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Updates to RFC 2418 Regarding the Management of IETF Mailing Lists

Status of this Memo

This document specifies an Internet Best Current Practices for the Internet Community, and requests discussion and suggestions for improvements. Distribution of this memo is unlimited.

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Abstract

This document is an update to RFC 2418 that gives WG chairs explicit responsibility for managing WG mailing lists. In particular, it gives WG chairs the authority to temporarily suspend the mailing list posting privileges of disruptive individuals.

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1. Introduction

As written, RFC 2418 [RFC2418] gives WG chairs more authority to manage face-to-face discussions than to manage mailing list discussions. In face-to-face meetings, the WG chair has the authority "to refuse to grant the floor to any individual who is unprepared or otherwise covering inappropriate material, or who, in the opinion of the Chair, is disrupting the WG process." However, RFC 2418 does not give the WG Chair the authority to suspend the mailing list posting privileges of an individual who is similarly disrupting WG mailing list discussions. RFC 2418 explicitly requires full IESG approval for this action.

This document is an update to RFC 2418, section 3.2. It gives WG chairs the authority to temporarily suspend the posting privileges of disruptive individuals without IESG approval.

2. Specific Changes to RFC 2418

The following paragraphs supersede the last paragraph of RFC 2418, section 3.2:

As in face-to-face sessions, occasionally one or more individuals may engage in behavior on a mailing list that, in the opinion of the WG chair, is disruptive to the WG process. Unless the disruptive behavior is severe enough that it must be stopped immediately, the WG chair should attempt to discourage the disruptive behavior by communicating directly with the offending individual. If the behavior persists, the WG chair should send at least one public warning on the WG mailing list. As a last resort and typically after one or more explicit warnings and consultation with the responsible Area Director, the WG chair may suspend the mailing list posting privileges of the disruptive individual for a period of not more than 30 days. Even while posting privileges are suspended, the individual must not be prevented from receiving messages posted to the list. Like all other WG chair decisions, any suspension of posting privileges is subject to appeal, as described in RFC 2026 [RFC2026].

This mechanism is intended to permit a WG chair to suspend posting privileges of a disruptive individual for a short period of time. This mechanism does not permit WG chairs to suspend an individual's posting privileges for a period longer than 30 days regardless of the type or severity of the disruptive incident. However, further disruptive behavior by the same individual will be considered separately and may result in further warnings or suspensions. Other methods of mailing list control, including longer suspensions, must

be carried out in accordance with other IETF-approved procedures. See BCP 83 [RFC3683] for one set of procedures already defined and accepted by the community.

3. Security Considerations

This document describes a modification to the IETF process for managing mailing list discussions. It has no security considerations.

4. Acknowledgements

This document reflects a discussion that was held on the MPOWER mailing list in December 2003 and January 2004. In particular, the following people contributed ideas that influenced this document: Harald Alvestrand, Dave Crocker, James Kempf, and John Klensin.

This document was written with the xml2rfc tool described in RFC 2629 [RFC2629].

5. References

5.1. Normative References

[RFC2026] Bradner, S., "The Internet Standards Process -- Revision 3", BCP 9, RFC 2026, October 1996.

[RFC2418] Bradner, S., "IETF Working Group Guidelines and Procedures", BCP 25, RFC 2418, September 1998.

5.2. Informative References

[RFC2629] Rose, M., "Writing I-Ds and RFCs using XML", RFC 2629, June 1999.

[RFC3683] Rose, M., "A Practice for Revoking Posting Rights to IETF Mailing Lists", BCP 83, RFC 3683, March 2004.

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