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## **Internationalized Delivery Status and Disposition Notifications draft-ietf-eai-rfc5337bis-dsn-00**

### **Abstract**

Delivery status notifications (DSNs) are critical to the correct operation of an email system. However, the existing Draft Standards (RFC 3461, RFC 3462, RFC 3464) are presently limited to US-ASCII text in the machine-readable portions of the protocol. This specification adds a new address type for international email addresses so an original recipient address with non-US-ASCII characters can be correctly preserved even after downgrading. This also provides updated content return media types for delivery status notifications and message disposition notifications to support use of the new address type.

This document extends RFC 3461, RFC 3462, RFC 3464, and RFC 3798. It replaces the experimental RFC 5337.

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## 1. Introduction

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When an email message is transmitted using the [UTF8SMTP \(Yao, J., Ed. and W. Mao, Ed., "SMTP Extension for Internationalized Email Addresses," September 2008.\)](#) [RFC5336] extension and [Internationalized Email Headers \(Yang, A., Ed., "Internationalized Email Headers," September 2008.\)](#) [RFC5335], it is sometimes necessary to return that message or generate a [Message Disposition Notification \(MDN\) \(Hansen, T. and G. Vaudreuil, "Message Disposition Notification," May 2004.\)](#) [RFC3798]. As a message sent to multiple recipients can generate a

status and disposition notification for each recipient, it is helpful if a client can correlate these notifications based on the recipient address it provided; thus, preservation of the original recipient is important. This specification describes how to preserve the original recipient and updates the MDN and DSN formats to support the new address types.

NOTE: The only issue for which there is (as yet) no consensus yet is whether to change the name of the Address Type from "UTF-8" to something different, such as "UTF8", to reflect the fact that the "<addr <addr>>" address syntax is no longer permitted.

NOTE: There was discussion of whether to change the media type names from message/global, message/global-delivery-status and message/global-headers to something else. The apparent consensus was to not change those names.

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## 2. Conventions Used in This Document

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The key words "MUST", "MUST NOT", "REQUIRED", "SHALL", "SHALL NOT", "SHOULD", "SHOULD NOT", "RECOMMENDED", "MAY", and "OPTIONAL" in this document are to be interpreted as described in [\[RFC2119\] \(Bradner, S., "Key words for use in RFCs to Indicate Requirement Levels," March 1997.\)](#).

The formal syntax use the [Augmented Backus-Naur Form \(ABNF\) \(Crocker, D. and P. Overell, "Augmented BNF for Syntax Specifications: ABNF," January 2008.\)](#) [RFC5234] notation including the core rules defined in Appendix B of [RFC 5234 \(Crocker, D. and P. Overell, "Augmented BNF for Syntax Specifications: ABNF," January 2008.\)](#) [RFC5234] and the UTF-8 syntax rules in Section 4 of [\[RFC3629\] \(Yergeau, F., "UTF-8, a transformation format of ISO 10646," November 2003.\)](#).

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## 3. UTF-8 Address Type

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[An Extensible Message Format for Delivery Status Notifications \(Moore, K. and G. Vaudreuil, "An Extensible Message Format for Delivery Status Notifications," January 2003.\)](#) [RFC3464] defines the concept of an address type. The address format introduced in [Internationalized Email Headers \(Yang, A., Ed., "Internationalized Email Headers," September 2008.\)](#) [RFC5335] is a new address type. The syntax for the new address type in the context of status notifications is specified at the end of this section.

An [SMTP \(Klensin, J., "Simple Mail Transfer Protocol," April 2001.\)](#) [RFC2821] server that advertises both the [UTF8SMTP extension \(Yao, J., Ed. and W. Mao, Ed., "SMTP Extension for Internationalized Email Addresses," September 2008.\)](#) [RFC5336] and the [DSN extension \(Moore,](#)

[K., "Simple Mail Transfer Protocol \(SMTP\) Service Extension for Delivery Status Notifications \(DSNs\)," January 2003.](#)) [RFC3461] MUST

accept a UTF-8 address type in the ORCPT parameter including 8-bit UTF-8 characters. This address type also includes a 7-bit encoding suitable for use in a message/delivery-status body part or an ORCPT parameter sent to an SMTP server that does not advertise UTF8SMTP. This address type has 3 forms: utf-8-addr-xtext, utf-8-addr-unitext, and utf-8-address. The first 2 forms are 7-bit safe.

The utf-8-address form is only suitable for use in newly defined protocols capable of native representation of 8-bit characters. That is, the utf-8-address form MUST NOT be used in the ORCPT parameter when the SMTP server doesn't advertise support for UTF8SMTP or the SMTP server supports UTF8SMTP, but the address contains US-ASCII characters not permitted in the ORCPT parameter (e.g., the ORCPT parameter forbids unencoded SP and the = character), or in a 7-bit transport environment including a message/delivery-status Original-Recipient or Final-Recipient field. In the former case, the utf-8-addr-xtext form (see below) MUST be used instead; in the latter case, the utf-8-addr-unitext form MUST be used. The utf-8-address form MAY be used in the ORCPT parameter when the SMTP server also advertises support for UTF8SMTP and the address doesn't contain any US-ASCII characters not permitted in the ORCPT parameter. It SHOULD be used in a message/global-delivery-status Original-Recipient or Final-Recipient DSN field, or in an [Original-Recipient header field \(Hansen, T. and G. Vaudreuil, "Message Disposition Notification," May 2004.\)](#) [RFC3798] if the message is a UTF8SMTP message.

In addition, the utf-8-addr-unitext form can be used anywhere where the utf-8-address form is allowed.

When using in the ORCPT parameter, the UTF-8 address type requires that US-ASCII CTLs, SP, \, +, and = be encoded using xtext encoding as described in [\[RFC3461\] \(Moore, K., "Simple Mail Transfer Protocol \(SMTP\) Service Extension for Delivery Status Notifications \(DSNs\)," January 2003.\)](#). This is described by the utf-8-addr-xtext form in the ABNF below. Unicode characters MAY be included in a UTF-8 address type using a "\x{HEXPOINT}" syntax (EmbeddedUnicodeChar), where HEXPOINT is 2 to 6 hexadecimal digits. When sending data to a UTF8SMTP-capable server, native UTF-8 characters SHOULD be used instead of the EmbeddedUnicodeChar syntax described in details below. When sending data to an SMTP server that does not advertise UTF8SMTP, then the EmbeddedUnicodeChar syntax MUST be used instead of UTF-8.

When the ORCPT parameter is placed in a message/global-delivery-status Original-Recipient field, the utf-8-addr-xtext form of the UTF-8 address type SHOULD be converted to the utf-8-address form (see the ABNF below) by removing all xtext encoding first (which will result in the utf-8-addr-unitext form), followed by removal of the unitext encoding. However, if an address is labeled with the UTF-8 address type but does not conform to utf-8 syntax, then it MUST be copied into the message/global-delivery-status field without alteration.

The ability to encode characters with the EmbeddedUnicodeChar encodings should be viewed as a transitional mechanism. It is hoped that as systems lacking support for UTF8SMTP become less common over time, these encodings can eventually be phased out.

In the ABNF below, all productions not defined in this document are defined in Appendix B of [\[RFC5234\] \(Crocker, D. and P. Overell, "Augmented BNF for Syntax Specifications: ABNF," January 2008.\)](#), in Section 4 of [\[RFC3629\] \(Yergeau, F., "UTF-8, a transformation format of ISO 10646," November 2003.\)](#), or in [\[RFC3464\] \(Moore, K. and G. Vaudreuil, "An Extensible Message Format for Delivery Status Notifications," January 2003.\)](#).

```

utf-8-type-addr      = "utf-8;" utf-8-enc-addr

utf-8-address        = uMailbox [ 1*WSP "<" Mailbox ">" ]
    ; uMailbox is defined in [RFC5336].
    ; Mailbox is defined in [RFC2821].

utf-8-enc-addr       = utf-8-addr-xtext /
    utf-8-addr-unitext /
    utf-8-address

utf-8-addr-xtext     = xtext
    ; xtext is defined in [RFC3461].
    ; When xtext encoding is removed,
    ; the syntax MUST conform to
    ; utf-8-addr-unitext.

utf-8-addr-unitext   = 1*(QUCHAR / EmbeddedUnicodeChar)
    ; MUST follow utf-8-address ABNF when
    ; dequoted

QUCHAR               = %x21-2a / %x2c-3c / %x3e-5b / %x5d-7e /
    UTF8-2 / UTF8-3 / UTF8-4
    ; US-ASCII printable characters except
    ; CTLs, SP, '\', '+' and '=', plus
    ; other Unicode characters in UTF-8

EmbeddedUnicodeChar = %x5C.78 "{" HEXPOINT "}"
    ; starts with "\"

HEXPOINT = "5C" / (HEXDIG8 HEXDIG) /      ; 2 digit forms
    ( NZHEXDIG 2(HEXDIG) ) /              ; 3 digit forms
    ( NZDHEXDIG 3(HEXDIG) ) /
    ( "D" %x30-37 2(HEXDIG) ) /
    ; 4 digit forms excluding surrogate
    ( NZHEXDIG 4(HEXDIG) ) /              ; 5 digit forms
    ( "10" 4*HEXDIG )                    ; 6 digit forms
    ; represents either "\" or a Unicode code point outside the
    ; US-ASCII repertoire

HEXDIG8              = %x38-39 / "A" / "B" / "C" / "D" / "E" / "F"
    ; HEXDIG excluding 0-7

NZHEXDIG             = %x31-39 / "A" / "B" / "C" / "D" / "E" / "F"
    ; HEXDIG excluding "0"

NZDHEXDIG            = %x31-39 / "A" / "B" / "C" / "E" / "F"
    ; HEXDIG excluding "0" and "D"

```

---

#### 4. UTF-8 Delivery Status Notifications

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A traditional [delivery status notification](#) (Moore, K. and G. Vaudreuil, "An Extensible Message Format for Delivery Status Notifications," January 2003.) [RFC3464] comes in a three-part [multipart/report](#) (Vaudreuil, G., "The Multipart/Report Content Type for the Reporting of Mail System Administrative Messages," January 2003.) [RFC3462] container, where the first part is human-readable text describing the error, the second part is a 7-bit-only message/delivery-status, and the optional third part is used for content (message/rfc822) or header (text/rfc822-headers) return. As the present DSN format does not permit returning of undeliverable UTF8SMTP messages, three new media types are needed.

The first type, message/global-delivery-status, has the syntax of message/delivery-status with three modifications. First, the charset for message/global-delivery-status is UTF-8, and thus any field MAY contain UTF-8 characters when appropriate (see the ABNF below). In particular, the Diagnostic-Code field MAY contain UTF-8 as described in UTF8SMTP (Yao, J., Ed. and W. Mao, Ed., "SMTP Extension for Internationalized Email Addresses," September 2008.) [RFC5336]; the Diagnostic-Code field SHOULD be in i-default language [\[DEFAULTLANG\]](#) (Alvestrand, H., "IETF Policy on Character Sets and Languages," January 1998.). Second, systems generating a message/global-delivery-status body part SHOULD use the utf-8-address form of the UTF-8 address type for all addresses containing characters outside the US-ASCII repertoire. These systems SHOULD up-convert the utf-8-addr-xttext or the utf-8-addr-unitext form of a UTF-8 address type in the ORCPT parameter to the utf-8-address form of a UTF-8 address type in the Original-Recipient field. Third, a new optional field called Localized-Diagnostic is added. Each instance includes a language tag [\[LANGTAGS\]](#) (Phillips, A. and M. Davis, "Tags for Identifying Languages," September 2006.) and contains text in the specified language. This is equivalent to the text part of the Diagnostic-Code field. All instances of Localized-Diagnostic MUST use different language tags. The ABNF for message/global-delivery-status is specified below.

In the ABNF below, all productions not defined in this document are defined in Appendix B of [\[RFC5234\]](#) (Crocker, D. and P. Overell, "Augmented BNF for Syntax Specifications: ABNF," January 2008.), in Section 4 of [\[RFC3629\]](#) (Yergeau, F., "UTF-8, a transformation format of ISO 10646," November 2003.), or in [\[RFC3464\]](#) (Moore, K. and G. Vaudreuil, "An Extensible Message Format for Delivery Status Notifications," January 2003.).

```

utf-8-delivery-status-content = per-message-fields
                                1*( CRLF utf-8-per-recipient-fields )
    ; "per-message-fields" remains unchanged from the definition
    ; in RFC 3464, except for the "extension-field"
    ; which is updated below.

utf-8-per-recipient-fields =
    [ original-recipient-field CRLF ]
    final-recipient-field CRLF
    action-field CRLF
    status-field CRLF
    [ remote-mta-field CRLF ]
    [ diagnostic-code-field CRLF
      *(localized-diagnostic-text-field CRLF) ]
    [ last-attempt-date-field CRLF ]
    [ will-retry-until-field CRLF ]
    *( extension-field CRLF )
    ; All fields except for "original-recipient-field",
    ; "final-recipient-field", "diagnostic-code-field"
    ; and "extension-field" remain unchanged from
    ; the definition in RFC 3464.

generic-address =/ utf-8-enc-addr
    ; Only allowed with the "utf-8" address-type.
    ;
    ; This indirectly updates "original-recipient-field"
    ; and "final-recipient-field"

diagnostic-code-field =
    "Diagnostic-Code" ":" diagnostic-type ";" *text-fixed

localized-diagnostic-text-field =
    "Localized-Diagnostic" ":" Language-Tag ";" *utf8-text
    ; "Language-Tag" is a language tag as defined in [LANGTAGS].

extension-field =/ extension-field-name ":" *utf8-text

text-fixed = %d1-9 /           ; Any US-ASCII character except for NUL,
    %d11 /                     ; CR and LF
    %d12 /
    %d14-127
    ; Same as <text> from [RFC2822], but without <obs-text>.
    ; If/when RFC 2822 is updated to disallow <obs-text>,
    ; this should become just <text>
    ; Also, if/when RFC 2822 is updated to disallow control characters
    ; this should become a reference to RFC 2822upd instead.

utf8-text = text-fixed / UTF8-non-ascii

```



UTF8-non-ascii = UTF8-2 / UTF8-3 / UTF8-4

The second type, used for returning the content, is message/global which is similar to message/rfc822, except it contains a message with UTF-8 headers. This media type is described in [\[RFC5335\] \(Yang, A., Ed., "Internationalized Email Headers," September 2008.\)](#).

The third type, used for returning the headers, is message/global-headers and contains only the UTF-8 header fields of a message (all lines prior to the first blank line in a UTF8SMTP message). Unlike message/global, this body part provides no difficulties for the present infrastructure.

Note that as far as [multipart/report \(Vaudreuil, G., "The Multipart/Report Content Type for the Reporting of Mail System Administrative Messages," January 2003.\)](#) [RFC3462] container is concerned, message/global-delivery-status, message/global, and message/global-headers MUST be treated as equivalent to message/delivery-status, message/rfc822, and text/rfc822-headers. That is, implementations processing multipart/report MUST expect any combinations of the 6 media types mentioned above inside a multipart/report media type.

All three new types will typically use the "8bit" Content-Transfer-Encoding. (In the event all content is 7-bit, the equivalent traditional types for delivery status notifications MAY be used. For example, if information in message/global-delivery-status part can be represented without any loss of information as message/delivery-status, then the message/delivery-status body part may be used.) Note that [\[RFC5335\] \(Yang, A., Ed., "Internationalized Email Headers," September 2008.\)](#) relaxed restriction from [MIME \(Freed, N. and N. Borenstein, "Multipurpose Internet Mail Extensions \(MIME\) Part Two: Media Types," November 1996.\)](#) [RFC2046] regarding use of Content-Transfer-Encoding in new "message" subtypes. This specification explicitly allows use of Content-Transfer-Encoding in message/global-headers and message/global-delivery-status. This is not believed to be problematic as these new media types are intended primarily for use by newer systems with full support for 8-bit MIME and UTF-8 headers.

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#### 4.1. Additional Requirements on SMTP Servers

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If an SMTP server that advertises both UTF8SMTP and DSN needs to return an undeliverable UTF8SMTP message, then it MUST NOT downgrade [\[DOWNGRADE\] \(Fujiwara, K. and Y. Yoneya, "Downgrading mechanism for Email Address Internationalization," July 2008.\)](#) the UTF8SMTP message when generating the corresponding multipart/report. If the return path SMTP server does not support UTF8SMTP, then the undeliverable body part and headers MUST be encoded using a 7-bit Content-Transfer-Encoding such as "base64" or "quoted-printable" [\[RFC2045\] \(Freed, N. and N.](#)

[Borenstein, "Multipurpose Internet Mail Extensions \(MIME\) Part One: Format of Internet Message Bodies," November 1996.](#)), as detailed in [Section 4 \(UTF-8 Delivery Status Notifications\)](#). Otherwise, "8bit" Content-Transfer-Encoding can be used.

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## 5. UTF-8 Message Disposition Notifications

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[Message Disposition Notifications \(Hansen, T. and G. Vaudreuil, "Message Disposition Notification," May 2004.\)](#) [RFC3798] have a similar design and structure to DSNs. As a result, they use the same basic return format. When generating an MDN for a UTF-8 header message, the third part of the multipart/report contains the returned content (message/global) or header (message/global-headers), same as for DSNs. The second part of the multipart/report uses a new media type, message/global-disposition-notification, which has the syntax of message/disposition-notification with two modifications. First, the charset for message/global-disposition-notification is UTF-8, and thus any field MAY contain UTF-8 characters when appropriate (see the ABNF below). (In particular, the failure-field, the error-field, and the warning-field MAY contain UTF-8. These fields SHOULD be in i-default language [\[DEFAULTLANG\]](#) ([Alvestrand, H., "IETF Policy on Character Sets and Languages," January 1998.](#))) Second, systems generating a message/global-disposition-notification body part (typically a mail user agent) SHOULD use the UTF-8 address type for all addresses containing characters outside the US-ASCII repertoire.

The MDN specification also defines the Original-Recipient header field, which is added with a copy of the contents of ORCPT at delivery time. When generating an Original-Recipient header field, a delivery agent writing a UTF-8 header message in native format SHOULD convert the utf-8-addr-xtext or the utf-8-addr-unitext form of a UTF-8 address type in the ORCPT parameter to the corresponding utf-8-address form.

The MDN specification also defines the Disposition-Notification-To header field, which is an address header field and thus follows the same 8-bit rules as other address headers such as "From" and "To" when used in a UTF-8 header message.

```
; ABNF for "original-recipient-header", "original-recipient-field",  
; and "final-recipient-field" from RFC 3798 is implicitly updated  
; as they use the updated "generic-address" as defined in  
; Section 4 of this document.
```

```
failure-field = "Failure" ":" *utf8-text  
; "utf8-text" is defined in Section 4 of this document.
```

```
error-field = "Error" ":" *utf8-text  
; "utf8-text" is defined in Section 4 of this document.
```

```
warning-field = "Warning" ":" *utf8-text  
; "utf8-text" is defined in Section 4 of this document.
```

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## 6. IANA Considerations

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This specification does not create any new IANA registries. However, the following items have been registered as a result of this document.

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### 6.1. UTF-8 Mail Address Type Registration

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The mail address type registry was created by [\[RFC3464\] \(Moore, K. and G. Vaudreuil, "An Extensible Message Format for Delivery Status Notifications," January 2003.\)](#). The registration template response follows:

- (a) The proposed address-type name.  
UTF-8
- (b) The syntax for mailbox addresses of this type, specified using BNF, regular expressions, ASN.1, or other non-ambiguous language.  
  
See [Section 3 \(UTF-8 Address Type\)](#).
- (c) If addresses of this type are not composed entirely of graphic characters from the US-ASCII repertoire, a specification for how they are to be encoded as graphic US-ASCII characters in a DSN Original-Recipient or Final-Recipient DSN field.  
This address type has 3 forms (as defined in [Section 3 \(UTF-8 Address Type\)](#)): utf-8-addr-xttext, utf-8-addr-unitext, and utf-8-address. The first 2 forms are 7-bit safe.

The utf-8-address form MUST NOT be used

1. in the ORCPT parameter when the SMTP server doesn't advertise support for UTF8SMTP;
2. or the SMTP server supports UTF8SMTP, but the address contains US-ASCII characters not permitted in the ORCPT parameter (e.g., the ORCPT parameter forbids SP and the = characters);
3. or in a 7-bit transport environment including a message/delivery-status Original-Recipient or Final-Recipient field.

The utf-8-addr-xtext form MUST be used instead in the first case; the utf-8-addr-unixtext form MUST be used in the other two cases. The utf-8-address form MAY be used in the ORCPT parameter when the SMTP server also advertises support for UTF8SMTP and the address doesn't contain any US-ASCII characters not permitted in the ORCPT parameter; in a message/global-delivery-status Original-Recipient or Final-Recipient DSN field; or in an [Original-Recipient header field \(Hansen, T. and G. Vaudreuil, "Message Disposition Notification," May 2004.\)](#) [RFC3798] if the message is a UTF8SMTP message.

In addition, the utf-8-addr-unixtext form can be used anywhere where the utf-8-address form is allowed.

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## 6.2. Update to 'smtp' Diagnostic Type Registration

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The mail diagnostic type registry was created by [\[RFC3464\] \(Moore, K. and G. Vaudreuil, "An Extensible Message Format for Delivery Status Notifications," January 2003.\)](#) and updated by [\[RFC5337\] \(Newman, C. and A. Melnikov, "Internationalized Delivery Status and Disposition Notifications," September 2008.\)](#). The registration for the 'smtp' diagnostic type should be updated to reference RFC XXXX in addition to [\[RFC3464\] \(Moore, K. and G. Vaudreuil, "An Extensible Message Format for Delivery Status Notifications," January 2003.\)](#) and [\[RFC5337\] \(Newman, C. and A. Melnikov, "Internationalized Delivery Status and Disposition Notifications," September 2008.\)](#).

When the 'smtp' diagnostic type is used in the context of a message/delivery-status body part, it remains as presently defined. When the 'smtp' diagnostic type is used in the context of a message/global-delivery-status body part, the codes remain the same, but the text portion MAY contain UTF-8 characters.

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## 6.3. message/global-headers

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**Type name:**

message

**Subtype name:** global-headers

**Required parameters:** none

**Optional parameters:** none

**Encoding considerations:** This media type contains [Internationalized Email Headers \(Yang, A., Ed., "Internationalized Email Headers," September 2008.\)](#) [RFC5335] with no message body. Whenever possible, the 8-bit content transfer encoding SHOULD be used. When this media type passes through a 7-bit-only SMTP infrastructure it MAY be encoded with the base64 or quoted-printable content transfer encoding.

**Security considerations:** See [Section 7 \(Security Considerations\)](#).

**Interoperability considerations:** It is important that this media type is not converted to a charset other than UTF-8. As a result, implementations MUST NOT include a charset parameter with this media type. Although it might be possible to downconvert this media type to the text/rfc822-header media type, such conversion is discouraged as it loses information.

**Published specification:** RFC XXXX

**Applications that use this media type:** UTF8SMTP servers and email clients that support multipart/report generation or parsing.

**Additional information:** none

**Magic number(s):**

**File extension(s):** In the event this is saved to a file, the extension ".u8hdr" is suggested.

**Macintosh file type code(s):** The 'TEXT' type code is suggested as files of this type are typically used for diagnostic purposes and suitable for analysis in a UTF-8 aware text editor. A uniform type identifier (UTI) of "public.utf8-email-message-header" is suggested. This type conforms to "public.utf8-plain-text" and "public.plain-text".

**Person & email address to contact for further information:** See the Authors' Addresses section of this document.

**Intended usage:** COMMON

**Restrictions on usage:** This media type contains textual data in the UTF-8 charset. It typically contains octets with the 8th bit set.

As a result, a transfer encoding is required when a 7-bit transport is used.

**Author:** See the Authors' Addresses section of this document.

**Change controller:** IETF Standards Process

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#### 6.4. message/global-delivery-status

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**Type name:** message

**Subtype name:** global-delivery-status

**Required parameters:** none

**Optional parameters:** none

**Encoding considerations:** This media type contains delivery status notification attributes in the UTF-8 charset. The 8-bit content transfer encoding **MUST** be used with this content-type, unless it is sent over a 7-bit transport environment in which case quoted-printable or base64 may be necessary.

**Security considerations:** See [Section 7 \(Security Considerations\)](#)

**Interoperability considerations:** This media type provides functionality similar to the message/delivery-status content-type for email message return information. Clients of the previous format will need to be upgraded to interpret the new format;

however, the new media type makes it simple to identify the difference.

**Published specification:** RFC XXXX

**Applications that use this media type:** SMTP servers and email clients that support delivery status notification generation or parsing.

**Additional information:** none

**Magic number(s):**

**File extension(s):** The extension ".u8dsn" is suggested.

**Macintosh file type code(s):** A uniform type identifier (UTI) of "public.utf8-email-message-delivery-status" is suggested. This type conforms to "public.utf8-plain-text".

**Person & email address to contact for further information:** See the Authors' Addresses section of this document.

**Intended usage:** COMMON

**Restrictions on usage:** This is expected to be the second part of a multipart/report.

**Author:** See the Authors' Addresses section of this document.

**Change controller:** IETF Standards Process

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## 6.5. message/global-disposition-notification

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**Type name:** message

**Subtype name:** global-disposition-notification

**Required parameters:** none

**Optional parameters:** none

**Encoding considerations:** This media type contains disposition notification attributes in the UTF-8 charset. The 8-bit content transfer encoding MUST be used with this content-type, unless it is sent over a 7-bit transport environment in which case quoted-printable or base64 may be necessary.

**Security considerations:** See [Section 7 \(Security Considerations\)](#).

**Interoperability considerations:**

This media type provides functionality similar to the message/disposition-notification content-type for email message disposition information. Clients of the previous format will need to be upgraded to interpret the new format; however, the new media type makes it simple to identify the difference.

**Published specification:** RFC XXXX

**Applications that use this media type:** Email clients or servers that support message disposition notification generation or parsing.

**Additional information:** none

**Magic number(s):**

**File extension(s):** The extension ".u8mdn" is suggested.

**Macintosh file type code(s):** A uniform type identifier (UTI) of "public.utf8-email-message-disposition-notification" is suggested. This type conforms to "public.utf8-plain-text".

**Person & email address to contact for further information:** See the Authors' Addresses section of this document.

**Intended usage:** COMMON

**Restrictions on usage:** This is expected to be the second part of a multipart/report.

**Author:** See the Authors' Addresses section of this document.

**Change controller:** IETF Standards Process

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## 7. Security Considerations

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Automated use of report types without authentication presents several security issues. Forging negative reports presents the opportunity for denial-of-service attacks when the reports are used for automated maintenance of directories or mailing lists. Forging positive reports may cause the sender to incorrectly believe a message was delivered when it was not.

Malicious users can generate report structures designed to trigger coding flaws in report parsers. Report parsers need to use secure coding techniques to avoid the risk of buffer overflow or denial-of-



service attacks against parser coding mistakes. Code reviews of such parsers are also recommended.

Malicious users of the email system regularly send messages with forged envelope return paths, and these messages trigger delivery status reports that result in a large amount of unwanted traffic on the Internet. Many users choose to ignore delivery status notifications because they are usually the result of "blowback" from forged messages and thus never notice when messages they sent go undelivered. As a result, support for correlation of delivery status and message disposition notification messages with sent-messages has become a critical feature of mail clients and possibly mail stores if the email infrastructure is to remain reliable. In the short term, simply correlating message-IDs may be sufficient to distinguish true status notifications from those resulting from forged originator addresses. But in the longer term, including cryptographic signature material that can securely associate the status notification with the original message is advisable.

As this specification permits UTF-8 in additional fields, the security considerations of [UTF-8 \(Yergeau, F., "UTF-8, a transformation format of ISO 10646," November 2003.\)](#) [RFC3629] apply.

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## 8. References

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### 8.1. Normative References

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## 8.2. Informative References

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## Appendix A. Changes Since RFC 5337

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Made minor changes to move from Experimental to Standards Track.  
 Minor ABNF changes.  
 Minor changes to MIME type references.  
 Other minor corrections.

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## Appendix B. Acknowledgements

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