

Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF)
Request for Comments: 7475
BCP: 9
Updates: 2026, 2418
Category: Best Current Practice
ISSN: 2070-1721

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March 2015

Increasing the Number of Area Directors in an IETF Area

Abstract

This document removes a limit on the number of Area Directors who manage an Area in the definition of "IETF Area". This document updates RFC 2026 (BCP 9) and RFC 2418 (BCP 25).

Status of This Memo

This memo documents an Internet Best Current Practice.

This document is a product of the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF). It has been approved for publication by the Internet Engineering Steering Group (IESG). Further information on BCPs is available in Section 2 of RFC 5741.

Information about the current status of this document, any errata, and how to provide feedback on it may be obtained at <http://www.rfc-editor.org/info/rfc7475>.

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1. Introduction and Scope

This document updates RFC 2026 ([RFC2026], BCP 9) to remove a limit on the number of Area Directors who manage an Area in the definition of "IETF Area". This document also updates RFC 2418 ([RFC2418], BCP 25) to reflect this updated definition.

The change described in this document is intended to allow the IESG additional flexibility in organizing the IETF's work. It does not make any changes to the role of an Area and does not argue that assigning more than two Area Directors to an Area is an optimal solution in the long run. In particular, this change is not intended to increase the size of the IESG significantly. If several Areas will require more than two Area Directors, the IESG should consider investigating alternative ways of organizing the IETF's work.

2. Discussion

In recent discussions, the IESG has explored splitting and combining Areas. One proposal resulted in a single Area that would be managed by three Area Directors.

An Area managed by three Area Directors conflicts with this definition in Section 14, "DEFINITIONS OF TERMS" of RFC 2026 ([RFC2026]):

IETF Area - A management division within the IETF. An Area consists of Working Groups related to a general topic such as routing. An Area is managed by one or two Area Directors.

A similar statement appears in Section 1, "Introduction" of RFC 2418 ([RFC2418]):

Each IETF area is managed by one or two Area Directors (ADs).

While it's true that recent IESGs have had two Area Directors in each Area except for the General Area, the number of Area Directors in each Area has varied since the publication of RFC 1396 ([RFC1396]). (For reference, see <<http://www.ietf.org/iesg/past-members.html>>.)

This variation was due to a number of factors, including workload and personal preferences, and happened as a natural part of the IESG organizing itself to do the work the IESG is chartered to do.

At one point, the IESG placed three Area Directors in a single Area (Scott Bradner, Deirdre Kostick, and Michael O'Dell, in the Operational & Management Requirements Area, between IETF 36 and IETF 37 in 1996).

The last time the IESG increased the number of Area Directors in an Area was when they requested that the Nominating Committee provide a second Area Director in the Routing Area in 1999. Although the number of Area Directors in an Area hasn't changed since then, the IESG continues to be responsible for specifying the positions that the Nominating Committee fills each year.

It is consistent with the IESG's role in creating and dismantling entire Areas to allow the IESG flexibility in assigning enough Area Directors who have been selected by the Nominating Committee to effectively manage the working groups within an Area.

Note the requirement in RFC 7437 ([RFC7437], BCP 10) that the Nominating Committee review (approximately) half the positions for the IESG each year is unchanged. The Nominating Committee may assign an appropriate term duration for each position to ensure the ideal application of this rule in the future, and this is also unchanged.

3. Normative Text Change

For this text (OLD) in Section 14, "DEFINITIONS OF TERMS" of RFC 2026 ([RFC2026]):

IETF Area - A management division within the IETF. An Area consists of Working Groups related to a general topic such as routing. An Area is managed by one or two Area Directors.

Replace with this text (NEW):

IETF Area - A management division within the IETF. An Area consists of Working Groups related to a general topic such as routing. An Area is managed by one or more Area Directors.

For this text (OLD) in Section 1, "Introduction" of RFC 2418 ([RFC2418]):

Each IETF area is managed by one or two Area Directors (ADs).

Replace with this text (NEW):

Each IETF area is managed by one or more Area Directors (ADs).

Informational RFCs such as RFC 3710 ([RFC3710]) and informal descriptions of IETF organizational structure that also describe IETF Areas as being managed by one or two Area Directors should be considered updated by this normative specification.

4. Security Considerations

This document updates an IETF process BCP and has no direct Internet security implications.

5. References

5.1. Normative References

- [RFC2026] Bradner, S., "The Internet Standards Process -- Revision 3", BCP 9, RFC 2026, October 1996, <<http://www.rfc-editor.org/info/rfc2026>>.
- [RFC2418] Bradner, S., "IETF Working Group Guidelines and Procedures", BCP 25, RFC 2418, September 1998, <<http://www.rfc-editor.org/info/rfc2418>>.
- [RFC7437] Kucherawy, M., Ed., "IAB, IESG, and IAOC Selection, Confirmation, and Recall Process: Operation of the Nominating and Recall Committees", BCP 10, RFC 7437, January 2015, <<http://www.rfc-editor.org/info/rfc7437>>.

5.2. Informative References

- [RFC1396] Crocker, S., "The Process for Organization of Internet Standards Working Group (POISED)", RFC 1396, January 1993, <<http://www.rfc-editor.org/info/rfc1396>>.
- [RFC3710] Alvestrand, H., "An IESG charter", RFC 3710, February 2004, <<http://www.rfc-editor.org/info/rfc3710>>.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to Barry Leiba and Jari Arkko for applying the giggle test to version -00 of this document, and to Adrian Farrel, Alexey Melnikov, Brian Carpenter, Christer Holmberg, David Crocker, David Harrington, Donald Eastlake, Kathleen Moriarty, Murray Kucherawy, Susan Hares, Stephan Farrell, and Stewart Bryant for providing review comments.

Thanks to Fred Baker, Michael St. Johns, and Scott Bradner for providing a better understanding of the history of how the IESG ended up with two Area Directors in most Areas and even, at one point, three Area Directors in one Area.

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