RFC 6722 & Updating the Tao

Lars Eggert

RFC 6722 was supposed to make Tao updates easy

That doesn't seem to have worked as planned

Tao-as-RFC revisions:

- RFC 4677 in 2006
- RFC 3160 in 2001
- RFC 1718 in 1994
- RFC 1539 in 1993
- RFC 1391 in 1993

Tao-as-webpage revisions:

- 3x in 2012
- 1x in 2018
- 1x in 2022

Opportunity for a different process?

Tao revisions require IESG approval

The IESG reviews and approves many documents

The datatracker is indispensable here

But Tao revisions are not handled via the datatracker anymore
- They were when they were RFCs…

Bespoke datatracker tooling just for Tao revision approval seems like overkill

Does the IESG really need to approve Tao revisions?

Old Tao revisions are still available as RFCs

So they get indexed by search engines and cited by others

Because people prefer "proper" citations over web pages

Especially if they are not very familiar with the IETF

RFC 6722 is very prescriptive

2. Procedure for Publishing and Editing the Tao

The Tao is published at <http://www.ietf.org/tao.html> and <https://www.ietf.org/tao.html>. The initial content for the Tao web page is based on a draft document that was meant to replace RFC 4677.

The Tao is edited by one or more people as designated by the IESG. Suggestions for changes to the Tao are discussed on the tao-discuss@ietf.org mailing list.

The editor of the Tao decides which proposed changes should be submitted to the IESG for approval. **The editor publishes the proposed changes in a version at <http://www.ietf.org/tao-possible-revision.html>. The IESG may accept as many of the proposed changes as it wishes. The IESG then submits the changed version to the IETF Secretariat** for publication on the IETF web page at the URLs given above. The Tao editor and the IESG should confirm that the page appears on the web site as intended.

Each version of the Tao has a visible timestamp near the beginning of the document. All published versions are archived using URLs of the form <http://www.ietf.org/tao-archive/tao-YYYYMMDD.html>, and a list of the revisions is available at <http://www.ietf.org/tao-archive/>.

Ways forward (personal view)

1. If there is a desire to have the IESG review Tao revisions, publish as RFCs, so that we can use the available tooling.

2. If not, do something that is actually lighter-weight than an RFC, e.g.,

   a. Replace Tao with <something else>

   b. Maintain Tao as "living document" (e.g., Github repo with PRs and community reviews)

   c. <your idea here>