



# DRAFT-THOMSON-GENDISPATCH-RFC-DERIVATIVES

Request to the Trustees of the IETF Trust to  
Permit the Creation of Derivative Works

WHY?

# IT IS THE RIGHT THING TO DO

Other SDOs have this as an option or a default

- W3C
- ECMA

Protocol maintenance does not *have to* depend on the SDO

# OPEN STANDARDS

Open standards are a bit like open source

Except that our licenses are more restrictive

# CHANGE CONTROL

One of the hardest things to do is give up change control

... with a guarantee that you won't get it back

Open source projects manage this risk in many ways

... one of which is giving anyone the right to fork

# ALLOWING DERIVATIVE WORKS GIVES US CONTROL

Our copyright means that people can't copy RFCs

But they can always write their own specification

We can place conditions on copies and gain some control

# RISKS



# 1. A FORK IS SUCCESSFUL

Answer: GREAT!

This happens rarely in the open source world

Reasons are many: neglect of the original, diversification of needs

Not always an interoperability risk

## 2. A FORK INTRODUCES MARKET CONFUSION

We've seen attempts with MPLS and TLS (and likely others)

Forks that do this for open source tend not to be successful

Safeguards:

- IETF ensures that it is the best place to do protocols
- [Technical] Require acknowledgment of original
- [Technical] Require distinct names for forks

## OTHER ARGUMENTS

The trust can just license in special cases

Sure, if you know the right people, maybe

Does not address open participation concerns

We need to stop people from being wrong on the Internet

Good luck with that

