Why is PEP-801 reserved?

23

I was scrolling through the [PEP index page](#) and noticed that a PEP number was reserved by 'Warsaw':

PEP	PEP Title	PEP Author(s)
I 801	Reserved	Warsaw

I looked it up out of curiosity and the only thing I found referencing this was the [PEP index page](#) and [this commit](#) from 2013 which didn't answer my question

In the commit, they explain that it could be for humour reason (like 666 for example) but I don't see why 801. What is that number linked to?

`python` `pep`

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edited May 2, 2022 at 16:54

dumbass
27.2k ● 4 ● 35 ● 72

asked Apr 4, 2018 at 11:34

juleslasne
570 ● 3 ● 22

6   Since there are no other reserved PEP numbers, it seems that it's placeholder for future reserved numbers. Meta-reserved PEP, in other words. – el.pescado - нет войне Apr 4, 2018 at 11:41

1   Maybe it's some joke from the Monty Python show. I can't say for sure 'cause I've never watched it. Here is why it's a possibility – Gabriel Apr 8, 2018 at 3:21 ✏

1   You might have more luck asking on the python-list mailing list. – user2357112 Apr 8, 2018 at 4:04

1   I'm voting to close this question as off-topic because this is better asked of the Python developer(s) (mailing list). – Michael F Apr 9, 2018 at 7:23

3   @Michael, wouldn't that be true of *all* questions related to developing the Python code base, such as the 440-odd questions tagged `[python-internals]` ? How is this question any different from (for example) stackoverflow.com/questions/4067395/... which probably should be on one of the the GNU mailing lists? :-) As far as I can tell, this question ticks the boxes for a "kosher" SO one. – paxdiablo Apr 9, 2018 at 7:33 ✏

2 Answers

Sorted by: Highest score (default) ⇕

▲

16

▼

Warning, this is supposition, though investigated as at *least* being plausible.

If you look at the history for the `python\peps\pep0` file (the listing of all PEPs), you'll find the change was done in October 2013 by one Barry Warsaw, so probably nothing

to do with any Polish Python user group as some surmise :-)

I can really only suggest why *I* would have done such a thing and, based on that, the most likely reason for it would be to either test that the changes would work with some random value, or that a placeholder of some sort was needed. Short of asking the author himself (which I have now done, so stay tuned ...), that's probably the most likely reason for now.

After receiving a reply from the author, the reason is as simple as it was related to some song/band back in those days, possibly [this one](). The email reply follows:

> You've both reached out to me about the same topic and SO thread, so I hope you don't mind me responding to you both. First, thanks for your love of Python! It's a fantastic language, and even better community, and it's been a great place to have spent the better part of my professional career.
>
> What better than a minor mystery in a corner of a language? Python, named after the Monty Python troupe, has a rich history of humor and easter eggs, so 801 could be nothing more than that. An enigma, wrapped in a riddle, stuffed into a conundrum. A turducken PEP.

Maybe you're right, and it's the secret key that unlocks the Polish Python Ploy, a conspiracy of Warsawans to take over the language from the Dastardly Dutch Dozen. Or it could be a number, that when fed to a certain Python stdlib API, takes over your speakers and unstoppably plays the entire series of Flying Circus until you Silly Walk accurately in front of your webcam.

I like to think it's just a fun number that named a song and a band some people were into back in the day, coupled with the abuse of power from a mad PEP editor everyone else is too afraid to question. Only the Python Secret Underground (PSU) -which emphatically does not exist- knows for sure.

Cheers,
-Barry

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Some PEPs are not numbered sequentially, but are numbered based on their content. Examples are:

- [PEP 628](#) adding math.tau, so named because tau is approximately 6.28,

- [PEP 754](#), implementing the IEEE 754 standard, named after the standard number

Now what if I want to start writing a PEP, I desire for it to have a special number, but I haven't written it yet? Then we can ask the PEP manager! On 21 June 2018, PEP numbers 801 was reserved in [this pull request](#). Initially, PEP 581 was reserved as well, but this reservation was [withdrawn](#).

So, presumably people reserved PEP 801 and 581 because they are preparing a PEP for which this number has a special meaning, and they don't want that number to be assigned to any other PEP.

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edited Jul 12, 2018 at 8:42

answered Jul 2, 2018 at 14:44

gerrit
26.3k ● 18 ● 107 ● 184

1   Yeah but that doesn't explain why they reserved that random pep number – juleslasne Jul 12, 2018 at 7:31