

A Brief History of the PROcess and TOols (PROTO) Universe

The PROTO Team
62nd IETF
Minneapolis, MN

PROTO History

- Early in 2004, the IESG undertook several experiments aimed at evaluating whether any of the proposed changes to the IETF document flow process would yield qualitative improvements in document throughput and quality
- One such experiment, referred to as PROTO (and developed by the PROTO team), was a set of methodologies designed to involve the working group chairs more directly in their documents' approval life cycle
- By the end of 2004, the IESG had evaluated the utility of the PROTO methodologies based on data obtained through several pilot projects which had run throughout the year, and subsequently decided to adopt the PROTO process

PROTO Team Members

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- <http://www.1-4-5.net/~dmm/IETF/IETF62/proto> (mgp)
 - <http://www.1-4-5.net/~dmm/IETF/IETF62/proto.pdf>

PROTO Goals

- PROTO focuses on that part of the document's life cycle which occurs after the working group and document editor would have traditionally forwarded the document to the IESG for publication
- The primary objective of the PROTO process is to improve document throughput and quality by enabling a partnership between the responsible Area Director and the Shepherding Working Group Chair (or her/his designee)
- Let's take a look at how PROTO does this...

First, what was the old process?

- First, the WG Chair(s) request publication
- Responsible AD takes over all effort on behalf of the document
- includes tracking, advocating, asking for revisions, reviewing changes, approving, ...
- In short, the WG chair more or less throws document "over the process wall" to the IESG

PROTO in a nutshell: New Process

- WG Chair(s) requests publication, and one chair (or WG secretary) is identified as shepherd of the document
- The shepherd takes on many/most of the tasks of the responsible AD
 - Including tracking, advocating, asking for revision, reporting out review changes, ...
- The Responsible AD still needs to be cc'ed in the shepherd's work (checks and balances), and approval is still with the IESG
 - But document quality and approval speed shifts to the WGs

New Process -- Key Takeaways

- Throwing the document over the wall (to the IESG) is no longer our paradigm
- Rather, document approval is now a partnership between Chairs, Editors, and ADs

The PROTO Advisor

- As with any new widespread practice, we expect there will be (many) questions, bumps along the way, ...
 - and we learned during the PROTO pilots that frequently a WG chair could use some help getting started
 - as well as at various points during the process
- The IESG has appointed a "PROTO Advisor" (currently me) as a resource for WG chairs to help in executing the PROTO process
- Let's take a brief look at the PROTO Advisor's Roles and Responsibilities

PA Roles and Responsibilities

- Acts as a general resource for Working Group chairs involved in PROTO
- Reminds the ADs and Working Group Chairs that PROTO write-ups are required (thus starting the PROTO process) when working group documents transition into AD Evaluation state
- Keeps track of WG progress status and activity level to ensure that the methodology is being used (and works smoothly)
- Periodically reports to the community on the progress of PROTO, including successes and problems encountered, and incremental changes to the methodology

PROTO Documents

- draft-ietf-proto-wgchair-doc-shepherding-04.txt
 - I'll be revising this based on comments next week, so look for the new revision
- draft-ietf-proto-proto-advisor-00.txt
 - Not (yet) published
- Coming document on document lifecycle

Conclusions

- The PROTO processes are designed for working groups
 - In particular, PROTO gives the WG more control over the velocity and destiny of your documents
- A document's energy is now directly related to your energy
 - PROTO empowers you
- Corollary
 - Best energy for getting documents through is also your energy
- So when does this all start?
 - Answer: It already did!

Questions?

Thanks

Please direct questions to wgchairs@ietf.org and document edits to proto-team@ietf.org