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## **RFC Format Framework As Implemented**

### **Abstract**

RFC 7990 "serves as the framework that provides the problem statement, lays out a road map of the documents that capture the specific requirements, and describes the transition plan" for the format of RFCs. The eventual implementation of the framework happened somewhat differently than was described in RFC 7990. This document describes how the framework was, and is being, implemented.

This document makes RFC 7991 obsolete, but does not replace it.

### **Status of This Memo**

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## 1. Introduction

[[RFC7990](#)], published in December 2016, defined a framework for how RFCs would be published in the future, including new formats and a new canonical format for archiving RFCs. The first RFC to be published using the framework was [[RFC8651](#)], published in October 2019. In the time since then, the new framework has been applied to all published RFCs.

The implementation of the framework did not go completely as planned. The canonical format changed many times between the publication of [[RFC7991](#)] and now, and is expected to change more times in the future. Similarly, the software used to generate the non-canonical HTML, plain text, and PDF formats also changed during that time. This document describes how the RFC format framework was actually implemented.

This document also obsoletes [[RFC7991](#)], but does not replace it. Instead, this document describes the expected progression to version 4 of the XML grammar and semantics.

## 2. XML Grammars

The RFC Editor has changed the XML v3 grammar and semantics used to generate RFCs many times since the publication of [[RFC7991](#)]. In fact, no RFC that was published using the [[RFC7990](#)] framework exactly followed the [[RFC7991](#)] grammar.

Because of this lack of adherence to [[RFC7991](#)] in the current RFC series, [[RFC7991](#)] is declared obsolete. There is no RFC yet that replaces it. The decision to obsolete [[RFC7991](#)] is based on a

discussion from the RFC Series Working Group <https://datatracker.ietf.org/rfcedtyp/rswg/about/> (RSWG).

The RSWG might update the now-obsolete grammar from [RFC7991] and still call that "version 3". If the RSWG changes the v3 grammar, it will only do so in a way that is backwards compatible with all RFCs published using the current framework; that is, the currently published RFCs must be able to be valid with the new grammar. The semantics associated with the version 3 grammar may change as well.

The RSWG is discussing what would go into a XML v4 grammar. The result of that discussion may become a RFC in the Editorial stream of RFCs. The v4 grammar is unlikely to be backwards compatible with the grammar in [RFC7991]. Similarly, the semantics for the v4 grammar is unlikely to be backwards compatible with the semantics in [RFC7991].

The XML grammars that were used between the publication of [RFC7991] and the eventual publication of the v4 grammar are cataloged at <https://authors.ietf.org/>. [[ EDITOR'S NOTE: the above statement is currently false. They are currently cataloged at <https://github.com/rfc-format/v3grammar>, ]]

[[ EDITOR'S NOTE: The grammar published as <https://datatracker.ietf.org/doc/draft-ir-se-draft-ir-se-xml2rfcv3-implemented/>. should be the basis of the grammars stored in the new catalog. ]]

### **3. Rendering RFCs in HTML, Plain Text, and PDF**

The rendering of the non-canonical formats evolved after the initial implementation of the framework. Thus, accessing the files for the non-canonical formats would get different results over time. The rendering is expected to continue to change in the future.

### **4. IANA Considerations**

This document has no IANA considerations.

### **5. Security Considerations**

This document introduces no new security considerations.

### **6. References**

#### **6.1. Normative References**

[RFC7990] Flanagan, H., "RFC Format Framework", RFC 7990, DOI 10.17487/RFC7990, December 2016, <<https://www.rfc-editor.org/info/rfc7990>>.

## 6.2. Informative References

[RFC7991] Hoffman, P., "The "xml2rfc" Version 3 Vocabulary", RFC 7991, DOI 10.17487/RFC7991, December 2016, <<https://www.rfc-editor.org/info/rfc7991>>.

[RFC8651] Cheng, B., Wiggins, D., and L. Berger, Ed., "Dynamic Link Exchange Protocol (DLEP) Control-Plane-Based Pause Extension", RFC 8651, DOI 10.17487/RFC8651, October 2019, <<https://www.rfc-editor.org/info/rfc8651>>.

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