DISPATCH
@IETF127

RFC 4648bis? (Base 16/32/64)

https://datatracker.ietf.org/doc/draft-josefsson-rfc4648bis/

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Motivation

- *RFC 4648 (Base16/32/64) is WIDELY implemented and used, mature, but only a „Proposed Standard“.*
- *We should advance it to „Internet Standard“ – the concrete scope of work to be defined (see later).*
- *It is used in » 100 other RFCs, and has tons of implementations. No new implementation work is expected, maybe except code fixes/cleanup/documentation etc.*

(Why now? I got interested because of the use in „Structured Fields“ and while debugging an ancient implementation in an Open Software project?)

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Background

Drafts: https://datatracker.ietf.org/doc/draft-josefsson-rfc4648bis/ (ongoing, but intended to be as a suggestion only)

Discussions happened on ietf@ietf.org, approximately one year ago: https://mailarchive.ietf.org/arch/msg/ietf/NJyecHRRYMrcbUC66rJp3WjKC6U/

Pointers to implementations: Too numerous to enumerate, particularly since this would be primarily an editorial revision.

How did RFC 4648 come about in 2006? Was it an AD-sponsored activity?

No existing Working Groups have been approached so far. Which Working Groups, if any, would be relevant?.

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Scope of Work

Sorted by Complexity / Risk / Effort

1. Do not change it at all, just advance to STANDARD.

2. Minor editorial work: update references, apply errata, and possibly revise text describing previous work.

3. Additional editorial work: make minor structural and editorial improvements, such as avoiding repetition and ensuring consistency (e.g., statements that apply to both Base32 and Base64 but currently appear in only one place).



Scope of Work (continued)

4. Give widely used profiles names and dedicated subsections to make them easier to reference (e.g., “Base64, URL-safe, no whitespace, always padded, strict parsing”).

5. Anything more? Probably not. This should not take years (looking back at HTTPbis).

Note: Simon is on board to serve as an author again.

Desired dispatch outcome

What's next? Decisions!

- *Which area???*
- *Use an existing Working Group. Which???*
- *Create a focused and „short lived" Working Group?*

- *Do we need a BOF? (seriously?)*

- *Alternatively, pursue AD sponsorship? (Volunteers welcome!)*

- *Do we need to gather more feedback / suggestions? A dedicated mailing list?*

