5785bis
IETF101, London
• RFC5785 introduced “Well-Known URIs”

• Use cases:
  • robots.txt
  • P3P
  • DNT
“...they are designed to facilitate discovery of information on a site when it isn’t practical to use other mechanisms; for example, when discovering policy that needs to be evaluated before a resource is accessed, or when using multiple round-trips is judged detrimental to performance.

As such, the well-known URI space was created with the expectation that it will be used to make site-wide policy information and other metadata available directly (if sufficiently concise), or provide references to other URIs that provide such metadata.”

–RFC5785
• URI paths are under the control of their authority (i.e., the origin’s administrator). Cf: Architecture of the WWW, Vol1

• Standards should not encroach into this space.

• BCP190 explains why.

• Well-Known URIs are a very limited carve-out for standards to use for metadata about the origin.
Meanwhile...
• Lots of IETF protocols have started to use HTTP as a substrate.

• Common requirement: “What URI should I use?”

• Well-Known URIs seem like they’re the answer.
• Well-Known URIs were not designed as a protocol bootstrap/tunnelling mechanism.

• Again, **limited** carve-out.

• Assuming that an origin corresponds to administrative boundaries can be problematic.

• Shoving everything into .well-known means that applications aren’t using HTTP well (see: BCP56bis).

• There are very few cases where you can’t just start with a URI (rather than a hostname).
Proposal

• Expand upon “Appropriate Use” section

• This is a clarification; no new normative requirements

• Clarity on this would be very helpful, as we’ve had a number of late-stage “discussions” between ADs, registry expert and WGs about how to use well-known URIs

• RFC5785 was AD-sponsored

• AD-sponsor bis?