

RFC Editor

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History

The RFC series has a long history. The series was [originated in 1969](#) by Steve Crocker of UCLA, to organize the working notes of the new ARPAnet research program. Online data access (e.g., FTP) was defined

in early RFCs, and the RFC series itself became the first online publication series. For 28 years, this RFC series was managed and edited by the Internet pioneer [Jon Postel](#).

The RFC Editor operation was funded by the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) of the US government until 1998. From 1998 – 2018, the RFC Editor was funded by a contract with the [Internet Society](#), to continue to edit, publish, and catalog RFCs. The RFC Editor was a project at the [USC Information Sciences Institute](#) in Marina del Rey, California, through 2009. Currently, the RFC Production Center and Publisher functions are provided by [Association Management Solutions, LLC \(AMS\)](#).

For more history of the series, see “[30 Years of RFCs](#)”, “[40 Years of RFCs](#)”, and “[50 Years of RFCs](#)”.

Internet Archaeology: Documents from Early History

- Internet Experiment Notes – IEN Index: [HTML](#) | [TEXT](#)

In 1977, ARPA began funding the “internet” research project to realize the protocol concepts laid out by Cerf and Kahn in 1974. Since RFCs were considered the creature of the ARPAnet research program, the internet project decided to create its own RFC-like series of technical notes, the Internet Experiment Notes or IENs. Jon Postel became the editor for the new IEN series as well as the long-standing RFC series.

There were 204 IENs that were published between March 1977 and September 1982. After that, RFCs became the single document series for all ARPAnet- and Internet-related documents. The experience of maintaining two parallel documents series led Postel in later years to vigorously oppose any attempt to create a new series in addition to RFCs.

- [ARPANET News 1-24](#) email messages

This mail file contains ARPANET NEWS messages 1-24, for the period July 1980 – April 1983. These ARPANET news letters were published by the SRI Network Information Center (NIC) for the US Defense Communication Agency (DCA), which operated the ARPANET at the time. Near the end of this period, the ARPANET was switched from the original NCP host-host protocol to the TCP/IP protocol suite. Several of these messages deal with the prelude to that event, in which the Internet was born.

(The email headers were constructed by hand from a TOPS20-format archive file, so they are a little crude.)

- [TCP-IP Digests](#)

This directory contains 46 digests of email concerning the technical development of the research Internet, during the period Oct 1981 through Oct 1983. This includes the trauma of the birth of the Internet proper on January 1, 1983. These emails were collected by an Internet pioneer Mike Muuss of BRL. Mike wrote the original ping program.

- [“TCP/IP Implementations and Vendors Guide”](#), Anne Sauer and Francine Perillo Eds, Sept 1985.
- [Internet Monthly Reports \(IMRs\)](#) covering January 1991 to December 1998

This series of monthly report on Internet issues was originated by DARPA and NSF, and its publication was funded by DARPA. It records the transition from the NSFnet-centered Internet, which brought networking to higher education all around the world, to the present commercial Internet.

- [Reseaux Associes pour la Recherche Europeene \(RARE\) technical reports](#)

During the early 1990s, RARE, an association of European academic organizations, made significant contributions to the international spread of the Internet. Some of the RARE technical reports (RTRs) were also published as RFCs. This directory contains RTRs 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13, which were RFCs 1506, 1614, 1616, 1617, 1685, and 1689, respectively.

- [“List-of-Lists”](#), a list of the Internet-related mailing lists, 14 June 1993.
- [MIL-Standard Test Suite](#)
- [CSNET Transition Plan](#), Bulletin No. 1, October 1983.
- [“SMTP MAIL ERRORS”](#), Paul Mockapetris, Jan 1983.
- [“TCP IP Users Guide”](#) and [“TCP Jsys Calling Sequences”](#), both by Charles Lynn, March 1982. Documentation of TCP/IP implementation for BBN Tenex operating system.
- [Museum](#)

This directory contains other related materials, such as RARE

reports and RIPE notes.

- More early history will be found on the [IAB Web pages](#)

More History about the RFC Series

- The RFC Online project

The **RFC Online** project is an effort to bring all the early RFCs online. Early on, many volunteers typed or scanned in the text of these RFCs, and the RFC Editor did the final formatting and proof-reading. More information can be found on these pages:

[RFC Online project page from 2000](#)

[Update on the RFC Online project from 2008](#)

- News Archive

This page contains updates about the RFC Editor from February 2000 – February 2010.

- Old Reports

[The RFC Editor Function at ISI, January 2009. \(PDF\)](#)

[ISI's Final Report to ISOC on RFC Editor contract, January 2002 through March 2007. \(PDF\)](#)