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Standing Documents Describing IETF Processes and Operations
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Abstract

The "ISD" model for specifying the definition, status, and content of Internet Standards does not appear to be satisfactory for the documents that describe IETF procedures, structure, or relationships with other bodies. Those documents have traditionally be published as BCPs and described as "process" BCPs. This document proposes an special document series for those process documents, paralleling the ISDs.

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1. Introduction

[[Note in draft: The on-list discussions of the ISD specification seem to have concluded that including the IETF procedural BCP documents in the ISD series would be a mistake for a number of different reasons. This document is posted as a placeholder in the event that the NEWTRK WG concludes that the general ISD idea would be appropriate for process documents, but that the ISD series is not the right repository. If the WG makes that decision, the present author would welcome a volunteer to take this document over and coordinate drawing the details together.]]

The "ISD" model for specifying the definition, status, and content of Internet Standards [repurposing-ISD] does not appear to be satisfactory for the documents that describe IETF procedures, structure, or relationships with other bodies. Those documents have traditionally be published as BCPs and described as "process" BCPs. This document proposes an special document series for those process documents, paralleling the ISDs.

Other standards bodies seem to have similar series. They are called "Standing Documents" in INCITS and many other ANSI-accredited SDOs, "Directives" in ISO and ISO/IEC JTC1, and A-series Recommendations or WTSA Resolutions in ITU-T.

2. Proposal Overview

This document proposes that a new document series be created, called IETF Standing Documents ("IETFSD"s) and that these be real documents, separate from the underlying RFCs. The documents would be managed under the direction of the IESG as part of the IETF procedural definition process, rather than being simply undifferentiated BCPs.

[[Note in Draft: A better name, one less likely to be confused with "ISD" is solicited.]]

3. A New Document Series

This set of documents could be initialized simply by creating template reference documents to the existing process BCP RFCs, complementing their BCP identities. While it would be desirable to remove the target documents from the BCP series entirely, existing references to them by BCP numbers would require a long transition period before doing so.

Since these documents, following the ISD model, would involve a lighter-weight modification process than issuing a completely new RFC, they could accommodate minor changes to the procedures by inline

notes. They could also act as a repository for IESG operational notes, such as "id-nits".

4. Content and Organization of an ISD Document

[[Placeholder -- details to be developed if the WG decides to go down this path]]

5. Transition

The Internet-Draft [ISD-Examples-Process] appears to contain most of the information needed to create this series. An alternative to a series is to create a single master standing document that refers to the RFCs and policy statements that would otherwise make up the document collection. That I-D would essentially be the first draft of that document.

6. IANA Considerations

This document does not anticipate any specific tasks for the IANA. The IANA has traditionally not been involved in maintaining registries for IETF process activities.

7. Security Considerations

This document specifies an administrative procedure for the IETF and hence does not raise any new issues about the security of the Internet.

8. Acknowledgements

[[To be supplied]]

9. References

9.1 Normative References

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