

## IETF Rights in Contributions

### Status of this Memo

This document specifies an Internet Best Current Practices for the Internet Community, and requests discussion and suggestions for improvements. Distribution of this memo is unlimited.

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### Abstract

The IETF policies about rights in Contributions to the IETF are designed to ensure that such Contributions can be made available to the IETF and Internet communities while permitting the authors to retain as many rights as possible. This memo details the IETF policies on rights in Contributions to the IETF. It also describes the objectives that the policies are designed to meet. This memo updates RFC 2026, and, with RFC 3668, replaces Section 10 of RFC 2026.

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## 1. Definitions

The following definitions are for terms used in the context of this document. Other terms, including "IESG," "ISOC," "IAB" and "RFC Editor," are defined in [RFC 2028].

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- i. "RFC Editor Documents": RFCs and Internet-Drafts that are RFC Editor Contributions and the RFCs that may be published from them.
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## 2. Introduction

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Section 1 gives definitions used in describing these policies. Sections 3, 4, 5 and 6 of this document address the rights in Contributions previously covered by Section 10 of [RFC 2026] and the

"Note Well" explanatory text presented at many IETF activities. Sections 7 and 8 then explain the rationale for these provisions, including some of the clarifications that have become understood since the adoption of [RFC 2026]. The rules and procedures set out in this document are not intended to substantially modify or alter the IETF's current policy toward Contributions.

A companion document [RFC 3668] deals with rights in technologies developed or specified as part of the IETF Standards Process. This document is not intended to address those issues.

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- o rights to produce derivative works
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- c. the right to let third parties translate it into languages other than English
- d. except where explicitly excluded (see Section 5.2), the right to make derivative works within the IETF process.
- e. the right to let third parties extract some logical parts, for example MIB modules

The authors retain all other rights, but cannot withdraw the above rights from the IETF/ISOC.

## 7.2. Rights to use Contributed Material

Because, under the laws of most countries and applicable international treaties, copyright rights come into existence whenever a work of authorship is created (but see Section 8 below regarding public domain documents), and IETF cannot make use of IETF Contributions if it does not have sufficient rights with respect to these copyright rights, it is important that the IETF receive assurances from all Contributors that they have the authority to grant the IETF the rights that they claim to grant. Without this assurance, IETF and its participants would run a greater risk of liability to the owners of these rights.

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#### 9. Security Considerations

This memo relates to IETF process, not any particular technology. There are security considerations when adopting any technology, but there are no known issues of security with IETF Contribution rights policies.



## 10. References

### 10.1. Normative References

- [RFC 2026] Bradner, S., Ed, "The Internet Standards Process -- Revision 3", BCP 9, RFC 2026, October 1996.
- [RFC 3668] Bradner, S., Ed., "Intellectual Property Rights in IETF Technology", BCP 79, RFC 3668, February 2004.

### 10.2. Informative References

- [Berne] "Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Work",  
<http://www.wipo.int/treaties/ip/berne/index.html>

## 11. Acknowledgements

The editor would like to acknowledge the help of the IETF IPR Working Group and, in particular the help of Jorge Contreras of Hale and Dorr for his careful legal reviews of this and other IETF IPR-related and process documents. The editor would also like to acknowledge the extensive help John Klensin provided during the development of the document.

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