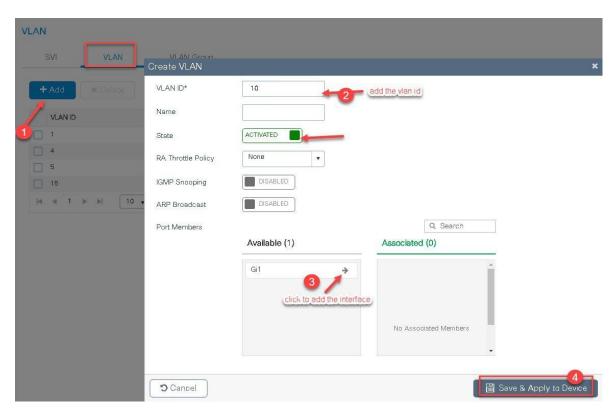
The Controller also needs a layer 2 VLAN or a layer 3 SVI to be created to centrally switch the traffic from the controller.



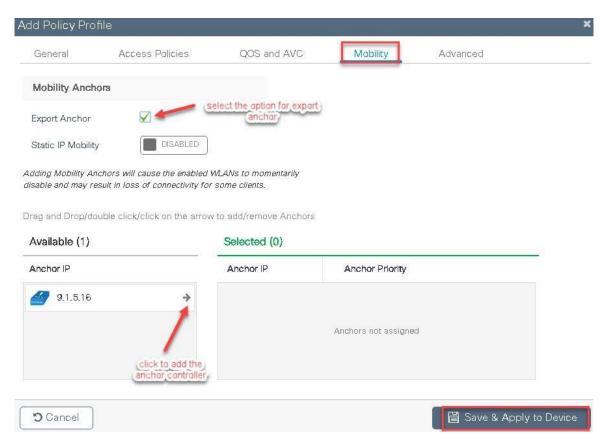
In this example we create a layer 2 VLAN on the controller,

Navigate to Configuration > VLAN

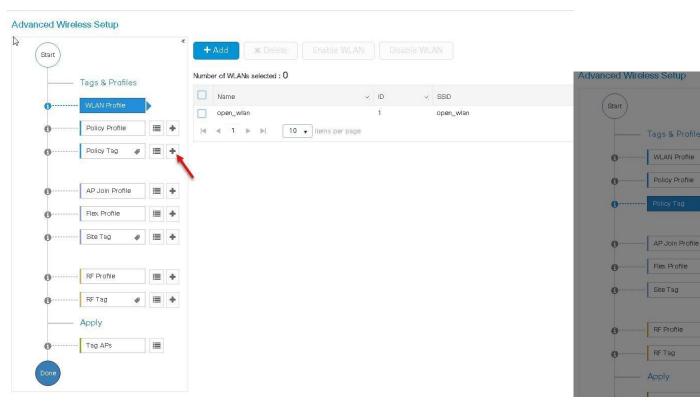




**Step 8** An optional attribute to set is the export anchor configuration, please refer the mobility deployment guide to set up mobility peers.

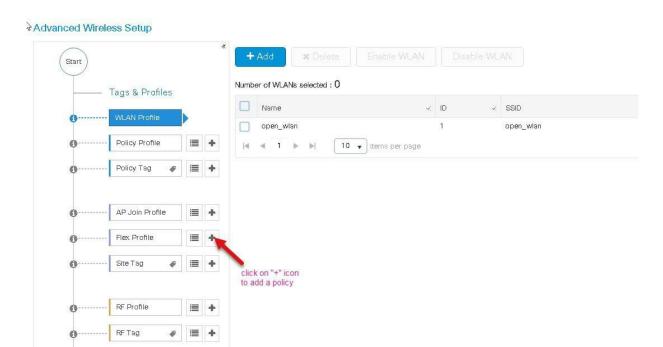


**Step9** Create a policy tag which binds the SSID and policy profile together.



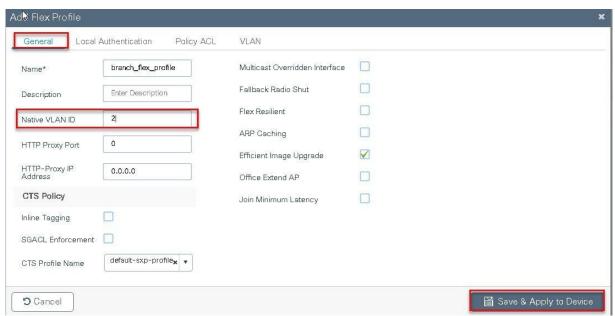
**Step 10** Define a flex profile, the flex profile is used for configuring the VLANs on the AP which is used for the local switched SSID's.

In this example the guest SSID is centrally switched, in cases where there is a mix of central switched and local switched SSID's, an administrator can create a flex profile and define the VLAN's to be used by the local switched SSID's.

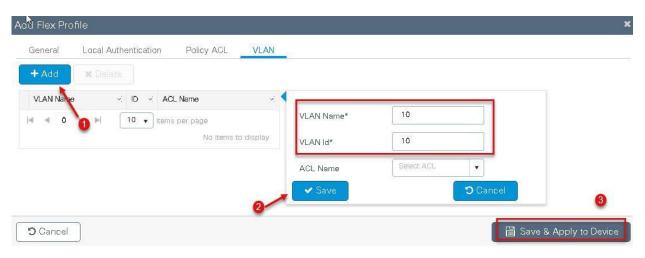


**Step11** Define the native VLAN for the flexconnect AP's.

Apply

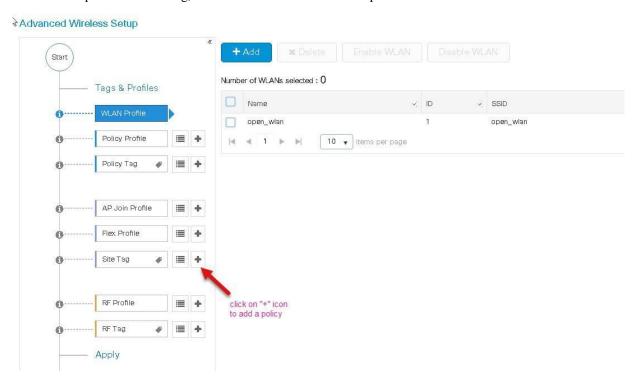


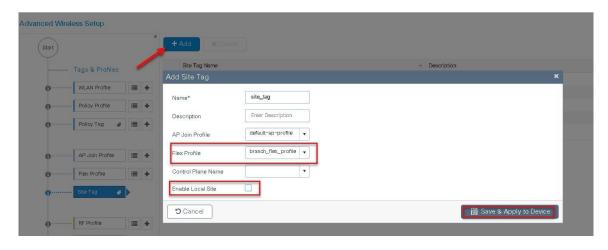
**Step 12** Define the VLANS to be used for the local switched SSID.



**Step 13** Define a site tag which binds the Flex profile and a default AP join profile.

To add a flex profile on a site tag, uncheck the "enable local site" option.





#### **Step 14** The final stage is to provision the policy, site and RF tag on the AP.

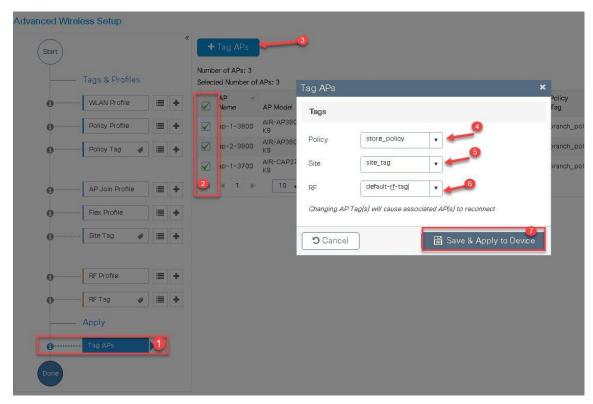
Click on Tag APs to select the profiles and have it configured for the AP.

In this example the AP is tagged using a default RF tag.

Once the AP is provisioned with the site tag, the AP gets converted to flex mode based on the site tag assigned to the AP.

If the AP is already in flex mode, there is no conversion. If the AP is in local mode, AP would reboot to boot in flex connect mode.

The assigning of tag does the auto conversion of the AP mode based on properties of the tag.



## **Manual Configuration**

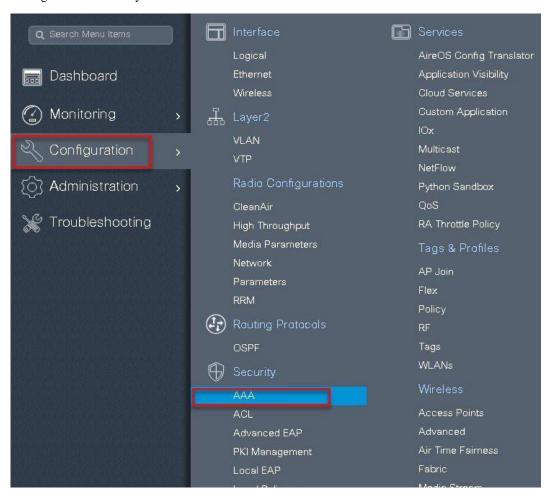
The manual configuration for creating the SSID /tags and profiles is done using the WLC GUI, in this section we will cover creating an enterprise SSID with dot1x enabled.

The first step in creating an enterprise SSID with dot1x is to define the AAA server for authentication.

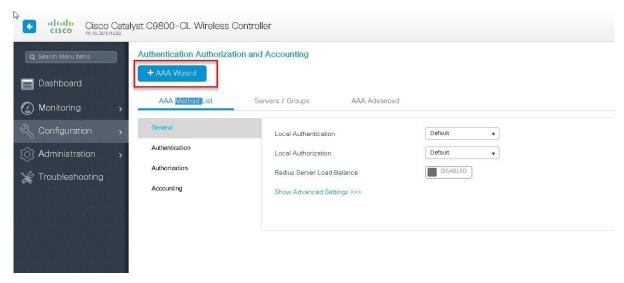
#### **Procedure**

Step 1 Define an AAA server and method list for dot1x which is mapped to the WLAN. The AAA server is created by navigating to the following:

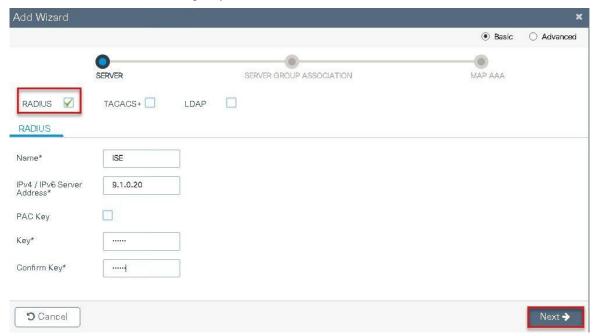
Configuration > security > AAA



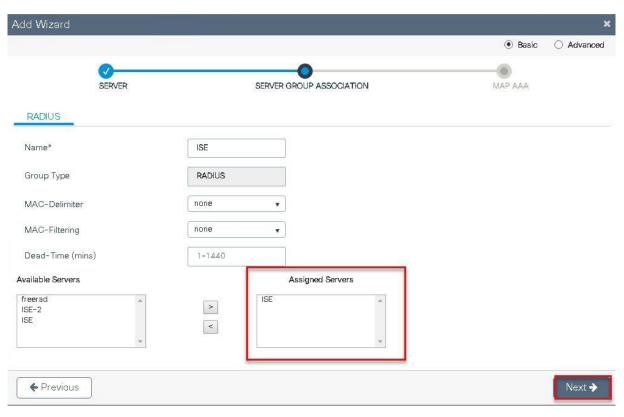
**Step2** Use the AAA wizard to create the server and server groups.



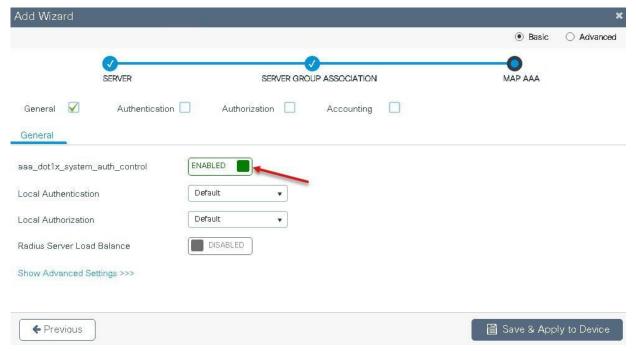
**Step3** Define a name for the server and specify the IP address and shared secret.



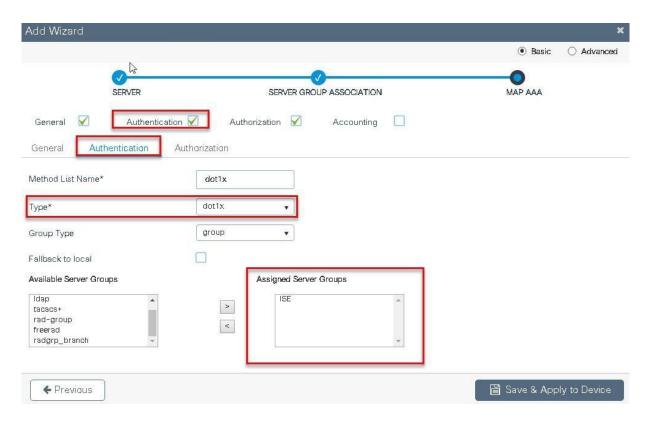
**Step4** Create a server group and map the server in the group.



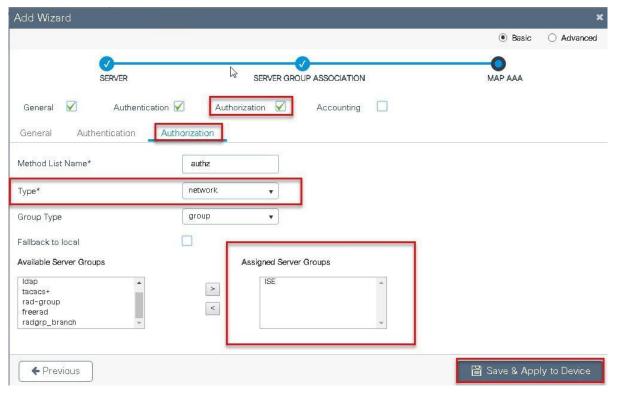
**Step5** Enable dot1x system control and check mark the authentication and Authorization profile.



**Step 6** Check mark the authentication list and define the method type as Dot1x and map the server group.

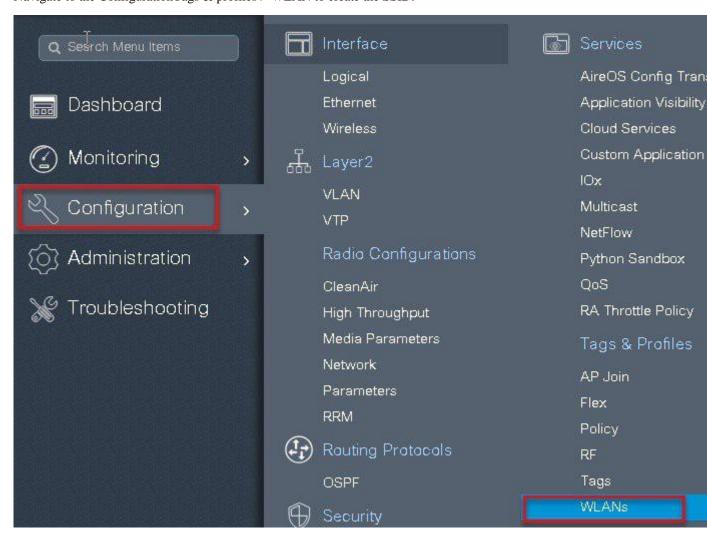


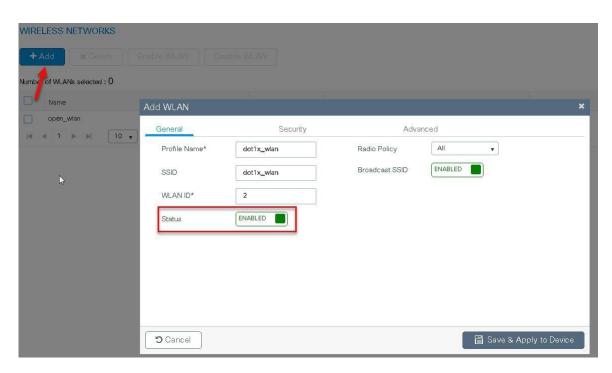
**Step7** Check mark the authorization list and define the method type as network and map the server group.



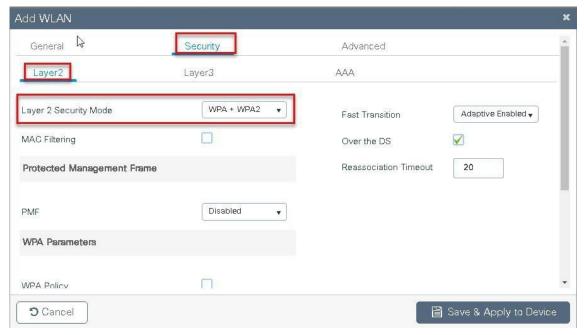
Step8 Create a Dot1x WLAN and map the method list on the WLAN.

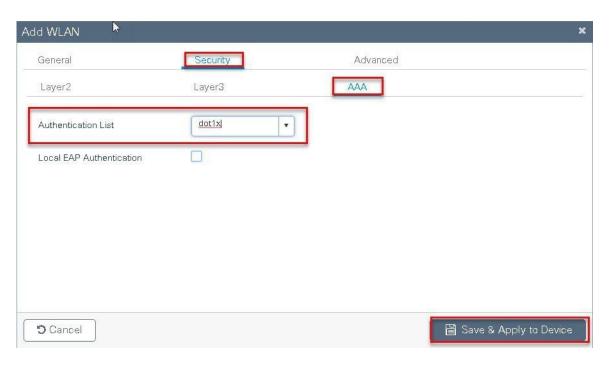
Navigate to the ConfigurationTags & profiles > WLAN to create the SSID.



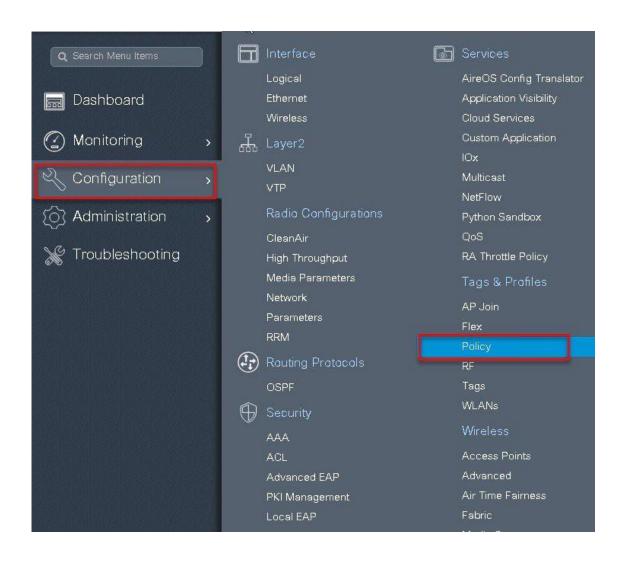


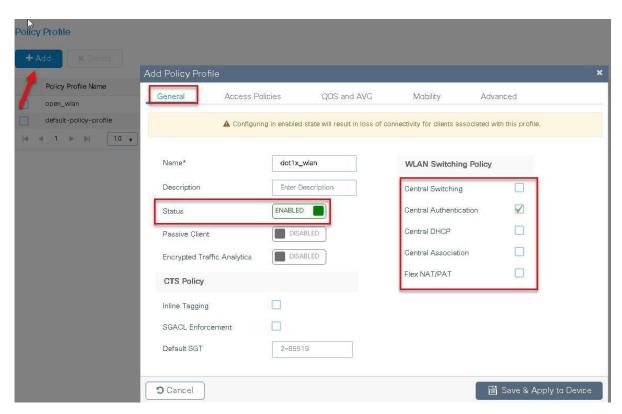
# **Step9** Define the security for the WLAN.



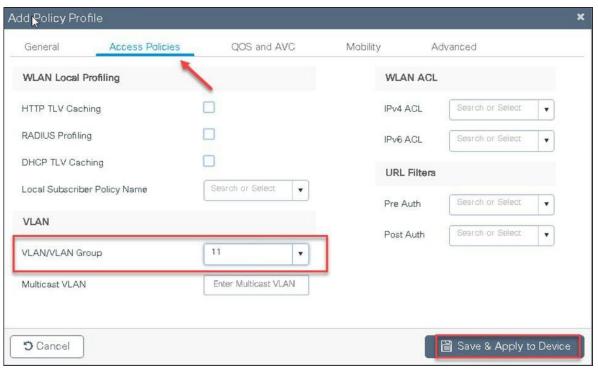


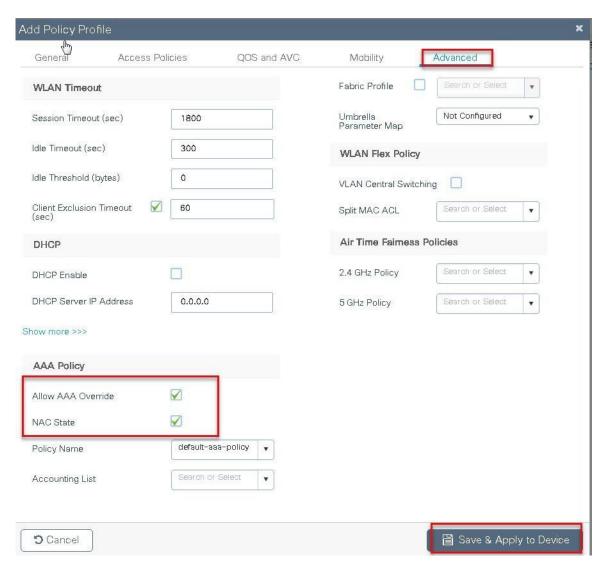
**Step 10** Create a policy profile which defines switching capability of the WLAN and the interface mapping to the WLAN.





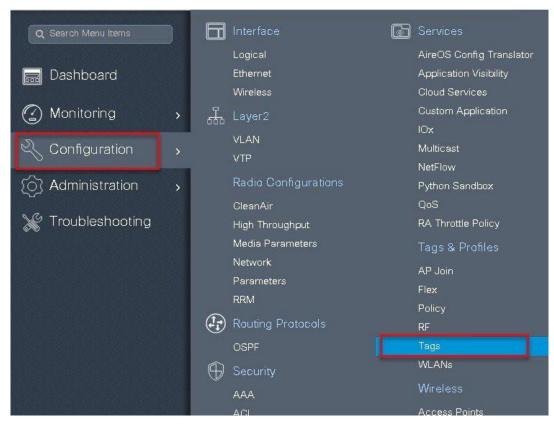
#### **Step11** Define the VLAN to be used by the SSID.

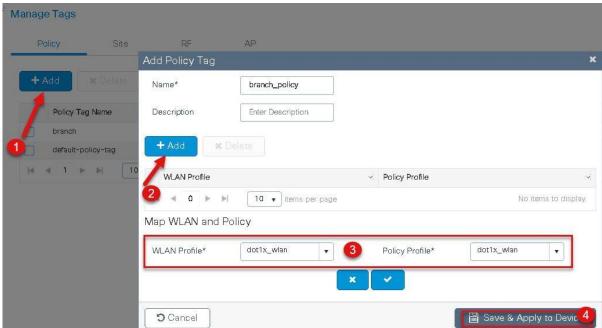




Step12 Create a policy tag which bundles the policy profile and WLAN profile together.

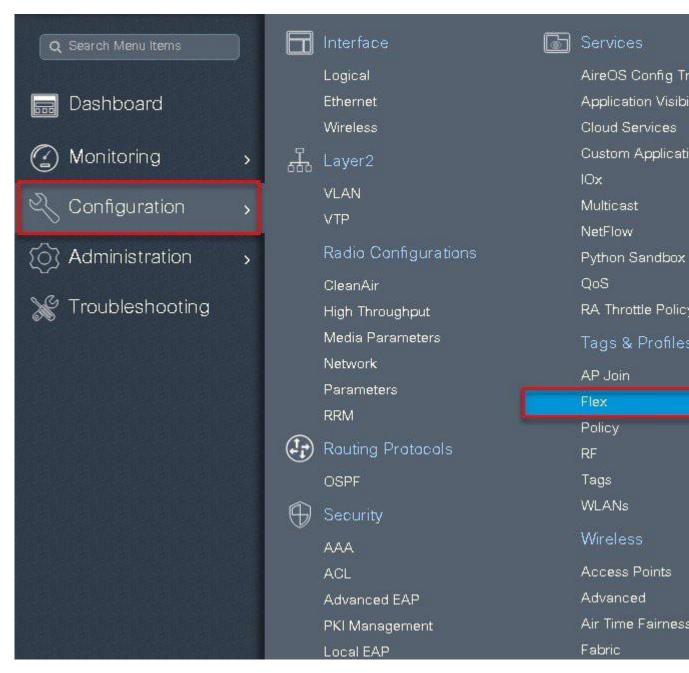
Navigate to configuration > Tag and create a policy tag mapping the WLAN and policy profile.



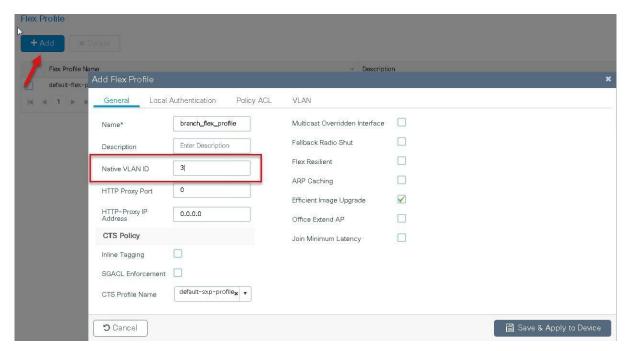


**Step 13** Create a flex profile that defines the flex AP properties.

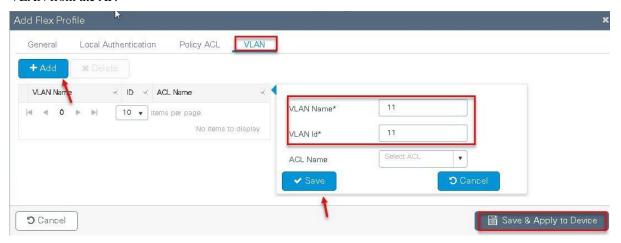
To create a flex profile navigate to Configuration > Tags and Profile >flex.



**Step 14** Define the native VLAN for the Flexconnect AP.

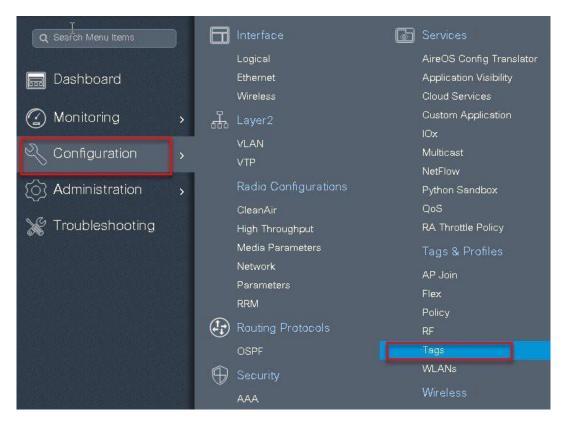


**Step 15** Define the VLANS to be used for local switched SSID, in this example we use VLAN 11 which is local switched VLAN from the AP.

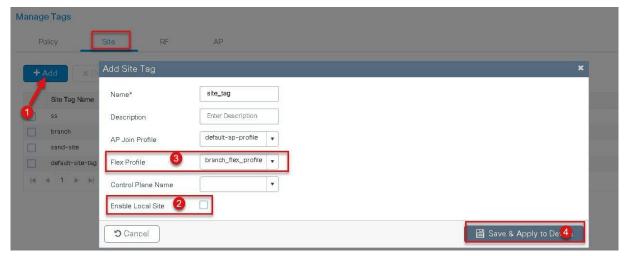


**Step 16** Create a site tag that maps the flex and RF profile.

To create a site tag navigate to Configuration > Tags and Profile > Tags.



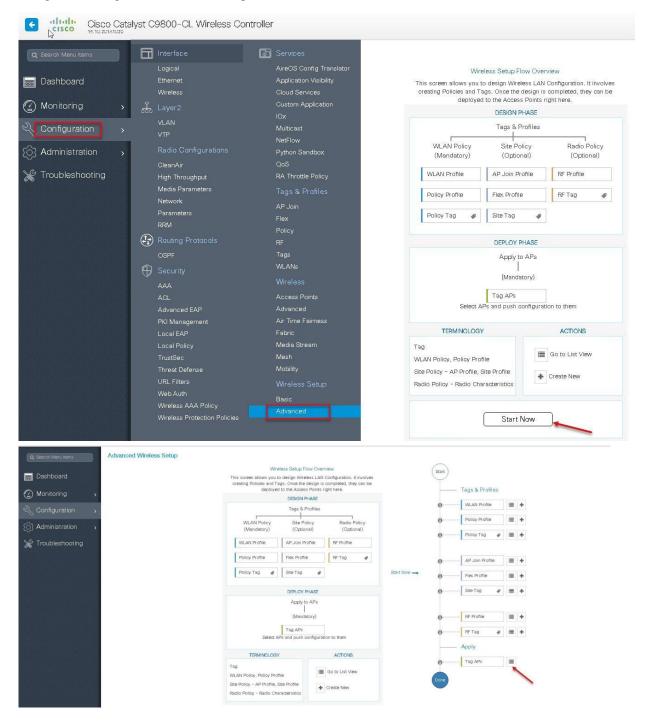
**Step17** Uncheck "enable local site" to map the flex profile on the site tag.

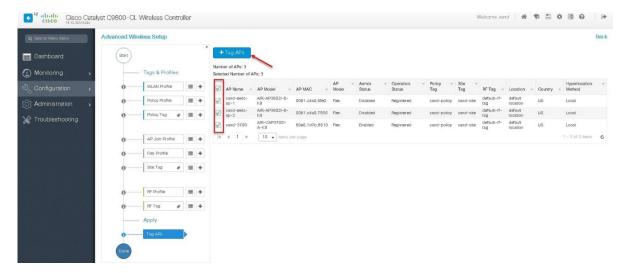


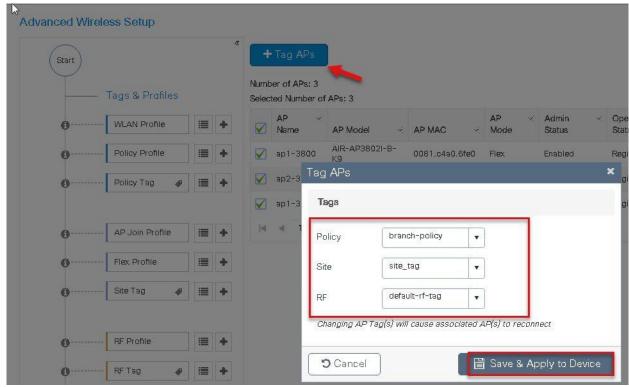
- **Step 18** Map the policy site tag and RF tag on the AP. To tag the AP an Administrator can use the following options.
  - Use the advanced config wizard
  - Use a Static mapping
  - Use a filter

# Using the Advanced config wizard to tag the AP's

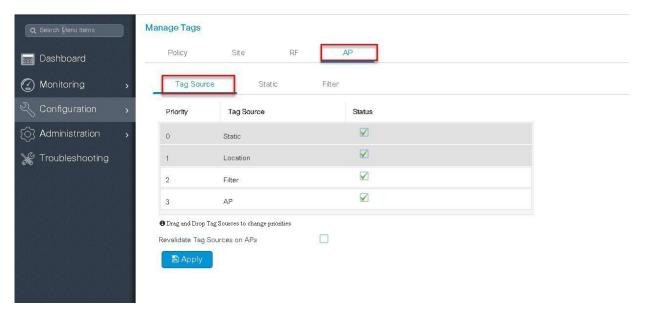
#### Navigate to Configuration > wireless setup > Advanced



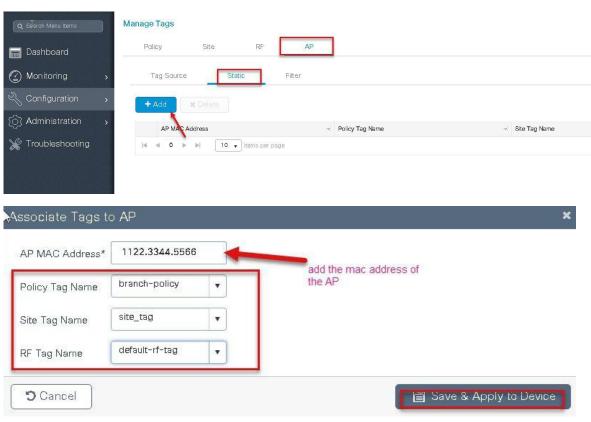




Using a static mapping to tag the AP's.

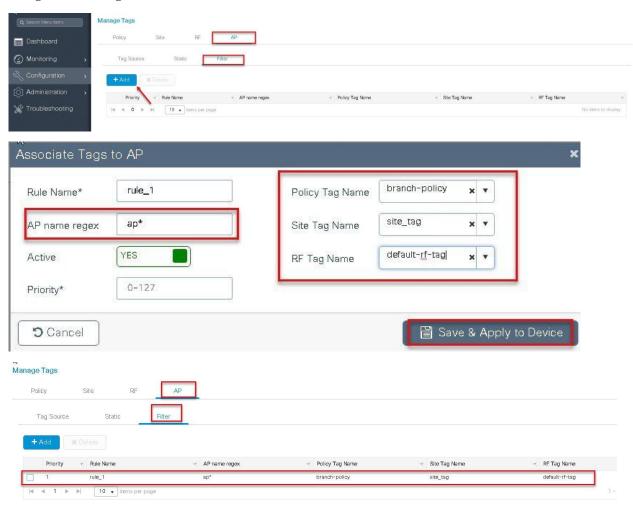


Static Mapping – In the static mapping, the administrator need to specify the mac address of the AP along with the site, policy and RF tag.





#### Using a Filter to tag the AP



The Access point summary page show the source based on which the tags was assigned to an AP.



Once the AP is provisioned with the site tag, the AP gets converted to flex mode based on the site tag assigned to the AP.

If the AP is already in flex mode, there is no conversion. If the AP is in local mode, AP would reboot to boot in flex connect mode.

The assigning of tag does the auto conversion of the AP mode based on properties of the tag.

# Flexconnect VLAN override

AAA override of VLAN on individual WLAN is supported for local switching. In order to have dynamic VLAN assignment, AP would have the VLAN pre-created based on a configuration using the flex profile mapped to the site tag. The VLAN's used in the flex profile is pushed to the AP and overriding of the WLAN is done using the VLAN the AP is programmed to.

## **Summary**

- AAA VLAN override is supported on WLANs configured for local switching in central and local authentication mode.
- AAA override should be enabled on the policy profile mapped to the WLAN.
- The FlexConnect AP should have VLAN pre-created from WLC, this is done in the flex profile mapped to the site tag.
- If VLANs returned by AAA override are not present on AP, client will be excluded and not allowed access to the network.
- Multicast traffic on a AAA overridden VLAN is not supported

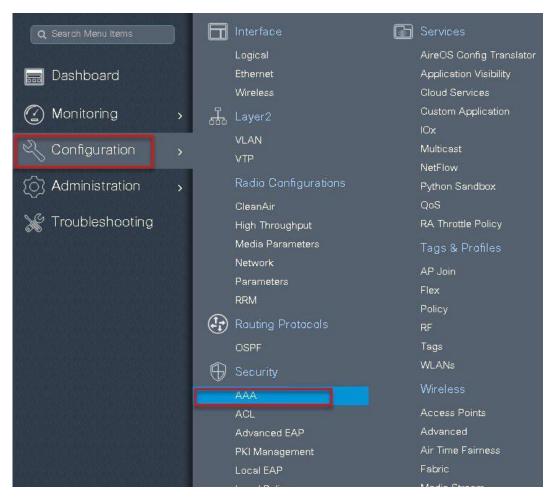
#### Procedure to Enable VLAN

The procedure to enable VLAN override is outlined below along with the GUI configuration. The WLAN here is enabled for dot1x based authentication.

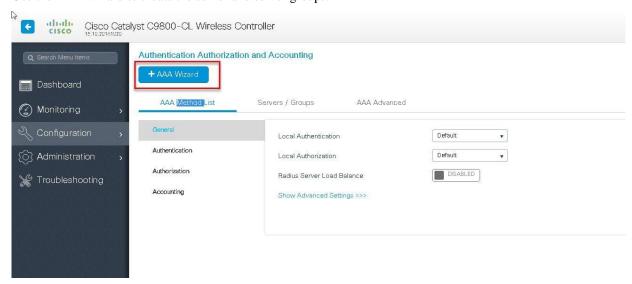
#### **Procedure**

Step 1 Define a AAA server and method list for dot1x which is mapped to the WLAN. The AAA server is created by navigating to the following:

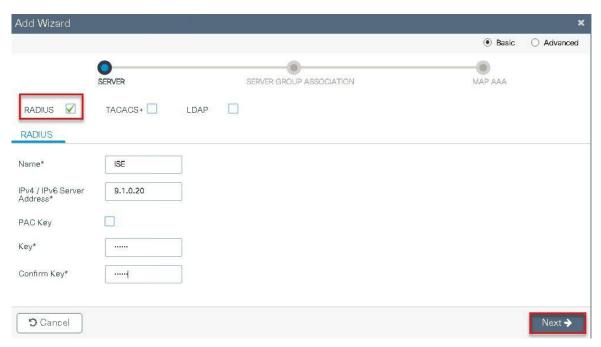
Configuration > security > AAA



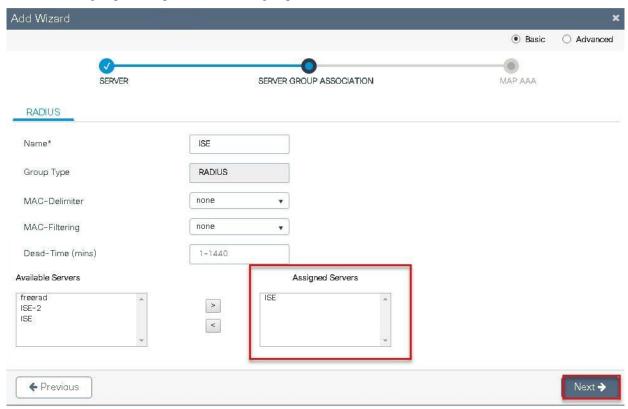
**Step2** Use the AAA wizard to create the server and server groups.



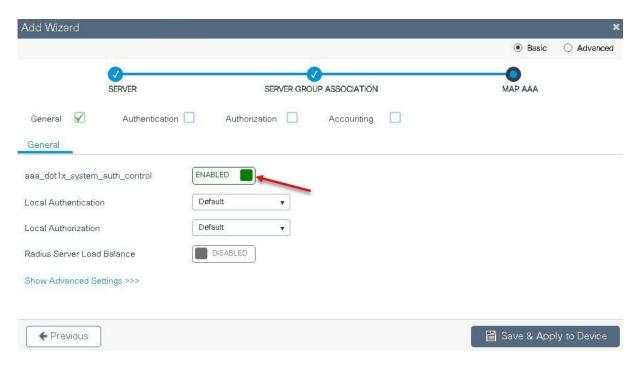
**Step3** Define a name for the server and specify the IP address and shared secret.



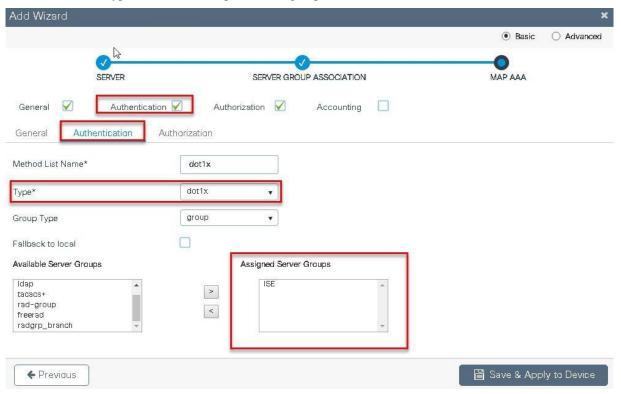
**Step4** Create a server group and map the server in the group.



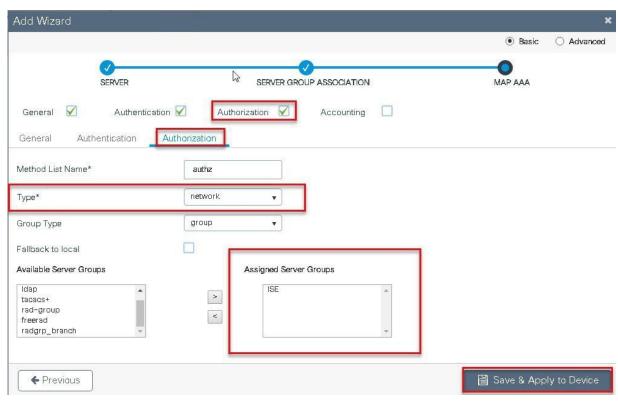
**Step5** Enable dot1x system control and check mark the authentication and Authorization profile.



**Step6** Define the method type as Dot1x and map the server group.

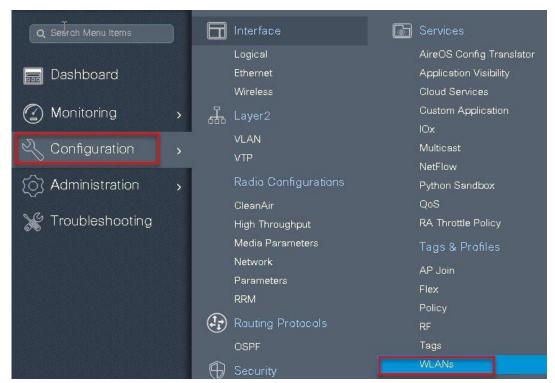


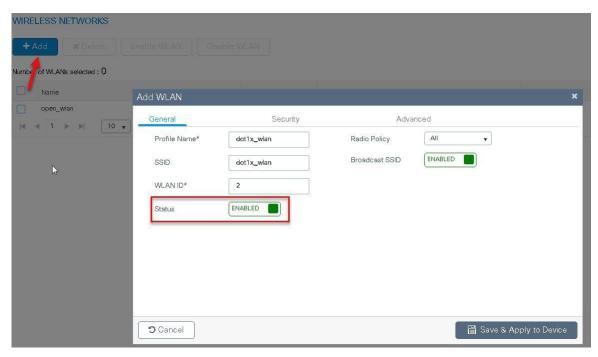
**Step7** Define the method type as network and map the server group.

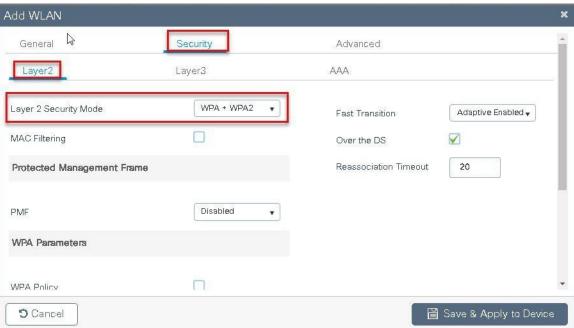


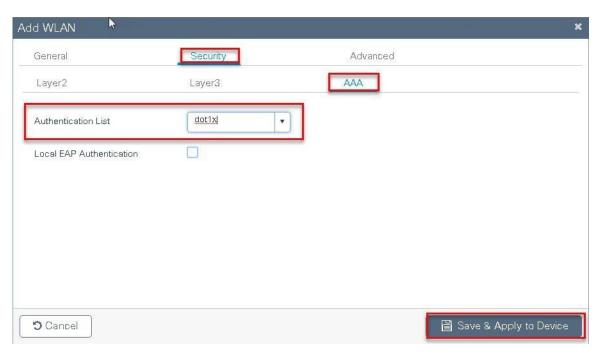
**Step8** Create a Dot1x WLAN and map the method list on the WLAN.

Navigate to the Configuration > Tags& profiles > WLAN to create the SSID.

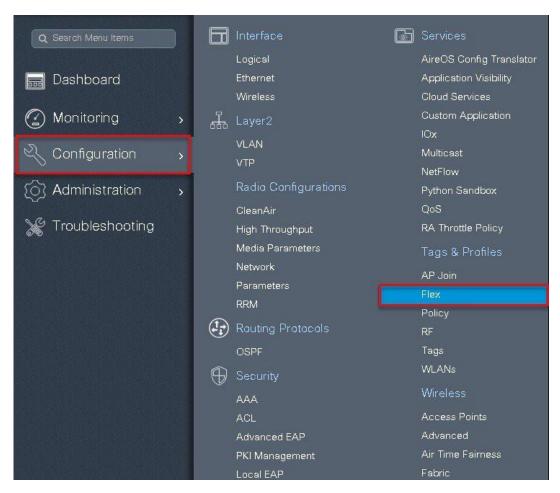


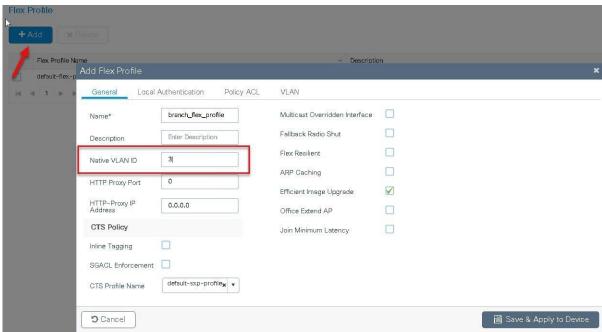


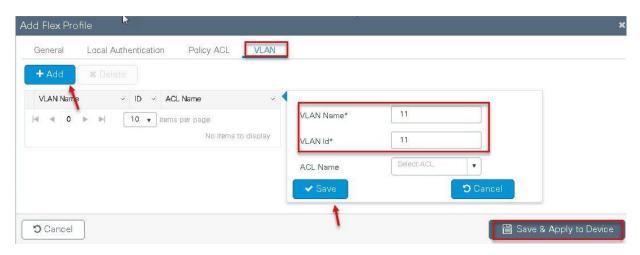




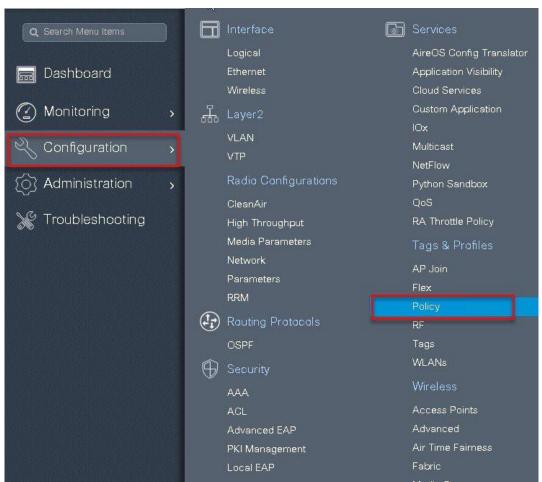
**Step9** Create a flex profile, Create a Vlan on the Flex profile which is the VLAN returned by the AAA.

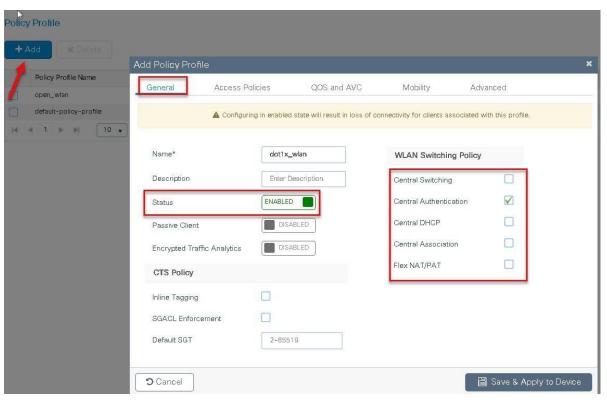


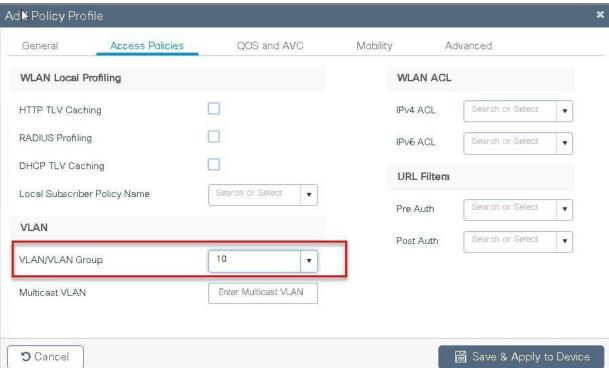


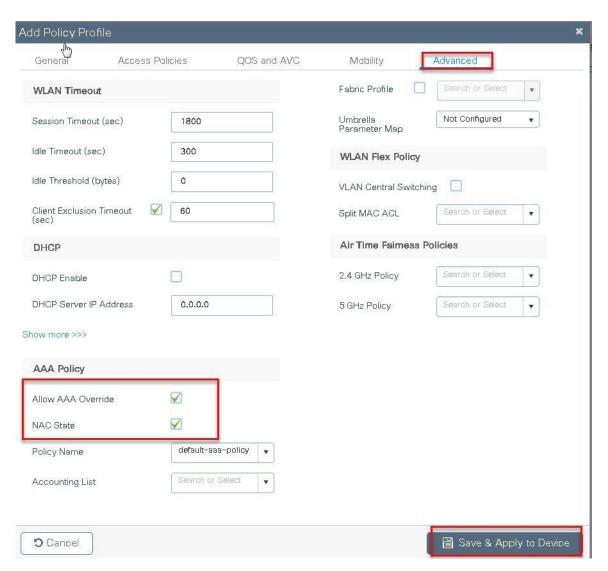


Step 10 Create a policy profile enable local switching and central authentication on the profile also map the default vlan for the WLAN and enable AAA override .



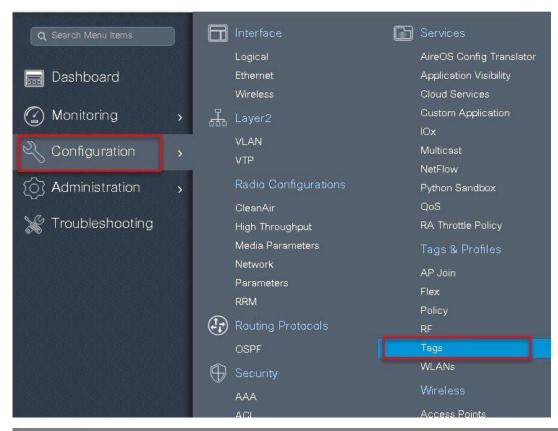


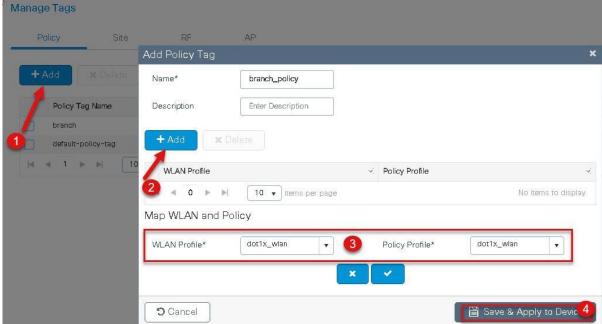




#### **Step 11** Map the WLAN to policy profile.

Navigate to configurationTag and create a policy tag mapping the WLAN and policy profile.

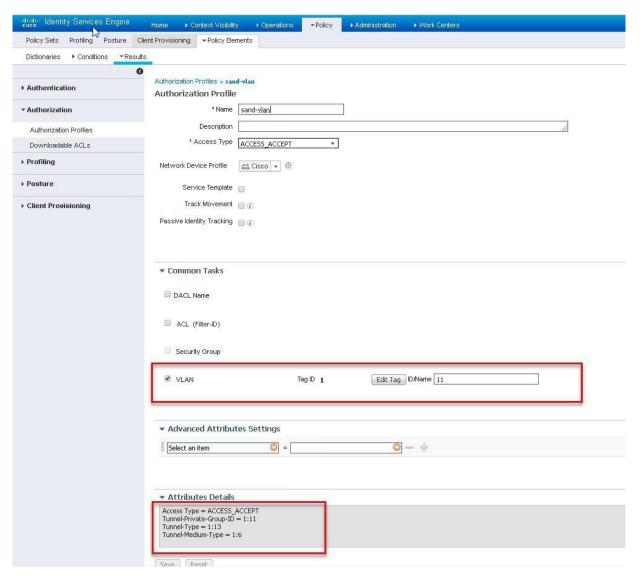




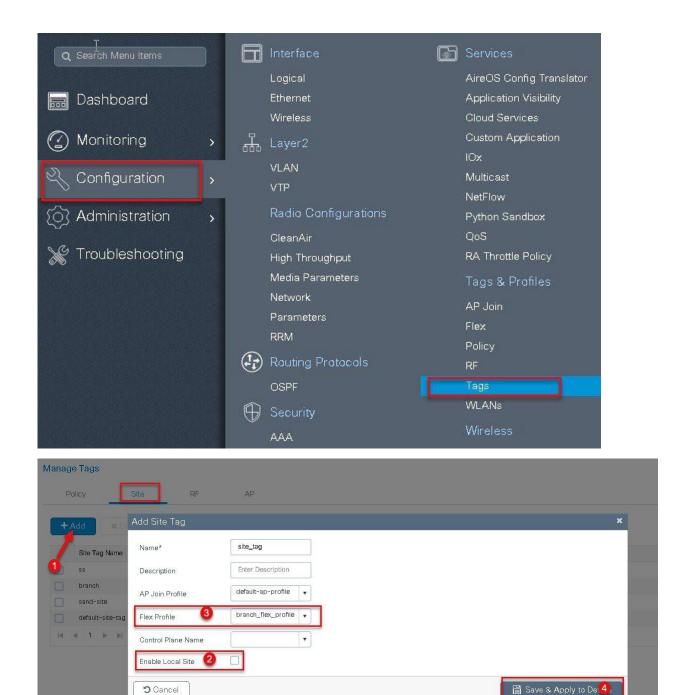
**Step 12** Create an Authorization profile on the ISE to override the VLAN from AAA.

Create the respective authorization rules to return the authorization profile as part of Access accept.

The screenshot below is for the authorization profile, the authorization rules should refer the profile created.

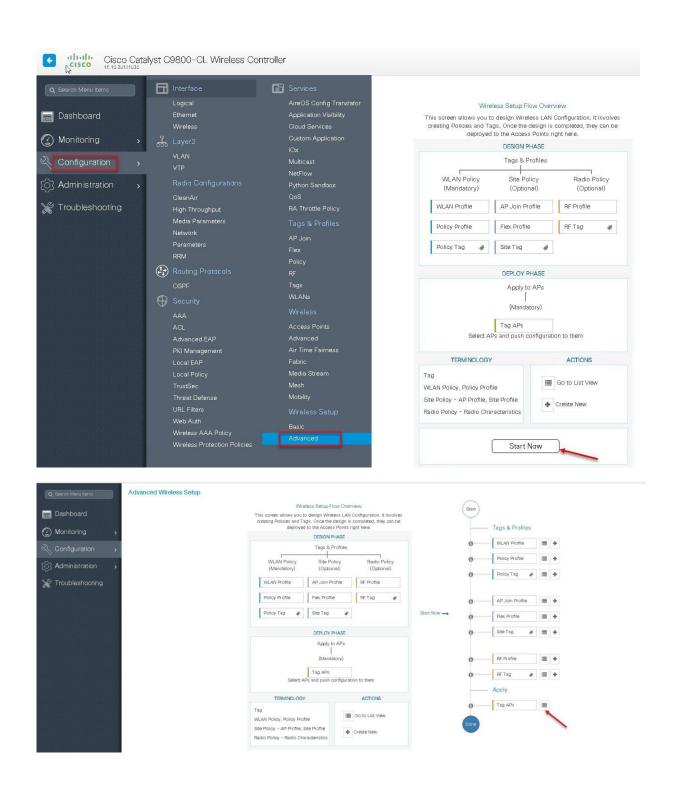


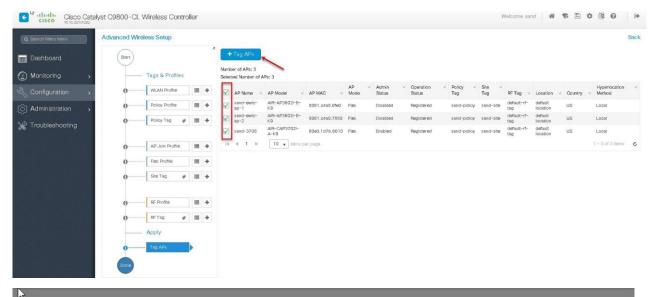
**Step 13** Create a site tag and map the flex profile on the site tag.

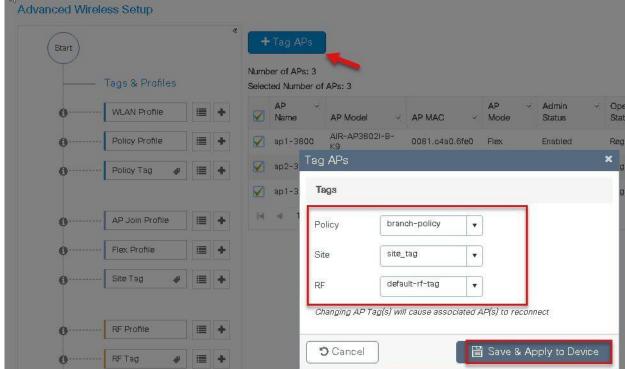


**Step14** Map the policy site tag and RF tag on the AP using the advanced config wizard .

Navigate to Configuration wireless setup Advanced



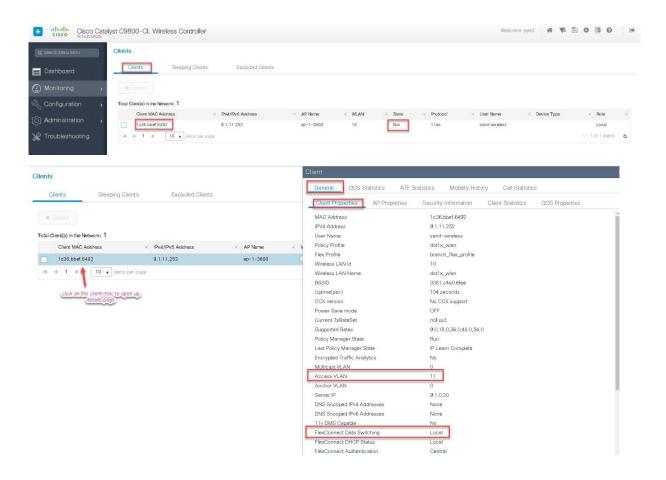


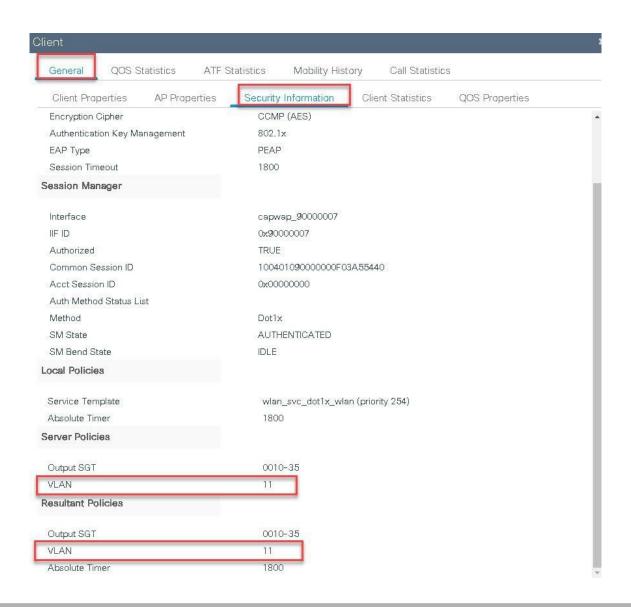


**Step 15** Associate a client on the WLAN and authenticate using the user name configured in the AAA server in order to return the AAA VLAN as the attribute.

Verify the client connectivity by navigating to monitoring wireless clients and verify the access vlan the client is mapped to

Double click on the client mac to open up the details of the Client session





# FlexConnect VLAN Based Central Switching

VLAN based central switching is a feature that will enable central or local switching based on the VLAN returned as part of the AAA override. If the VLAN provided by the AAA is part of the VLAN present on the AP, the client would be locally switched and if the VLAN returned by the AAA is not present in the AP and is available at the WLC, the client would be centrally switched.

# Summary

Traffic flow on WLANs configured for Local Switching when Flex APs are in Connected Mode.

• If the VLAN is returned as one of the AAA attributes and that VLAN is not present in the Flex AP database, traffic will switch centrally and the client will be assigned this VLAN/Interface returned from the AAA server provided that the VLAN exists on the WLC.

- If the VLAN is returned as one of the AAA attributes and that VLAN is not present in the Flex AP database, traffic will switch centrally. If that VLAN is also not present on the WLC, the client will be excluded with the reason VLAN failure.
- If the VLAN is returned as one of the AAA attributes and that VLAN is present in the Flex Connect AP database, traffic will switch locally.
- If the VLAN is not returned from the AAA server, the client will be assigned a VLAN mapped on the policy profile that is attached to the policy tag on that FlexConnect AP and traffic will switch locally.
- If the VLAN returned as part of the AAA attribute is present on both the AP and WLC, the client will be locally switched. The vlan on the AP takes precedence over the one on the WLC.

Traffic flow on WLANs configured for Local Switching when Flex APs are in Standalone Mode:

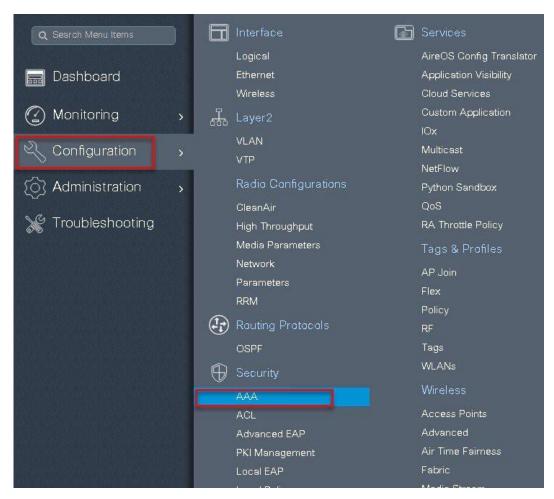
- If the VLAN returned by an AAA server is not present in the Flex AP database, the client will be put to default VLAN (that is the VLAN mapped on the policy profile which is linked to the WLAN). When the AP connects back, this client will be de-authenticated and will switch traffic centrally.
- If the VLAN returned by an AAA server is present in the Flex AP database, the client will be put into a returned VLAN and traffic will switch locally.
- If the VLAN is not returned from an AAA server, the client will be assigned a WLAN mapped VLAN on that FlexConnect AP and traffic will switch locally.

## Steps to configure FlexConnect VLAN Based Central Switching

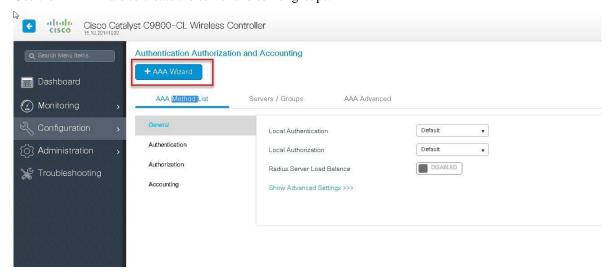
#### **Procedure**

**Step 1** Define a AAA server and method list for dot1x which is mapped to the WLAN. The AAA server is created by navigating to the following:

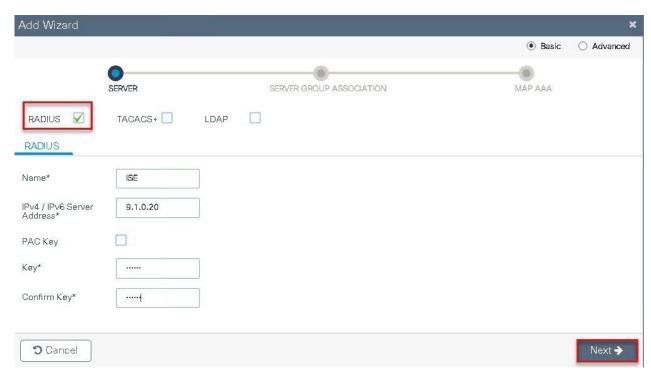
Configuration > security > AAA.



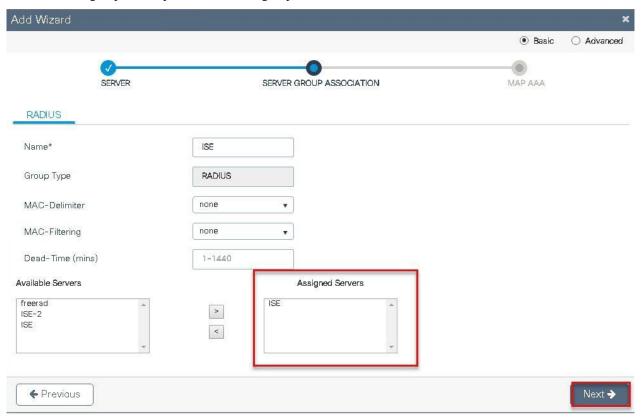
**Step2** Use the AAA wizard to create the server and server groups.



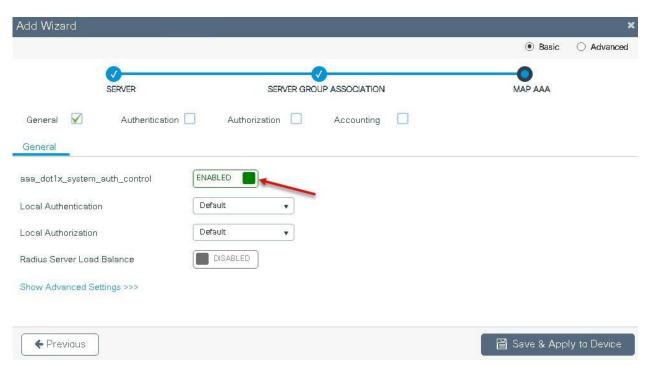
**Step3** Define a name for the server and specify the IP address and shared secret.



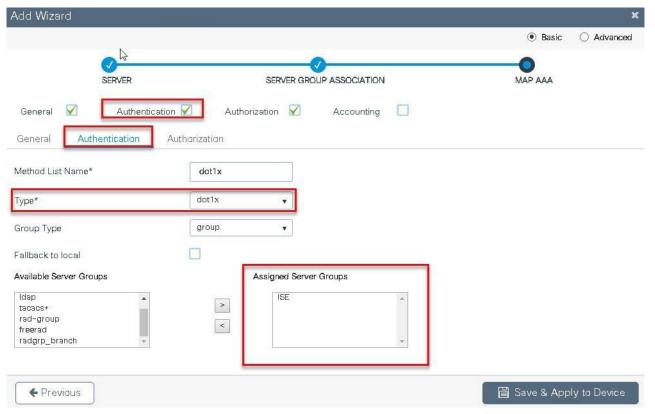
**Step 4** Create a server group and map the server in the group.



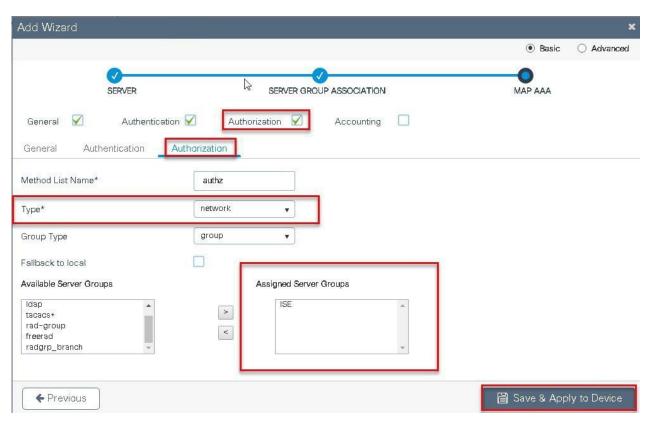
**Step 5** Enable dot1x system control and check mark the authentication and Authorization profile.



**Step6** Define the method type as Dot1x and map the server group.



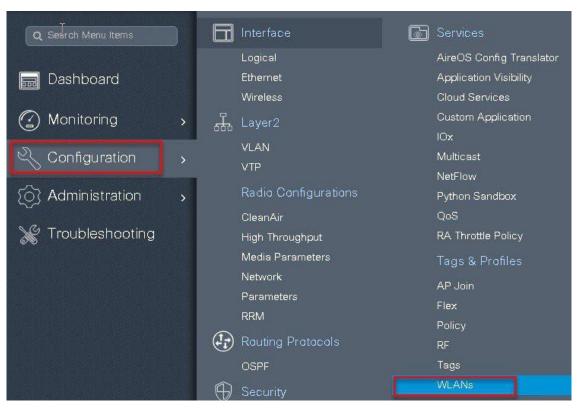
**Step7** Define the method type as network and map the server group .

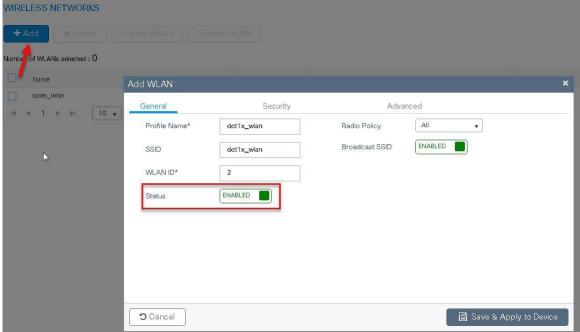


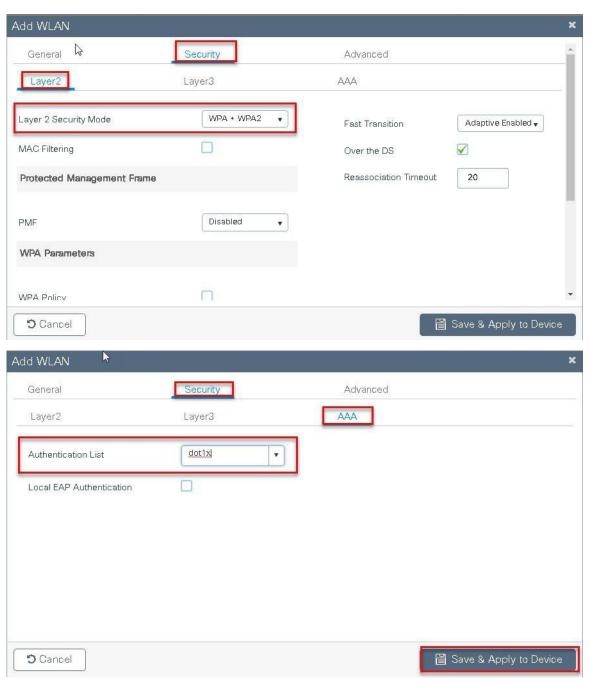
## $\label{eq:Step8} \textbf{Step8} \qquad \text{Create a Dot1x WLAN and map the method list on the WLAN.}$

To create an SSID navigate to Configuration > Tags & Profiles > WLANs.

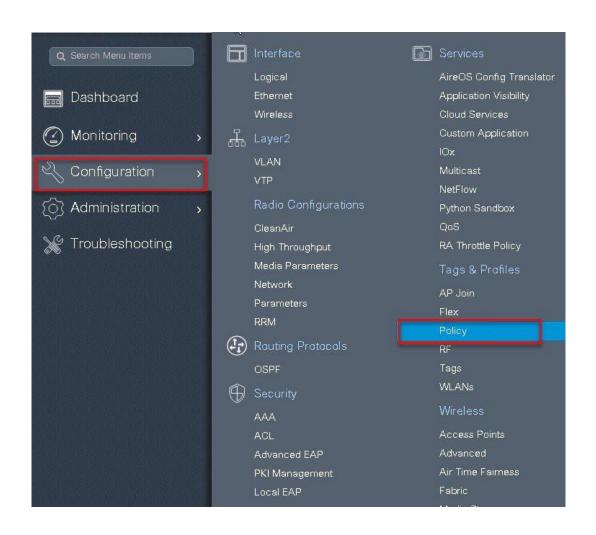
S

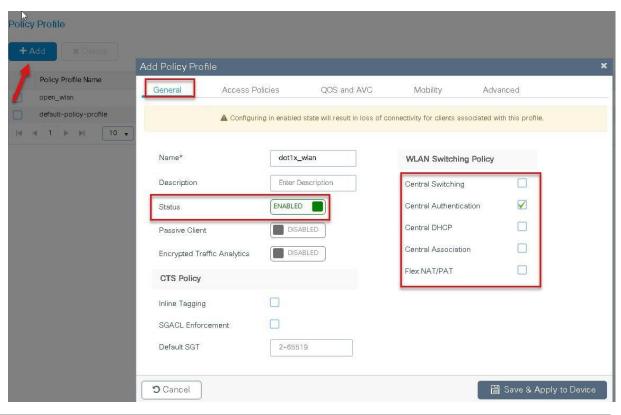


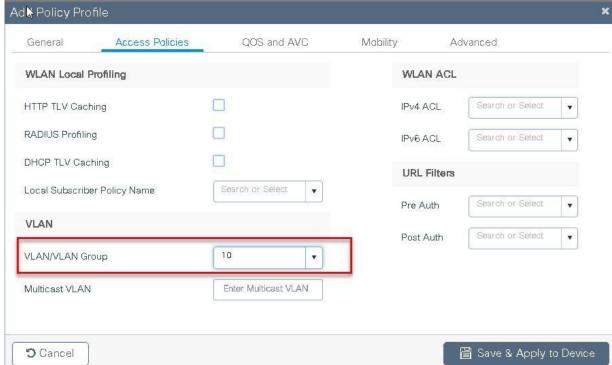


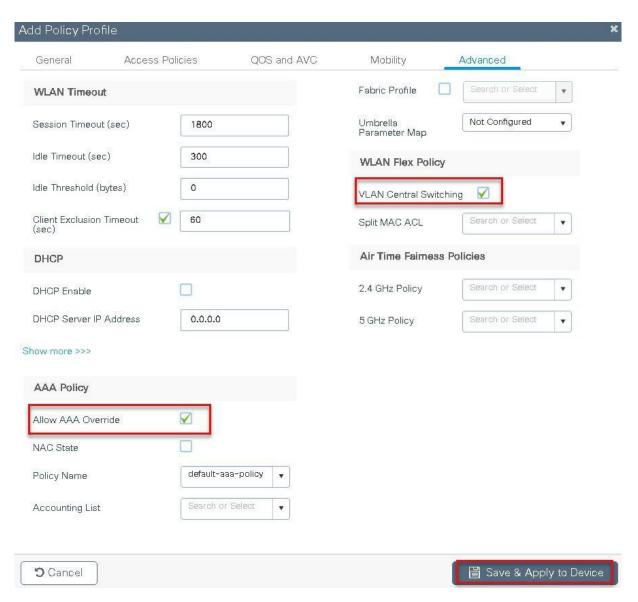


Step 9 Create a policy profile enable local switching and central authentication on the profile also map the default vlan for the WLAN and enable AAA override .



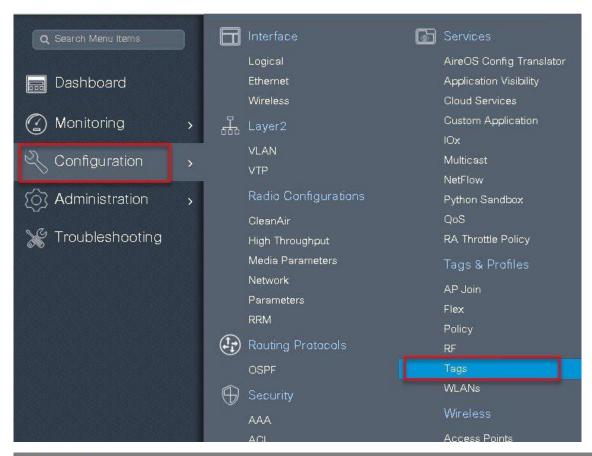


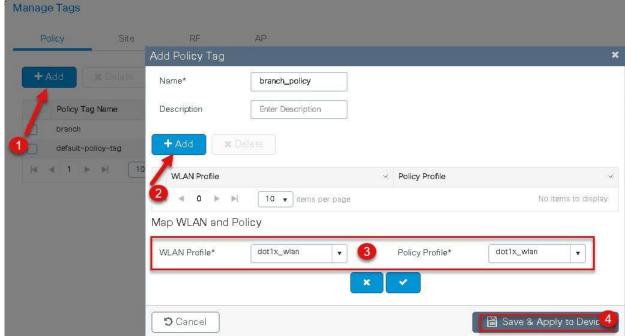




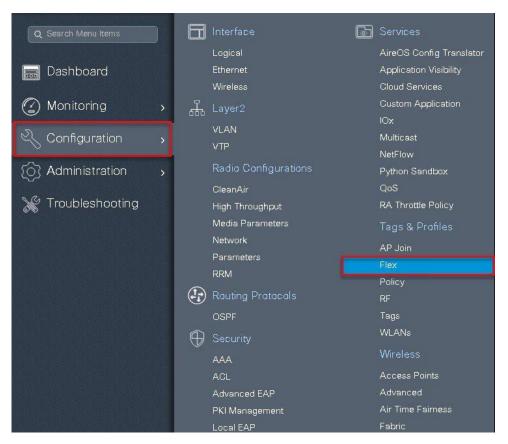
**Step 10** Map the WLAN to policy profile.

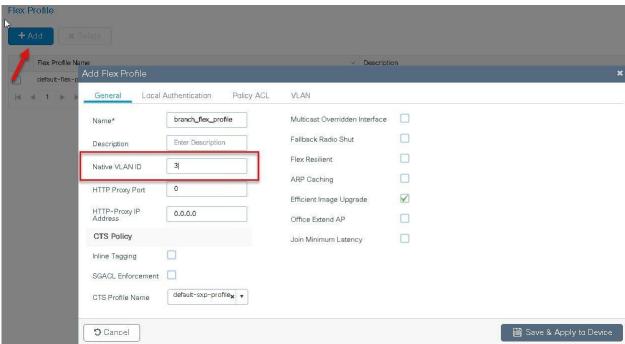
Navigate to configuration > Tag and create a policy tag mapping the WLAN and policy profile.

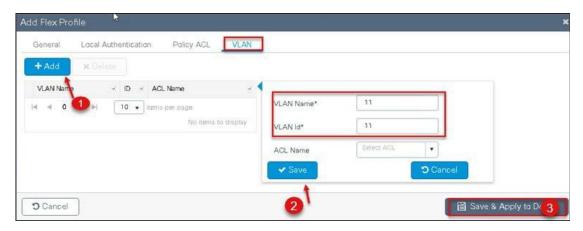




**Step 11** Create a flex profile and defines a VLAN on the flex profile returned by the AAA radius server.

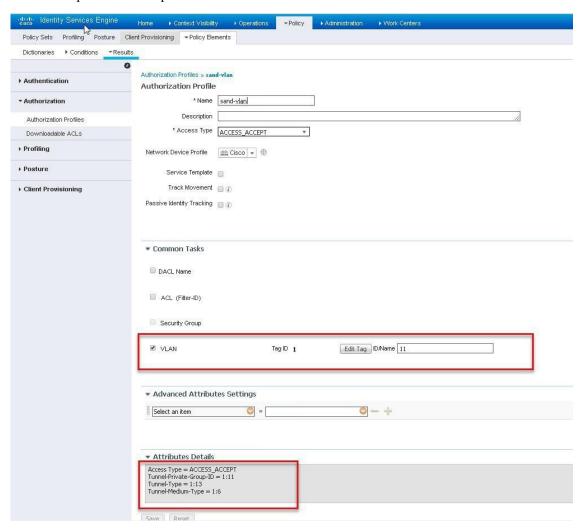




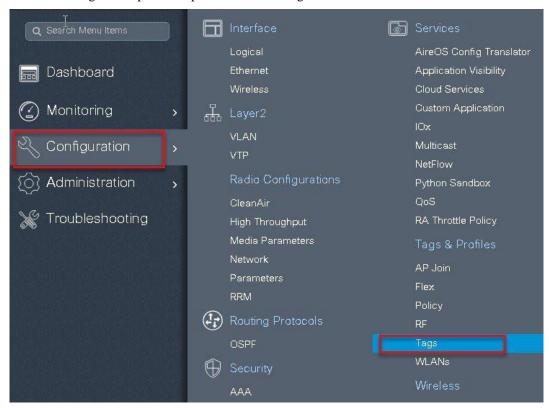


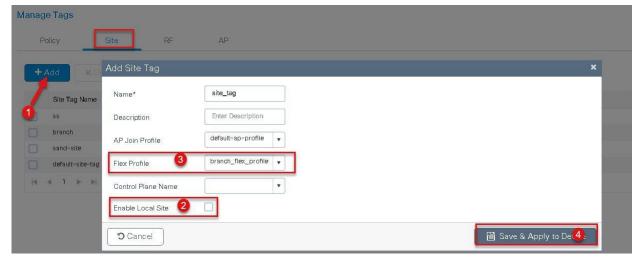
### **Step 12** Create an Authorization profile on the ISE to override the VLAN.

Create the respective authorization rules to return the authorization profile as part of Access accept. In this example vlan 11 is a present on the AP and would make the client in local switched mode.



**Step 13** Create a site tag and map the flex profile on the site tag.



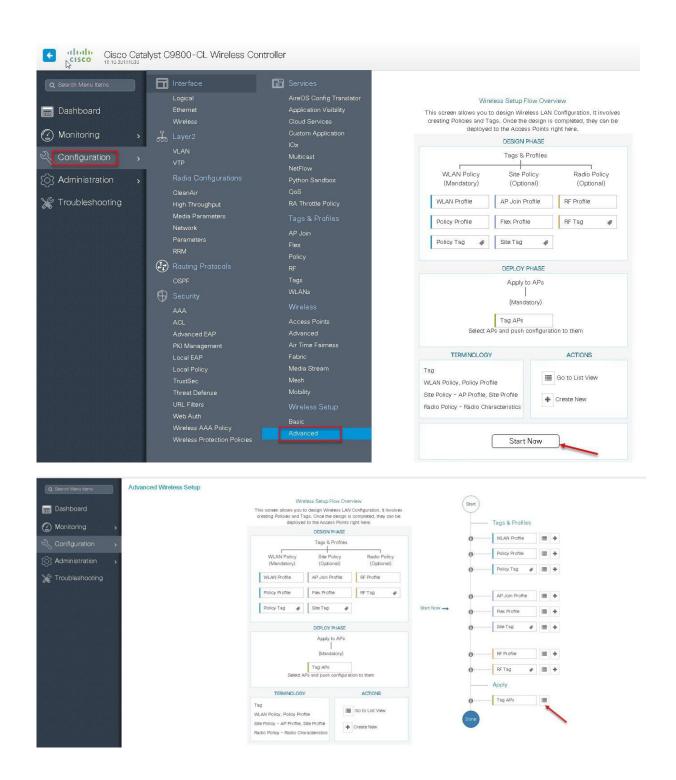


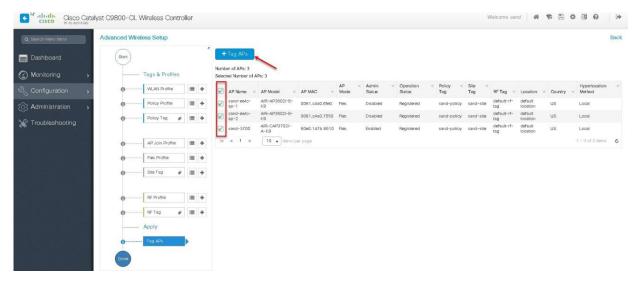
**Step 14** Map the policy site tag and RF tag on the AP using the advanced config wizard.

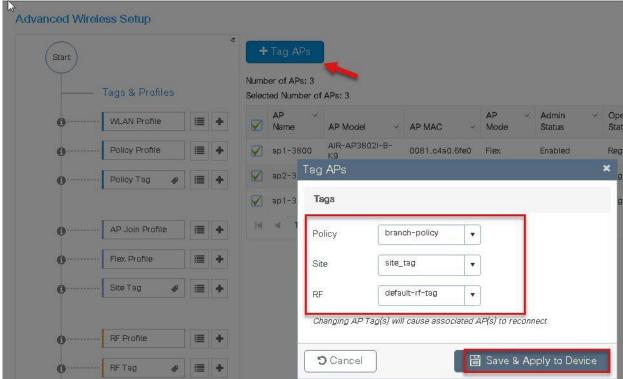
Assigning a site tag on a AP would result in AP reboot due to conversion to flexconnect mode.

The reboot is avoided if the AP is already in flexconnect mode,

Navigate to Configuration > wireless setup > Advanced





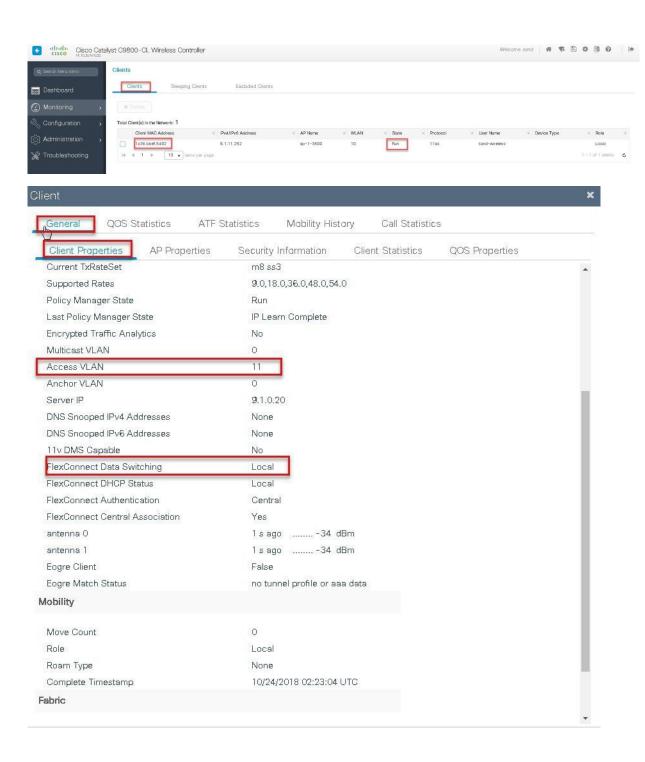


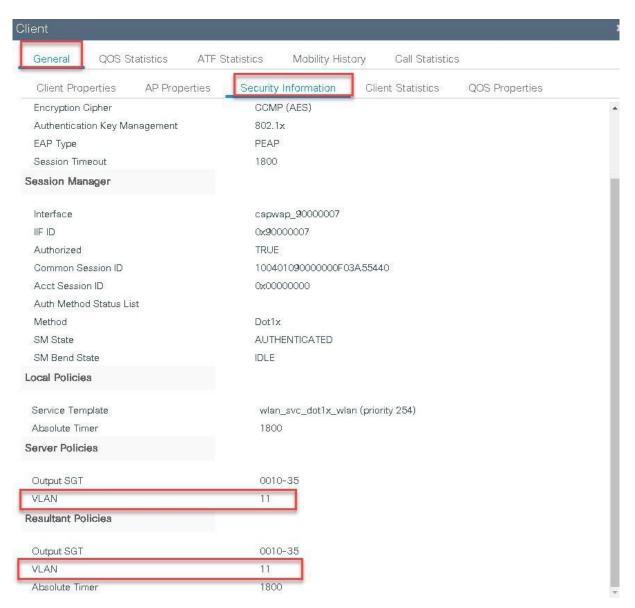
Step15 Associate a client on the WLAN and authenticate using the user name configured in the AAA server in order to return the AAA VLAN as an attribute.

Verify the client connectivity by navigating to monitoring > wireless > clients and verify the access vlan the client is mapped.

In this step the AAA returns vlan 11 which is present in the AP database results in local switched WLAN.

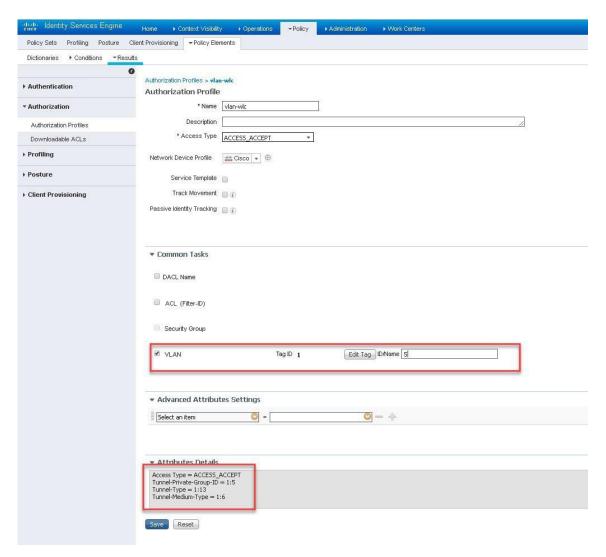
Double click on the client mac to open up the details of the Client session





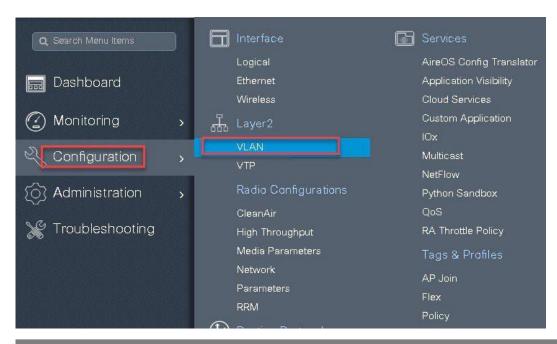
**Step16** Create an Authorization profile to return a VLAN which is not present on the AP database but on the WLC.

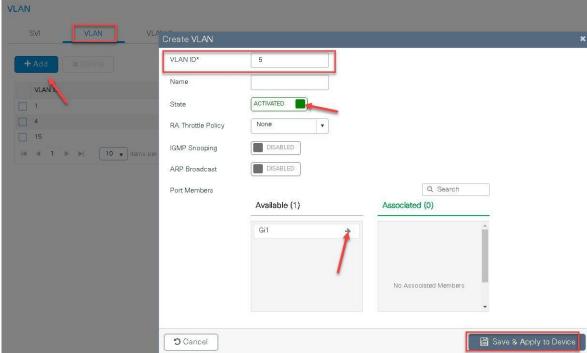
In this example VLAN 5 is present on the WLC and not on the AP database which results in WLAN being central switched.



 $\begin{tabular}{ll} \textbf{Step 17} & Validation on the presence of VLAN 5 on the WLC . \\ \end{tabular}$ 

Navigate to Configuration >Vlan.

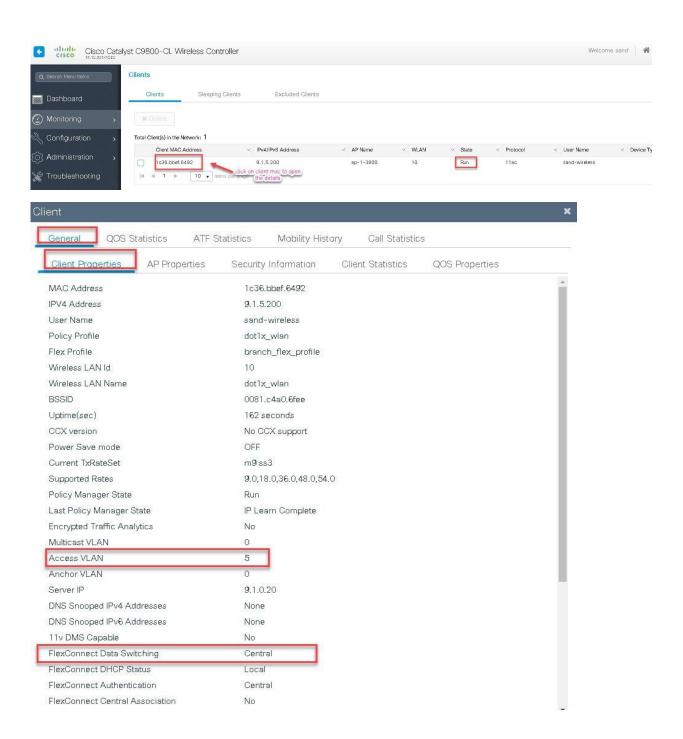


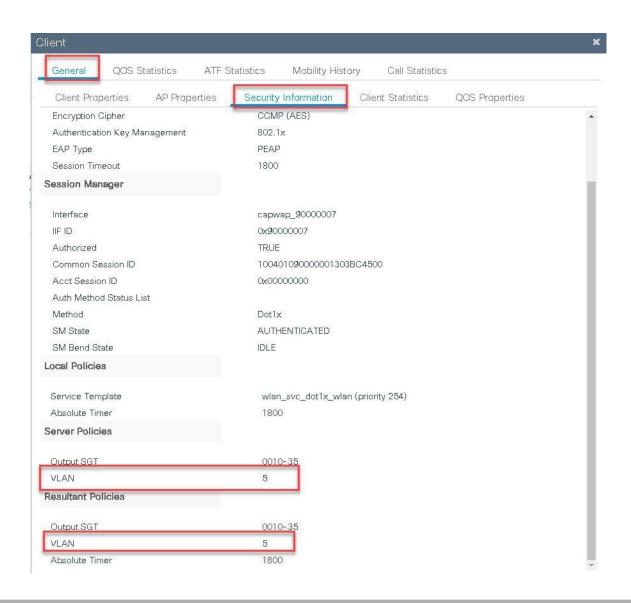


**Step18** Associate a client on the WLAN and authenticate using the user name configured in the AAA server in order to return the AAA VLAN(VLAN5) as the return attribute.

Verify the client connectivity by navigating to monitoring > wireless > clients and verify the access vlan the client is mapped and switching properties for the client.

Double click on the client mac to open up the details of the Client session.





# **Local Authentication and Backup Radius server**

In most typical branch deployments, it is easy to foresee that client 802.1X authentication takes place centrally at the WLC located at the Data center .However there arises certain concerns with central authentication at the WLC.

How can wireless clients perform 802.1X authentication and access Data Center services if WLC fails?

How can wireless clients perform 802.1X authentication if WAN link between Branch and Data Center fails?

Is there any impact on branch mobility during WAN failures?

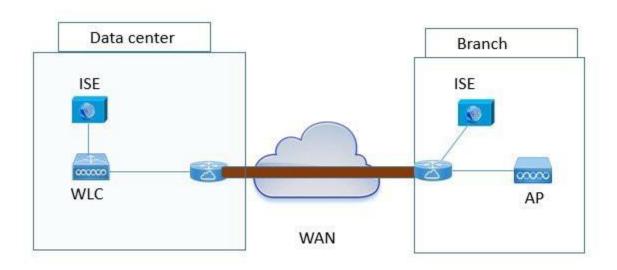
Does the Flex Connect Solution provide no operational branch downtime?

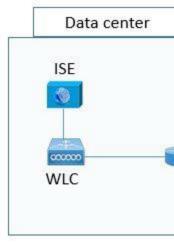
Flexconnect Local authentication and Backup/Local Radius can address the above concerns by enabling branch to operated independently in case of WAN outage or connectivity issue with the controller.

### **Summary**

- The use of local authentication in branch enables resiliency at the branch location by providing wireless access in scenarios where the WAN connectivity is lost with the Data center. The AP moves to standalone mode and provides wireless access with authentication for dot1x directed to a radius server available at the branch side.
- The AP can act as a radius server and this feature is only supported on the Wavel AP's.
- This feature can be used with central authentication or local authentication. In Central authentication case the WLC will authenticate the wireless clients as long as the AP is in connected mode.
- Once the AP loses connectivity with the WLC the AP will move to standalone and authenticate the client locally.
- This feature can be used with local authentication and local switching, in cases where there is a local radius server at the branch, the AP can forward the radius request to the radius server at the branch thereby avoiding the latency variation caused by the WAN links.
- EAP-LEAP is the only method supported for AP as radius Server.

### Local Authentication with External radius server





# Steps for Local Authentication and Backup Radius server

#### **Procedure**

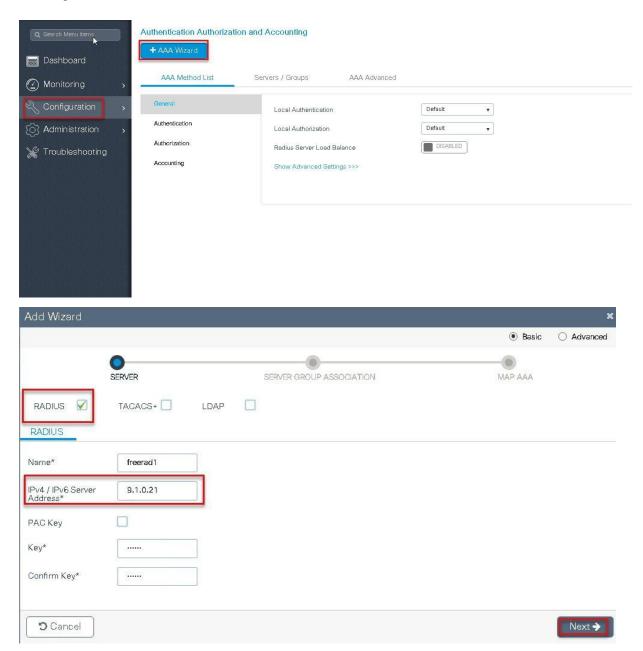
**Step1** Define an AAA server, For Branch deployment specify the AAA server used at the branch side.

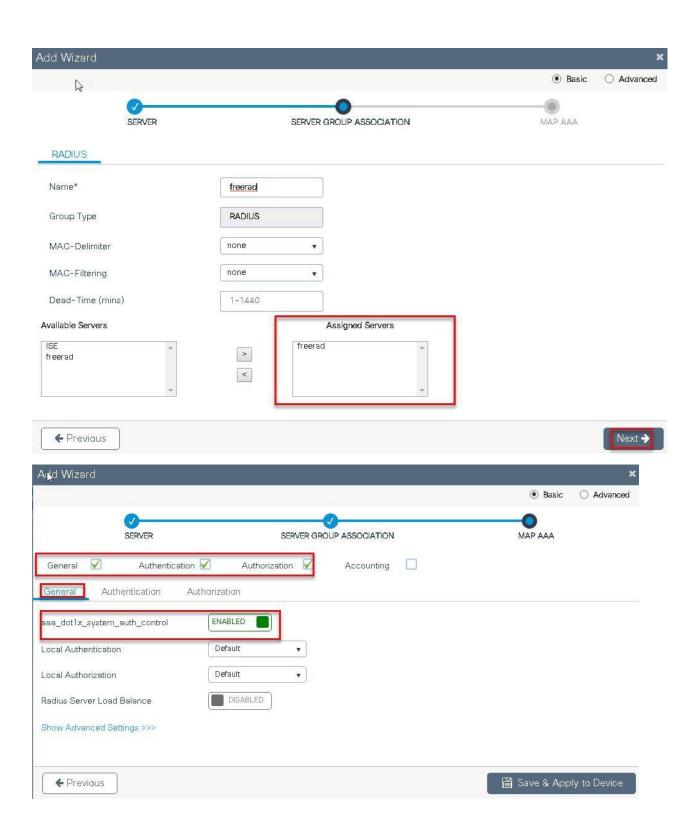
Navigate to Configuration > Security > AAA and start the AAA wizard

The wizard helps in creating the following flow.

· Create a radius server.

- Create a server group and map the radius server on the server group.
- ullet Map the server for dot1x authentication .



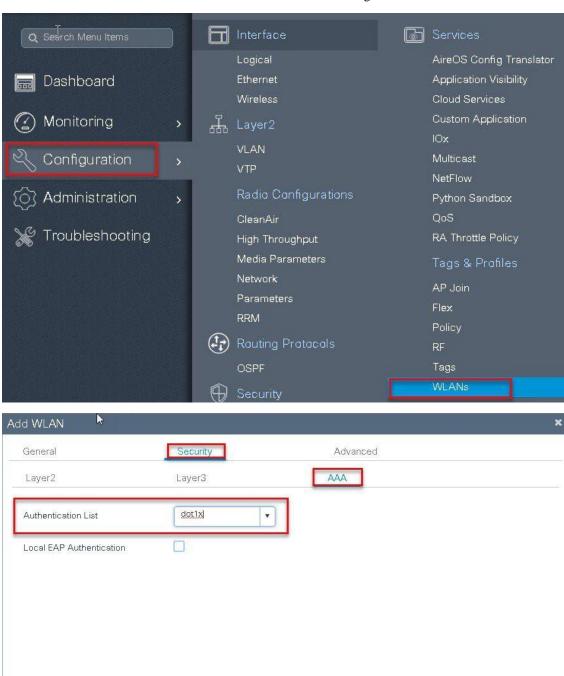


Add Nizard		×
		Basic
SERVER	SERVER GROUP ASSOCIATION	MAP AAA
General Authentication A	n 🗹 Authorization 🗹 Accounting 🔲	
Method List Name*	dot1x	
Type*	dot1x v	
Group Type	group ▼	
Fallback to local		1
Available Server Groups  radius Idap tacacs+ rad-group radgrp_branch	Assigned Server Groups    Freerad	
<b>←</b> Previous		Save & Apply to Device
Add Wizard		×
G .		Basic
SERVER	SERVER GROUP ASSOCIATION	MAP AAA
General Authentication	Authorization Accounting	
General Authentication Aut	horization	
Method List Name*	authz	
Туре*	network •	
Group Type	group v	
Fallback to local  Available Server Groups	Assigned Server Groups	
radius A Idap tacacs+ rad-group radgrp_branch	freerad *	
<b>♦</b> Previous		Save & Apply to Device

**Step2** Create an SSID on the controller for dot1x authentication.

To create an SSID navigate to Configuration >Tags& profiles >WLANs.

Defines the method list created for dot1x on the WLAN AAA settings.

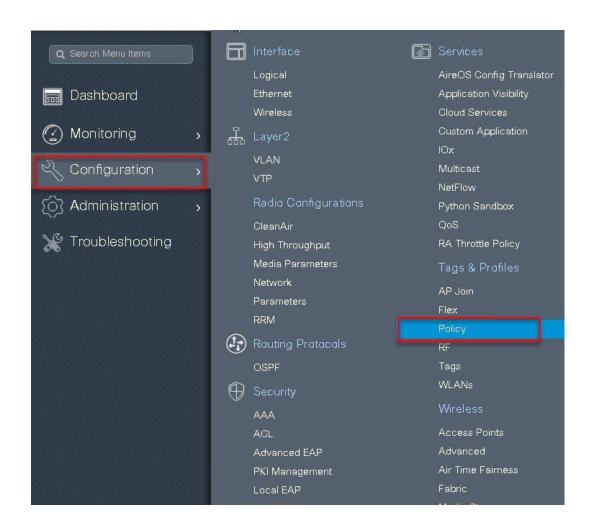


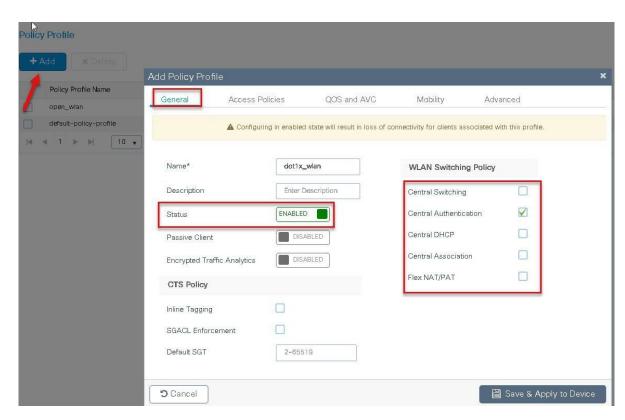
🖺 Save & Apply to Device

Cancel C

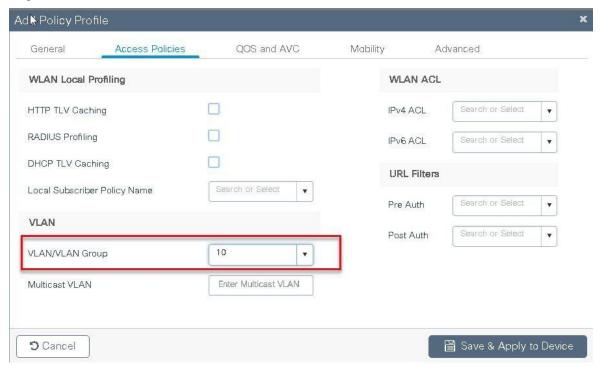
Add WLAN	**				×
General &	Security		Advanced		Ê
Layer2	Layer3		AAA		
Layer 2 Security Mode	WPA +	WPA2 ▼	Fast Transition	Adaptive Enabled ▼	
MAC Filtering			Over the DS		
Protected Management Frame			Reassociation Timeout	20	
PMF	Disable	ed 🔻			
WPA Parameters					
WPA Policy					•
<b>5</b> Cancel				Save & Apply to Devic	e )
+ Add					
Name Ad	d WLAN				×
	General	Security	Advan	ced	
	Profile Name*	dot1x_wlan	Radio Policy	All	
₽.	SSID	dot1x_wlan	Broadcast SSID	ENABLED	
	WLAN ID*	2			
	Status	ENABLED			
	<b>5</b> Cancel			冒 Save & App	olv to Device

**Step3** Create a policy profile enable local switching and central authentication on the profile.



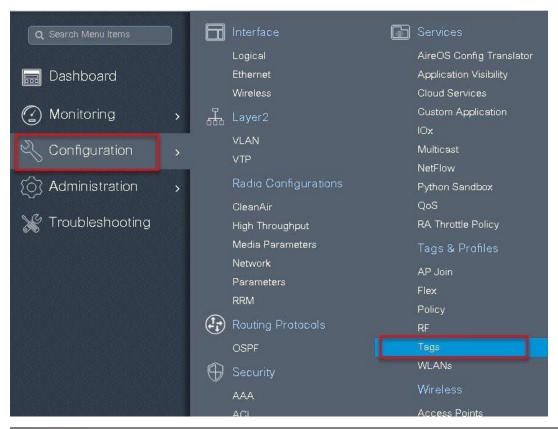


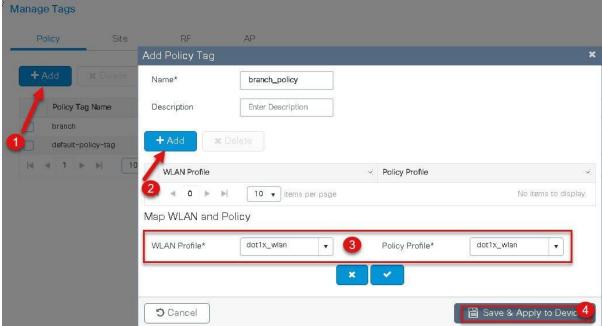
**Step 4** Map the Default VLAN for the WLAN.



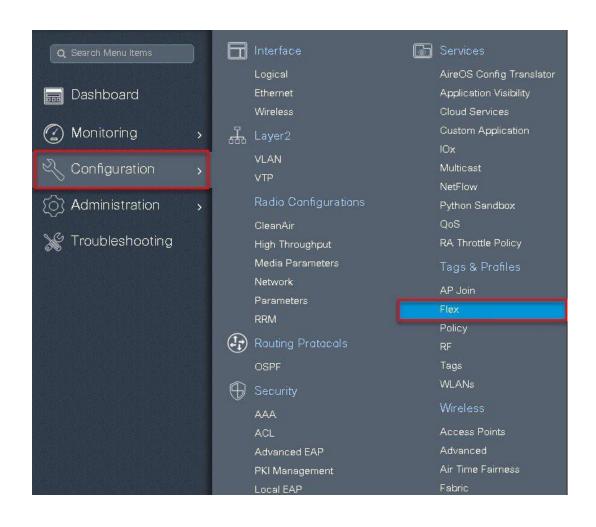
**Step 5** Map the WLAN to policy profile.

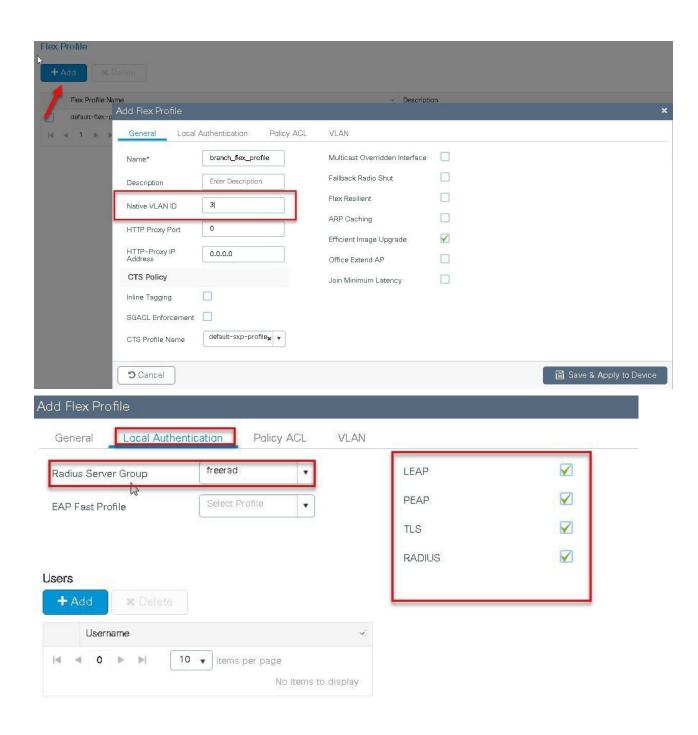
Navigate to configuration > Tag and create a policy tag mapping the WLAN and policy profile

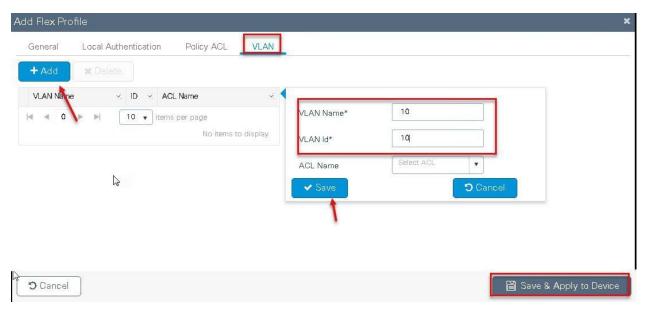




**Step 6** Create a flex profile to create the VLAN on the profile to be used by the SSID.

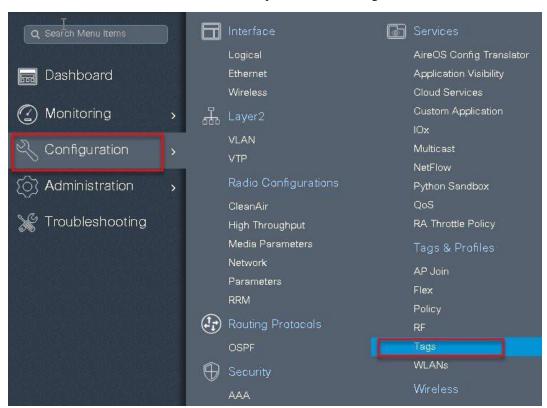


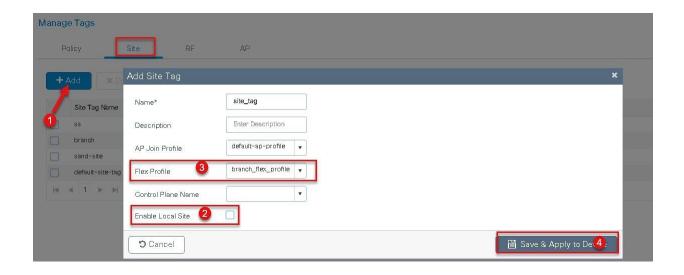




**Step7** Create a site tag and map the flex profile on the site tag.

Uncheck the "Enable local site" to add the flex profile on the site tag.





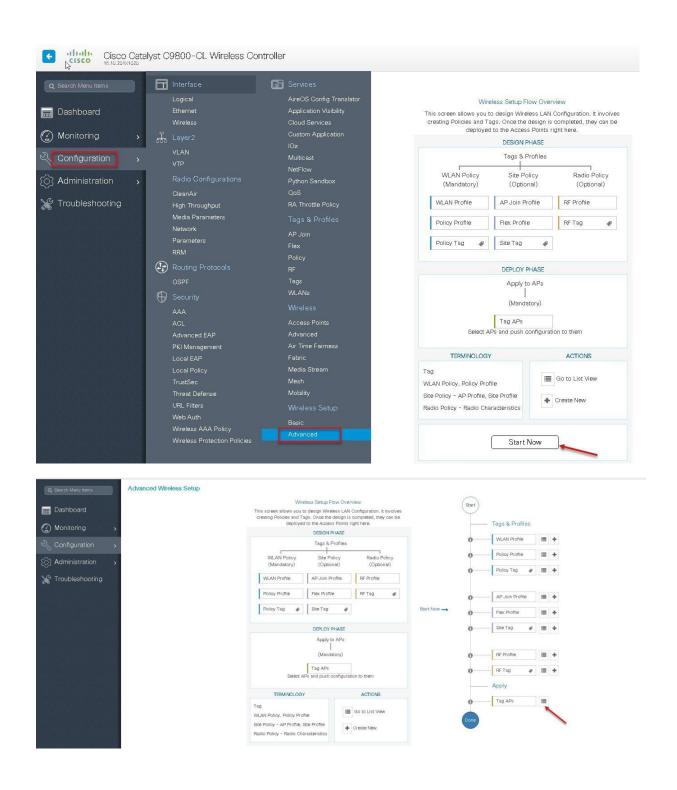
**Step 8** Map the policy profile and site tag on the AP. To tag the AP open the advanced config wizard and tag the AP with corresponding tags.

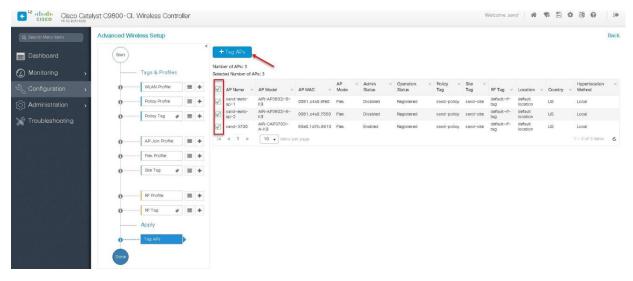
The mapping can be provisioned by creating a filter list based on the AP name.

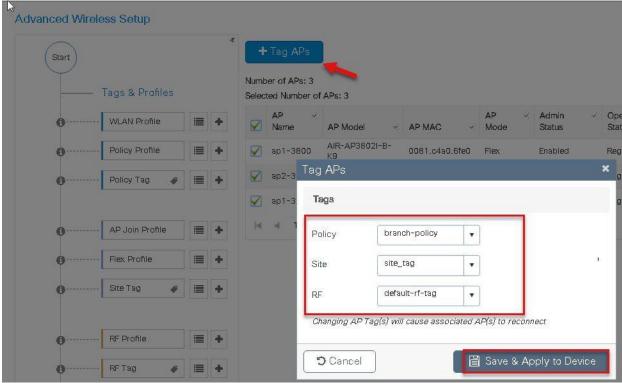
Assigning a site tag on a AP might result in AP reboot due to conversion to flexconnect mode.

The reboot is avoided if the AP is already in flexconnect mode.

Navigate to Configuration > wireless setup > Advanced







### **AP as Radius Server**

FlexConnect AP can be configured as a RADIUS server for LEAP client authentication. In standalone mode and also when local authentication feature is enabled on the WLANs, FlexConnect AP will do dot1x authentication on the AP itself using the local radius facility.

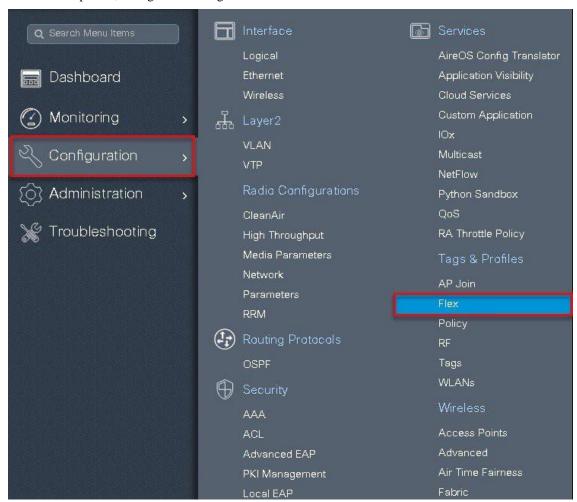
### **Procedure**

To have the flexconnect AP configured as the radius server repeat the steps 2,3,4,5,7 and 8 in the procedure section of Local Authentication with External radius server 1.

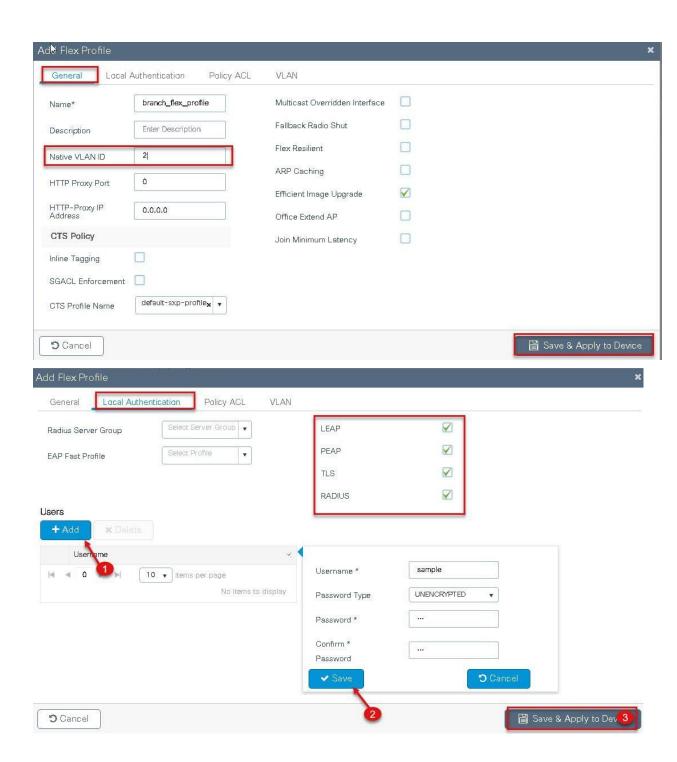
The flex profile needs to be reconfigured to enable local radius server functionality.

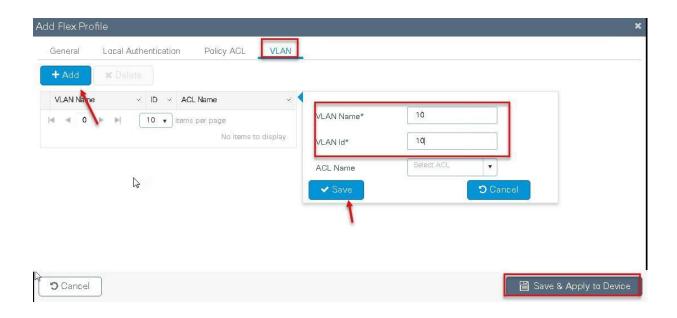
#### **Procedure**

**Step1** Create a flex profile, Navigate to Configuration > Flex.



**Step 2** Specify the native VLAN ID for the AP, on the local authentication specify the EAP methods to be used. Add local users for authentication on the AP, the local users resides on the AP.





# **CCKM/OKC** and **PMKCaching**

CCKM /OKC and PMK caching enables fast roaming for wireless clients .Fast roaming is achieved by caching a derivative of the master key from a full EAP authentication so that a simple and secure key exchange can occur when a wireless client roams to a different access point. This feature prevents the need to perform a full RADIUS EAP authentication as the client roams from one access point to another.

The controller supports CCKM/OKC and PMK caching, the controller takes care of distributing the master key to the AP's. The controller distributes the master key to all the Ap's whose site tag and policy tag are the same, this results in ability to do fast roaming across the AP within the same site. The distribution of the master key is done based on the site tag of the AP site the client initially associates, the controller now find's all the AP's which has a similar site tag and policy tag and pushes the master key on those AP' and thus enabling fast roaming among the AP's.

### Limitation

- The AP in standalone mode can support a maximum of two radius servers, the first server added in the server group acts as the primary. The second radius server acts as a backup for the primary.
- The AP as radius server is supported only on Wave 1 AP's . On 16.10 the EAP method supported for AP as radius server is EAP-LEAP.
- Fast roaming is not supported with default site-tag, if the AP's are mapped to a default site tag then the master key for caching is not shared among those APs.

# **Peer to Peer Blocking**

The Controller supports peer to peer blocking in local switching mode, the configuration for the peer to peer blocking is available while creating the WLAN.

Peer to peer blocking can be configured with any of the following three actions.

- Disabled Disables peer-to-peer blocking and bridged traffic locally within the controller for clients in the same subnet. This is the default value.
- Drop Causes the controller to discard packets for clients in the same subnet.
- Forward Up-Stream Causes the packet to be forwarded on the upstream VLAN. The devices above the controller decide what action to take regarding the packet.

#### Summary

- Peer-to-peer Blocking is configured per WLAN
- Per WLAN, peer-to-peer blocking configuration is pushed by WLC to FlexConnect APs.
- Peer-to-peer blocking action configured as drop or upstream-forward on WLAN is treated as peer-to-peer blocking enabled on FlexConnect AP.

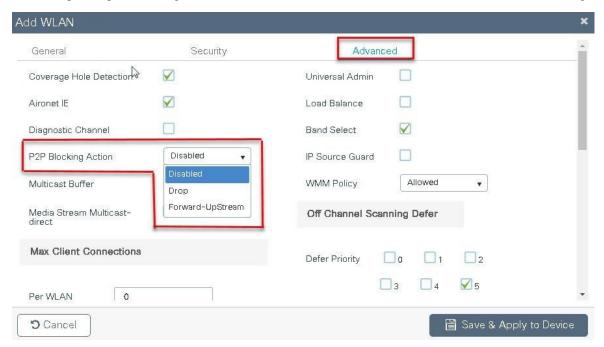
## **Steps**

#### **Procedure**

Refer the steps defined in the advanced config wizard of this document to create an SSID, policies and tags on the controller.

#### Advanced wireless setup wizard

Select the peer to peer blocking action in the advanced tab of the WLAN creation to have the feature configured.



Once the P2P Blocking action is configured on the WLAN configured it is pushed from the WLC to the FlexConnect APs. The config will be retained by the AP when it moves from connected mode to standalone mode.

## FlexConnect ACL

ACL usage on FlexConnect deployment provides a way to cater the need to provide access control at the FlexConnect AP for protection and integrity of locally switched data traffic from the AP. FlexConnect ACLs are created on the WLC and should then be configured with the VLAN on a flex profile which is mapped to a site tag. The site tag gets assigned to an AP. The ACL name can also be returned as part of an attribute from AAA.

## **Summary**

The ACL implementation for branch deployments can be done through the following methods:

- WLAN ACL The ACL applied on the WLAN dot11 interface and is enforced to all the client connecting on that SSID
- WLAN ACL The ACL applied on the WLAN dot11 interface and is enforced to all the client connecting on that SSID
- Client ACL- The ACL returned as part of the AAA attribute and is enforced for the specific client

The ACL for the enforcement needs to be created on the WLC and also needs to be pushed to the Flex AP, the way to push the ACL to the flex AP is using the flex profiles. An administrator can create policy ACL on the flex profile to push the ACL on the AP or use a dummy VLAN to ACL mapping on the flex profile. When a wireless client joins an SSID and an ACL is enforced either through WLAN/VLAN or AAA, the WLC checks if the ACL is also pushed to the AP .If the ACL is not present on the AP the client is moved to exclusion list .

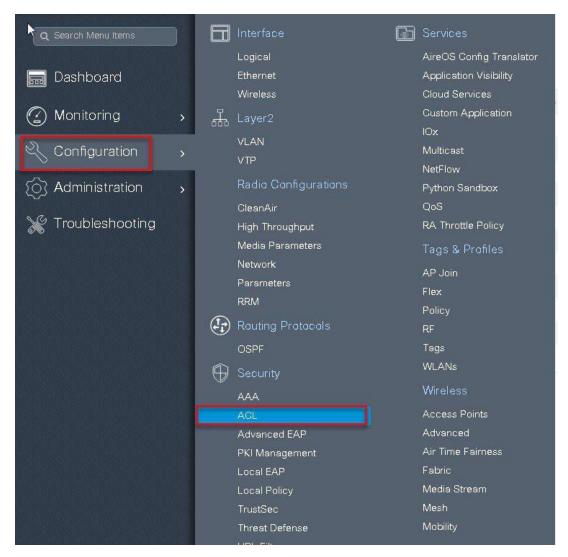
#### **Procedure for WLAN ACL**

Procedure for WLAN ACL

- Create an ACL on the controller.
- Apply the ACL on the respective policy profile for the WLAN
- Now create a flex profile and add a policy ACL and map the corresponding ACL on the flex profile.
- Also add the ACL as part of the policy profile
- Connect the client and validate the ACL works.

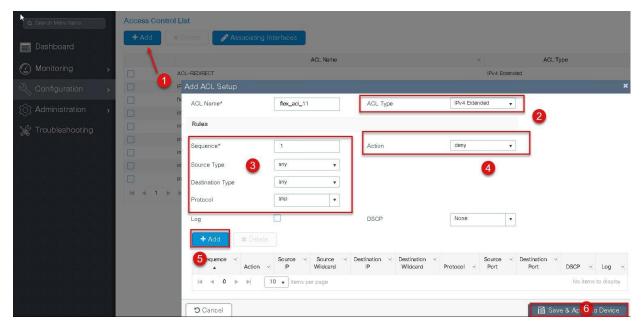
#### **Procedure**

**Step1** Create an ACL on the WLC by navigating to Configuration7 Security 7 ACL.



## **Step 2** Perform the following steps:

- Click on Add to create an ACL, define an ACL name.
- Specify the type of ACL-Standard or Extended
- Define the rules for the ACL
- Specify the action as permit or deny
- Add the ACL rules and save the ACL



- **Step3** Refer the steps in the procedure of advanced configuration wizard for the following:
  - Create a WLAN
  - Creation of policy profile (refer the screenshot below to add the ACL)
  - Policy tag mapping
  - Flex profile (refer the screenshot below to map the ACL using the Policy ACL)
  - Creation of Site Tag
  - Tagging the AP

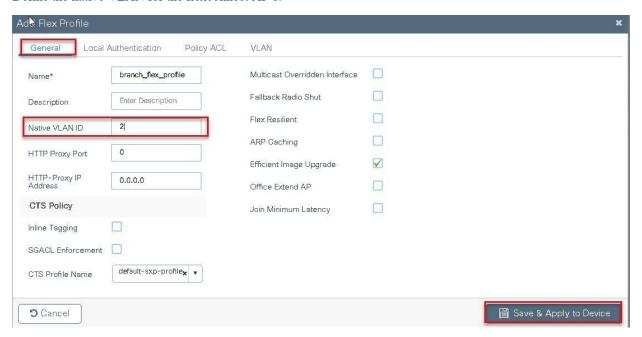
Advanced wireless setup wizard.

The ACL is attached to the WLAN through the policy profile.

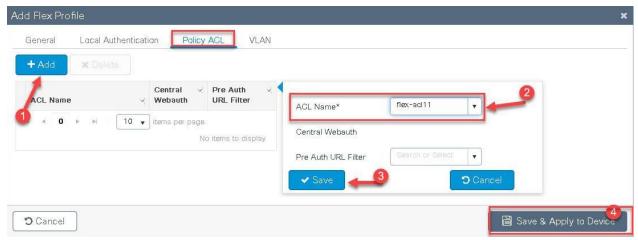
eneral Ad	ccess Policies	QOS and AVC	Mobility	Ac	dvanced	
A	Configuring in enabled	I state will result in loss of o	onnectivity for clients	associated	with this profile.	
Name*	open_v	wlan	WLAN Switch	ing Polic	¥	
Description	Enter D	Description	Central Switchi	ng		
Status	ENABLED		Central Authen	tication	$ \mathbf{Z} $	
Passive Client	DISA	ABLED	Central DHCP			
Encrypted Traffic An	alytics DISA	ABLED	Central Associa	ation		
CTS Policy			Flex NAT/PAT			
Inline Tagging						
SGACL Enforcement						
Default SGT						
	2-655	19.			冒 Save & Apply t	o Devi
Cancel Policy Profile	ccess Policies	QOS and AVC	Mobility		≅ Save & Apply to	o Devi
Policy Profile	ccess Policies					o Devi
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Policy Profile eneral Ac //LAN Local Profiling	ccess Policies		WL IPv	Ac An ACL	lvanced	
Policy Profile Identified Action  CAN Local Profiling  TTP TLV Caching  ADIUS Profiling	ccess Policies		IPv	ACL AN ACL ACL	flex_acl_11	
Policy Profile Identity Profile Identity Profiling ITP TLV Caching ADIUS Profiling ITP TLV Caching	ccess Palicies		IPvi	ACL FACL ACL Filters	flex_acl_11	
Policy Profile  Jeneral Ac  JAN Local Profiling  TTP TLV Caching  ADIUS Profiling  HCP TLV Caching  Jecal Subscriber Policy	ccess Palicies	QOS and AVC	IPve IPve UR	ACL ACL Filters	flex_acl_11  Search or Select  Search or Select	
Policy Profile  Jeneral Active Profiling  ILAN Local Profiling  ADIUS Profiling  HCP TLV Caching  Jean Subscriber Policy  LAN	ccess Palicies	QOS and AVC	IPve IPve UR	ACL FACL ACL Filters	flex_acl_11  Search or Select	
Cancel Policy Profile	ccess Palicies	QOS and AVC	IPve IPve UR	ACL ACL Filters	flex_acl_11  Search or Select  Search or Select	

 $\textbf{Step 4} \qquad \text{Assign the ACL on the Flex profile , by mapping the VLAN and ACL.}$ 

Define the native VLAN for the flexconnect AP's.

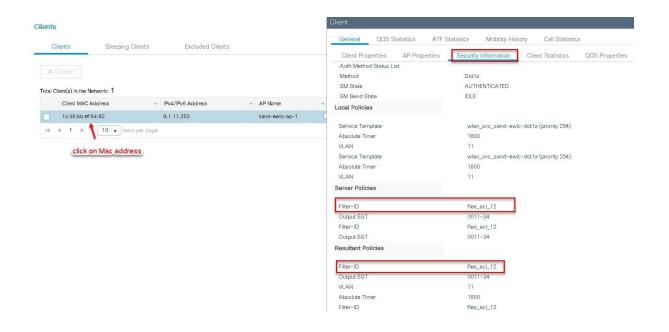


**Step 5** Push the ACL to AP by using the Policy ACL configuration on the flex profile .



**Step6** Verification on the controller.

Navigate to Monitoring > Wireless > Clients

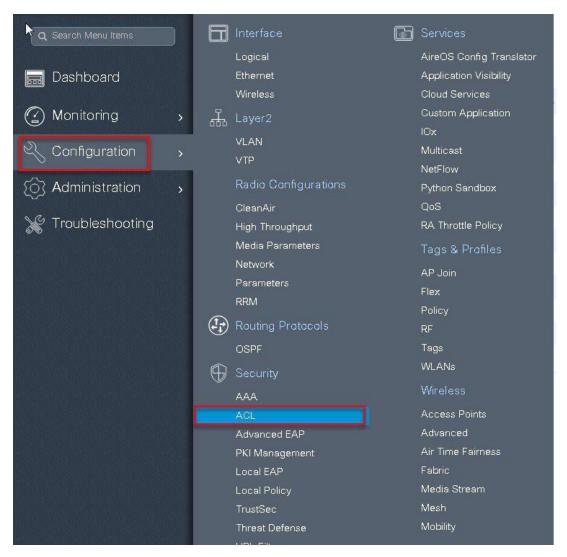


#### **Procedure for VLAN ACL**

- Create an ACL on the controller.
- Create a flex profile and add a VLAN mapped to the WLAN.
- Map the ACL on the VLAN interface.
- Connect the client and validate the ACL works.

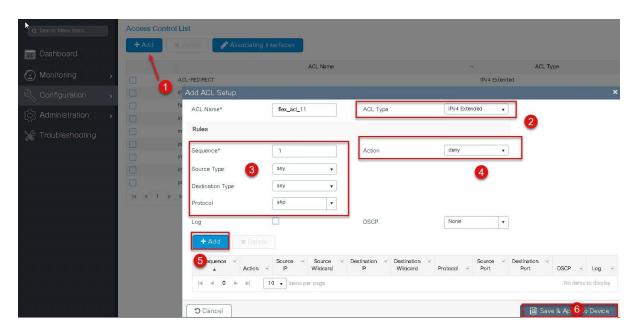
#### **Procedure**

**Step1** Create an ACL on the WLC by navigating to Configuration > Security > ACL.



### **Step2** Perform the steps below:

- Click on Add to create an ACL, define an ACL name.
- Specify the type of ACL Standard or Extended
- Define the rules for the ACL
- Specify the action as permit or deny
- Add the ACL rules and save the ACL

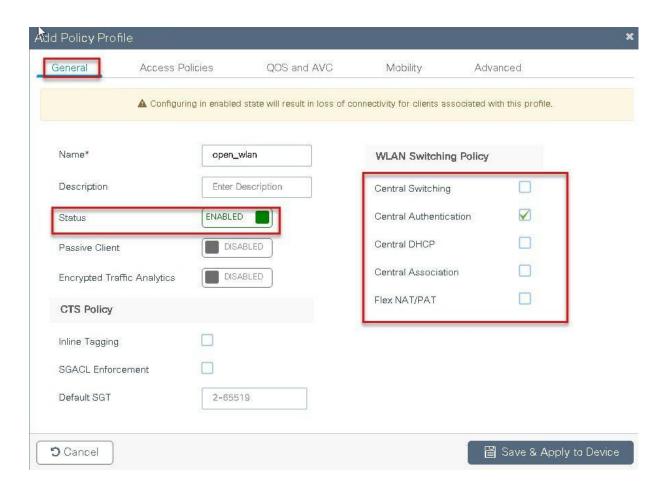


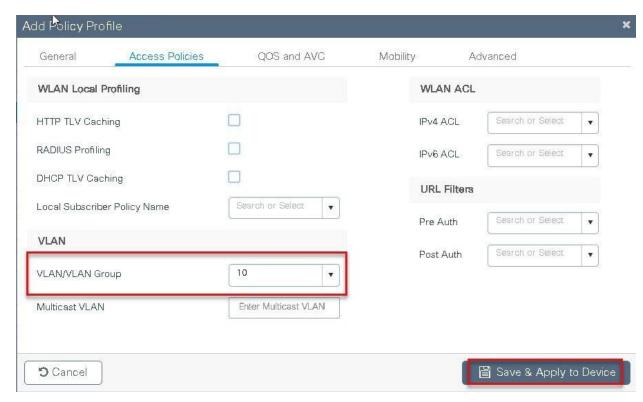
## **Step3** Refer the steps in the procedure of advanced configuration wizard for the following:

- Create a WLAN
- Creation of policy profile
- Policy tag mapping
- Flex profile creation
- Creation of Site Tag
- Tagging the AP

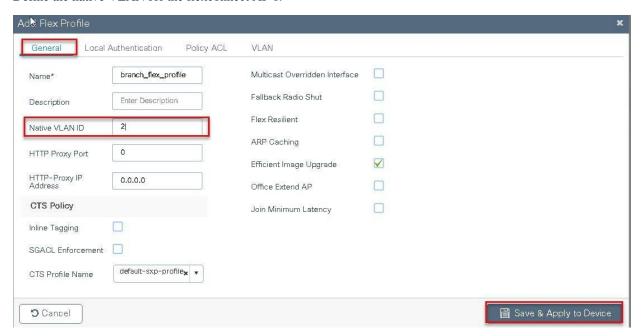
Advanced wireless setup wizard

The ACL is attached to the WLAN through the policy profile.





**Step 4** Assign the ACL on the Flex profile, by mapping the VLAN and ACL. Define the native VLAN for the flexconnect AP's.



**Step5** Define the VLAN and ACL mapping on the flex profile.



### Client ACL overview

- This feature allows application of Per-Client ACL for locally switching WLANs.
- Client ACL is returned from the AAA server on successful Client authentication.
- The AP needs to be provisioned with the ACL by using the policy ACL or dummy vlan acl mapping on the flex profile.
- The ACL will be pushed to all the AP's that has the same site tag and policy tag mapped.
- In the case of central authentication, when the controller receives the ACL from the AAA server, it will send the ACL name to the AP for the client. For locally authenticated clients, the ACL name will be sent from the AP to the controller as part of CCKM/PMK cache, which will then be distributed to all APs belonging to the same site tag and policy tag.

### **Procedure for Client ACL**

- Create an ACL on the controller
- Create a Dot1x based SSID
- Enable AAA override on the policy profile
- Return the ACL name as part of the AAA access-accept from AAA

For the creation of ACL refer the steps in the WLAN ACL use case .Refer the step5 in the WLAN ACL section to push the ACL on to the AP.

Procedure for WLAN ACL

For creating a dot1x WLAN and enabling AAA override, refer the procedure section of the VLAN override Use case

Flexconnect VLAN override

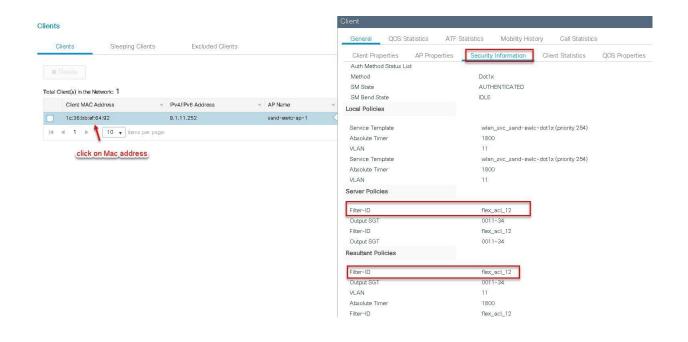
#### **Procedure**

**Step1** Authorization profile on ISE for returning ACL as a AAA attribute.

Authorization Profiles > san	d-acl
Authorization Profile	
* Name	sand-acl
Description	
* Access Type	ACCESS_ACCEPT ▼
Network Device Profile	rese Cisco ▼ ⊕
Service Template	
Track Movement	
Passive Identity Tracking	
▼ Common Tasks	
DACL Name	
Carrier to the service	
ACL (Filter-ID)	flex_acl_12 in
Security Group	
= occurry or oup	
□ VLAN	
▼ Advanced Attribut	tes Settinas
Select an item	© - 4
▼ Attributes Details	
Access Type = ACCESS_ Filter-ID = flex_acl_12.in	ACCEPT
Save Reset	

**Step2** verification of ACL getting enforced on the AP and WLC .

Navigate to Monitor > wireless > Clients



#### Limitations

- The use of downloadable ACL is not supported on flex connect local switching, downloadable ACL are only supported for central switching.
- In case of central authentication if an ACL is returned from the AAA server but the corresponding ACL is not present on the AP, the client will be excluded with the reason as ACL failure.
- In case of the Local authentication the client will be Deauthenticated continuously

# **AP Pre-Image Download**

This feature allows the AP to download code while it is operational. The AP pre-image download is extremely useful in reducing the network downtime during software maintenance or upgrades. For the AP preimage download to work the controller should be install mode of operation. If the controller is running in bundle mode, first have it converted to install mode before proceeding to AP pre-image download.

## **Summary**

- Ease of software management
- Schedule per branch updates: NCS or Cisco Prime is needed to accomplish this.
- · Reduces downtime

### **Procedure**

#### **Procedure**

**Step1** Copy the image on the controller flash and the add the file using the install command.

```
wlc-2#install add file bootflash:wlc9500C-universalk9.BLD V1610 THROTTLE 010435.SSA.bin
```

The install file command runs base compatibility checks on a file to ensure that the package is supported on the platform. It also adds an entry in the package, so that its status can be monitored and maintained.

**Step2** Once the file is added, the image can be pushed to the Ap using the following CLI:

```
"ap image predownload"
```

```
wic-2/ap image pulc-2/ap image pulc-2/ap image pulc-2/ap image predownload wic-2/ap image predownload image pulc-2/ap image predownload image predownloading image predownloading image predownloading image predownloading image predownload version Next Retry Time Response predownload image predownloading image predownl
```

Once the download is completed on the AP, issue the following CLI to swap the image and reset the AP.

- · ap image swap
- ap image reset

**Step3** After the AP has been reset, using the following CLI to activate the image on the controller.

#### "Install Activate"

The Install activate runs compatibility checks, installs the package, and updates the package status details. For a non-restartable packages it triggers a reload. The systems will prompt for saving the config and a reboot during the process . Please input the response to save the config and reboot the WLC.

**Step 4** Once the systems is rebooted use the following CLI to have the changes persist across reboot.

#### "Install Commit"

Commits the activation changes to be persistent across reloads The commit can be done after activation while the system is up, or after the first reload. If a package is activated but not committed, it remains active after the first reload, but not after the second reload.

### Limitation

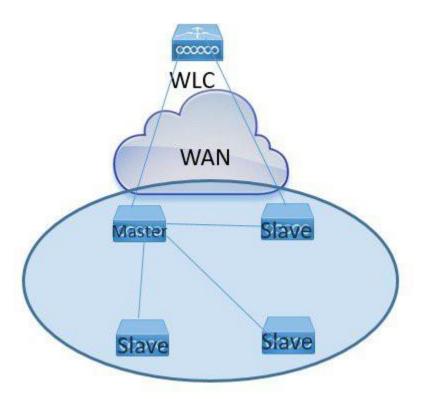
The Controller needs to be install mode for the AP pre-image to work, if a controller works in bundle mode it needs to be converted to install mode. Please refer cisco.com for the conversion for bundle mode to install mode.

# FlexConnect Smart AP Image Upgrade

The pre-image download feature reduces the downtime duration to a certain extent, but still all the FlexConnect APs have to pre-download the respective AP images over the WAN link with higher latency.

Efficient AP Image Upgrade will reduce the downtime for each FlexConnect AP. The basic idea is only one AP of each AP model will download the image from the controller and will act as Master/Server, and the rest of the APs of the same model will work as

Slave/Client and will pre-download the AP image from the master. The distribution of AP image from the server to the client will be on a local network and will not experience the latency of the WAN link. As a result, the process will be faster.



## **Summary**

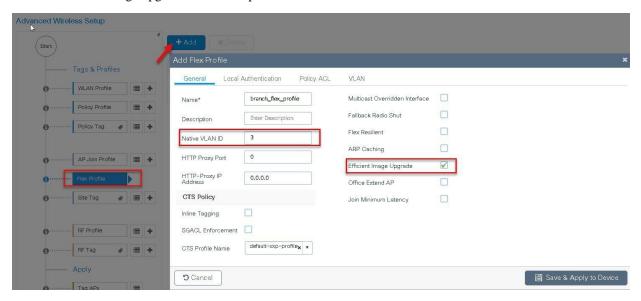
- Master and Slave APs are selected for each AP Model per site tag
- Master downloads image from WLC
- Slave downloads image from Master AP using tftp
- Reduces downtime and saves WAN bandwidth
- The master is choosen by the system, the AP with the lowest mac among the same type and model is to become a master

## **Procedure**

### **Procedure**

**Step 1** For steps to create a flex profile and to have it applied on the AP , refer the steps in the Advanced config wizard of the document at Advanced wireless setup wizard

Enable smart AP image upgrade on the flex profile.



**Step 2** Download the image on the controller as outlined in step1 of the AP image pre-download process. Issue the CLI below to initiate the smart ap image upgrade and also to see the master AP elected for a given type of AP and the also master downloading image from the controller.

#### AP Pre-Image Download

```
ap image predownload site-tag <site_name> start
```

It is important to give the site tag and start the pre-image download process as this would initiate the smart AP image upgrade process, if the site tag is not specified the download falls back to the normal pre-image download process.

```
| Number of APs | Intiated | Predownloading | Operating | Predownloading | Operating | Ope
```

- **Step3** After the image predownload on the AP is completed, follow the sequence below:
  - Swap the AP image and reset the AP using the CLI "ap image swap" and "ap image reset"
  - Activate the image using the "Install activate" CLI
  - During the activation the WLC will go for a reboot, use the CLI install Commit to persist the changes across reboot

## Limitation

The system decides on the election of a master AP and the decision on who the master is decided when the smart AP image download process is initiated. Once the decision is made any AP that joins after and which has a lower mac will not alter or change the master AP already elected.

# Flexconnect Pre-auth ACL and URL filtering

The URL filtering is an extension to the ACL deployments current in place, with the addition of URL filtering the ACL can accept internet domain names in addition to the existing IP address rules. The Flexconnect deployments supports the LWA, CWA and BYOD flow. The LWA refers to the local web authentication done on the WLC while the CWA refers to the guest authentication done on the identity service engine. The BYOD flow requires access to the play store for downloading the supplicant for which URL filters can be used. The use for URL filter can also be extended to CMX connect social login where the authentication happens on the social network site.

## **Summary**

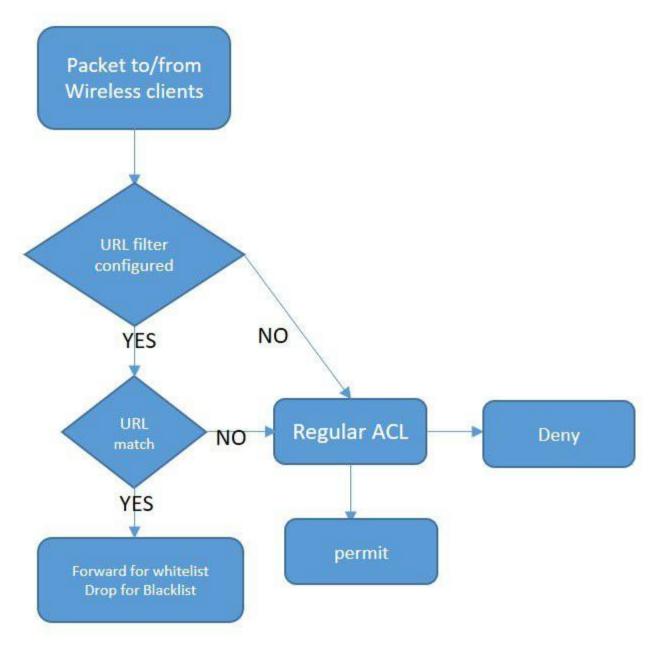
Pre-auth ACL refers to a state when a wireless client would require access to resources prior to getting authenticated. In case of the LWA/CWA or BYOD the client might require access to resources before getting full access into the network. The URL filtering for flex is supported only on the Wave 2 platforms. The url filtering follows a whitelist and black list model of working, the administrator can specify up to 20 URLS within a URL filter. The URL filter supports wild card matching to support sub URL matching.

For e.g.:

URL type	Definition
cisco*	match any URL that starts with Cisco
*cisco.com	match any URL that ends in cisco.com
www.cisco.com	match the exact string

The URL filtering ACL works along with a regular ACL, to have the URL ACL pushed to a flex AP it needs to be linked with a regular ACL in the flex profile. The URL ACL works by snooping the DNS transaction between the DNS client and a DNS server, for flex deployment the DNS snooping is performed on the AP for each client. With snooping in place, AP learns the IP address of

the resolved domain name in the DNS response. If the domain name matches the configured URL, then the DNS response is parsed for the IP address, and the IP address is mapped in the ACL for locally switched traffic. The rules created from DNS parsing has a permit or deny based on the URL filtering rules which is either white listing or blacklisting. When a packet from or to a client traverses through the AP, the DNS rules are processed first before proceeding with the regular ACL processing. The URL filtering is optional configuration on the LWA and CWA flow.

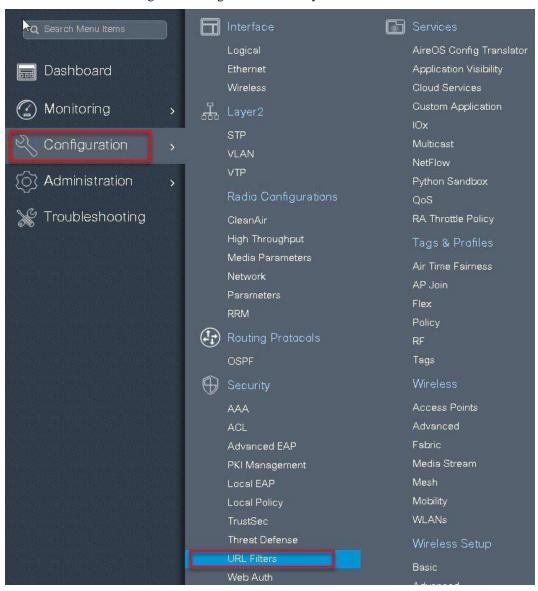


### LWA flow with URL filter

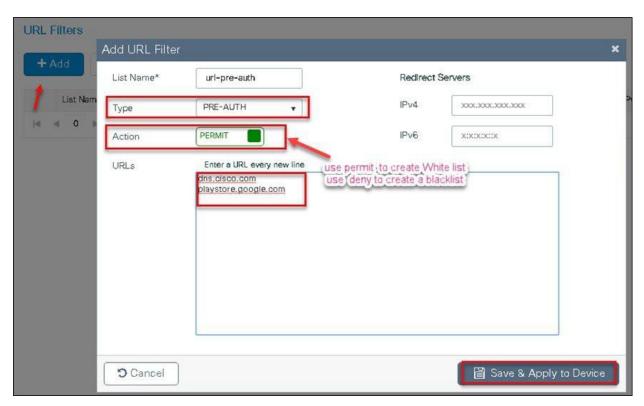
This section describes the steps to set up LWA with pre-auth ACL and URL filter, for the local web authentication the pre-auth ACL and URL filtering is optional.

#### **Procedure**

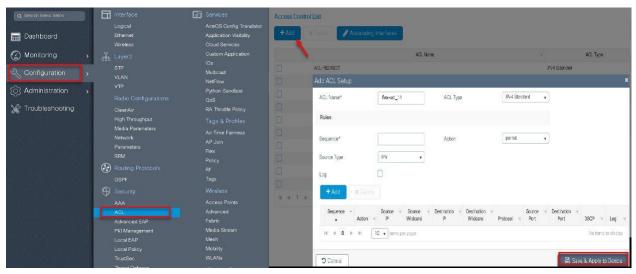
**Step1** To create a URL filter navigate to Configuration > security and URL filters.



**Step 2** Create a URL filter.

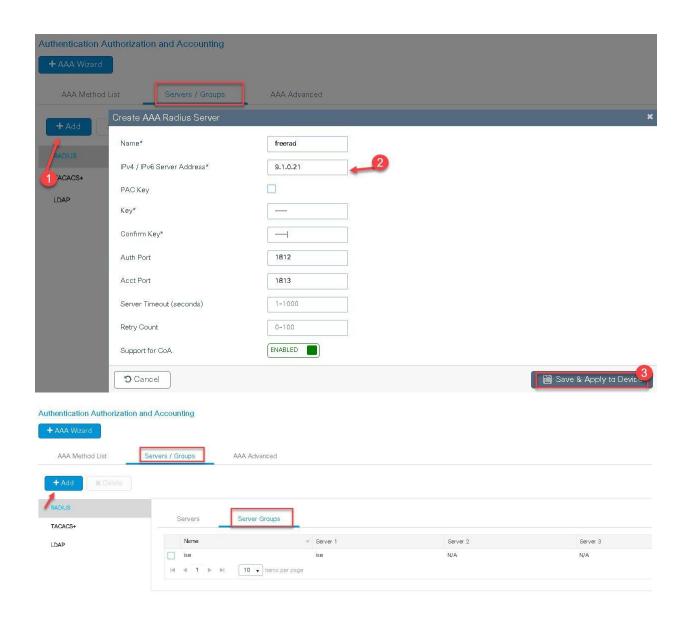


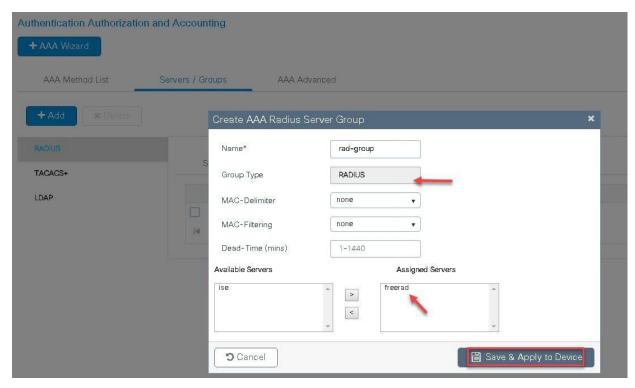
**Step3** Create an ACL on the WLC to link with the URL ACL.

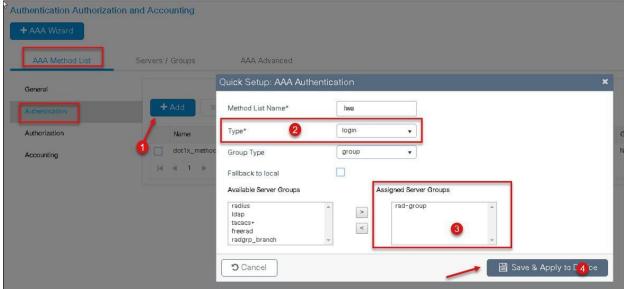


**Step 4** Create an Authentication list on the WLC to be used on the LWA WLAN. The authentication list can point to a Radius server or can do a local lookup.

Navigate to Configuration > Security > AAA

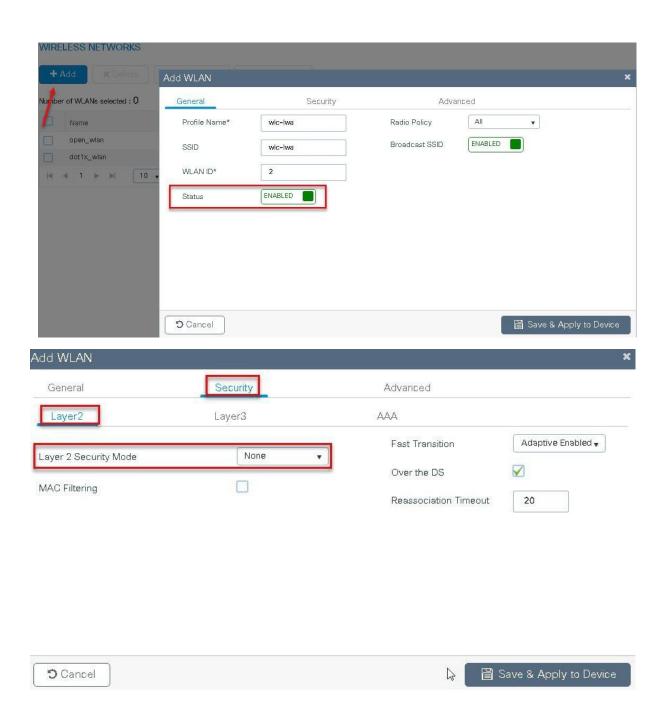






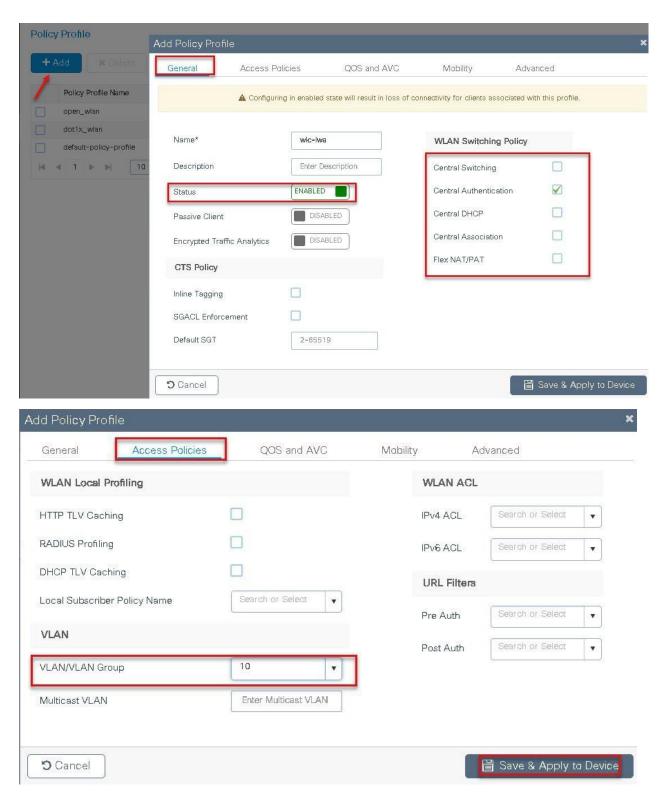
**Step 5** Create a WLAN to local web-authentication flow.

Navigate to Configuration > Tags& profiles > WLAN.



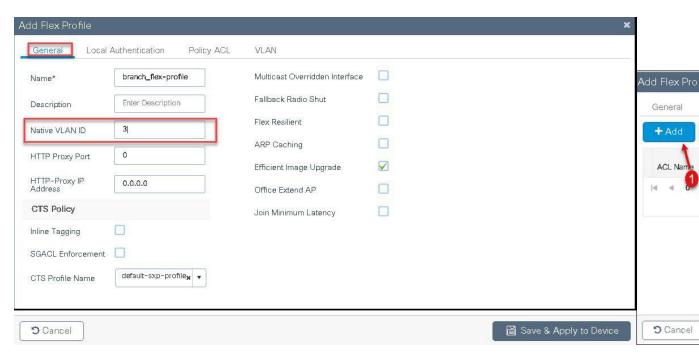
Add WLAN				×
General	Security	Advanced		
Layer2	Layer3	AAA		
Web Policy		Show Advanced Settings >	>>	
Webauth Parameter Map	global ▼		Advanced	
Authentication List	lwa  ▼	_		
For Local Login Method List to make sure the configuration 'a network default local' exists o	ai.			
<b>5</b> Cancel		1		ice
Add WLAN				
	, S.			
Web Policy	$\mathbf{Z}$	<< Hide On Mac Filter Failure		
Webauth Parameter Map	global	Conditional Web Redirect	DISABLED	
Authentication List	[Iwa ]	Splash Web Redirect	DISABLED	
For Local Login Method List make sure the configuration network default local' exists	'aaa authorization	Preauthentication ACL	2 2	ļ,
		IPv4	flex_acl_11 ▼	]
		IPv6	none 🔻	
<b>5</b> Cancel			冒 Save & Apply to	В :

**Step6** Create a policy profile.



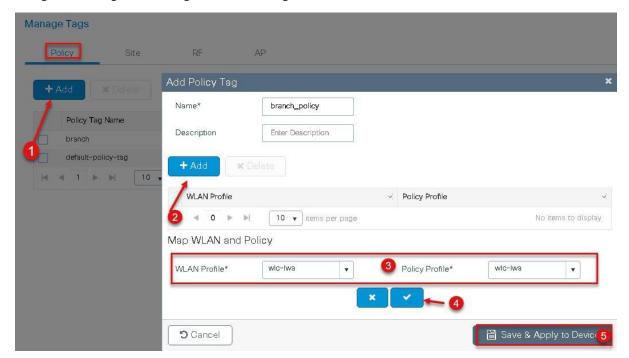
**Step7** Create a flex profile.

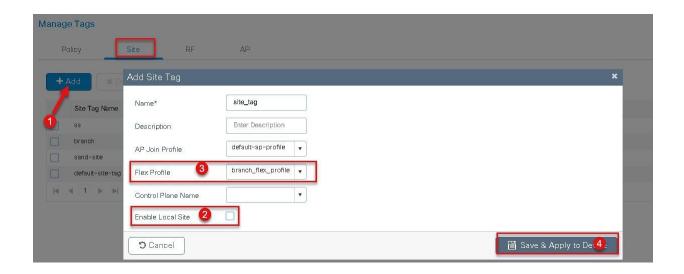
Navigate to Configuration > Tags & Profiles > Flex



**Step8** Create a Site tag mapping the policy tag and flex profile.

Navigate to Configuration > Tags & Profiles > Tags





**Step 9** Map the tags on the AP, Once the AP's are tagged with a policy profile the AP 's will reboot due to conversion from local mode to flex-connect mode.

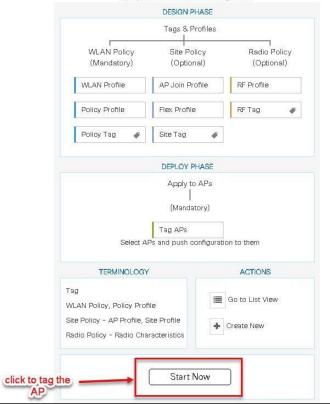
If the AP's are already in flex mode, the reboot wouldn't be triggered.

Navigate to Configuration > Wireless Setup > Advanced

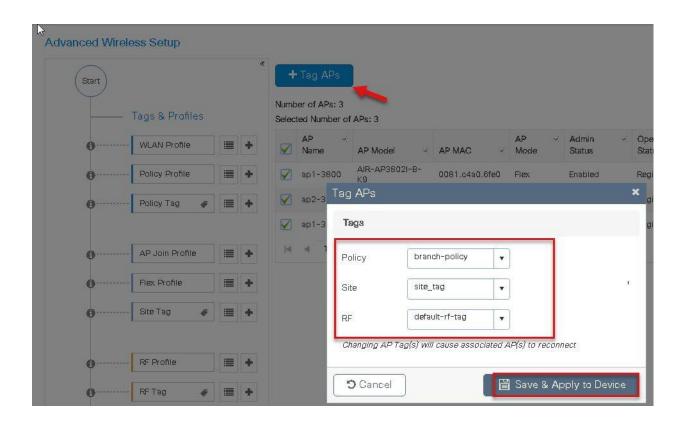
#### Advanced Wireless Setup

#### Wireless Setup Flow Overview

This screen allows you to design Wireless LAN Configuration. It involves creating Policies and Tags. Once the design is completed, they can be deployed to the Access Points right here.



Advanced Wireless Set



## **CWA flow on Flex**

This section describes the steps to set up CWA with URL filter, for CWA flow the URL filter is optional.

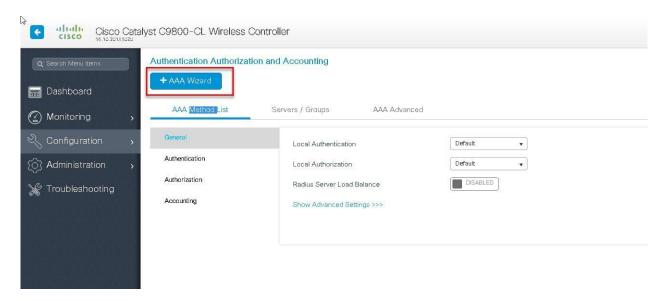
- Create a server and server group for mac auth and AAA attributes
- Create an authorization list on the controller
- Create a MAB SSID and map the authorization list on the SSID
- Create a redirect ACL and a URL filter(optional) on the controller
- Bind the URL filter and ACL on the flex profile
- $\bullet \ Create \ an \ Authorization \ profile \ on \ ISE \ to \ return \ Cisco \ AV \ pair \ of \ url-redirect \ and \ url-redirect-acl \ .$

#### **Procedure**

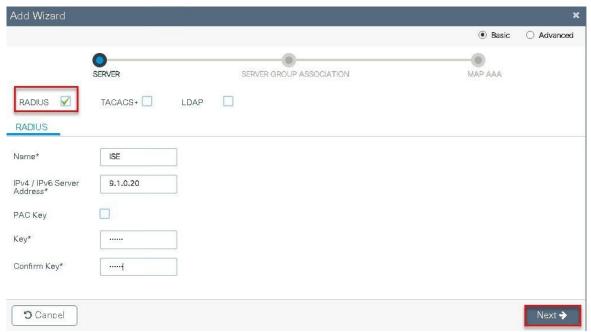
**Step1** Create an Authentication and Authorization list on the WLC.

Navigate to Configuration > Security > AAA.

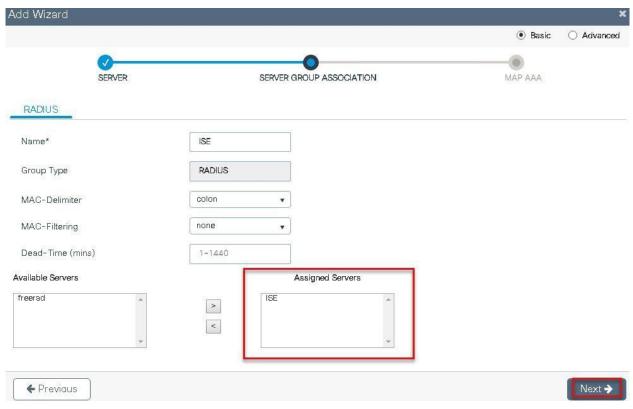
Use the AAA wizard to create the server and server groups.



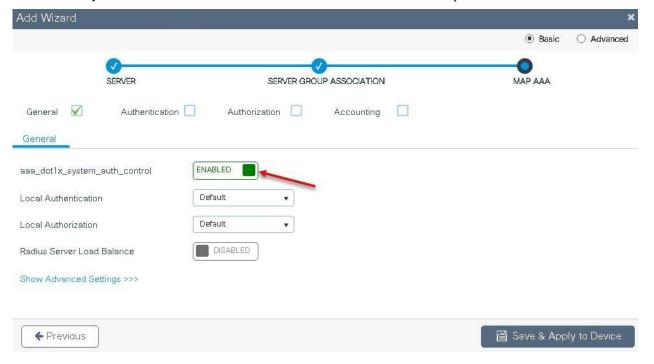
**Step2** Define a name for the server and specify the IP address and shared secret.



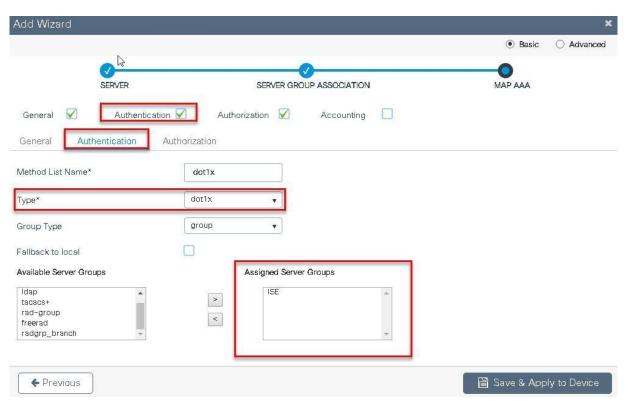
**Step3** Create a server group and map the server in the group.



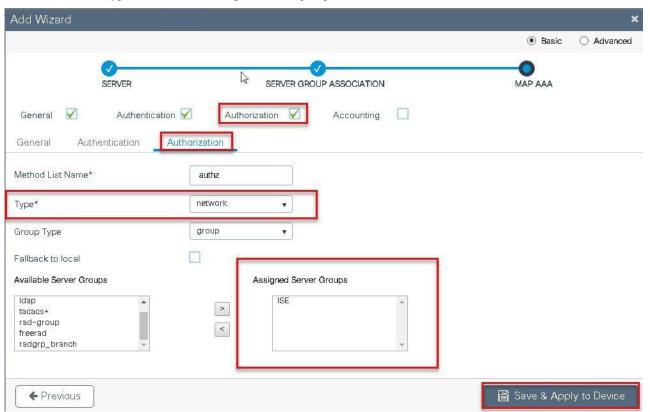
**Step 4** Enable dot1x system control and check mark the authentication and Authorization profile.



**Step5** Define the method type as Dot1x and map the server group.

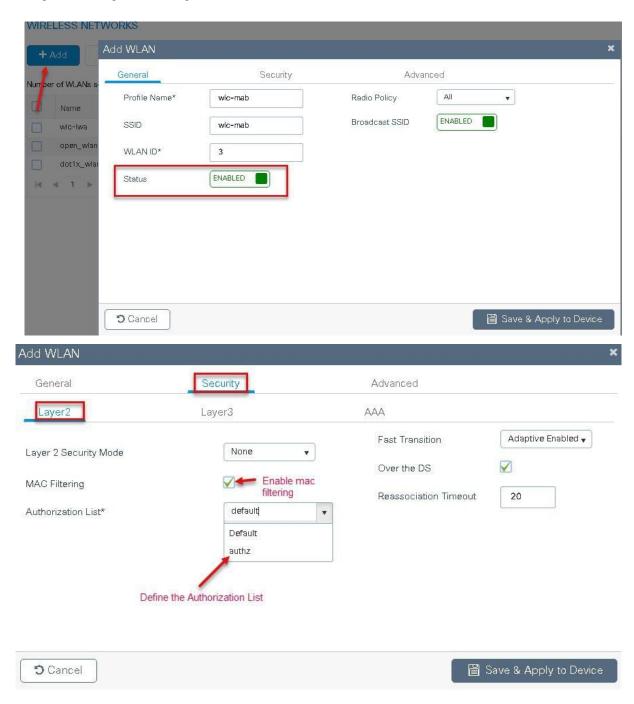


**Step 6** Define the method type as network and map the server group.



## **Step7** Create a MAB SSID and map the authorization method list.

Navigate to Configuration > Tags & Profiles > WLAN.

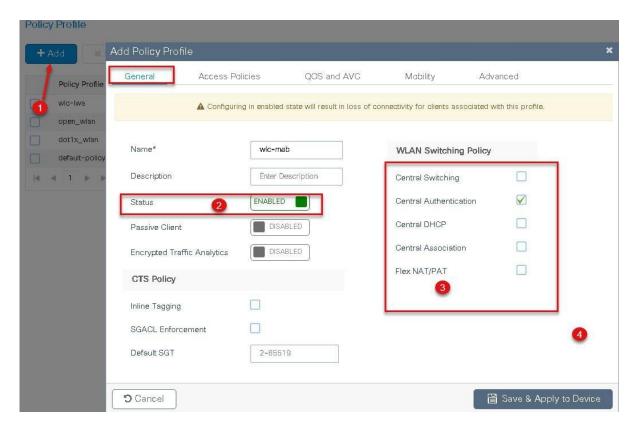


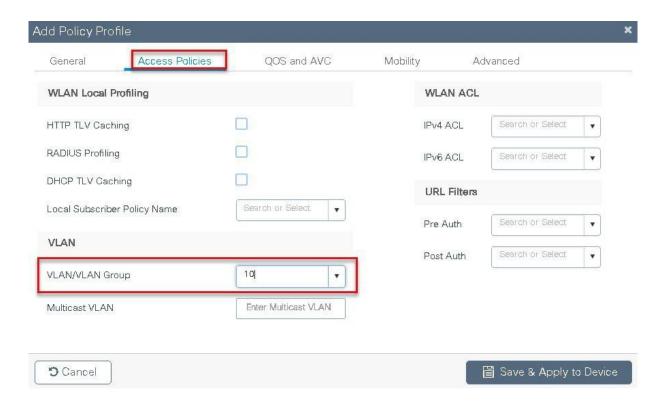
## **Step 8** Enable the following on the policy profile.

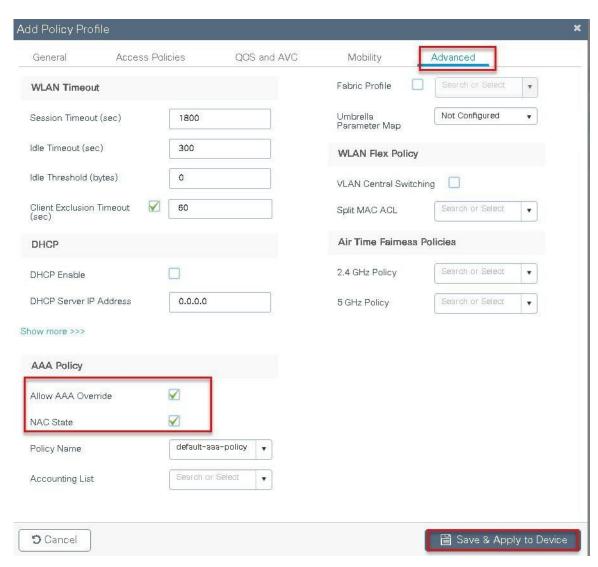
- Local VLAN present on the AP (mapped in the flex profile)
- AAA override

#### • NAC

Navigate to Configuration > Tags & Profiles > policy.

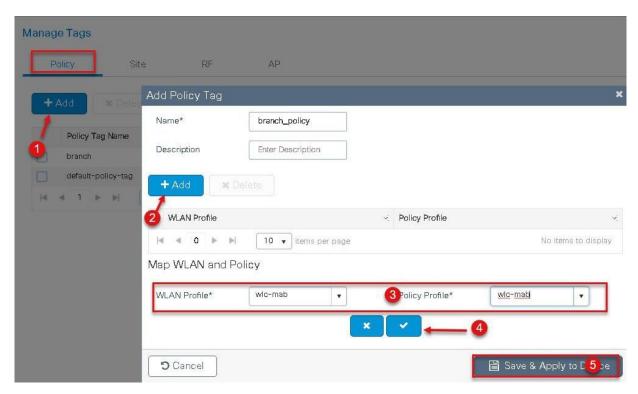






 $\textbf{Step 9} \qquad \quad \text{Map the policy profile to the WLAN in the policy tag} \; .$ 

Navigate to configuration > tags and profiles > tags



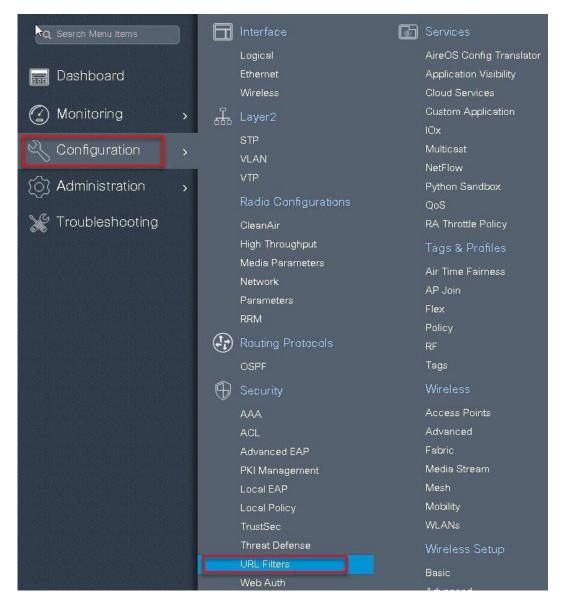
Step 10 Create a redirect ACL and an optional URL filter. The option to create a URL filter depends on access to resources during the pre-auth phase.

To create a redirect ACL use the CLI on the controller. Have the rules created as shown below:

```
ip access-list extended ACL-REDIRECT
remark adding "DNS ACCESS"
deny udp any any eq domain
remark adding "DHCP ACCESS"
deny udp any eq bootps any
deny udp any eq bootps any
deny udp any any eq bootps
remark adding "ISE ACCESS"
deny ip any host 9.1.0.20
deny ip host 9.1.0.20 any
remark adding "rules for redirection"
permit tcp any any eq www
permit tcp any any eq 443

Punt ACL rules for redirection
```

To create a URL filter navigate to Configuration > security and URL filters.



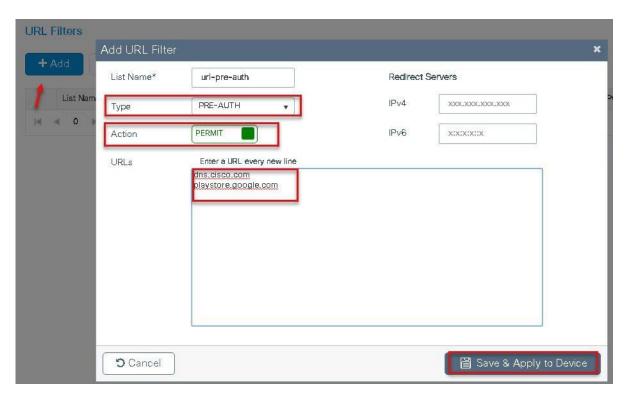
#### **Step11** Create a URL filter.

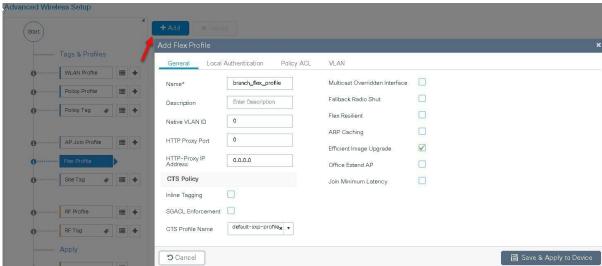
Permit action creates a whitelist while the deny action creates a blacklist.

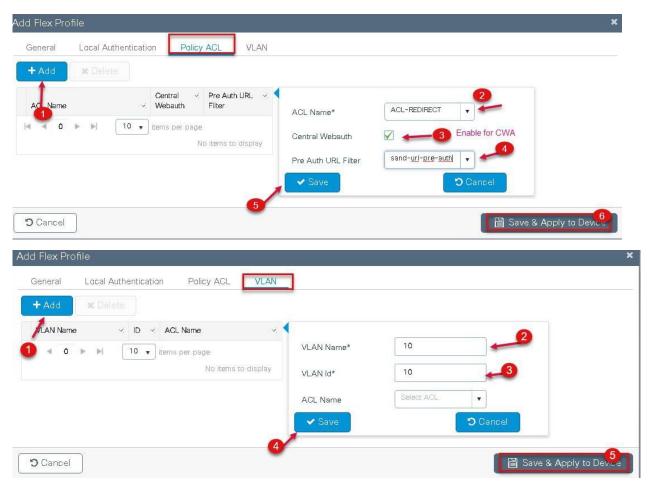
**Step 12** Enable the following on the flex profile.

Navigate to configuration > tags and profiles > flex.

- Local VLAN need to be configured
- ACL and URL filter needs to be mapped

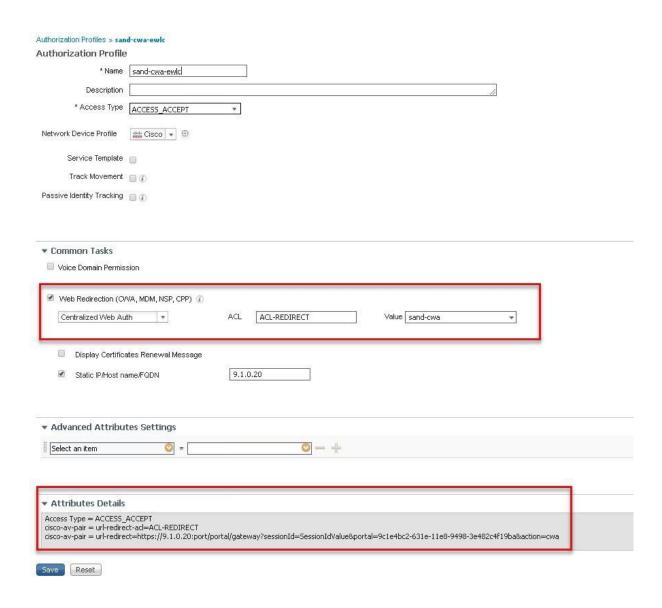






- **Step 13** For assigning the flex profile on the site tag and mapping it on the AP, refer the steps in the advanced configuration wizard of this document.
- **Step 14** Create an Authorization profile and rule on ISE to return the CWA attributes.

For more details on ISE rules and configuration, please refer the deployment guide.



https://www.cisco.com/c/en/us/support/docs/security/identity-services-engine/115732-central-web-auth-00.html#anc6

### Limitation

- The URL filter is only supported on wave 2 AP's and is not supported on wave 1 APs.
- Post Auth support for URL filter is not supported for local switched clients.

# **Client Association Limit per WLAN/AP**

The Client limit per WLAN features address the requirement when an administrator would want to restrict the number of the clients accessing the wireless service For example, limiting total Guest Clients from branch tunneling back to the Data Center.

# **Summary**

The controller supports limiting the number of client associations in the following ways.

Per WLAN basis-here the client association are limited on a per WLAN basis

Per AP Per WLAN-here the client Association are limited on a per WLAN per AP basis

Per AP radio per WLAN-Client association limited on a per radio per WLAN basis

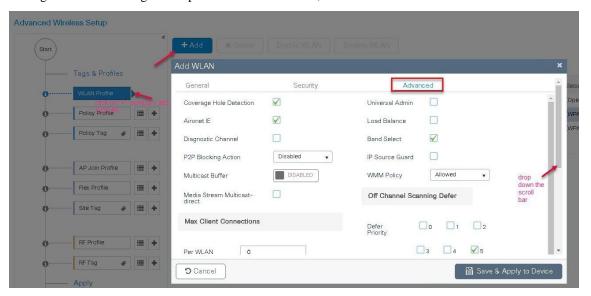
### **Procedure**

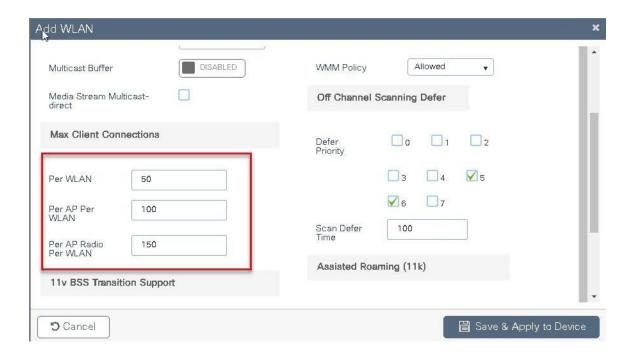
To enable a WLAN please refer the section of setting up the WLAN in the advanced config wizard of this document.

Advanced wireless setup wizard

#### **Procedure**

During the WLAN configuration phase enable the feature,





## **Limitations**

This feature does not enforce client limit when the Flex Connect is in Standalone state of operation.

### **Fault Tolerance**

FlexConnect Fault Tolerance allows wireless access and services to branch clients when:

- FlexConnect Branch APs lose connectivity with the primary controller.
- FlexConnect Branch APs are switching to the secondary controller.
- FlexConnect Branch APs are re-establishing connection to the primary controller.

FlexConnect Fault Tolerance, along with Local authentication on Flex Connect AP provide zero branch downtime during a network outage. This feature is enabled by default and cannot be disabled. It requires no configuration on the controller or AP. To ensure Fault Tolerance to works smoothly both the controller needs to have identical config such as:

- Wlan config and policy profile
- AP join profile/ flex profile
- RF profile and RF tag
- Site tag

The management IP address of the controller can be different, an administrator can take a backup config of the primary controller and have it installed on the secondary controller to maintain config consistency.

### **Summary**

- FlexConnect will not disconnect clients when the AP is connecting back to the same controller provided there is no change in configuration on the controller.
- FlexConnect will not disconnect clients when connecting to the backup controller provided there is no change in configuration and the backup controller is identical to the primary controller.
- FlexConnect will not reset its radios on connecting back to the primary controller provided there is no change in configuration on the controller.
- Supported on both Wave1 and Wave 2 AP's.

#### Limitations

- Supported only for FlexConnect with Central/Local Authentication with Local Switching.
- Centrally authenticated clients require full re-authentication if the client session timer expires before the FlexConnect AP switches from Standalone to Connected mode.
- FlexConnect primary and backup controllers must be in the same mobility domain.

# VideoStream for FlexConnect Local Switching

### Introduction

This feature enables the wireless architecture to deploy multicast video streaming across the branches, just like it is currently possible for enterprise deployments. This feature recompenses the drawbacks that degrade the video delivery as the video streams and clients scale in a branch network. VideoStream makes video multicast to wireless clients more reliable and facilitates better usage of wireless bandwidth in the branch.

On a traditional WLAN networks multicast and broadcast is send out over the wireless medium at the lowest data rate with no acknowledgement and the packet delivery for such streams are on a best effort basis . This makes the usage of multicast unreliable on a WLAN network . The usage of multicast for delivering critical application has become a demand and need of the hour. There is also a need to differentiate multiple streams and assign priority and weightage based on the applications supported. With the adoption of 802.11ac and the data rates supported it is possible to deliver multicast streams using the data rates available on 11ac with reliability and priority built in.

### **Summary**

- VideoStream provides efficient bandwidth utilization by removing the need to broadcast multicast packets to all WLANs on the AP
- Supported on Wave 1 and Wave 2 AP's
- Supported for flexconnect local switching and Central authentication
- With video stream in flex connect local switching the multicast to unicast conversion happens on the AP
- The branch infrastructure should have multicast enabled
- · Admission control is currently not supported

• IPv6 support for media stream is not supported

The section below details the procedure for configuring media stream from the controller. It is expected the branch network is enabled for multicast. Please refer the cisco.com on enabling multicast on the switching platforms.

Please ensure the following multicast features are enabled on the network.

- Multicast routing protocol PIM sparse/dense mode
- IGMP version 2 or 3
- IGMP snooping

This section doesn't cover enabling multicast on the infrastructure rather on the wireless controller.

### **Procedure for enabling Video Stream**

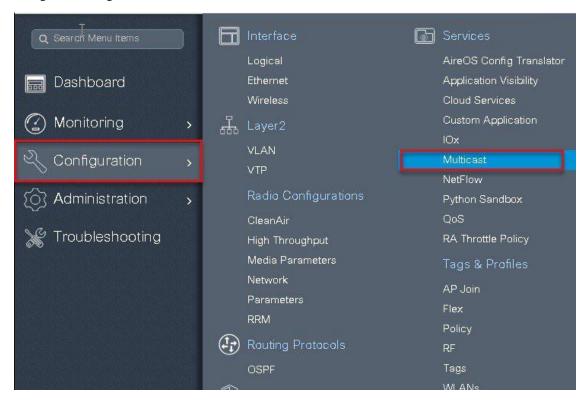
: The steps here includes only the changes to enable video stream

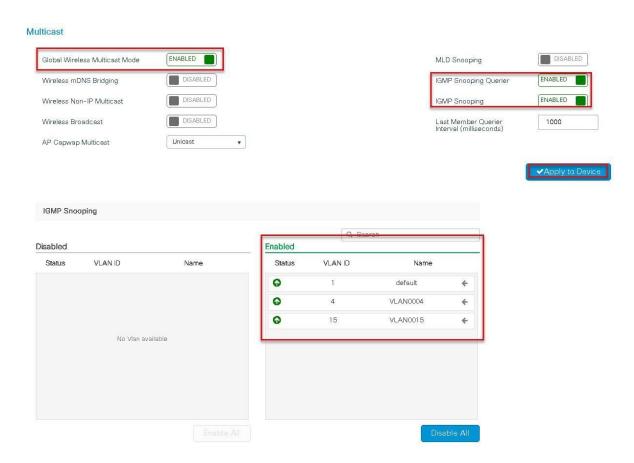
The advanced configuration section can be used to set up the SSID, profiles and tags. The section below details the configuration of media stream on the 5Ghz radio.

#### **Procedure**

**Step1** Enable multicast globally on the controller.

Navigate to configuration > services > Multicast



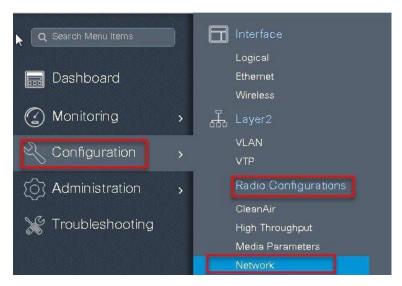


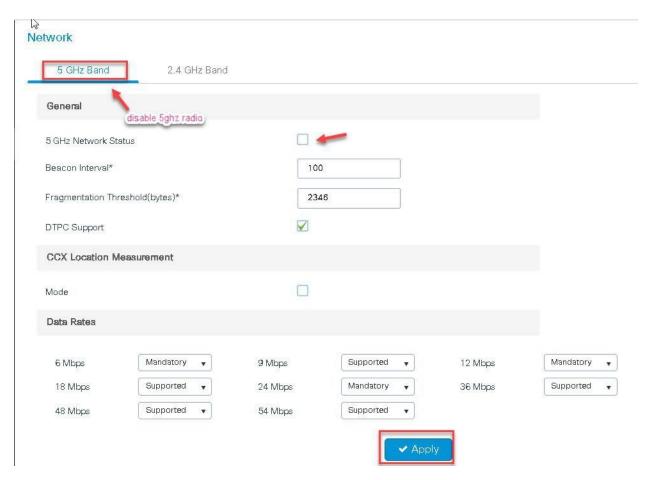
#### **Step 2** Enable media stream on the Dot11 interface.

Disable the appropriate radio interface before enabling the media stream

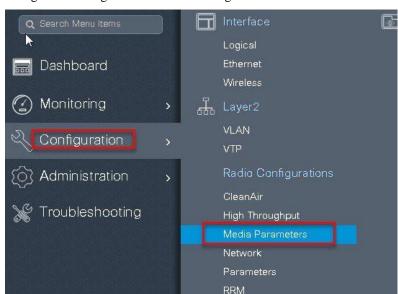
Navigate to Configuration > Radio Configurations > Network.

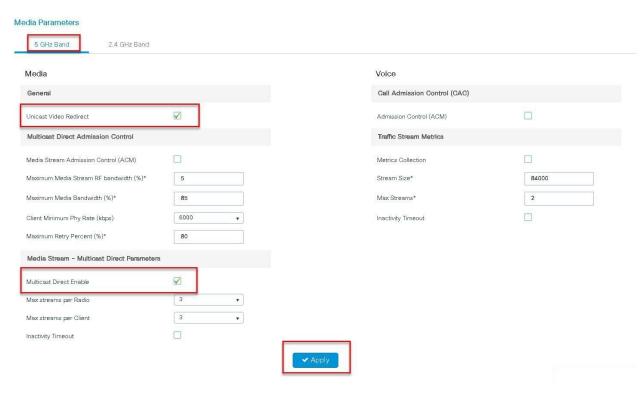
Disable 5ghz or 2.4 ghz radio, in this example we are enabling media stream on 5ghz radio.



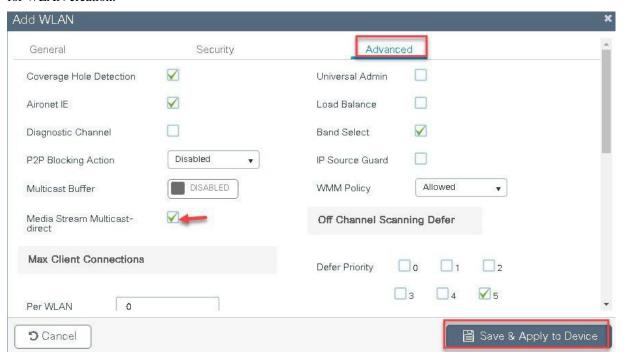


### **Step3** Navigate to Configuration > Radio Configurations > Media Parameters



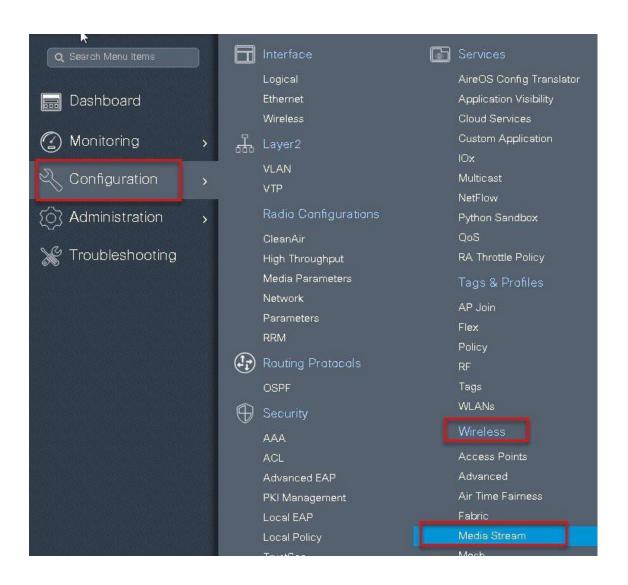


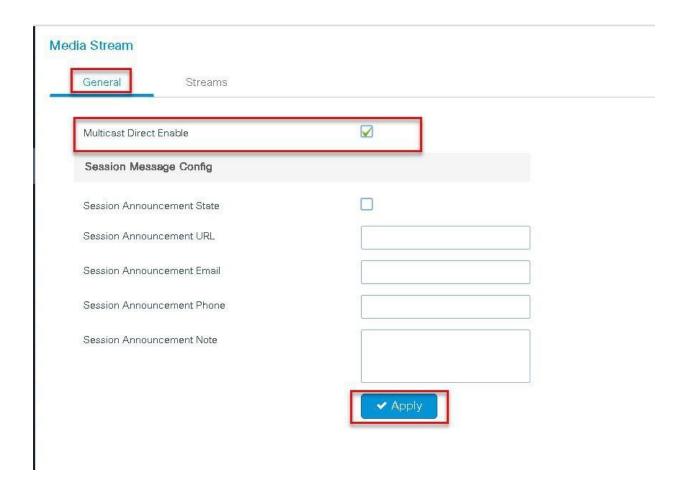
**Step 4** Enable media stream on the WLAN creation page on the advanced TAB, Refer the advanced configuration wizard section for WLAN creation.

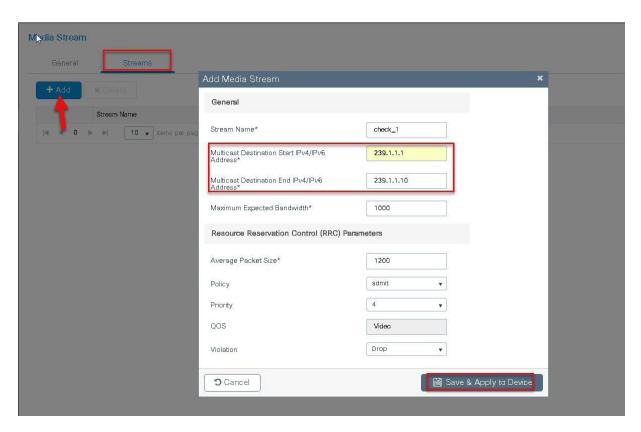


**Step5** Define the media stream multicast address configuration.

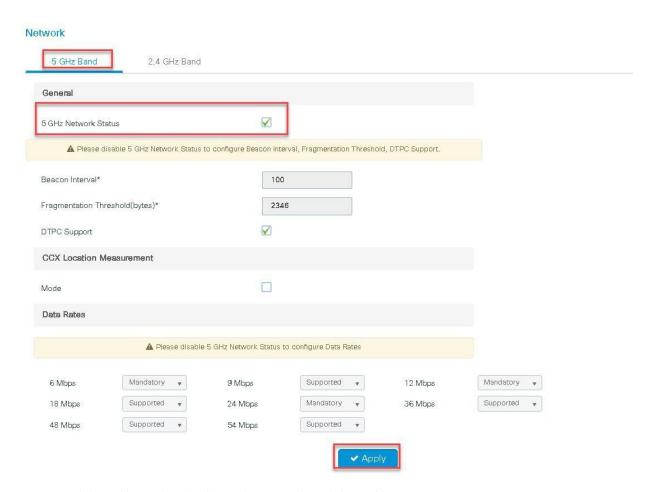
Navigate to wirless > Mediastream







**Step6** Enable the dot11 interface on which media stream was enabled.



Connect wireless client and subscribe to the respective multicast video stream

Issue the CLI "show flexconnect media client summary "to see the multicast transmission being classified as multicast direct /video stream.



# FlexConnect IP Overlapping across Sites

Multiple customers in the branch deployment space tend to use cookie cutter configurations across the sites and branches which also includes local DHCP servers configured with the same subnet. Prior to this feature, the wireless controllers in this topology would detect the multiple client sessions with the same IP as IP Theft and clients would be blacklisted.

With this feature being introduced in IOS-XE Release 17.4, we can support overlapping IP address across different flex sites and still provide all the functionalities that are supported in the flex deployments. In order to accomplish this, a zone-ID along with IP-Address combination is used to prevent duplicate IP address across sites where Zone-ID will be different. Zone-ID is a running index that is generated per every site and persisted.

### Configuration via CLI and WebUI

<config> wireless profile flex flex1
(config-wireless-flex-profile)#[no] ip overlap

By default, this configuration is disabled.

The following show commands can be used to display the zone ID along with IP address of the client.

#### wlc#show wireless device-tracking database ip

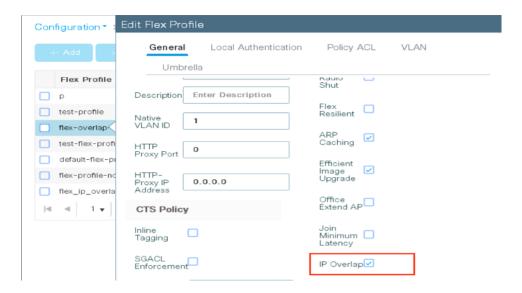
IP	ZONE-ID STATE	DISCOVERY	MAC	
9.91.59.154	91.59.154 0x00000002 Reachable IPv4 Packet 6038.e0dc.3182			
1000:1:2:3:90d8:dd1a:	:11ab:23c0 0	x00000002 Rea	achable IPv6 Pa	acket 58ef.680d.c6c3
1000:1:2:3:f9b5:3074:	d0da:f93b 0x	00000002 Read	chable IPv6 Pa	cket 58ef.680d.c6c3
2001:9:3:59:90d8:dd1	a:11ab:23c0	0x00000002 Re	achable IPv6 N	NDP 58ef.680d.c6c3
2001:9:3:59:f9b5:3074	4:d0da:f93b 0	x00000002 Rea	achable IPv6 N	DP 58ef.680d.c6c3
fe80::f9b5:3074:d0da:f	f93b 0x80	000001 Reachal	ble IPv6 NDP	58ef.680d.c6c3

#### Wlc#show wireless profile flex detailed flex1

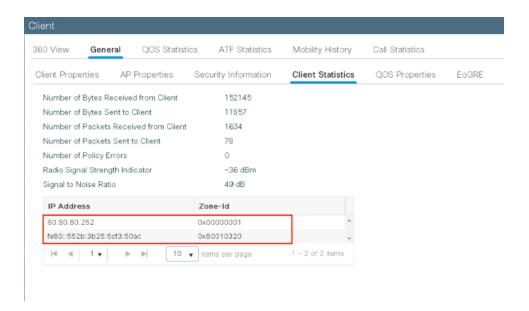
Fallback Radio shut : DISABLED
ARP caching : ENABLED
Efficient Image Upgrade : ENABLED
OfficeExtend AP : DISABLED
Join min latency : DISABLED

IP overlap status : DISABLED

To configure this feature using the WebUI, select the IP Overlap checkbox under the General tab under flex profile.



The feature can be verified by looking at the client statistics tab under General client details. The Zone ID will be populated along with the IP address indicating that this feature is turned on. When this feature is disabled the zone ID will show a value of zero.



### **Configuration via Programmable Interfaces**

In order to enable or disable the overlap IP support which is part of the flex profile, the following NETCONF RPC is defined

```
<nc:rpc xmlns:nc="urn:ietf:params:xml:ns:netconf:base:1.0" message-id="urn:uuid:a90868eb-1b78-43b4-a949-
2dca79687a69">
 <nc:edit-config>
  <nc:target>
  <nc:running/>
  </nc:target>
  <nc:config>
   <flex-cfg-data xmlns="http://cisco.com/ns/yang/Cisco-IOS-XE-wireless-flex-cfg">
   <flex-policy-entries>
    <flex-policy-entry>
     <policy-name>Flex_profile</policy-name>
     <description/>
     <ip-overlap-cfg>
      <flex-overlapping-ip-enable>true</flex-overlapping-ip-enable>
     </ip-overlap-cfg>
    </flex-policy-entry>
   </flex-policy-entries>
   </flex-cfg-data>
 </nc:config>
 </nc:edit-config>
</nc:rpc>
```

### **Invalid/Not Supported Scenarios**

- Client Join when VLAN- based Central Switching for Flex Connect: With VLAN Based Central switching enabled, AP tunnels the
  traffic back to the controller. This scenario inherently will not support Overlapping IP support as it falls under central switched use case.
- Client Join when AP in Local Mode: No support for Overlapping IP for all the Local Mode configuration where the traffic is centrally switched
- Client Join with Flex with Central Switching: AP is in Flex mode but operated in Central switching mode. Here the DHCP server is also central and the IP overlapping case is not valid
- Flex Local Switching with Central DHCP: With the central DHCP, we still like to detect the IP Theft cases even though it is flex local

switched site. This feature will not be supported with this configuration

- EWC on Catalyst 9100s: This feature is not applicable since multiple sites cannot be supported with EWC
- Fabric or SD-Access wireless deployments are not supported

# **Glossary**

- VLAN-Virtual LAN
- RF-Radio frequency
- FT-Fault Tolerance
- WAVE1 AP-All AP which supports WAVE1 802.11ac (Cisco -3700AP)
- WAVE2 AP AP which supports WAVE2 802.11ac (Cisco 1800/2800/3800/4800)

• WLC- Wireless LAN controller



Americas Headquarters Cisco Systems, Inc. San Jose, CA 95134-1706 USA Asia Pacific Headquarters CiscoSystems(USA)Pte.Ltd. Singapore

**Europe Headquarters**CiscoSystemsInternationalBV
Amsterdam,TheNetherlands

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