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**Uniform Resource Name (URN) Namespace Registration Transition  
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Abstract

The original registration procedure for formal Uniform Resource Name (URN) namespaces required IETF Consensus. That requirement discouraged some registrations and increased the risk for problems that could occur as a result. The requirements have now been changed in [\[\[RFC 3406bis\]\]](#) to adopt a different model. This document specifies IANA instructions to adapt selected existing registrations to the new model. It also obsoletes some previous RFCs to eliminate any ambiguity about the status of new templates and updated registrations.

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## [1.](#) Introduction

[[Note in draft: This document has been written in RFC form, i.e., assuming that it and 3406bis have been approved. That style of writing assumes that [RFC 3406](#) and the rules it specified are already obsolete. It may be a bit awkward while the I-D is being evaluated by the WG and the IETF, but lowers the risk for errors or other surprises during the RFC editing process.]]

As a part of the initial development of the URN system back in the late 1990s, the IETF URN working group agreed that it was important to demonstrate that the URN syntax can accommodate existing identifier systems. [RFC 2288](#) [[RFC2288](#)] investigated the feasibility of using three identifiers (ISBN, ISSN and SICI) as URNs, with positive results; however, it did not formally register corresponding URN namespaces. This was in part due to the still evolving process to formalize criteria for namespace definition documents and registration, consolidated later in the IETF, first into [RFC 2611](#) [[RFC2611](#)] and then into [RFC 3406](#) [[RFC3406](#)].

URN Namespaces have subsequently been registered for NBN (National Bibliography Number), ISBN (International Standard Book Number), and ISSN (International Serial Standard Number) in RFCs 3188 [[RFC3188](#)], 3187 [[RFC3187](#)], 3044 [[RFC3044](#)] respectively.

The original registration procedure for Uniform Resource Name (URN) namespaces [[RFC3406](#)] required IETF Consensus for formal ones. That



requirement discouraged some registrations and increased the risk for problems that could occur as a result. Those potential problems included the possibility of the same name being used to identify different namespaces with different rules. The requirements have now been changed [[RFC3406bis](#)] to adopt a different model that focuses more on attempting to get all namespaces that follow the syntax of formal ones registered, with as much information collected as a possible consistent with that goal. This document specifies IANA instructions to adapt selected existing registrations to the new model and obsoletes the RFCs that specify the namespaces for International Standard Serial Numbers (ISSNs) [[RFC3044](#)], International Standard Book Numbers (ISBNs) [[RFC3187](#)] to eliminate any ambiguity about the status of new templates and updated registrations.

An updated version of the specification for the namespace for National Bibliography Numbers (NBNs) [[RFC3188](#)] will be issued separately. NBN is not a formal standard and [RFC 3188](#) is the only formal document which specifies its scope. The intention is to modernize the existing namespace registration so that it specifies the identifier and provides examples of its use, while the actual namespace registration will be done according to the new practice.

## **2. Obsoleting Older Registration RFCs**

The existing RFCs that describe URN namespaces for ISSNs ([RFC 3044](#)) and ISBNs ([RFC 3187](#)) should be identified as "Historic" immediately after this document is approved and the new registration templates for those namespaces are submitted and incorporated into the URN Namespace registry by IANA.

[[Note in draft: The more information that can be supplied in the template or references from it, the better. But, if there is information in the now-expired Internet-Drafts ([draft-ietf-urnbis-rfc3187bis-isbn-urn](#), [draft-ietf-urnbis-rfc3044bis-issn-urn](#)) that should be captured somewhere and that doesn't fit naturally in the template, the discussion below is probably a reasonable place to put it.]]

Those updated templates reflect not only new formats but substantive changes to the definitions of the namespaces, as described in the following subsections.



## **[2.1.](#) ISBN URN Changes**

The revised ISBN namespace reflects the updated version of the ISO Standard for ISBNs, ISO 2108:2005 [[ISO-ISBN-b](#)] and allows for the use of both the ten character numbers described in [RFC 3187](#) and the earlier ISO 2108:1992 [[ISO-ISBN-a](#)] (known as ISBN-10) and the expanded ones of the revised standard (known as ISBN-13).

## **[2.2.](#) ISSN URN Changes**

The ISSN namespace is also updated to reflect changes between the ISSN Standard when [RFC 3044](#) was written and the newest, 2007 version [[ISO-ISSN](#)].

## **[3.](#) IANA Considerations**

IANA is requested to update the registry entries for URN ISSNs, ISBNs, and NRNs to reflect the new, RFC 3406bis-complaint templates as soon as they are available and to no longer reference the now-historic RFCs. Other registrations and templates conforming to the newer rules may be substituted for the older ones when they are available. However, neither this document nor RFC 3406bis invalidates existing registrations other than those listed above, so IANA needs to be prepared to maintain a registry whose contents reflect both old and new templates.

## **[4.](#) Security Considerations**

While particular URN namespaces and their registrations might conceivably have security implications, this specification merely specifies a transition in a registration procedure and does not have such implications. The security implications associated with particular namespaces are expected to be listed in registration templates as specified in RFC 3406bis.

## **[5.](#) Acknowledgements**

This document draws heavily on discussions in the IETF URNbis Working Group in the second and third quarters of 2013, particularly during IETF 87 in August 2013, and on informal discussions during the plenary meeting of ISO TC 46 in June 2013. The efforts of those who participated in those discussions are greatly appreciated. It also draws on internet-drafts that were developed to update the older registrations before that approach was replaced by the new extended template model. Those drafts were prepared by Pierre Godefroy, Juha Hakala, Alfred Hoenes, and Maarit Huttunen.



## **6. Contributors**

Alfred Hoenes was the editor and co-author of two of the documents from which this one is, in part, derived. This document would not have been possible without his contributions.

## **7. References**

### **7.1. Normative References**

[RFC3406bis]

Saint-Andre, P., Ed., Daigle, L., van Gulik, D., Iannella, R., and P. Faltstrom, "Uniform Resource Name (URN) Namespace Definition Mechanisms", August 2013, <<https://datatracker.ietf.org/doc/draft-ietf-urnbis-rfc3406bis-urn-ns-reg/>>.

### **7.2. Informative References**

[ISO-ISBN-a]

ISO, "Information and documentation - The International Standard Book Number (ISBN)", ISO 2180:1992, 1992.

[ISO-ISBN-b]

ISO, "Information and documentation - The International Standard Book Number (ISBN)", ISO 2180:2005, 2005.

[ISO-ISSN]

ISO, "Information and documentation - International standard serial number (ISSN)", ISO 3297:2007, 2007.

[RFC2288]

Lynch, C., Preston, C., and R. Jr, "Using Existing Bibliographic Identifiers as Uniform Resource Names", [RFC 2288](#), February 1998.

[RFC2611]

Daigle, L., van Gulik, D., Iannella, R., and P. Faltstrom, "URN Namespace Definition Mechanisms", [BCP 33](#), [RFC 2611](#), June 1999.

[RFC3044]

Rozenfeld, S., "Using The ISSN (International Serial Standard Number) as URN (Uniform Resource Names) within an ISSN-URN Namespace", [RFC 3044](#), January 2001.

[RFC3187]

Hakala, J. and H. Walravens, "Using International Standard Book Numbers as Uniform Resource Names", [RFC 3187](#), October 2001.



[RFC3188] Hakala, J., "Using National Bibliography Numbers as Uniform Resource Names", [RFC 3188](#), October 2001.

[RFC3406] Daigle, L., van Gulik, D., Iannella, R., and P. Faltstrom, "Uniform Resource Names (URN) Namespace Definition Mechanisms", [BCP 66](#), [RFC 3406](#), October 2002.

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