

## TRANSITIONAL RFC SERIES EDITOR

### JOB DESCRIPTION

*NOVEMBER 4, 2009*

This Job Description describes tasks to be performed by the transitional RFC Series Editor (transitional RSE). The transitional RSE will be appointed for a nominal period of one year. The appointment may be terminated earlier if the transitional RSE and IAB determine that the transitional tasks are complete and it is appropriate to shift to a more permanent model and job description. Conversely, the appointment may be extended beyond that year if the transition RSE and IAB conclude that more time is necessary to complete the transitional tasks.

Reference: This Job Description was prepared based on the RFC Editor Model description in RFC 5620, supplemented by material in RFC 4714, "Requirements for IETF Technical Publication Service", the framework for the RFC Editor function described in RFC 4844, and the earlier, 3 June 2009, description of the RFC Series Editor position (<http://iaoc.ietf.org/docs/RSE-JobDescr-20090603.pdf>). Additionally, various IETF process documents and operational procedures affect the work of the RFC Editor.

This description incorporates the earlier version, but adds a primary task of working with the IAB, the RSAG as appropriate, the IAOC, and the community to refine the definition of the role and relationships of the RSE. Other changes have been made to the expected term of the appointment and other details to align with that change and to clarify RSE responsibilities. Wherever responsibilities and tasks are specific, and a priority, for the transitional role we are using the term Transitional RSE, other tasks and responsibilities are those that we expect to be the regular tasks.

As described in RFC 4844, RFCs are documents generated by one of the four streams:

- (i) The Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF),
- (ii) The Internet Research Task Force (IRTF),
- (iii) The Internet Architecture Board (IAB), and
- (iv) Independent Submissions.

The IETF, IRTF and IAB streams are managed by the Internet Engineering Steering Group (IESG), the Internet Research Steering Group (IRSG), and the Internet Architecture Board (IAB) respectively. The Independent Submissions stream is managed by the Independent Submissions Editor (ISE).

The transitional RSE will (i) take lead responsibility for examining the RSE role as described in this and other documents, (ii) steer the RFC Editor function through the transition process from ISI to the new model and organizational arrangements, and, (iii) based on that examination and experience, make recommendations as appropriate to the IAB and the community for adjustments to the role, to relationships within the overall RFC Editor function including the advisory structure, and the selection process to ensure long-term success and smooth operation of that function. Appointment to the position of

transitional RSE does not either obligate the appointee to be a candidate for the long-term role or bar the appointee from doing so. However, if the appointee does not take on the long-term role, he or she is responsible for recommending a plan for orderly transition to the IAB. That plan may include some overlap of appointments and incremental transfer of responsibilities.

The RSE will, with the advice of the RFC Series Advisory Group (RSAG), as defined in RFC 5620-Section 4.1. identify those issues within the RFC processes for which general policies need to be developed and lead community discussion of important issues and opportunities facing the RFC series. The IAB retains its oversight role and is responsible for ensuring that adequate community discussion has been held on any such significant topic.

The RSE will also often be tasked (with appropriate IAB and community review) with deciding how to implement policies related to the RFC Series. The RSE will act as a point of contact for the IAB for queries about RFC Series continuity and the effectiveness of policies. Where reference is made to individuals or roles that may authorize certain actions, these individuals or roles will be identified from time to time by the IAB, IESG, and IRSG, for their respective streams as those streams are described in RFC 4844.

The RSE will exercise executive-level management over the activities of the RFC Publisher and the RFC Production Center (which can be seen as back office functions) and will be the entity that faces the community, and works with the IAB and the IETF Administrative Oversight Committee (IAOC) for procedural and contractual responsibilities respectively, while those entities maintain their chartered responsibility. The RSE is supported and advised in these actions by the IAB-chartered RSAG.

The RSE will be appointed by the IAB following an open nomination and/or recruitment process of the IAB's choosing. An individual so selected, or hired, shall be under contract with the Internet Society. The IAB appoints and chooses whether to release or reappoint an individual selected as the RSE. As part of the community process, the IAOC shall provide input to the IAB based upon the contractual performance, if any, of an individual under consideration.

#### A. Transition Management

1. As discussed above, the transitional RSE is responsible for ensuring a smooth transition from the traditional management and operation of the RFC Editor function at ISI to the general model described in RFC 5620. If experience and the transitional RSE's judgment requires it, specific provisions of that document may be adjusted to better support a smooth transition with the advice of the RSAG and consent of the IAB. If contractual issues are involved, the transitional RSE may make recommendations to the IAB and IAOC for appropriate adjustments.

2. Based on the transition experience and general understanding of the issues involved, the RSE will prepare recommendations to the IAB and the wider community for an

update to RFC 5260 and related provisions to better define the RSE role and other elements of the RFC Editor function and to ensure successful future transitions.

## B. RFC Series Continuity

1. Working with the advice of the RSAG, the RSE is responsible for identifying appropriate steps to ensure RFC Series continuity. Aspects for which continuity needs to be achieved include policies for look and feel of the series, policies for accessibility of the material, archiving and publication policies, copyright and licensing (implementation) policies, errata policies and procedures, publication format policies, policies for extending or enhancing the indexing of the RFC Series and the like.

2. Working with the advice of the RSAG, the RSE will coordinate with the stream managers, and the IAB in the identification of the appropriate steps, and through them, the implementation of those steps to maintain continuity.

3. The RSE will exercise executive-level management over the implementation of policies, processes and procedures established to ensure the quality and consistency of the RFC Series. The RSE will consult with the RSAG to ensure new policy is developed and reviewed in a manner satisfactory to the IAB, and, when appropriate, advise the IAOC of policies and procedures that may impact contract provisions, and of contract provisions that are not being followed.

4. Working in consultation with the RSAG, the RSE will take proposed changes to the community, and work with the IAB so that the IAB can ensure that there is sufficient community review before the policy is adopted.

## C. Functional Reviews

1. The RSE shall lead periodic (annual, mid-term and/or end of term) reviews of the ISE, the RFC Production Center and RFC Publisher to ensure the consistency of the RFC Series. These reviews shall incorporate any feedback supplied by the RSAG and shall be forwarded to the IAB and IAOC respectively.

2. During the transition period the transitional RSE may conduct reviews more frequently and with less formality. These reviews may lead to dynamic adjustments in relationships and document handling. The transitional RSE will work with the IAOC to effectuate these changes, subject to IAB oversight.

## D. RFC Style and Procedures Manuals

1. To ensure the consistency of the RFC series, the RSE shall prepare and maintain an RFC Style Manual for authors and editors, the stream managers, the RFC Production Center, and the RFC Publisher, describing with clarity the grammar, style, usage, typography, punctuation, and spelling to hone clear, concise technical prose, etc., for the drafting and editing of RFCs. The Manual will be posted on the RFC Publisher's website. A draft of the RFC Style Manual is located at <http://www.rfc-editor.org/rfc->

style-guide/rfc-style-manual-08.txt. This draft will be used until replaced by the RSE.

2. The RFC Style Manual shall be developed and maintained with community input, cooperatively with the IAB in the manner outlined in RFC 4844.

3. The transitional RSE shall prepare and maintain a Procedures Manual describing with clear detail tasks performed by the RSE. This Procedures Manual, together with the errata process described in (E), below, are key elements of the transition report and recommendations about the long-term functioning of the RFC Editor system.

#### E. RFC Errata Process

The RSE shall work with the stream managers in the development of policies for an errata process for RFCs.

#### F. Relationship to the IAB

The IAB is responsible for ensuring the RFC Editor function, including the specific functions of the RSE, are carried out in accordance with the community-accepted model. The responsibilities of the transitional RSE include advising the IAB on ways in which that responsibility may be more effectively and efficiently exercised, including the responsibilities of, and instructions for, the various advisory bodies.

#### F. RFC Series Oversight

The RSE is responsible for the continuity and consistency of the RFC Series. To achieve these goals the RSE may employ or develop the following documents and processes:

1. Develop and maintain the RFC Style Manual.
2. Develop and maintain FAQs for RFC publication.
3. Conduct annual assessments of the RFC process.
4. Participate in author document reviews.
5. Administer and participate in the rfc-interest mailing list. The RSE is responsible for the list but can delegate as desired.
6. Review the performance of the ISE, the RFC Production Center, and RFC Publisher, and provide a report to the IAOC and IAB as described in C above.
7. Develop policies for the types of indexes that the RFC series will support by default and the metadata that may be required to support those indexes.
8. Approve tools for the validation of syntax of documents containing formal languages.

#### G. RFC Series Advisory Group

The RSAG is chartered by the IAB. As such, it operates independently of the IAB to fulfill that charter. The RSAG members are chosen by the RSE in consultation with the sitting RSAG members and then confirmed by the IAB. Also see section 4.1 RFC 5620.

#### H. Liaison, Coordination, and Collaboration

1. Provide a contact email address for policy questions and policy inputs.
2. Through liaison participants, the RSE may take part in IESG and IAB formal meetings, usually telechats, and may participate in IESG and IAB face-to-face activities at IETF meetings, and other activities such as retreats when requested, by either party.
3. The RSE shall coordinate, via telechats or other mechanisms, with stream managers, the RFC Production Center, the RFC Publisher, the IAB Chair, the IETF Chair, the IAD, and others as the RSE considers appropriate.
4. The RSE may be requested to make regular reports at IETF meetings, online, in writing, in person, or all three.
4. 5. In case of disagreement between the various entities shall follow the steps as outlined in RFC 5620.

#### J. Process and Document Evolution

The RSE shall, as appropriate, participate in and support process experiments proposed by the Internet community involving the technical publication process that may improve the RFC series process.

#### K. Innovations

The RSE will continuously examine the RFC production process for possible improvements, propose experiments with feasible and useful ones, and recommend those that succeed. The RSE should consider innovations to improve efficiency, improve coordination and transparency, and improve quality within the boundaries laid out in RFC 5620 and RFC 4844.

#### K. Specific Deliverables

1. The “transitional tasks” are those mentioned above in conjunction with assuring a smooth transition from the ISI-based RFC Editor function to the one based on RFC 5620. They also include, as needed, recommendations for
  - an update to RFC 5260,
  - the permanent RSE job description and associated recruitment, selection, and hiring processes,
  - advisory committees, their membership, and their relationship to the IAB, RSE, and, if appropriate, other RFC Editor function components

2. The RSE's deliverables are the outputs of the activities discussed above plus a quarterly report to the IAOC and IAB.