IETF 112 Plenary Minutes

3 November 2021, Online

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1. Welcome

Lars Eggert welcomed the community to IETF 112 and thanked Ericsson for hosting.

2. Brief Updates

Note: Reports available in the [Datatracker](#)

2.1. IETF Chair Update

Slides: [IETF Chair Report](#)

2.2. IAB Chair Update

Slides: [Internet Architecture Board (IAB) Report](#)

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2.4. RFC Editor Update

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2.5. NomCom Update

Slides: [Nomcom 2021 Update IETF 112](#)

2.6. IETF LLC Board Update

Slides: [IETF 112 - IETF LLC Briefing](#)

3. Internet Architecture Board (IAB) open mic session

Andrew Campling: I've got a question about [RFC 8890](#), which the IAB published, as you know, some while ago. I wonder if you had any thoughts on what to do to implement some of the recommendations or best practices that were described in the RFC, and how we might get the voice of the end user more directly into the activities of the IETF? Thank you.

Mirja Kühlewind (IAB Chair): Thanks for the question, but you were breaking up a little bit. I think you were talking about the RFC that says that the user's intent should be taken in mind when designing protocols, and the question was if the IAB did something to implement this. I'd invite other IAB members to add an opinion here, and even the authors of the draft who are not on the IAB anymore. From my point of view, this is advice by the IAB that was given for the IETF community, and this should trigger some discussion in the IETF community. But to actually take action or implement something or consider this in protocol design, that is something that needs to be done in the IETF community itself and in the protocol development process.

Tommy Pauly (IAB): Just to comment a little bit more, yes, Mirja is right that this is mainly advice to the community. However, in the ways that the IAB does get to give input, such as when we're doing reviews of BOF and charters, we've noted specifically that this document is one that we want to have on hand, and that we will look at and review during the times to make sure that it's something that's in our mind, and if we see something that we can comment about, we will. So, that's what we're doing.

Colin Perkins (IRTF Chair): I'd also like to note that the IAB workshop we're organizing in November/December looking at analyzing the IETF data will hopefully give us some idea to what extent the people developing the standards are representative of the broader community. So we can at least understand whether we are at all representative of the end users.

Mirja Kühlewind (IAB Chair): Good point.

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Aaron Falk: I see only one BOF on the agenda, and maybe a half-dozen side meetings. I am wondering, is the IAB concerned about the arrival of new work to the IETF, and do you have any thoughts on how to keep the intake moving along?

Mirja Kühlewind (IAB Chair): Maybe "concerned" is not the right word, but the IESG is talking a lot about this.

Lars Eggert (IETF Chair): This is a concern, and it was a joint topic--we recently had a little workshop with the IAB, IESG, and LLC Board where this was one of the sessions. We are monitoring the activity of the IETF, and we reported on it a little bit at the last meeting in more detail. We do see that currently-chartered work is sort of progressing okay, I want to say. There is something like a 10% reduction in emails being sent, for example, but it's not what I would call dramatic. But we do see a distinct drop in the submission of -00 drafts, and I think that translates into a reduction in BOF proposals. I think everyone is finding it difficult to socialize a topic, especially something that might be a bit controversial or require some more shaping, in this virtual format. We also know anecdotally that a few people are waiting with their proposals until they get to be back in person and can present to a room, rather than online. So, yes, we are hoping that we can go back to at least a hybrid format, and we hope that that will revitalize

the intake of new work. But yes, the IESG and the leadership overall see that concern that you raise.

Aaron Falk: Is there any way that you can add some transparency to--your observation that you think there may be topics that are considered to be too controversial to socialize now was something that I had not heard. I am wondering, is there a way to share some visibility into those things that are out there? I mean, maybe that's not an accurate assessment. Maybe it is. But from an organizational point of view, it would be reassuring to know that this is a temporary, pandemic-related change, as opposed to maybe the IETF's utility diminishing.

Lars Eggert (IETF Chair): I agree, and all signs we see point to this being solely because of the pandemic and not being able to meet. One thing that I'm actually happy about is HotRFC, so thank you again for that, because I think that is a pretty useful vessel in which people can bring in the nugget of an idea for new work and get some exposure and private feedback. Maybe that private feedback could be, "You should really bring this as a BOF." We haven't had that for a while, and so I think people might have been hesitant to jump straight to the BOF stage, which is sometimes a little bit difficult. We also have side meetings in this virtual format, but I think--I don't have numbers--but it feels like there's fewer of those as well. Because maybe also the side meeting crowd doesn't get what they want out of the virtual meetings, which I can sort of understand. I wish I had a better answer than hoping to be back in person, but I think this new work is something where people really want to sit together and chat and brainstorm, which doesn't lend itself well to virtual formats.

Aaron Falk: I don't want to belabor the point, but I feel like we're conflating two slightly different topics. One is, when you say that all signs are pointing to the fact that this is temporary, I am suggesting that it would be helpful if those signs could be collected together and shared with the community so that we can all develop that assessment. The actual signs are, the specifics are what they are. I'm just saying that you, or maybe the IESG, are in a position where you're seeing more potential stuff than the rest of the community, and I think if there's a way that you can share that, that would be helpful.

Mirja Kühlewind (IAB Chair): This is a topic we've been discussing very often before and during the pandemic. We do have in general a new problem to on-board new work in a good way, to find the right contact person and bring it at the right stage. It's not like I think the IESG is exposed to much more of these ideas or new work, but we are seeing that there are components of an in-person meeting that we can't replicate in a virtual environment, and these are simply missing. And a lot of this was where you actually talked to people about new work and so on, and we can't replicate this; we just don't have it. I think the signs that we are looking at are just the numbers that everybody can look up from the Datatracker or email lists. Like, we see less emails; we see less -00 drafts; those kinds of things. They are very good hints, but it's also not a full evidence of what is happening there.

Aaron Falk: I get it. Okay, thank you.

Lars Eggert (IETF Chair): If you want an answer from the IESG, maybe bring this up again later in the plenary when the IESG is up on stage, because this is probably more a topic, or at least as much a topic for the IESG.

Mirja Kühlewind (IAB Chair): I definitely agree; I think a lot of people contact ADs first, so they might be exposed differently. The IAB is just trying to help, and we are trying to improve that process..

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Spencer Dawkins:The comment about work being considered to be controversial, were you actually saying that that was the people who were proposing the work who are concerned it was too controversial, or someone else was concerned it was too controversial? I didn't understand the response to Aaron.

Lars Eggert (IETF Chair): Sorry, I maybe spoke a little bit sloppily here. Controversial might be the wrong word. But what I have heard from several people is that they feel that they need to have a discussion at a depth and at a level that they don't feel that they can have in a virtual form. Maybe "complex" would be a better word than "controversial."

Spencer Dawkins: Okay, that's helpful. I'll follow up during the IESG open mic. Thank you.

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Sanjeev Gupta: Quick question. I got quite confused with the work in the SHMOO group and the hybrid meeting and all. So, is Vancouver planned to be hybrid as of now? I mean, I realize things could change. Since you are mentioning Vancouver, I am assuming there will be some in-person meetings there.

Mirja Kühlewind (IAB Chair): I think you have to join the queue at the next open mic again, because that's a question for the LLC; sorry.

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Jari Arkko (IAB): I wanted to return to the previous discussion just a little bit. The initial question was if we are concerned about the BOFs, and I think we are, or at least in my mind we are, but there are two factors here. One is the pandemic, which is easy to understand. But I think there is a longer-term issue that it's not easy to bring new work to the IETF, and we've been discussing this, of course, many times. We make it relatively hard. And some of the things that are making it easier are things like HotRFC; Lars already mentioned that. But also the Hackathon. Like, if you compare the experience of bringing a new thing to the Hackathon versus bringing a new thing to the IETF, it's quite different. You go to the Hackathon, you're welcomed and you have your team and you have your table and you just move forward. It's much harder on the IETF side. And of course, I understand some of the reasons why--many proposals are

sort of all over the place and not very easy to adopt into any standards organization. But I think that we should at least recognize that this is an issue. It's difficult in the IETF to do these new things.

Mirja Kühlewind (IAB Chair): Yeah, just to add, when you say we are making it hard, I don't think we're making it hard on purpose. It is hard to bring in new work. You have to understand a lot about the IETF, and we're not doing enough to help people with that, and that's definitely a job for the IAB. It's what we do at the IAB, but it's also not easy to find the right ways for that. So, if people have more input, please let us know, and start a discussion with the IAB.

4. IETF Administration LLC open mic session

Jason Livingood (IETF LLC Board Chair): Jay, do you want to speak initially to the Vancouver question?

Jay Daley (IETF Executive Director): Yes. I'm just double checking when Vancouver is... Vancouver is [in] 2024. Yes, I imagine that will probably still be some form of hybrid meeting but I can't guess more beyond that, being almost three years away. If you have a more specific question I can try to answer it, but that's the best I can do at the moment.

Sanjeev Gupta: Apologies, I misremembered the slide. The next IETF which is placed to be in a city, will it be in person since the hotel has been booked?

Jay Daley (IETF Executive Director): The next planned IETF meeting, IETF 113, we are currently in negotiations with a venue in Europe and hoping to book. That's the one I mentioned earlier that we are planning for a smaller number of onsite participants, about 650, down from what would otherwise be about 1100. That would inevitably be a hybrid meeting. It's fair to guess we'll have hybrid meetings for the next couple of years at least, given the ongoing nature of pandemics and the way diseases work.

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Dominique Lazanski: I wanted to follow up on the community survey that was mentioned. I note that it's both the LLC and IESG that are covering it. I just wanted to see if you had any more followup on it in terms of actions from it. I know you have the whole year to review it but any information would be great. Thanks.

Jay Daley (IETF Executive Director): The other week we had a joint IESG/LLC/IAB workshop spread over four days and one of those sessions focused on the community survey and the outputs of the community survey, and the major issues as reported through that survey. I won't go into the details of what was discussed, because it hasn't been written up and agreed properly yet, but there was an understanding that some things there are important and need to be tackled by us and will be tackled. I think that's about all I can say, unless Lars wants to add anything. [pause] I presume no, then. Shall we go with Spencer?

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Spencer Dawkins: I just wanted to take a moment to thank you all on camera for the work you all are doing. I've been following at a distance the work you all have been doing in the current environment and I think this is the IETF meeting where I finally realized there was no possible way I could contribute to this. Thank you for the work you're doing, I know it's not easy, and I know it really matters.

Jay Daley (IETF Executive Director): Thank you.

Jason Livingood (IETF LLC Board Chair): I don't see anyone else in the queue, so I think we can move on. Thank you everyone.

5. Internet Engineering Steering Group (IESG) open mic session

Spencer Dawkins: At the IAB open mic session about new work and things like that, I think one of the things it is important to say is that we have tools now that – I'm not talking to you guys, I'm talking to you guys and the community. We have tools now that we can use more. So the HotRFC thing was shut down during the pandemic and it took us a while to figure out how we can do that in a virtual meeting or in a hybrid meeting. We've had publication of the public side meetings and we've had the wiki as well. One of the things I note--and I didn't realize this for a while--Gather is up between IETF meetings. Anything you can do in Gather today or in the coming week this week you can do in February also. It does have the ability to have audio-video conversations and things like that. That I think would be very helpful for people. One of the things we've done with side meetings so far which is fine, which is leaving people to find their own conferencing facilities. But if Gather is capable of supporting the small meetings we visualize as side meetings, that may be a good thing as well. I think it is important for everyone, especially the community to remember that BoFs have never been a required part of this. They were just a convenient way of us looking at and evaluating new work proposals with much of the community gathered three times a year. But there is nothing magic about BoFs. The thing is to focus on the quality of new work proposals coming in and being able to move those forward in the IETF. I'm curious if you all have reactions to that.

Roman Danyliw: I think the idea of having a high quality idea not going through a formal BoF to directly into chartering is a very viable path. That is one of the outcomes that is recommended out of SECDISPATCH that the idea seems baked enough that there has been enough discussion on it, let's do a little more mailing list discussion to get charter language firmed up.

Lars Eggert: Thanks, Roman. One of the things I'd be curious to know is if one reason people find it difficult to progress work is the lack of tools like Gather. Given that hangouts and other free cooperation systems are available. If that's the case we can certainly try and work on that from the tools side. If this is an issue for many people. If so, please send email to the IESG [iesg@ietf.org].

Spencer Dawkins: That was me leaving the queue and then popping back into it in front of Wes. My apologies Wes. I wanted to thank you for the comment about SECDISPATCH, as a reminder to me almost all the areas have some form of dispatch-y function these days, don't they? I wonder whether being able to do something with those kinds of groups where it is more formal than a side meeting in Gather but less formal than a BoF request. Being able to do that ongoing. Maybe once between IETFs as an example. Just so people are not waiting four months to see how things are going to go at the IETF. The thing that Jason was talking about with the LLC looking at stuff more frequently than we have been looking at things. I think that may be a good model for the technical work as well. What are we going to wish we had approved a proposal for at the next IETF meeting? You guys would know better how to do that with the current structure in the current environment. I think you're digging in the right hole. Thank you.

Warren Kumari: One thing BoFs give us that dispatch type groups don't is it seems as though we get more cross-area input from BoFs and similar. One of the things I'm concerned about is that we don't end up in sort of silos of people in areas. One way we could try to mitigate that is try to make it so people are more willing from other areas to show up at the dispatch meetings possibly by scheduling things that there's less conflict so that with dispatches or just trying to have more of a culture of dispatch meetings are more open and accessible to people from other areas. I'm really concerned we end up with silos of APPS [ART] working on APPS [ART]; OPS working on OPS; RTG only – and we don't get the wide cross-area review.

Lars Eggert: One quick point, we sort of discussed briefly yesterday and also a few weeks ago whether we should have a dispatch-dispatch or just a dispatch meeting where basically it is something with discussion, but IETF-wide where we could have the first stop for new work and where it gets triaged maybe into areas, or maybe just in some other direction. And by its nature would be done so that could be sort of a thing to try out. But I want to go to Wes, he has been patiently waiting in the queue.

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Wes Hardaker: I wanted to follow Spencer's topic because it is an important one. You know it is definitely easier to have new work when you can get together and do it in person. We're not

going to be fully in person, or fully online for a while. I mean, if what we heard earlier we expect the March meeting to be sort of half attended and so hybrid meetings may still mean less incoming new work unless we can find other solutions that allow us to continue bringing in new work even when some of the potential participants can't actually make it to the meeting because they are in an area where travel may be restricted for example. So it would really benefit everyone to concentrate on reaching out and helping through some of the existing tools. I'm very happy that Spencer mentioned Gather for example as being around between meetings. I will admit I haven't joined Gather as much as I should, and I should make a concentrated effort to do that. But even responding to email or helping out with the guides program or something like that would greatly help bring in new work. It feels really good to manage to help somebody take a document and walk them through the IETF process and later find that the new member that brought in new work became an active member of the IETF community. There have been a couple of cases over the past five or ten years where I've helped somebody come in and now they're writing more mail than I can. Final point is to really try to make a concentrated effort to help newcomers come in and help them because it will just wither away if they don't get help through the weird processes the IETF has. I'd argue every standards body has the same issues, not just IETF. Thanks.

Lars Eggert: Thanks, Yeah, that is a good point. I got matched up with somebody through the mentoring program that was trying to bring new work, I think in Transport, and I think that was a pretty interesting engagement for both sides in terms of you can really help someone explain what they should focus on when first presenting, what are some of the questions they are likely to get and soon. I'm wondering - also think about the EMODir and the mentoring effort, whether this is something we can strengthen, whether not only focus on new people, but also new ideas, new work that might come from existing participants but they might not know quite how to bring the idea to the IETF. Could be something for further discussion.

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Aaron Falk: So before we break, the general comment to everyone is capabilities in Gather are somewhat limited. I want to take a minute and sort of talk about the HotRFC structure if that is okay with you. Okay. So we have a space in Gather for HotRFC, the link is on the IETF agenda page and the password is notewell to get in. After you decorate your avatar there are directions on the floor to take you to the HotRFC space. It's laid out like a poster session so each talk has a private little room in Gather where folks who are in the room can talk to each other, but you don't hear people outside the room. And there is a youtube video for each talk you can asynchronously watch the talk if you haven't seen it already. There is a white board for leaving messages to other interested folks or having a real-time discussion. I've invited each of the presenters to be present in their little poster room for folks who want to discuss their proposal. We've got an hour that nominally starts at a quarter past, so in about twelve minutes. You can wander around and talk to folks, this is co-scheduled with the reception so you don't have to go there, you can go to the reception and talk to anyone you want to. We have the space for the entire day, so if we run long, that is totally fine, you won't get kicked out. I'll be there if anyone has any questions on how to interact. And the Secretariat is also around and they are helping

people as well. So I think that is everything I wanted to get out there so I hope you all show up and can make it. So enjoy it, and give me feedback on things you liked and things you didn't like so we can figure out whether this is something we want to continue next time.

Lars Eggert: Thanks, Aaron, that was useful. Thank you all for joining the plenary. I know it was early for some of you but I think we had pretty good attendance. Probably to the same order of magnitude as the last few that we've done, so that is a good sign for this experiment. And I'll see you all over Gather now, and then all next week in the working group sessions. Enjoy the IETF!