

The “Expires” header field

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The general idea

- A header that says when a message expires

```
Expires: Wed, 1 Dec 2024 17:22:57 +0000
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- RFC 2156 defined it in 1998 for translated X.400 mail
- RFC 850 defined it in 1983 for Usenet messages
- Now allow it on all 5322 mail

<https://datatracker.ietf.org/doc/draft-ietf-mailmaint-expires/>

Some history

- AD sponsored in 2022
 - Reviews ready
 - Strong objections from two individuals
- WG adopted in August
 - Most reviews OK
 - Large mail provider said they wouldn't do it
 - Proposed "Expires-Because"
 - No idea how to choose the reasons
 - So we parked it

Next steps

- European mail operators say they have implemented it
- If it's really in use, we should revive and publish it
- Consider “Expires-Because” as a future improvement

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