



# Goals and Principles for Process Change

---

Elwyn Davies on behalf of the  
PESCI Initial Design Team  
PESCI BOF, IETF 64  
9 November 2005



# The Team and The Output

---

- **Adrian Farrel** [<adrian@olddog.co.uk>](mailto:adrian@olddog.co.uk)
- **Brian Carpenter** [<brc@zurich.ibm.com>](mailto:brc@zurich.ibm.com)
- **Elwyn Davies** [<elwynd@dial.pipex.com>](mailto:elwynd@dial.pipex.com)
- **Harald Tveit Alvestrand**  
[<harald@alvestrand.no>](mailto:harald@alvestrand.no)
- **Michael Richardson**  
[<mcr@sandelman.ottawa.on.ca>](mailto:mcr@sandelman.ottawa.on.ca)
- **Scott Brim** [<swb@employees.org>](mailto:swb@employees.org)
  
- **Goals and Principles for IETF Process Evolution**  
draft-davies-pesci-initial-considerations-00



# What the Design Team was intended to achieve...

---

- To be a short term design team, known as PESCI (Process Evolution Study Committee of the IETF).
- PESCI was intended to
  - review recent discussions on IETF process changes
  - identify a concise set of goals and principles for process change
  - publish these for comment and seek IETF debate and rough consensus
- The target was to have a draft of goals and principles by IETF64.



# The Actualité

---

- Created draft over 3 week period prior to IETF-64 initial draft deadline
  - Draft covers more than basic goals
  - Provides
    - process change goals and principles, and
    - an outline of next steps
- plus
- Initial cut at principles to be maintained during change
  - A view of the parts of the IETF structure that should be considered for change



# Process Change Goals – 1\*

---

## **Where should the changes be targeted?**

2. Preserve those parts of the process that work reasonably well today, unless they block other necessary changes.
3. Make changes that seem certain to improve those parts of the process that work less well.

\* Item numbers correspond to Gxx bullets in draft.



## Process Change Goals - 2

---

### **Parameters to apply to the changes.**

4. Changes to processes should err towards the maintenance of stability.
5. Avoid changes that would require unrealistic resources or behaviours.



## Process Change Goals - 3

---

**While changes are going on, we must...**

6. Protect the continuity of ongoing IETF work.
7. As far as possible, minimize simultaneous changes that may interfere with each other.
8. Avoid "thrashing" by repeated changes in the same area.



## Process Change Goals - 4

---

### **Think carefully about the effects...**

9. Try to explicitly estimate the impact of changes before making them, and try to measure whether the expectations were met after making the change.

### **... but avoid the perfectionism trap ...**

10. Acknowledge that some refinement of the initial proposals may be needed after trials. To this end try to work expeditiously to provide a nearly right solution that delivers most of the gains rather than refining the solutions endlessly before any implementation (in line with the IETF's usual way of developing standards).





# Principles for the Change Process - 1

---

## **Agreeing the process and the changes...**

1. Changes to the IETF process must themselves be agreed by an open process approved by the IETF community.
2. The process for developing and agreeing these changed processes must itself be the subject of IETF rough consensus.



# Principles for the Change Process - 2

---

## Consultation with and Agreement from...

3. The development process must incorporate taking advice from
  - the IESG, the IAB, the IAOC, and the Working Group chairs
  - legal advisors
  
4. When the proposed changes have been fully documented, "buy-in" or more formal assent to the changed processes needs to be obtained as follows:
  - Any negative comments from the Working Group chairs must be seriously considered.
  - Formal consent must be obtained from the IESG, the IAB, and the IAOC.
  - Acceptance must be obtained from the ISOC board.



## Principles for the Change Process - 3


---

### **The IESG shouldn't have to 'DIY'**

5. The development and authorisation of the changed processes must ensure that the IESG is not required itself to develop the new processes.

### **... and we need a fresh set of documents**

6. The revised process should be documented in a new set of coherent and comprehensive documents, rather than updates to the existing ad hoc set.



# Time for Discussion.... and the question is....

---

Are these good goals and principles  
for the change process itself

As we discuss, (to paraphrase a recent mail from Dave Crocker) let's:

- *Try to avoid repeating the two things that appear to greet every single serious proposal for change:*
  - *Claims that it's following the wrong process, or that first we have to discuss and revise the process, and*
  - *Death by a thousand criticisms, rather than a collaborative tone to improve it.*
- *Try not to focus so much on the process of change, and start focusing on making changes: then we are likely to make much better progress.*