

Network Working Group	O. Kolkman, Ed.
Internet-Draft	February 21, 2011
Intended status: Informational	
Expires: August 25, 2011	

RFC Editor: RSE consensus documentation
draft-kolkman-rse-2011-03

[Abstract](#)

This memo serves as a temporary placeholder for the documentation of consensus around the role and responsibilities surrounding the RFC Series Editor as developed on the rfc-interest list.

[Status of this Memo](#)

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[1. Introduction](#)

This memo tries to cast what I believe the consensus to be in language that is close to being the basis for text in 5620bis. This is supposed to be (or quickly evolve into) the basis from which we will develop job descriptions and write an update to [RFC5620](#) [RFC5620].

In other words, once we converged this memo will be used as the basis for other documents and is not intended to be published as RFC.

Editorial and other comments appear in [square brackets].

[2. The RFC Series Editor](#)

The RFC Series Editor(RSE) is an individual who assumes several responsibilities.

[2.1. Executive Management of the Publication and Production function.](#)

For this type of responsibility the RSE is expected to cooperate closely with the IASA and the various streams.

To prevent actual or apparent problems with conflicts of interest or judgment, the RSE is barred from having any ownership, advisory, or other relationship to the vendors executing the Publication or Production functions except as specified elsewhere in this document. If necessary, an exception can be made after public disclosure of those relationships and with the explicit permission of the IAB and IASA.

[2.2. Development of the RFC Publication series.](#)

In order to develop the RFC Publication series the RSE is expected to develop a relationship with the Internet technical community. With that community, the Editor is expected to engage in a process of articulating and refining a vision for the Series and its continuous evolution.

Concretely:

The RSE is responsible for the coordination of discussion on Series evolution among the Series' Stream participants and the broader Internet technical community.

In time the RSE is expected to develop and refine a vision on

the technical specification series, as it continues to evolve beyond the historical 'by engineers for engineers' emphasis; and

its publication-technical environment: slowly changing in terms of publication and archiving techniques; the communities that produce and depend on the RFC Series. All of those communities have been slowly changing to include significant multi-lingual non-native-English populations. Some of them also have a primary focus on the constraints and consequences of network engineering, rather than a primary interest in the engineering issues themselves.

The RSE will develop consensus versions of vision and policy documents which will be approved by the RFC Series Oversight Committee (RSOC, see [Section 3](#)).

For this type of responsibility the RSE cooperates closely with the community and under oversight of the RSOC and thus ultimately under oversight of the IAB.

Consensus is to hire someone with publication experience and grow their knowledge of the community they will serve.

2.3. Workload

The job is expected to take on average half of an FTE (approx 20 hrs per week) whereby the workload per week is expected to be near full time during IETF weeks, be over 20 hours per week in the first few months of the engagement, and higher during special projects.

3. RSE oversight

The IAB is responsible for oversight over the RFC Series.

In order to provide continuity over periods longer than the nomcom appointment cycle and assure that oversight is informed through subject matter experts the IAB will establish a group that implements oversight for the IAB, the RFC Series Oversight Committee (RSOC).

The RSOC will act with authority delegated from the IAB: In general it will be the RSOC that will approve consensus policy and vision documents as developed by the RSE in collaboration with the community. In those general cases the IAB is ultimately responsible for oversight and acts as a body for appeal and resolution.

For all aspects that affect the RSE itself (e.g. hiring and firing) the RSOC prepares recommendations for the IAB but final decision is the responsibility of the IAB. For instance the RSOC would:

- *perform annual reviews of the RSE and reports to the IAB.

- *manage RSE candidate selection and advises the IAB on candidate appointment (in other words select the RSE, subject to IAB approval)

It is expected that such oversight by the IAB is a matter of due diligence and that the reports and recommendations from the RSOC are approached as if they are binding.

RSOC as a body should abstain from direct participation in policy-making or formation of policy-making committees, which would conflict with RSOC's oversight role. If individual members of RSOC participate in policy-making, they should be aware of possible conflict with their RSOC role and should be prepared to recuse themselves from subsequent RSOC decisions if appropriate.

There is one aspect in which the RSOC will work with the IASA: the remuneration of the RSE itself. The RSOC will propose a budget for approval to the IASA.

The RSOC will be responsible to ensure that the RFC Series is run in a transparent and accountable manner.

The RSOC shall develop and publish its own rules of order.

3.1. RSOC composition

The RSOC will operate as a Program of the IAB, with the IAB retaining final responsibility. The IAB will delegate authority and responsibility to the RSOC as appropriate and as RSOC and RSE relationships evolve. Like other IAB Programs, the RSOC will include people who are not current IAB members. The IAB will designate the membership of the RSOC with the goals of preserving effective stability, keeping it small enough to be effective, but large enough to provide general Internet Community expertise, specific IETF expertise, Publication expertise, and stream expertise. Members serve at the pleasure of the IAB and are expected to bring a balance between short and long term perspective. Specific input about, and recommendations of, members will be sought from the streams, the IASA, and the RSE. The RSE and a person designated to represent the IASA will serve as ex-officio members of the RSOC but either or both can be excluded from its discussions if necessary.

4. References

4.1. Normative References

4.2. Informative References

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| [1] | Kolkman, O., IAB, " RFC Editor Model (Version 1) ", RFC 5620, August 2009. |
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Author's Address

Olaf M. Kolkman editor Kolkman EMail: olaf@nlnetlabs.nl