

**A Proposal for IETF Administrative Restructuring**  
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Abstract

This document outlines a proposal for an administrative oversight entity for the collection of activities that allow the IETF to carry out its work. The current description of the IETF's work can be found in [2]. The proposal is based on the observations and recommendations outlined in the IAB Advisory Committee report ([1]). The motivation for this proposal is described separately ([3]). These 4 documents must be read together for completeness.

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## **1. Introduction**

This document outlines a proposal for an administrative oversight entity for the collection of activities that allow the IETF to carry out the work described in [2]. The specific motivation for the proposal can be found in [3], and these were prepared in response to the outcome of the IAB Advisory Committee, published in [1]. All 4 documents must be read for completeness.

This purpose of this proposal is to present the concepts and structural relationship to existing IETF activities. It deliberately remains agnostic about the specific implementation form of any eventual organizational structure. Details and more formal procedural guidelines implementing the structure outlined in this document will be set out in subsequent formal documents such as bylaws and/or constitutional documents, as appropriate to the formal structure chosen for implementation.

Specific goals of this restructuring are to recognize and preserve the community-driven nature of the IETF's work, and to continue to support it through the formalization of a single administrative umbrella that is openly accountable to that same community.

## **2. Proposal Overview**

This proposal preserves the existing IETF standardization process structure, led by the IESG and IAB in their respective roles, and introduces a new Administration Group (AG) to carry out the formal administration processes of IETF organization. Like the IAB and the IESG, the AG (through its Board) is accountable to the IETF community as a whole.

In short, the responsibilities for the different IETF bodies can be characterized as:

IAB: architecture and longterm technical overview; sponsorship and organization of the IRTF; appeals; confirmation of IESG appointments; oversight of standards process

IESG: management of standards work (working groups, documents, and process)

AG: administrative arm of IETF organization; establishes and manages contracts; proposes and executes budget plans; does NOT change or influence the standards process



### **3. IETF Administration Group (AG)**

An IETF Administration Group (AG) is proposed to provide the unified administrative management of all IETF supporting functions. This group is ultimately accountable to IETF participants, as described below.

The AG will not replace any existing IETF support structure although it subsumes some tasks that have been handled on an ad hoc basis by IAB or IESG members or others. It will rather complement the existing work (RFC-Editor, Secretariat, IANA protocol parameter assignments), and take on the role of overall coordination and management of the administration. This will permit unification of fund-raising activities, flexibility in balancing budget allocations, and coherence in management across the functions.

#### **3.1 AG Activities**

##### **3.1.1 Administration**

The AG is responsible for the administrative activities associated with the IETF organization. Today, most of the operational work that permits the IETF to continue creating and managing standards is done by a disparate group of organizations dedicated to the ongoing health of the Internet. It is expected that those organizations will continue to do the work as they do today, but the AG will provide administrative oversight for the IETF operational process, and will give those organizations a clear anchor. The AG will negotiate and formalize contracts with the organizations that provide support for IETF functions, and will be responsible for ensuring their timely payment and performance review.

##### **3.1.2 Operations**

As part of this activity, the AG will exercise financial control for the whole IETF activity -- either handling the funds directly, or providing executive oversight for the bodies that do. The AG will be responsible for developing viable financial plans to support the IETF activity, to better match revenue and costs across the board of IETF support activities.

#### **3.2 AG Composition**

There will be one person designated as the manager of the AG. This person will be selected by and serve at the pleasure of the Board of the AG.



### **[3.3](#) AG Committees**

The expectation is that the manager of the AG will constitute special-purpose, chartered committees to bring in expertise (e.g., financial) or differing perspectives when and as necessary. These committees may consist of subsets of the IAB and/or IESG, selected IETF participants, or external experts, depending on the need.

These committees are advisory in nature -- the manager of the AG is responsible for the outcome, including presenting and supporting any material to the Board, as and when appropriate.

## **[4.](#) Board of the Administration Group (BAG)**

The BAG provides oversight of the AG's activities, ensuring that they are carried out in accordance with the IETF mission, and that appropriate operational support is provided for the IAB, IESG, working groups, etc, to carry out their chartered work.

### **[4.1](#) BAG Activities**

Election of Chair and Secretary of the BAG

Selection of manager of the AG

Budget approval

Financial review

Approval of major contracts and funding proposals

Publication of audited IETF financials

### **[4.2](#) BAG Composition**

At a minimum, the BAG will have 5 voting members:

IETF Chair

IAB Chair

3 appointed members with staggered 3 year renewable terms; these members are selected by (though not necessarily members of) ISOC, the IAB, the IESG.

The BAG also has, at a minimum, 3 non-voting members:





manager of the AG

a representative of the IETF's legal counsel

a treasurer (if necessary; appointment process TBD)

The BAG will organize itself to elect a Secretary and a Chair for one-year, renewable appointments. The Secretary may be any BAG member; the Chair must be a voting member of the BAG.

Although appointed by ISOC, the IAB and IESG, the BAG is accountable directly to the IETF community. At any time, a recall against an appointed BAG member may be proposed by members of the IETF community (procedure to be defined). Once a BAG member has been recalled, they are ineligible to be re-appointed (for a period analogous to that outlined in [4]).

## 5. Security Considerations

This document does not discuss Internet protocols, and thereby introduces no security issues for their operation.

## References

- [1] AdvComm, AdvComm., "The IETF in the Large: Administration and Execution", [draft-iab-advcomm-01](#) (work in progress), December 2003.
- [2] Alvestrand, H., "IETF Mission Statement", February 2004.
- [3] Alvestrand, H. and L. Daigle, "IETF Administration Restructuring: Motivation", February 2004.
- [4] Galvin, J., "IAB and IESG Selection, Confirmation, and Recall Process: Operation of the Nominating and Recall Committees", [draft-ietf-nomcom-rfc2727bis-08](#) (work in progress), October 2002.

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