Definition of new tags for relations between RFCs
draft-kuehlewind-update-tag-02

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Background and Problem

- Drafts/RFCs can include a tag called "Updates" to link a new RFC to an existing RFC.
- On publication the existing RFC is augmented with an additional metadata tag called "Updated by" that provides a link to the new RFC.

Problem

The “Updates/Updated by” tag pair is **not well-defined**

and therefore it is currently used for multiple different purposes,

which leads to **confusion** about the actual meaning of this tag and **inconsistency** in its use.
Current State and Motivation for Changes

- Some working groups apply the “Updates” tag when new implementers are also required to implement the new RFC.
- Other groups use the “Updates” tag to define optional extensions or use of extension points in the current protocol.
- It is useful to separate the mandatory to implement case from the optional to implement case.
New Tag Definitions

Amends/Amended by: The amending RFC specifies mandatory changes the amended RFC.
e.g. bug fixes, behavior changes
→ Signals to anyone planning to implement the amended RFC that they MUST also implement the amending RFC

Extends/Extended by: The extending RFC defines an optional addition to the extended RFC.
e.g. use existing extension points or clarifications that do not change existing protocol behavior
→ Signals to implementers/protocol designers that there are changes to the extended RFC that they need to consider but not necessarily implement

See Also/See Also: Intended as a catch-all tag where two documents are related loosely but do not fit either of the above categories.
→ Provides a forward reference from an existing RFC to RFCs that may be of interest to read.
Usage of New Tags

- Tags MUST only be used for the defined meanings
  - However, use of these tags is not mandatory

- As is the case today with the "Updates" tag, none of the new tags makes the extended/amended RFC invalid

- Tags can only be used to reference other RFCs (and not as a reference to external sources)

- No restrictions on the status/maturity level of the RFC that uses these new tags in relation the RFC that gets amended/extended

- No requirements on the form of the amendment (e.g. OLD/NEW vs. text) specified

- The RFC that is being Amended/Extended should be indicated in the abstract AND introduction as is the case today for Updated RFCs
  - Further recommended to provide additional information about the amendment/extension in the abstract OR introduction
Open Questions for Discussion

● Is this work useful?
● Should we allow the continued use of Updates/Updated tag pair in the future?
● Use of new tags for other streams
  ○ Use of tags cross-stream is out of scope as seen as a separate topic
● Updates to RFC Style Guide [RFC7322] and "xml2rfc" Version 3 Vocabulary [RFC7991] are necessary if this goes forward
● Should we use these new tags for process documents?