

Using the mlx5 Tx datapath tracing feature

The mlx5 Tx datapath tracing feature provides the capability to gather the comprehensive information about packets handling in PMD with timings, including the packet sending completion ones.

1. Build DPDK application with enabled datapath tracing

The meson option should be specified:

```
--enable_trace_fp=true
```

The c_args should be specified:

```
-DALLOW_EXPERIMENTAL_API
```

The DPDK configuration examples:

```
meson configure --buildtype=debug -Denable_trace_fp=true -Dc_args='-DRTE_LIBRTE_MLX5_DEBUG -DRTE_ENABLE_ASSERT -DALLOW_EXPERIMENTAL_API' build
```

```
meson configure --buildtype=debug -Denable_trace_fp=true -Dc_args='-DRTE_ENABLE_ASSERT -DALLOW_EXPERIMENTAL_API' build
```

```
meson configure --buildtype=release -Denable_trace_fp=true -Dc_args='-DRTE_ENABLE_ASSERT -DALLOW_EXPERIMENTAL_API' build
```

```
meson configure --buildtype=release -Denable_trace_fp=true -Dc_args='-DALLOW_EXPERIMENTAL_API' build
```

2. Configuring the NIC

If the sending completion timings are crucial the NIC should be configured to provide real-time timestamps, the REAL_TIME_CLOCK_ENABLE NV settings parameter should be configured to TRUE, for example with command (followed by FW/driver reset):

```
sudo mlxconfig -d /dev/mst/mt4125_pciconf0 s REAL_TIME_CLOCK_ENABLE=1
```

3. Run DPDK application to gather the traces

EAL parameters controlling trace capability in runtime:

```
--trace=pmd.net.mlx5.tx
```

the regular expression enabling the trace points with matching names at least "pmd.net.mlx5.tx" must be enabled to gather all events needed to analyze mlx5 Tx datapath and its timings. By default, all the trace points are disabled

```
--trace-dir=/var/log
```

- trace storing directory, optional, default is "\$HOME/dpdk-traces/rte-yyyy-mm-dd-[AP]M-hh-mm-ss/"

```
--trace-bufsz=<val>B|<val>K|<val>M
```

optional, trace data buffer size per thread, optional, default is 1MB

```
--trace-mode=overwrite|discard
```

optional, selects trace data buffer mode

The trace data are committed to the specified folder on EAL cleanup. Optionally data commit can be triggered explicitly by application via `rte_trace_save()` API call.

4. Installing or building Babeltrace2 package

The gathered trace data can be analyzed with Python script.

To parse the trace data script uses Babeltrace2 library, the package should be either installed or built from source code:

```
git clone https://github.com/efficios/babeltrace.git
```

```
cd babeltrace
```

```
./bootstrap
```

```
./configure -help
```

```
./configure --disable-api-doc --disable-man-pages --disable-python-  
bindings-doc --enable-python-plugins --enable-python-binding
```

5. Running the analyzing script

The analyzing script is located in the folder: `./drivers/net/mlx5/tools`

It requires the Python3.6, Babeltrace2 packages and takes the only parameter of trace data folder, example:

```
./mlx5_trace.py /var/log/rte-2023-01-23-AM-11-52-39
```

6. Interpreting the script output data.

All timings are given in nanoseconds.

The list of Tx (and coming Rx) bursts per port/queue is presented in output. Each list element contains the list of build WQEs, and each WQE contains the list of packets to send.

