

# IP Geolocation Workshop Report

draft-iab-ip-geo-workshop-report-00

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IETF 125, March 2026, Shenzhen

# Workshop details

Virtual workshop held on December 3-5, 2025

30 accepted submissions, 67 participants

<https://datatracker.ietf.org/doc/draft-iab-ip-geo-workshop-report/>

Each day focused on a different area:

- Current use cases for publishing, discovering, and consuming IP address geolocation data
- Areas for improvement, to update or replace IP geolocation mechanisms
- Future directions that satisfy the use cases without relying on geolocating IP addresses

# Why are we talking about this?

IP addresses were not designed to carry geographic meaning...

... but geolocating IP addresses is a widespread practice that has become engrained into how many functions of the web and Internet work today

# Why is IP geolocation used?

Optimizing user experience & network behavior

- Language / regional settings
- Relevant nearby content
- Optimizing network routes and server selection

Enforcement

- Legal/compliance requirements
- Contractual requirements
- Disaster relief & law enforcement

# What are the current mechanisms?

RFC 8805 defines the CSV geofeed format

RFC 9632 adds discovery and authentication

Geo IP provider services add significant amounts of other metadata, and have notions of confidence in location and reputation

Current mechanisms don't handle the reality that a single IP doesn't always map to a single location

# What does IP geolocation represent?

When a claim is made about location, is it:

- Physical user location?
- Network egress location?
- Network infrastructure location?
- Regulatory jurisdiction?

# Gaps and issues

See the report for the full list!

- Privacy and security issues; implicit signal without consent, that targets and tracks users
- Issues with geofeed format; need to be able to extend or be more clear
- Deployment / ecosystem issues; updates are often slow and unreliable
- Location issues; borders between regions/countries, etc

# Why change?

- Geofeeds have gaps to improve
- Satellite networks and privacy proxy networks are "stretching" the current models
- Regulatory requirements are adding pressure for accuracy
- Bar for security and privacy is increasing

# Directions for change

- Update geofeed format details
- Build new mechanisms that don't rely on implicit signals, but are both more authenticated and based on user consent

Geolocation is not going away, but we have the opportunity to drive better designs for the ecosystem

# Next steps

We need more collaboration!

Workshop involved many stakeholders not normally at IETF

Regular conversations on how to evolve this space across the groups would help

What shape should this discussion take?

Thank you to all who participated!

*Questions?*