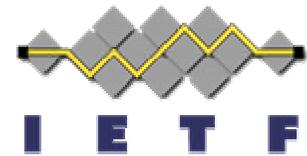# Increasing Authority and Responsibility of WG Chairs
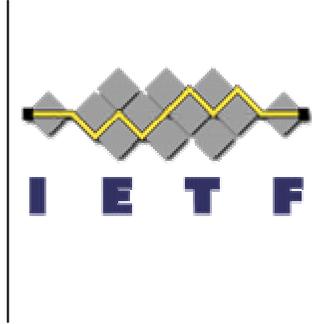
IETF58, Minneapolis

Margaret Wasserman

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From the Problem Statement…

- The IETF Management Structure is not Matched to the Current Size and Complexity of the IETF
    - Span of Authority
        - Too much work and authority funneled to IESG
    - Workload of the IESG
        - Impossible to do IESG job well as part-time job
    - Concentration of Influence in Too Few Hands
        - Includes use of ADs as WG chairs and, by extension, WG chairs as document editors
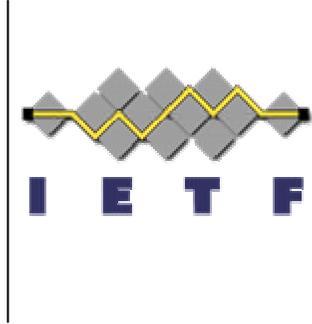
Current Management Structure

- Includes about 230 people -- NOT too few!
  - 7 Areas with 13 Area Directors
  - Over 130 WGs with over 220 WG Chairs
  - Very wide, flat structure
 - Authority and responsibility inefficiently distributed
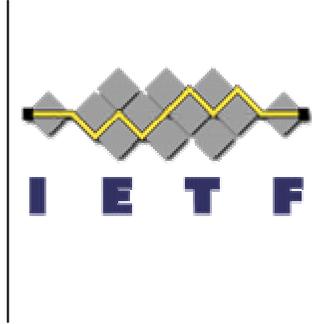
Proposal and Goals

- Increase the authority and responsibility of WG chairs
  - Current Goals:
    - Improve the scalability and efficiency of our WG/Process Management functions
    - Move authority and responsibility from ADs to WG chairs
  - Future Possibilities:
    - Build a WG/process management team that may take on additional tasks in the future
      - May be candidates for area-level management?
      - Approve BOFs or participate in cross-area non-standards track document approval teams?

New or Reinforced WG Chair Responsibilities
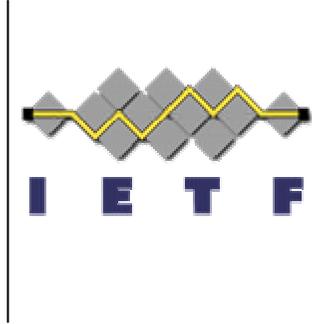
- Retain WG document ownership through publication
  - No WG => IESG hand-off
- Ensure document quality
- Manage document production
  - Manage the dates of WG milestones
  - Manage document editors
- Manage WG mailing lists
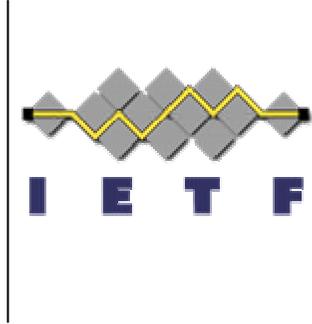
Specifics (1)

- **Have WG chairs shepherd documents throughout life cycle**
  - Responsible for making sure that IETF last-call issues are tracked and resolved
  - Responsible for resolving IESG blocking and non-blocking comments
  - Responsible for dealing with IANA questions, authors 48 hour review, etc.
- **Distributes significant IESG workload to WG chairs**
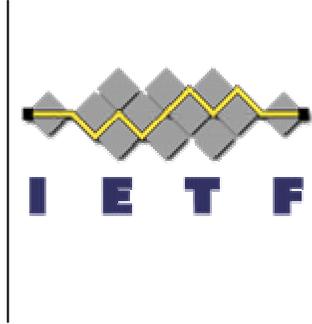
Specifics (2)

- Make WG chairs responsible for the quality of WG process and output
  - Includes editorial and technical quality
    - Responsible for ensuring that proper cross-area review is performed at appropriate stages
      - Process to support this will be discussed in Alex's talk
   - Responsible for ensuring that all issues are tracked and resolved
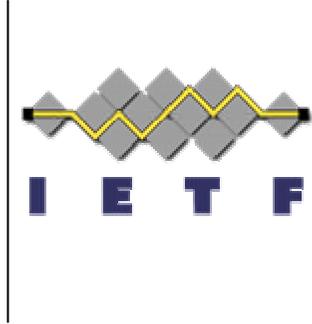
Specifics (3)

- Reinforce WG chairs' authority to say "no"
  - For work coming in (new WG work items)
    - Based on scope, quality, level of WG support, etc.
  - And for work going out (to the IESG for publication)
    - Based on technical quality and completeness
    - Based on the level of cross-area review received
    - Based on relevance and suitability of the work
   - Based on editorial quality (I-D Nits and RFC Guidelines)
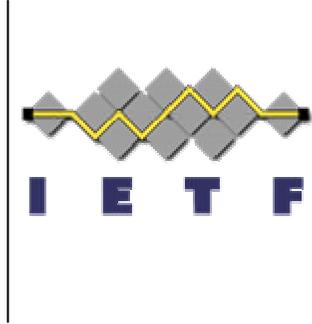
Specifics (4)

- Have WG chairs do ballot write-ups for standards track documents
 - Includes technical summary, WG summary and quality review
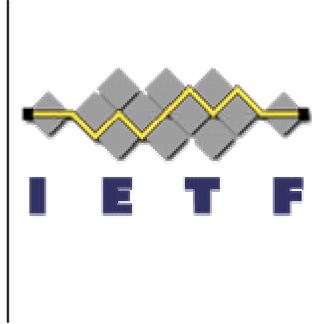
Specifics (5)

- Clarify WG chairs' authority and responsibility to manage document editors
  - Includes selecting, training and replacing, if necessary
    - AD should be kept in the loop and should agree to replacements
  - Makes it more important that WG chairs not be document editors in their own groups
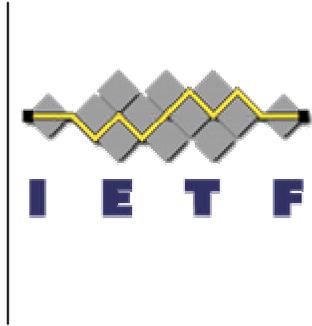
Specifics (6)

- Allow WG chairs to update charter milestones
  - Modify dates and completion without AD approval
 - Not create new milestones
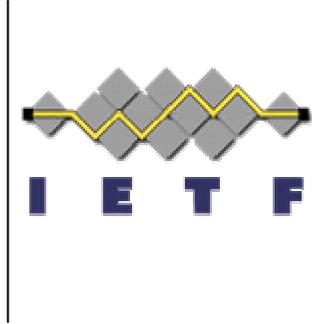
Specifics (7)

- Give WG chairs authority and responsibility to manage WG mailing lists
  - WG chairs can suspend the posting privileges of disruptive participants
  - Requires AD agreement, but not IESG approval

What Will This Mean for WGs and WG Chairs?
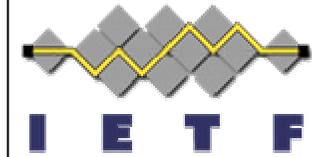
- WG chairs get more responsibility and more work
  - May drive more delegation to document editors or WG secretaries
- WG Chairs and WGs have more control over the document process, especially in later stages
- Need for some WG chairs to transition out of joint WG chair/document editor role
- Transition/training period
  - How/when/if to transition TBD with responsible AD
- May cause some turnover if chairs don't want more responsibility or prefer to remain document editors
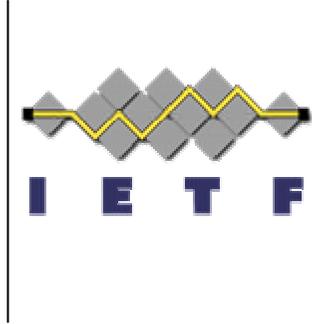
How Do We Make This So?

- Changes are needed to RFC 2418 to increase the authority and responsibility of WG chairs
  - First draft of proposed changes published
- Changes are needed to IESG charter
  - Currently an Internet-Draft
- Changes are needed to internal IESG process and tools
  - To keep control of the document with WG chairs through IETF last call and IESG review
- Training for WG chairs and others regarding new roles, process and tools
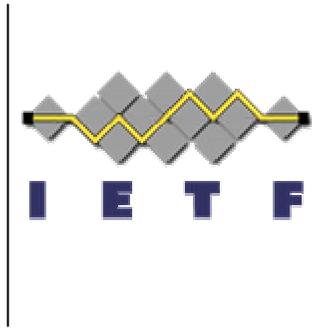
Tentative Timeline (1)

RFC 2418 Updates:

JAN 03   Reach rough consensus on changes and
                produce full RFC 2418 update → IETF last call
FEB 04   Resolve last call issues and publish

Procedure and Tools Updates:

NOV 03   Form planning group
DEC 03   Determine what updates are needed to internal
                IESG procedures to effect changes
DEC 03   Determine what changes are need to I-D Tracker
JAN/FEB 04   Document procedure changes and implement
                required tools changes
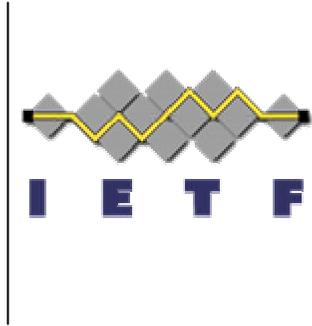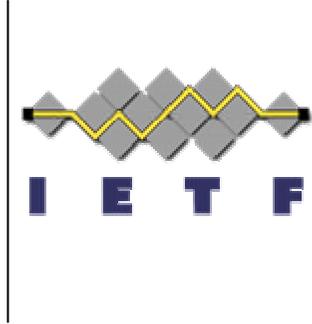
Tentative Timeline (2)

Training:

FEB/MAR 04   Training for WG chairs, document editors, participants and secretariat staff in new process and tools

Transition:

APR/MAY 04   ADs and WG Chairs develop transition plans for each group and execute

JUL 04   All groups transitioned to new process

What Next?

- Determine whether the community agrees that this is a reasonable general direction
  - Discuss in plenary and on solutions mailing list
    - solutions@alvestrand.no
- Work on updates to RFC 2418 until we reach rough community consensus
  - IETF last call on RFC 2418 updates
- In parallel, plan a project to enact the required changes to our processes and tools