

DMARC WG: Food For Thought

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ART Area Director

Timeline

- March 2013: DMARC first appears in IETF repositories
- July 2013: DMARC WG BoF
- April 2014: DMARC submitted to the ISE
- April 2014: Yahoo! publishes “p=reject” policy
- July 2014: DMARC WG charter review begins
- August 2014: DMARC WG chartered
- March 2015: DMARC (-13) published as RFC 7489 (Informational)
- September 2016: RFC 7960: Interoperability Issues (Informational)
- May 2019: RFC 8601: Authentication-Results (Proposed Standard)
- June 2019: RFC 8616: Authentication for I18N Email (Proposed Standard)
- July 2019: RFC 8617: ARC (Experimental)
- July 2021: RFC 9091: PSD (Experimental)

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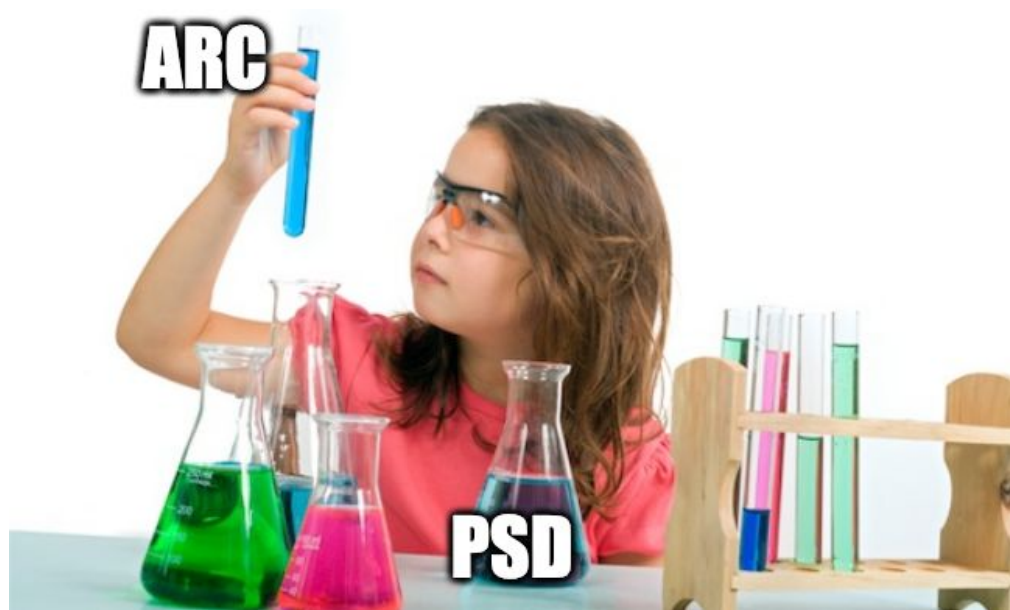
IT'S BEEN NINE YEARS ...

Food For Thought #1: Duration

- Nine years is a long time to be working on a single problem
- It's on its fourth Area Director
- The ART area is now 36 working groups with three more chartering
 - There's increasing pressure to terminate WGs that aren't producing
 - The next AD may not be as tolerant as others have been
- Would this WG's energy be better spent on other projects at the IETF that have a better chance of success?
- Do we really believe there's a solution here someplace?
- Do we have the energy and focus to keep searching for it?
 - Distractions and regressions are frequent and expensive

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ARC

PSD

Food For Thought #2: Experiments

- Are the experiments running? The answer seems to be “yes”, but ...
- What are we learning from them?
 - What ARC implementations exist? Who’s using it?
 - Does ARC provide useful data? It’s been out for four years now!
 - If yes, why isn’t it folded into DMARCBis?
 - If not, should we declare it completed and look at something else?
 - Do we think we need more time? Will we learn something from more time?
 - Who’s trying PSD? Does it provide useful results? It’s been out for two years now!
 - If yes, why isn’t it folded into DMARCBis?
 - If not, should we declare it completed and look at something else?
 - Do we think we need more time? Will we learn something from more time?

During chartering:

From: john-ietf@jck.com

To: ietf@ietf.org

Subject: Re: WG Review: Domain-based Message Authentication, Reporting & Conformance (dmarc)

Date: Jul 17, 2014, 7:31 AM

[...]

I don't want to try to do the WG's work at charter discussion time, but I'd like to be sure that the charter and leadership of **the WG aren't set up to preclude a result of "this protocol is dangerous and problematic**, it is Not Recommended, and the IETF recommendation is to minimize damage by discarding (or otherwise ignoring) DMARC headers whenever they are encountered". I want to stress that I'm not recommending that approach, although it has some charm. I just want to be sure it is at least treated as a legitimate alternative and that, should someone complain on IETF Last Call that it wasn't considered seriously and/or that the reasons for not going in that direction are not adequately documented, such complaints cannot be dismissed on the basis of language in the charter.

During chartering:

From: john-ietf@jck.com

To: ietf@ietf.org

Subject: Re: WG Review: Domain-based Message Authentication, Reporting & Conformance (dmarc)

Date: Jul 17, 2014, 12:11 PM

[...]

I just want to be absolutely sure that the charter doesn't constrain any of those options and that **the WG is on notice that it will be accountable for, and required to explain, the choices it makes.**



Food For Thought #3: The Contract

- The IETF was very unhappy about the rollout of DMARC because of the broad disruption it caused
 - Find the ietf@ietf.org thread starting April 29, 2014, for instance
 - It still comes up as a plenary topic periodically
 - Yes, there are mitigations, but people don't like them
- Nobody doubts the claims of the value of the protection DMARC provides
 - There is doubt that the value offsets the disruption
- There is doubt about the scope of the protection it provides
 - For example: display name attacks, cousin domain attacks, etc., remain
 - This seems to be largely ignored, or unsupported by data
- The deal was a Proposed Standard in exchange for an effective solution to the disruption
 - By resisting the “MUST” suggestion, the WG appears to be diluting this commitment
 - A DMARCBis that doesn't deal with this problem somehow is likely to meet fierce resistance
 - Is anyone talking to the list developers? Seems like they need to be involved here



I AM NOT ALTERING THE DEAL

PRAY I DON'T NOT ALTER IT ANY FURTHER

Let's talk!