

The PROTO Adviser
draft-ietf-proto-proto-adviser-00

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Abstract

The PROTO Adviser is a designated IETF community member who will provide support to PROTO document shepherds during the first year or so after the IETF working groups begin using PROTO. He or she primarily serves as a source of institutional knowledge for the shepherds and Chairs (and any community member with an interest in PROTO). This document describes roles of the PROTO Adviser.

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1. Introduction

Early in 2004 the IESG undertook several experiments aimed at evaluating whether any of the several candidate changes to the IETF document approval process could yield qualitative improvements in document throughput and quality. One such experiment, referred to as PROTO [[PROTO](#)] (PROcess and TOols), is a set of methodologies designed to involve the Working Group chairs more directly in their documents' approval life cycle. In particular, the PROTO team focused on that part of the document's life cycle which occurs after the document editor and working group typically view the document as "tossed over the wall" to the IESG for publication. In the PROTO methodology, instead of tossing the document over the wall, the WG Chair takes over the Area Director's shepherding tasks (as detailed in [[PROTO](#)]). There are no changes in the document approval requirements, the IESG still must carry out its approval steps, but the Working Group Chair document shepherd is able to team with use his or her energy to greatly enhance the work done during the approval process for the document.

The PROTO process represents a shift in responsibilities from AD to working group chair. This is a significant change which should improve the timeliness and quality of IETF documents. Since this change is being applied to working groups and important IETF documents, the PROTO team felt that it would helpful to have a member of the group which devised this new process available to the folks using it to ensure that transition went smoothly. Note that the Proto Adviser's responsibilities are generally to answer questions about the process and remind folks to use it. Finally, the Proto Adviser isn't intended to be directly involved in document shepherding other than as an adviser on the PROTO process.

2. PROTO Adviser Roles and Responsibilities

The PROTO Adviser (PA) will provide support to the Working Group document shepherds using PROTO in the first year or so after working groups begin to use the PROTO approach to document publication. The includes serving as a source of institutional knowledge available to the Working Group Chairs during the PROTO process, both through involvement in the PROTO team and through continuing manager experience, and the following specific responsibilities:

1. Maintaining a list or website for the community of PROTO working groups. See [[PROTO](#)] for the set of cases which are excluded. The PA also reminds the ADs and Working Group Chairs that PROTO write ups are required (thus starting the PROTO process) when working group documents transition into AD Evaluation state. Note that this requires that the PA receive notifications of the

state transitions for the PROTO documents. This reminder should point the shepherds to [\[PROTO\]](#) to ensure that the structure and content of the write up is full and complete.

2. Keeping track of WG progress status and activity level to ensure that the methodology is being used (and works smoothly),
3. Acting as a general resource for WGCs involved in PROTO. In particular, the PA serves as a resource for the WGC who can triage PROTO related issues and vector them appropriate resolution point,
4. The PA will periodically report to the community on the progress of PROTO, including successes and problems encountered, and incremental changes to the methodology.

[3.](#) Conclusions

This document introduces the roles and responsibilities of the PROTO manager. It is important to note that the PROTO manager is an informal position and is not intended to be institutionalized. Rather, it is envisioned that the PROTO manager position will be retained as long as it proves useful, i.e., until the PROTO ways of working become very familiar, probably for a year or so.

[4.](#) Security Considerations

This document specifies a change to IETF document flow procedures. As such, it neither raises nor considers protocol-specific security issues.

[5.](#) Acknowledgments

Allison Mankin, Bill Fenner, Barbara Fuller, Margaret Wasserman, Aaron Falk and Henrik Levkowetz all made important contributions to this document.

[6.](#) IANA Considerations

This document creates no new requirements on IANA namespaces or other IANA requirements.

[7.](#) Normative References

[PROTO] Falk, A., Levkowetz, H. and D. Meyer, "The PROTO Process: Working Group Chair Document Shepherding",
Internet-Draft [draft-ietf-proto-wgchair-doc-shepherding](#),

March 2005.

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Acknowledgment

Funding for the RFC Editor function is currently provided by the Internet Society.

