Clarifying the Historic RFC Maturity Level
<draft-yevstifeyev-genarea-historic-03>

Abstract

   This document defined what the Historic RFC maturity level means,
   what are the criteria for Historic RFCs, describes procedures for
   republication and reclassification of RFCs in Historic maturity level
   and discusses other issues related to Historic RFCs. It updates RFC
   2026.

Status of this Memo

   This Internet-Draft is submitted to IETF in full conformance with the
   provisions of BCP 78 and BCP 79.

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   Task Force (IETF), its areas, and its working groups. Note that
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1. Introduction

   The Historic RFC maturity was firstly mentioned in RFC 1310
   [RFC1310], the first document that defined IETF standards process,
   and its definition remained unchanged in all its revisions - RFC 1602
   [RFC1602] and the most current RFC 2026 [RFC2026]. It just says:

      A specification that has been superseded by a more recent
      specification or is for any other reason considered to be obsolete
      is assigned to the "Historic" level.

   This description remains many issues opened and uncertain. They
   include: criteria for Historic RFCs, procedures for republication and
   reclassification of RFCs in Historic maturity level, references to
   Historic RFCs, etc. This caused misunderstandings of the community
   regarding such issues and often using ad-hoc and often undefined
   procedures for them.

   This document is to clarify the Historic maturity level and other
   issues related to it. It updates RFC 2026 [RFC2026].

1.1. Terminology

   The key words "MUST", "MUST NOT", "REQUIRED", "SHALL", "SHALL NOT",
   "SHOULD", "SHOULD NOT", "RECOMMENDED", "NOT RECOMMENDED", "MAY", and
   "OPTIONAL" in this document are to be interpreted as described in RFC
   2119 [RFC2119].

   The definitions of RFC streams, i. e. IETF stream, IAB stream, IRTF
   stream and Independent Submissions stream, can be found in RFC 4844
   [RFC4844].

   The terms 'Standards Action' and 'IETF Consensus' are described in
   Section 4.1 of RFC 5226 [RFC5226]

   The term 'historicizing RFC' means the RFC that makes another one
   Historic. The term 'historicized RFC' means the RFC that is made
   Historic by another one. The term 'superseding RFC' means the RFC
   that replaces another one. The term 'superseded RFC' means the RFC
   that is replaced by another one.

1.2. Discussion of this Document

   Discussion of this document SHALL occure on IETF Discussion mailing
   list [RFC3005] until and unless any of the ADs will create the
   separate list. This section MUST be deleted upon publication of this
   document.

2. Historic Status Definition

The Historic maturity is used to identify that the particular RFC is obsolete (i.e. outdated), superseded or deprecated. The criteria the RFC should meet to be considered as obsolete, superseded or deprecated are discussed in Section 2.1.

Historic RFC maturity level is a kind of caveat emptor, that notifies the reader that they SHOULD be careful with the implementation of the described technology since it is not advised to be used for some reason. But Historic maturity level does NOT restrict any implementations of the described technology.

The Historic status MAY be assigned to RFCs of all categories following the procedures of Section 3 of this document.

2.1. Criteria for Historic RFCs

If the RFC is replaced by another one, it SHALL be considered to be superseded.

The RFC SHALL be considered to be obsolete if it meets the following criteria:

  a. It has been publicly available for at least 7 years;

  b. During this period of time the protocol or technology, described in this RFC has not been seen used in the Internet (i. e. no interoperable implementations have appeared during this time) or it has been implemented early in the process of testing of this technology, but further implementations have not appeared.

The RFC SHALL be considered to be deprecated if it meets at least one of the following criteria:

  a. There is another technology, that, in fact, does not supersedes the technology described in such RFC, but just provides more aceptable alternative, and, therefore, makes it 'predecessor' NOT RECOMMENDED to be used;

  b. The technology, described in it contains a design flaw or provides some risk of danger to the Internet and SHOULD be avoided;

  c. It described the technology that might create serious problems with its implementation or makes them impossible.

3. **Procedures for Historic RFCs**

There are two different ways the Historic RFC may put itself on the
map. They are:

   a. Republication of RFC as Historic; and

   b. Reclassification of RFC as Historic.

The procedures for these two cases are described below.

3.1. **Republication of RFC as Historic**

One way to make the RFC Historic is to republish it in this status.
If such action is needed, the appropriate Internet-Draft with the
intended status 'Historic' and that will become the superseding
document for the historicized one (when approved) SHALL be issued.
The technical content of this Internet-Draft MUST be the same as in
the historicized RFC. Such document SHALL contain the 'Historic
Considerations' section clarifying the reason of republication the
document in Historic maturity level.

Such republication proposal SHALL firstly be discussed at the
appropriate mailing list, if any, or on the IETF Discussion mailing
list [RFC3005]. If the authors are sure that there is at least rough
consensus on such action, they should apply to IESG to request the
IETF-wide Last Call for republication the particular document in
Historic maturity level. If the Last Call revealed the wide
consensus of the community, the corresponding RFC will be republished
as Historic document.

There are a number of cases when the approval of another parties is
needed for republication of RFC in Historic maturity level. In
particular, if the historicized document has been processed on IAB
Stream, the approval of IAB Chair [RFC2850] is REQUIRED for
historicizing such document. If the document has been processed on
IRTF or Independent Submissions Streams, the approval of IRTF Chair
[RFC2014] or the authors of the document (or the directors of the
area the document is considered to be related to, in exceptional
cases), respectively, is REQUIRED for moving such document to
Historic.

3.2. **Reclassification of RFC as Historic**

Reclassification of RFC as Historic is made via moving it to this
status from the other one. There are two possibilities for such
action:

   a. There is a superseding RFC that moves the superseded one to
   Historic maturity level; and

   b. There is a separate historicizing RFC that moves the
   historicized one to Historic maturity level.

The procedures for moving RFCs to Historic, depending on their
initial status are described below. For examples of the RFCs that
perform such action see RFC 4223 [RFC4223] or RFC 5125 [RFC5125].

3.2.1. Standards Track RFCs

Historicizing of Standards Track RFCs SHALL be made following the
'IETF Consensus' policies.

3.2.2. Best Current Practices RFCs

Best Current Practices (BCP) [RFC1818] RFC MAY be historicized only
in the case if it is being superseded by the other one. In this case
the usual procedure for BCP RFCs SHALL be followed [RFC2026].

3.2.3. Experimental RFCs

Procedures for historicizing Experimental RFCs depend on their origin
and the way it is being historicized, as follows.

3.2.3.1. Separate Historicizing Document

The procedures described in this section apply to the case, mentioned
as 'b' at the beginning of Section 3.2 (separate historicizing
document).

If the Experimental RFCs has been processed on IETF stream, 'IETF
Consensus' is REQUIRED to historicize it.

If the Experimental RFCs has been processed on IAB stream, 'IETF
Consensus' and IAB Chair [RFC2850] approval is REQUIRED to
historicize it.

If the Experimental RFCs has been processed on IRTF stream, 'IETF
Consensus' and IRTF Chair [RFC2014] approval is REQUIRED to
historicize it.

If the Experimental RFCs has been processed on Independent
Submissions stream, 'IETF Consensus' and authors' approval is
REQUIRED to historicize it. In exceptional cases the approval of the
director of the area the historicized document is considered to be
related to MAY be used instead the authors' one.

In the cases described above IESG is responsible for recording their
approval.

3.2.3.2. **Superseding Document Historicizes the Superseded One**

The procedures described in this section apply to the case, mentioned
as 'a' at the beginning of Section 3.2 (superseding document
historicizes the superseded one).

The superseding document that is being processed only on the same
stream as the superseded one MAY historicize it. A simple mention of
such action is therefore REQUIRED in superseding document.

3.2.4. **Informational RFCs**

In order to consider the Informational RFC to be appropriate for
assigning it the Historic maturity level, it SHALL meet the following
criteria:

   a. It describes the protocol or other technology (see Section 4.2.2
      of RFC 2026 [RFC2026]);

   b. It is not a part of FYI sub-series [RFC1150]; and

   c. It meets the criteria of Section 2 of this document.

The procedures for historicizing such RFCs are the same as for
Experimental ones, described in Section 3.2.3.

3.2.5. **RFCs with No Particular Status**

RFCs with no particular status (see [RFCNOSTATUS]) SHALL be moved to
Historic following the 'IETF Consensus' policies.

4. Other Considerations

4.1. 'Status of this Memo' Section in Historic RFCs

This document does not modify the boilerplates for 'Status of this
Memo' sections in Historic RFCs described in RFC 5741 [RFC5741].

4.2. Handling References to Historic RFCs

Normative references to Historic RFCs SHALL be handled as described
in RFC 3967 [RFC3967].

Informative references to Historic RFCs are allowed in any RFCs.

4.3. IANA Considerations in Historic RFCs

The historicized document may have requested some action from IANA,
that are already performed. In this case the historicizing document
MUST clearly mention whether any action from IANA is needed once such
document becomes Historic.

[DISCUSS: Are there any other issues related to Historic docs. that
should be discussed here?]

5. Security Considerations

Security issues are not discussed in this document.

6. IANA Considerations

None. This section may be deleted.

7. Varying Procedure

Varying procedure described in RFC 2026 [RFC2026] still applies to
this document.

8. References

8.1. Normative References

[RFC2026]   Bradner, S., "The Internet Standards Process -- Revision
            3", BCP 9, RFC 2026, October 1996.

   [RFC2119]   S. Bradner, "Key words for use in RFCs to Indicate
                Requirement Levels", BCP 14, RFC 2119, March 1997.

   [RFC3967]   Bush, R. and T. Narten, "Clarifying when Standards Track
                Documents may Refer Normatively to Documents at a Lower
                Level", BCP 97, RFC 3967, December 2004.

   [RFC4844]   Daigle, L., Ed., and Internet Architecture Board, "The
                RFC Series and RFC Editor", RFC 4844, July 2007.

     This document makes the downgrade reference to RFC 4844
     (Informational RFC). The procedure of RFC 3967, then, SHALL be
     applied to this document during IETF Last Call.

   [RFC5226]   Narten, T. and H. Alvestrand, "Guidelines for Writing an
                IANA Considerations Section in RFCs", BCP 26, RFC 5226,
                May 2008.

8.2. Informative References

   [RFC1150]   Malkin, G. and J. Reynolds, "FYI on FYI: Introduction to
                the FYI Notes", FYI 1, RFC 1150, March 1990.

   [RFC1310]   Chapin, L., "The Internet Standards Process", RFC 1310,
                March 1992.

   [RFC1602]   Internet Architecture Board and Internet Engineering
                Steering Group, "The Internet Standards Process --
                Revision 2", RFC 1602, March 1994.

   [RFC1818]   Postel, J., Li, T., and Y. Rekhter, "Best Current
                Practices", RFC 1818, August 1995.

   [RFC2014]   Weinrib, A. and J. Postel, "IRTF Research Group
                Guidelines and Procedures", BCP 8, RFC 2014, October
                1996.

   [RFC2850]   Internet Architecture Board and B. Carpenter, Ed.,
                "Charter of the Internet Architecture Board (IAB)", BCP
                39, RFC 2850, May 2000.

   [RFC3005]   Harris, S., "IETF Discussion List Charter", BCP 45, RFC
                3005, November 2000.

   [RFC4223]   Savola, P., "Reclassification of RFC 1863 to Historic",
                RFC 4223, October 2005.

   [RFC5125]   Taylor, T., "Reclassification of RFC 3525 to Historic",

RFC 5125, February 2008.

[RFC5741]   Daigle, L., Ed., Kolkman, O., Ed., and IAB, "RFC Streams,
             Headers, and Boilerplates", RFC 5741, December 2009.

[RFCNOSTATUS]
             RFC Editor, "The List of Unclassified RFCs",
             <http://www.rfc-editor.org/categories/rfc-unknown.html>

Appendix A. Acknowledgments

The comments from Doug Ewell, George Wes . . TBD . . were useful for
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