Let’s chat...

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XMPP/Jabber has served us well...

- Provides a secondary channel to support in person interactions
- Interoperable
  - Standards-based systems
  - A robust ecosystem of supporting tools
- Accessible...
  - … to people with different personal needs
  - … to people using different systems
  - … to search and archival tools
- Reliable
  - Old, but proven
... but the situation has shifted over time

● As we work more remotely, chat is more ...
  ○ Primary rather than secondary
  ○ Continuous rather than sporadic

● Atrophy in the XMPP ecosystem leads to access problems
  ○ Unsupported / abandoned clients
  ○ Lack of modern features (e.g., accessibility) in remaining clients
  ○ Where should I go for an XMPP account?

● Even in the best case, XMPP has poor support for modern features, e.g.:
  ○ Dynamic participation: Backchannels? Breakout groups?
  ○ Moderation tools to support CoC / anti-harrassment enforcement

● **Barriers for newcomers** and **suboptimal even for existing participants**
What we need now

- **Functionality** - Helps the IETF get its work done
- **Openness** - Works for the entire community
- **Accountability** - Compatible with policies that guide IETF participation
- **Transparency** - Supports our archiving and retention needs
- **Operability** - Fits within our operational / resource constraints
Functionality

- The service **must provide group chats for IETF working groups** and other sanctioned activities (plenary, IESG, IAB, etc.)
- The service **must allow the creation of ad-hoc group chats**, e.g., for breakout discussions
- The service **should allow for direct messages between members**, and **may provide E2E security** for DM conversations
Openness

- It must be accessible to the larger IETF community, at the same level as email lists.
- There must be a web-based client supported in all major browsers as well as mobile clients for iOS and Android.
- New users must be able to join the service without manual intervention from an administrator.
- The service must be accessible to users who depend on screen readers and high contrast interfaces.
- The service must support keyboard-only navigation.
Accountability

- It **must be possible** to enforce the IETF Anti-Harrassment Policy and Code of Conduct on this system.
- **Mature tooling to support CoC/policy enforcement must exist**, including authentication, the ability to warn and ban users, and related tooling.
Transparency

- The service **must have a customizable first-contact experience** to inform new participants about IETF’s policies (Note Well, Anti-Harassment, CoC).
- The service **must have** configurable logging & data retention settings that meet our institutional requirements.
- The system **must have persistent scrollback**. New users should be able to see the context into which they're arriving.
Operability

- We are not building our own. Whether we host it ourselves or pay for it as a service, we're getting something off the shelf that best meets our needs.
- We will consider products, not protocols.
- The service must have effective administrative tooling including user and channel management, alerting and banning.
- The service must support thousands of simultaneous users, at a minimum.
- The service must pass an independent, third-party security evaluation.
Etc.

**Nice-to-haves**
- Open protocols / third party clients
- Overlap with tools that people are already using
- Bot integration
- Notifications
- User status indicators.
- Markdown formatting and syntax highlighting

**Non-goals**
- That the product be purely open source / open standards is not a requirement
Some Candidates

- Probably not XMPP
- Probably not corporate tools: MS Teams, Webex Teams, HipChat, etc.

- Slack  https://slack.com/
- Mattermost https://mattermost.com
- Gitter  https://gitter.im
- Spectrum https://spectrum.chat/
- Zulip  https://zulipchat.com
Discussion

Is this topic of interest?

Scope: Functional requirement document to guide the LLC staff in a selection

Not in scope: Actually choosing a platform

Feedback on requirements?