

# What about Consensus?

How we work

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# Definition of Consensus

*General agreement* from the ***Latin*** *consens* (agreement)

From several dictionaries:

*a generally accepted opinion or decision among a group of people*

*the judgment arrived at by most of those concerned*

*group solidarity in sentiment and belief*

# Consensus within Ecma Rules

## From Ecma Rules

6.2.3 Voting on any matter shall be by simple majority of Ecma TC members. Each Ecma member has only one vote.

6.2.4 It is recommended that in the course of its ordinary work the TC should not use voting unless it is impossible to make progress without a vote.

6.2.18 Any member of a TC has the right to ask for a minority report, which they shall provide, to be included into the semi-annual report.

# TC39 Consensus

*Our terminology*

*Do we have consensus?*

*Is there explicit support for stage X?*

*Anyone block consensus?*

*I withhold consensus.*

# Issues with Our Current Consensus Process

*These are my observations on **Blocking***

- Typically used by a small minority of TC39 members.
  - Typically long time participants.
  - Who tend to be more vocal.
  - With the appearance of unequal authority within the committee.
- Usually stops proposals for that meeting AND sometimes completely.
- Can discourage newer attendees  
Especially when they present their first proposal!
- Has been a code of conduct violation.
- Counter to committee working relationship and cohesion

# Real World Example

## *Decimal*

- \*Proposed Nov 2017 (Stage 0)
- \*BigDecimal for Stage 1 (February 2020)
- \*Multiple stage 1 updates between March 2020 and November 2023
- \*Decimal for stage 2 (April 2024) - Two blockers (spec issues)
- \*Decimal for stage 2 (June 2024) - Single Blockers (wants primitives)
- \*(Future) Decimal for stage 2 with primitives - Know at least one blocker

*No Way Forward!*

# Current Veto Power vs Supporter Power

*One veto === block*

```
let numDelegates = ???;  
let numVetos = 1;  
let delegatePower = 1 / numDelegates;  
let vetoPowerPerBlocker = 1 / numVetos;  
let totalVetoPower = vetoPowerPerBlocker * numVetos;  
let totalSupporterPower = delegatePower * (numDelegates - numVetos);  
let motionResult = totalSupporterPower >= totalVetoPower  
  ? "Passes"  
  : "Fails";
```

*If numVetos > 0 then motionResult is "Fails"*

# Proposed Consensus Policy

*2 blockers or 5% of delegates (which ever is greater) to block*

```
let numDelegates = ???;  
let vetoThreshold = Math.max(0.05, 2 / numDelegates);  
let numVetos = 1;  
let delegatePower = 1 / numDelegates;  
let vetoPowerPerBlocker = delegatePower;  
let totalVetoPower = vetoPowerPerBlocker * numVetos;  
let motionResult = totalVetoPower < vetoThreshold  
  ? "Passes"  
  : "Fails";
```

*If totalVetoPower >= vetoThreshold  
then motionResult is "Fails"*



# Proposal

5% of delegates or 2 vetos (which ever is greater)

BLOCKS

# Discussion