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Expires in six months

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May 1997

URN Namespace for RFC series documents
Filename: [draft-ietf-urn-ietf-00.txt](#)

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Abstract

A system for Uniform Resource Names (URNs) must be capable of supporting new naming systems. As an example of the sort of information that needs to be supplied when proposing new namespaces, this document presents a naming system based on the RFC family of documents (RFCs, STDs, and FYIs) developed by the IETF and published by the RFC editor. This namespace can be supported within the URN framework and the currently proposed syntax for URNs.

[0.](#) Document History and Status

With the first draft of this document, the only issue that has occurred on the list is the discussion on functional equivalence for this namespace (see [section 1.5](#)). There are currently two positions on this: the first is what is specified here, and the second is that there is no equivalency for this namespace, e.g. a resolver receiving a request must return ONLY the resource named by that request.

[1.](#) Namespace Syntax

Consistent with the URN syntax specification [\[1\]](#), each namespace must specify syntax related information that is specific to that namespace. This section covers these specifications.

[1.1.](#) Namespace Identifier (NID)

The namespace identifier for this namespace is "ietf".

[1.2.](#) Namespace Specific String (NSS)

The Namespace Specific String has the following ABNF [\[2\]](#) specification:

NSS = family ":" number

family = "rfc" | "std" | "fyi"

number = 1*DIGIT

DIGIT = %x30..%x39

The ABNF specification for "family" above is based on the current documents in the RFC family. As new document series are added to the IETF family by the IESG (or its successor), this ABNF specification will need to be updated. Any system intended to resolve names for this namespace should be written with the awareness that a new document series may be introduced at any time.

[1.3.](#) Additional Reserved Characters

No characters in addition to those specified in [\[1\]](#) are reserved by this namespace.

[1.4.](#) Additional Lexical Equivalence Relations

Note that the entire URN is case-insensitive, because of the definition of the NSS.

[1.5.](#) Functional Equivalence Relations

Rules for equivalence in this namespace are embedded in the document mappings maintained by the RFC Editor (the index files "rfc-

index.txt", "fyi-index.txt", "std-index.txt"). A resource is equivalent to the set of resources implied by the "(Also...)" construct in these mappings. As an example, the URN "urn:ietf:rfc:1661" is equivalent to the URN "urn:ietf:std:51" because the "rfc-index.txt" map shows that [RFC 1661](#) is also STD 51. However,

the URN "urn:ietf:std:51" is equivalent to the SET of URNs "urn:ietf:rfc:1661" and "urn:ietf:rfc:1662" since the "std-index.txt" shows that STD 51 is also [RFC 1661](#) and [RFC 1662](#). Therefore, a resolver receiving a N2R request for "urn:ietf:std:51" MUST return either STD 51 or BOTH [RFC 1661](#) and [RFC 1662](#).

[2.](#) Security Considerations

Because this namespace defines no additional reserved characters, it does not add any security considerations beyond those inherent from the existence of the reserved characters from [\[1\]](#). Further, the definition of the NSS above does not use any of the reserved characters from [\[1\]](#), which means that resolvers for this namespace may be considered "secure" in the sense that any escaping of characters in the NSS MUST result in the resolver indicating that the URN has incorrect syntax.

[3.](#) Acknowledgments

Thanks to various members of the URN working group for comments on earlier drafts of this document. This document is partially supported by the National Science Foundation, Cooperative Agreement NCR-9218179.

[4.](#) References

Request For Comments (RFC) and Internet Draft documents are available from <URL:ftp://ftp.internic.net> and numerous mirror sites.

[1] R. Moats, "URN Syntax," [RFC 2141](#), May 5, 1997.

[2] D. Crocker, P. Overell, "Augmented BNF for Syntax Specifications: ABNF," Internet Draft (work in progress), January 1997.

[5.](#) Author's Address

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This Internet Draft expires November 30, 1997.

Expires 11/97

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