Status of Normative References in RFC3261
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Abstract

This document captures the current status of the normative references in RFC3261. It is intended to inform continuing discussions on how to maintain the SIP protocol.
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1. Understanding the normative dependencies in RFC3261

While discussing how to move forward with the maintenance of the SIP protocol, it will be useful to understand the scope and status of the normative dependencies in the core documents (RFC3261 in particular). The kind of work needed to move the protocol to Draft Standard is different than the work that would be done refining the protocol with the intent to remain at Proposed Standard for another interval.

[RFC2026] states:

Note: Standards track specifications normally must not depend on other standards track specifications which are at a lower maturity level or on non standards track specifications other than referenced specifications from other standards bodies.

In other words, any normative references from a Draft Standard must be to other Draft or full Standard documents, or come with a strong explanation of why a "downref" or an external reference is acceptable [RFC3967].

RFC 3261 normatively depends on SDP (literally [RFC2327], but any work would reference the current standard at the time - at the moment, that is [RFC4566]). This is likely to be one of the harder dependencies to resolve. We would either have to progress SDP as a prerequisite, find a way to construct the documents to avoid a normative reference to SDP, or discover some sort of compromise between those extremes.

RFC 3261 also normatively depends on TLS (again the literal reference, [RFC2246], no longer makes sense - the current authority is [RFC4346]). There is precedent for a downref in cases where the parts of the referenced documents that are used by the standard are believed to be of adequate quality. In this case, we could make the argument that the parts of TLS that are used by this specification are well enough specified and of adequate quality to qualify for draft standard. Furthermore, we anticipate being able to demonstrate interoperability of SIP's use of TLS with entirely discrete implementations (including the implementation of TLS).

2. Survey of RFC3261 Normative References

RFC 3261 has 26 direct normative references in the categories detailed below. We will, as part of this exercise, also need to understand the indirect references (the normative references in the documents below that are not at Draft or above, and the normative
3. Other dependencies to track

This survey does not include the dependencies of other RFCs defining widely implemented small updates, such as rport [RFC3581] and the non-INVITE fixes [RFC4320], that will likely be merged into the core specification of SIP however we move forward.
4. Security Considerations

This document is not known to introduce any new security issues for consideration.

5. IANA considerations

None

6. Informative References


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