Recommendations Process

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Abstract

This document entitled "Recommendation Recommendation" defines the process that the SIP Forum uses to create Recommendations. Task Groups within the Technical Working Group ("TWG") produce Recommendations by following this process. SIP Forum recommendations are defined to resolve technical issues related to the use of the IETF Session Initiation Protocol and are explicitly limited to this scope. The process defined in this document also addresses the intellectual property rights and copyright status associated with Recommendations.

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1 Introduction

1.1 The Need For, and Positioning of Recommendations

The SIP Forum is not, and does not intend to be a body that defines the base SIP protocol standard or extensions thereto. However, from time to time technical issues arise about how to use already-defined SIP standards to create SIP-based solutions. or to document operational or implementation experience. For instance, there are technical issues that would not merit standards-track or BCP-track status within the IETF, yet which still need resolution through a shared consensus among industry product and service vendors.

So, while not responsible for creating or maintaining SIP standards, the SIP Forum is an association of members that is well suited to address these issues. To do so, the SIP Forum needs a process by which groups of interested individuals can create and maintain documents that express consensus about recommended ways to solve such issues. These documents will hereinafter referred to as "Recommendations."

In general, a SIP Forum Technical Recommendation is a specification that is stable and well-understood, is technically competent, has multiple, independent, and interoperable implementations with substantial operation experience, enjoys significant public support, and is recognizably useful in SIP-based products and services.

Before a document becomes a Recommendation must undergo substantial discussion and public review. To facilitate this process, the SIP Forum will maintain a repository of Working Drafts. Working Drafts are works in progress contributed by individuals, or on behalf of a SIP Forum Working Group or one of its sub-groups representing progress toward Recommendation status.

In addition, the SIP Forum will use Recommendations to document and, as necessary modify, its procedures. These process Recommendations are called "Procedural Recommendations."

1.2 Recommendation Creation Process

The process of creating a SIP Forum Recommendation is very similar to, though slightly different from the process of creating an IETF standards track RFC. In general the goals of the process in the SIP Forum are similar to the goals specified in IETF RFC 2026 (or superceding RFC). The goals embodied in RFC2026 include:

- Anyone can participate
- Working and Final Documents are public
- Discussion is Public
- Consensus based

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- Emphasis on Technical Quality

In outline, the process is intended to work as follows:

- some SIP Forum Task Group identifies a technical issue area,

- a review is performed to insure the Forum is the appropriate body to create a Recommendation,

- a specification is created that undergoes a period of development and iteration,

- it is reviewed by the SIP Forum membership based on experience,

- the document rests in a Proposed Recommendation state until it is validated through actual implementations,

- and is then adopted by the Forum as a Recommendation, and is published.

There are two areas where the SIP Forum process intentionally diverges from the process used by the IETF. First, the SIP Forum, prior to commencing work on a Recommendation, shall take steps to confirm that the IETF (or other relevant standards body from time to time) does not intend to create a standards track RFC (or equivalent in other body) regarding the technical issue area in question. In addition, the SIP Forum will periodically review recommendations to confirm that they still complement work in the IETF and have not been superseded by new standardization activities in the IETF (or other relevant standards body). Second, there are some minor procedural differences in the steps taken to officially adopt a Recommendation as final.

1.3   Organization of This Document

Section 2 describes the process used to create Recommendations. Section 3 discusses the retirement of a Recommendation. Sections 4 and beyond contain administrivia.

2   Recommendation Creation Process

Recommendations proceed from concept to adopted official document in the following process:

- One or more initial drafts are authored by one or more individuals participating in the work of a Task Group;

- Working Drafts are revised and iterated on by soliciting input from participating SIP Forum members (full and participating);

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- If multiple drafts are submitted for the same issue, the drafts are either consolidated or eliminated from consideration by the consensus of the participating members;
- Drafts are revised in iterations until there is consensus on a Working Draft which becomes a candidate for Proposed Recommendation status;
- The final Proposed Recommendation is posted for last call;
- After successful last call, the document enters formal Proposed Recommendation status, where it remains until there exist at least two implementations that meet the requirements of Section 2.9 below;
- When the implementation requirement is met, the Proposed Recommendation is reviewed by the Technical Working Group chairperson, who performs a review to ensure it meets the quality and process requirements
- Then the Proposed Recommendation is submitted to the SIP Forum Board of Directors for procedural review, and approval;
- When approved, the draft changes status to Adopted;
- Recommendations are effective until explicitly retired, replaced by a later revision, or superceded by a new Recommendation that explicitly obsoletes a prior Recommendation.

2.1 Working Drafts

Working Drafts are works in progress that represent the contributions of one or more individual SIP Forum members, or a working document of a specific SIP Forum sub-group. Working Drafts expire automatically 180 days after they are submitted, or if they are replaced with a new document. While Working Drafts are not intended to be stable references, the SIP Forum will attempt to maintain a publicly-accessible archive of expired and deprecated Working Drafts.

A Working Draft may be used solely for discussion, or it may be become a source of text in a series of documents that becomes a SIP Forum Recommendation. All Working Drafts need to state clearly whether or not the content represents a consensus position of a SIP Forum group or subgroup.

Any SIP Forum member may submit a draft Recommendation. (Since anyone can become an individual member of the Forum, the process remains open to the community at large). The initial author of a draft may be the continuing author and editor of the draft during its revision, or not, based on the consensus of the Task Group responsible for working on the draft. The Task Group Lead is permitted some leeway in providing direction to the Task Group as to who should be the author / editor of a draft or its revisions. The leeway is primarily intended to help the Task Group Lead assure

that the draft makes active progress towards completion, and that the draft has high technical quality.

Revisions in the drafts are incorporated into the draft based on consensus among actively participating members in the Task Group.

All drafts must comply with the requirements of this Recommendation as to form.

Draft Recommendations should attempt to resolve as many of the issues raised in the subject matter of the Task Group as is practical.

2.2   Draft naming

SIP Forum Working Drafts are named according to the following convention. To avoid confusion with IETF Internet-Drafts, SIP Forum Working Drafts will begin with the prefix sf-draft. This is followed by the abbreviation of the SIP Forum Working Group, the abbreviation of the Task Group within the Working Group, the last name of the primary author, and a short descriptive name.

```
sf-draft-wg-tg-author-shortname
```

The subgroup names "admin" and "newwork" should be used to discuss administrative or procedural issues, and possible new work respectively.

For example, the title of this document is: sf-draft-twg-admin-batson-recommendations

Each submission of a document with the same name is automatically provided with a version number that begins at 1.

The most recent version of a Working Draft in the repository will always be accessible using just the title. A specific version of a Working Draft is accessible by appending the version number after the draft, or the date of the submission (in the UTC time zone). For example:

```
sf-draft-twg-admin-mahy-pub-process.2005-03-16

sf-draft-twg-admin-mahy-pub-process.001
```

All documents in the SIP Forum repository will be publicly available for free, anonymous viewing by anyone on the Internet.

2.3   Submitting a Working Draft

All SIP Forum documents are submitted by a SIP Forum (full or individual) member. Documents must be submitted to the SIP Forum document repository using an automated mechanism provided by the SIP Forum. Members need to setup credentials to submit documents and must agree to the SIP Forum submission terms. Since anyone with a valid email address can become a SIP Forum individual member, participation and contribution is open to anyone.

The submission terms mentioned above are expected to assign appropriate Copyright rights to SIP Forum to allow it to publish and modify documents, and to allow for compliance with a policy for disclosure of Intellectual Property Rights.

2.4   Formatting

Working Drafts need to be submitted in a consistent style to encourage readability and consistency. Since submissions are processed electronically, all submissions must be in a format acceptable for automatic submission and processing by a web server, or which can be converted to reasonable HTML by the tool used to create the document. The format submitted should be suitable source for editing (this excludes Adobe Acrobat-PDF). SIP Forum documents should not be limited to ASCII text, as this presents significant artificial barriers to conveying graphical content. The submission format should be a widely implemented, machine-readable format that preserves the ability to edit.

XHTML 1.0 with SVG and PNG diagrams satisfy these requirements provided a consistent stylesheet is used. The major drawback of XHTML is that it requires multiple files to convey a single document with inline images.

The final choice of document format is left for further discussion. The repository may also make other formats or translations available as needed.

2.5   Working Draft Expiration

Working Drafts shall have an expiration date noted on each version of the document. Working Drafts shall expire 12 months after the date the document is submitted.

2.6   Advancing Working Drafts

Drafts proceed from revision to revision, and from revision to Last Call as the Task Group achieves consensus on a revision. "Consensus" for purposes of this paragraph means a preponderance of the participants. This must be at least a majority (over 50%) of the active participants, and should be a plurality (2/3s) of the participants. Unanimity is helpful, but not required.

For purposes of this section, "active participants" shall include only those whom the Task Group Lead can identify as having contributed substantive comments, text, or analysis to the Recommendation. To be considered in the consensus determination, active participants should have contributed one comment or body text submittal to a pre-last-call draft of the Recommendation. Recognized subject matter experts may be included, and those who contributed only in the most minimal fashion may be excluded, both at the discretion of the Task Group Lead. The Technical Working Group

Chairperson shall resolve disputes over inclusion or exclusion from consideration in determining consensus.

No single member has any more official weight than any other member with regard to the measurement of consensus. The author or editor of a document may be considered to be a subject matter expert whose opinions should be considered with some additional weight, but such opinions are not to be weighed as a deciding factor.

2.7   Last Call

Once a SIP Forum Working Group or subgroup believes it has consensus on the contents of a Working Draft, and this work is consistent with its chartered work, the Working Group chair or designate can issue a formal Last Call.

Nothing but minor (e.g. editorial & grammatical) changes should be made to a Recommendation between the revision published for Last Call and the final Adopted Recommendation. If substantial changes are introduced during Last Call review, the document revision must be incremented, and a new Last Call issued.

The Last Call duration may be established by the Technical Working Group, but in no case shall be under fifteen (15) days.

The Task Group Lead shall submit the final proposed Recommendation to the Technical Working Group chairperson within thirty (30) days of the expiration of the Last Call period.

2.8   Proposed Recommendation status

After a Recommendation has successfully completed the Last Call period, and no changes have been received (or accepted by) the Working Group chair (or designate), the chair shall declare that the Recommendation has moved to Proposed Recommendation status.

The Recommendation shall stay in this status until the requirements of Section 2.9 are met. There is no formal time limit for how long a Recommendation may stay in this status. However, the Task Group Chair shall periodically certify to the Working Group Chair that the Recommendation has not, or should not be abandoned in the case where the Recommendation remains in this status for a lengthy period of time.

2.9   Pre-adoption Implementation

Prior to adoption, the Working Group Chair must be able to identify two independent instances of applications that are substantially compliant with the proposed Recommendation. While neither application must implement all of the details of the Recommendation, each implementation must implement a significant corpus of the Recommendation, all features that are implemented must be interoperable between the

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applications, all items indicated as "must be implemented" must in fact have been implemented by both implementations, and between the two applications the substantial bulk of all details of the Recommendation should be implemented.

Strong emphasis should be placed on using the SIP Forum's own test events (SIPit and SIMPLEt) as a venue in which to identify such implementations and evaluate whether they meet the provisions of this section.

2.10 Changes Arising From Pre-adoption Implementation

If, during pre-adoption implementation, experience shows that changes to the Recommendation are needed, some changes may be incorporated into the Recommendation prior to adoption. The process varies depending on the type of change. In either case, if permitted changes are made, another Last Call must be made, and properly concluded.

2.10.1 Minor Changes

If the Task Group Chair determines the changes are minor, e.g. either a grammatical change or a clarification of a existing element that does not change the intent, constraints, or technology of the Proposed Recommendation, the Recommendation may immediately proceed with a Motion to adopt as described below.

2.10.2 Moderate Changes

If the Task Group Chair determines the changes are more material, e.g. implies new or changed technical requirements, the pre-adoption implementations must implement these changes, and demonstrate interoperability among each other before the Recommendation can proceed with a Motion to adopt as described below.

2.10.3 Major Changes

If the Task Group Chair determines that the changes are major and substantial enough to require participants to reconsider the changes broadly, the Task Group Chair has two options. If the Chair determines that the substantial changes are crucial for the first adopted version of the Recommendation, the Chair may return the Recommendation to a Working Draft status, and proceed with substantial reworking of the Recommendation. If the Chair that the substantial changes are not crucial for the first adopted version of the Recommendation, the Chair may decline to accept the proposed changes and permit the Recommendation to proceed with a Motion to adopt without the changes. In this latter case, following adoption, the Task Group Chair may then start the entire Recommendation process to produce a revised (–bis) Recommendation, or request the Working Group Chair approve starting a different Recommendation to handle these substantial changes.

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2.11 Motion to Adopt

Either a Task Group Chair, or any participant in a Working Group or subgroup can make a motion to the Working Group Chair to advance the Recommendation from Proposed to Adopted status if they believe the requirements of Sections 2.7, 2.8, and 2.9 have been met. The motion should be seconded by at least two other participants or the Task Group chair (if the chair did not initiate the motion.)

The relevant Task Group chair should be sufficiently involved in the final preparation (and Last Call) of a proposed Recommendation to help insure that the proposed Recommendation that is submitted for certification is in fact a mature enough specification to merit the motion.

2.12 Working Group Chair Review

2.12.1 Form of Review

When the motion to advance from Proposed to Adopted is duly made, the chairperson of the relevant Working Group must review a candidate Proposed Recommendation prior to submitting it to the SIP Forum Board for review and Adoption. The intent of this review is to assure

- that the process of creation of the Recommendation has been adequately followed

- that it has had broad membership review,

- that the Recommendation is generally stable, has resolved known design choices, is believed to be well-understood, has received significant community review,

- appears to enjoy enough community interest to be considered valuable, as evidenced by independent implementations of the Recommendation,

- that the relevant task group and document authors / editors have adequately considered contrary opinions and incorporated or discarded such contrary opinions only after credible peer review,

- and that the proposed Recommendation has no known technical omissions with respect to the creating Task Group's original or explicitly modified goals.

The review of the chairperson is not intended to be an opportunity of the chairperson to directly change the technical substance of the Recommendation prior to submitting it to the SIP Forum Board of Directors for certification. The technical opinions the chairperson has should be expressed, and incorporated or discarded as part of the draft iteration process in the same manner as opinions expressed by other participating

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members in the Task Group. However, the chairperson may express technical opinions, endorsements, or reservations to the board when making a formal publication request to the board.

2.12.2   Chairperson Publication Request

The Working Group chairperson shall submit the final Recommendation to the SIP Forum Board of Directors within thirty (30) days following a valid motion to Adopt as described in Section 2.9.

This submittal is a formal publication request from the Working Group chairperson to the SIP Forum Board of Directors. As noted above, if the chairperson has opinions, endorsements, or reservations about the proposed Recommendation, these may be included in an advisory section of the certification request provided to the Board.

2.13 Board of Directors Review and Adoption

A review by the Board of Directors will be performed to provide a final check and balance to assure that the interests of the SIP Forum membership at large are well served by the proposed Recommendation. Similar to the Working Group chairperson review, the board should not comment on or change the technical substance of the Recommendation.

The Board of Directors shall either certify the Recommendation as Adopted, or deny publication within sixty (60) days following receipt of the Recommendation and publication request from the Working Group chairperson. If board denies publication, this denial shall be accompanied by a written justification for denial.

The Task Group shall have the opportunity to rework and re-submit the Recommendation for publication as often as desired. If this process results in the submittal of a series of Recommendations that are denied repeatedly, the Board of Directors may at its sole option review the goals of the Task Group to insure that solving the goals are in the best interests of the membership and the industry, and either change the goals or decertify the Task Group as required. Such a charter revocation or change decision shall only be approved by a plurality of the Board of Directors.

3 Retiring a Recommendation

As technology changes and matures, it is possible for a new Recommendation to be so clearly superior technically that one or more existing Recommendations for the same function should be retired. In this case, or when it is felt for some other reason that an existing Recommendation should be retired, the SIP Forum Board shall approve a change of status of the old specification(s) to Historic. This recommendation shall be issued with the same Last-Call and notification procedures used for new

Recommendations. A request to retire an existing standard can originate from a Task Group, the Technical Working Group Chairman or any other SIP Forum member.

4 Normative Language

SIP Forum Recommendations can contain normative language. In these Recommendations, the capitalized terms defined in IETF RFC 2119 (ex: MUST, SHOULD, MAY) will be used. To claim compliance with a SIP Forum Recommendation, an implementation needs to implement all relevant MUST statements, and should be able to provide written justification for any relevant SHOULD statements which are not followed.

5 Security Considerations

All SIP Forum Technical Recommendations must include a discussion of the security implications of their adoption and deployment.

6 Administrivia

6.1 Authors and contact

The authors of this document are Jay Batson, acting Managing Director of the SIP Forum, and Rohan Mahy, Technical Working Group chairperson as of the time of authoring. Thanks to Dave Oran, a SIP Forum Board of Director member for providing substantial editing and comment on the initial version of this document.

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6.2 References

IETF RFC 2026, BCP 9 – The Internet Standards Process – Revision 3, Scott Bradner, October 1996

IETF RFC 2119, BCP 14 – Key words for use in RFCs to Indicate Requirement Levels, Scott Bradner, March 1997

6.3 Intellectual Property Right Notices

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