Making an RFC in Today's IETF

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Just how long…

• Does it take to produce an RFC these days?
• Is it taking longer than before? Or is the process getting faster?
• What’s the “success rate” for Internet drafts?
Internet Drafts

February 2024 status:
• Current drafts in the Internet-Drafts repository: 2,185
• Average version count: 6
• Average time in the repository: 825 days (2 Years, 4 Months)
Current Draft Age Distribution

Average Draft Age
Outliers

draft-edwards-telnet-xon-xoff-state-control-00.txt  13 Years 11 Months
draft-spinosa-urn-lex-21.txt  14 Years 4 Months
draft-hoehrmann-cp-collation-01.txt  14 Years 9 Months
draft-palanivelan-bfd-v2-gr-13.txt  15 Years 2 Months
draft-dreibholz-rserpool-enrp-taking-30.txt  15 Years 2 Months
draft-dreibholz-rserpool-delay-32.txt  16 Years 9 Months
draft-dreibholz-rserpool-asap-hropt-33.txt  16 Years 9 Months
draft-haluska-sipping-directory-assistance-11.txt  17 Years 8 Months
draft-dreibholz-rserpool-score-33.txt  17 Years 11 Months
draft-dreibholz-rserpool-applic-mobility-34.txt  17 Years 11 Months
draft-hohendorf-secure-sctp-36.txt  18 Years 8 Months
draft-dreibholz-rserpool-applic-distcomp-35.txt  18 Years 8 Months
draft-lior-radius-prepaid-extensions-22.txt  20 Years 8 Months
draft-dreibholz-ipv4-flowlabel-38.txt  21 Years 3 Months
draft-kunze-ark-38.txt  22 Years 8 Months
Incoming Draft Rate

Internet Draft Weekly Submission Rate

DRAFTS per Week

DATE

iETF Meetings
Draft Submission Rate through 2023

Internet Draft Weekly Submission Rate for 2023

iETF Meeting Weeks

Month

Jan  Mar  May  Jul  Sep  Nov  Jan

Drafts per Week

0  100  200  300  400  500  600  700  800  900  1000
The draft submission rate has been steady at some 350 drafts per month (outside of IETF meeting months) since ~2012.
The -00 draft submission rate has been steady at some 50-80 -00 drafts per month (outside of IETF meeting months) since ~2003.

There was a small decline in the COVID period, but it appears to be rising again in the past 12 months.
RFCs

• Internet Drafts since 1 June 1989: **39,719** (watersprings.org)
• RFCs since April 1969: **9,338**. (8,225 since 1 June 1989)
• Draft to RFC “conversion rate”: 21%

• Obsoleted RFCs: **1,130**
• Updated RFCs: **1,168**
• Verified Errata: **1,681**
RFC Publication Rate
Time from Draft to RFC

From ID to RFC

Years (from first draft to RFC)

RFC Publication Date

Missing data
Time from Draft to RFC

Years (From first draft to RFC)

RFC Number

Missing data
Just how long...

• Does it take to produce an RFC these days?
  6 – 8 years

• Is it taking longer than before? Or is the process getting faster?
  It’s taking around 4x longer than 20 years ago!

• What’s the “success rate” for Internet drafts?
  Around 20%, or 1 in 5
See also

RFC8963 - Evaluation of a Sample of RFCsProduced in 2018
Christian Huitema, published Jan 2021
Thanks!