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A. Baber
IANA
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Early IANA Registry Creation
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Abstract

This memo describes the requirements for establishing an IANA registry before the IETF Stream document that creates the registry is approved for publication as an RFC. This process can be used when an IETF working group needs to coordinate allocations among multiple documents or with an organization outside the IETF.

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1. Introduction

Protocol specifications documented in RFCs often need to create registries of names or code points for various objects, messages, or other protocol entities so that implementations can interoperate. Registry creation is handled by the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA) in accordance with processes described in [I-D.ietf-ianabis-rfc8126bis].

Working groups that establish a new registry in one document may find that they need to allocate code points for other documents while the first document is still in development. However, adding those other allocations in the original document may prove impractical or undesirable.

Additionally, the working group may need to create a registry that a group outside of the IETF urgently needs ongoing allocations from.

Working groups may choose to maintain an informal registry internally until the IESG approves the registry document for publication as an RFC, at which point IANA would create an official registry. However, doing so risks the possibility that some party may not realize that the unofficial registry has been replaced, in which case they might

self-assign codepoints that IANA has assigned for another purpose. IANA also has processes in place to ensure that requirements are met and methods for tracking registration requests, among other coordination resources.

This document is therefore proposing methods for creating and maintaining IANA registries before the IESG approves the document for publication.

Creation requires the same approval processes described in [I-D.ietf-ianabis-rfc7120bis], the document that defines an early allocation process for IETF stream Internet-Drafts, and early registries are likewise subject to expiration, barring renewal or finalization.

Early registry creation also requires a process for obtaining allocations from an early registry. This process will require either approval by a Working Group chair, approval by the sponsoring Area Director (AD), or the IETF stream Internet-Draft process described in [I-D.ietf-ianabis-rfc7120bis], depending on the registration procedure intended for the finalized registry.

2. Conditions for Early Registry Creation

The following conditions must hold before IANA can process a request for early registry creation:

1. The registry must be described fully, in accordance with [I-D.ietf-ianabis-rfc8126bis], in enough detail for IANA to be able to create the registry, maintain it, and determine its format and location.
2. The Working Group chairs and Area Director (AD) must determine that there is sufficient interest in the community for early implementation and deployment, before the document that creates the registry is approved for publication as an RFC, or that a lack of central coordination before document approval could result in registry maintenance issues.
3. If the registry is to be created primarily for use by an organization outside of the IETF, the Working Group chairs must be satisfied that the relevant parties are aware that the registry will be closed if the document that creates it does not advance.
4. The Working Group chairs must be willing to function as approvers for all requests for allocation from that registry until the document is approved for publication, as described in Section 5.

If allocation from the finalized version of the registry will require an RFC, the Working Group chairs and Area Directors (ADs) must be willing to use the [I-D.ietf-ianabis-rfc7120bis] early allocation process to allocate values.

3. Process for Early Registry Creation

The processes described below assume that the document in question is the product of an IETF Working Group (WG). If the document is instead sponsored by an AD, replace "WG chairs" below with "sponsoring AD."

There are three processes associated with early allocation: making the request for registry creation, following up on the request, and, optionally, revoking the registry.

3.1. Request

The process for requesting early registry creation is as follows:

1. The authors (editors) of the document submit a request for early creation to the Working Group chairs, specifying which registry should be created and where it should be placed.
2. The WG chairs determine whether the conditions for early registry creation described in Section 2 are met.
3. The WG chairs gauge whether there is consensus within the WG that early registry creation is appropriate for the given document.
4. If steps 2) and 3) are satisfied, the WG chairs request approval from the AD(s). The AD(s) may apply judgment to the request, especially if there is a risk that the registry will not be made permanent.
5. If the ADs approve step 4), the WG chairs contact IANA to request early registry creation.
6. IANA creates the registry in the appropriate location, marking it as temporary, valid for a period of two years from the creation date. The creation and expiration dates are recorded in the registry and made visible to the public.

3.2. Follow-Up

The document authors and Working Group chairs are responsible for reviewing changes in the document and determining whether changes to registry content or structure are required before the document is approved for publication.

If the document progresses to the point at which IANA normally creates registries, IANA will make any necessary registry updates described by the document's IANA Considerations section and remove the "temporary" designation from the registry description.

If the document will not progress, or if the registry is no longer required, the Working Group chairs should inform IANA.

3.3. Expiry

As described in Section 3.1, the registry's expiration date is recorded and tracked by IANA. If the registry will expire before the IESG approves the document for publication, IANA will contact the WG chairs and AD to ask whether they wish to renew the registry for an additional two-year period.

After the first extension, any further renewal requests must also be approved by the IESG. The renewal request to the IESG must include the reason(s) another renewal is necessary and the WG's plans for the specification.

If an extension is not approved, IANA will close the registry and label it accordingly.

The WG chairs can also request that IANA close the registry at any time. Implementers and deployers need to be aware of this possibility.

Note that if the document that created the registry is submitted for review to the IESG, and at the time of submission the registry is valid (not expired), it will not be subject to expiration while the document is under IESG consideration.

4. Early Registry Initialization

When early registry creation is approved, IANA will initialize the registry with the registrations provided by the document's IANA Considerations section, indicate that the registry is temporary, and temporarily list this document as an additional reference for the registry.

Any desired registrations not included in the initializing document must be requested separately, after IANA creates the registry.

Until the IESG approves the document for publication, IANA will maintain the registry in accordance with one or more of the registration procedures described below.

5. Conditions for Allocation from Early Registries

The document's IANA Considerations section must name one or more registration procedures for the registry, as described in [I-D.ietf-ianabis-rfc8126bis]. However, those procedures will not apply until the registry has been finalized (i.e., until the document that creates the registry has been approved for publication). Instead, IANA will apply one or more of the "WG Chair Approval," "Sponsoring AD Approval," and "Early Allocation" procedures described below.

5.1. WG Chair Approval

If the projected registration procedure will not require an RFC (e.g., "First Come First Served", "Expert Review"), and the Internet-Draft that created the registry is the product of a working group, allocations must be approved by a Working Group chair responsible for the document. Once approved, these allocations do not require renewal.

If the projected registration procedure is "Specification Required," this procedure will apply under the circumstances described in Section 5.5.

5.2. Sponsoring AD Approval

Identical to the "WG Chair Approval" procedure, but in this case the sponsoring AD serves as the approver for AD-sponsored documents.

5.3. Early Allocation (draft-ietf-ianabis-rfc7120bis)

If the projected registration procedure will require an RFC (e.g., "IETF Review", "Standards Action"), entry into the early registry will be limited to IETF stream Internet-Drafts that qualify for the early allocation procedure described in [I-D.ietf-ianabis-rfc7120bis].

IANA will process requests in accordance with that document's Section 2.2, with WG chair and AD approval taking the place of any expert approval that would be required by a procedure like "Standards Action With Expert Review." When the registry itself is made

permanent, these allocations will continue to be identified as temporary until their associated documents are also approved for publication.

If the Working Group or sponsoring AD responsible for the registry is not the source of the early allocation request, the requesting chair or AD should consult with the chairs or sponsoring AD for the registry before contacting IANA.

%% QUESTION FOR IANABIS: if a different WG needs to request an early allocation, should approval from the registry's WG chair be required or recommended? %%

If the projected registration procedure is "Specification Required," this procedure will apply under the circumstances described in Section 5.5.

5.4. Updating Registration Procedures

If the projected registration procedure changes while the document is still in development, and the new procedure would call for a different temporary registration procedure (for example, if the projected procedure changes from "Expert Review" to "IETF Review"), IANA must be notified of the change. IANA will not track changes to documents that create early registries.

5.5. Temporary Procedures for "Specification Required" Registries

If the finalized registry will use the "Specification Required" policy, IANA will need to know whether Internet-Drafts will be considered eligible for permanent registration once the registry is finalized.

If the specification is "Specification Required," and the document states that Internet-Drafts will be eligible for permanent registration, as described in [I-D.ietf-ianabis-rfc8126bis], the "WG Chair Approval" (or "Sponsoring AD Approval") procedure will apply to all registration requests.

If the projected registration procedure is "Specification Required," but the document does not declare Internet-Drafts eligible for permanent registration, the early registry will require two separate registration procedures: 1) the time-limited "Early Allocation" procedure available to IETF stream Internet-Drafts, and 2) permanent "WG Chair Approval" (or "Sponsoring AD Approval", as appropriate) registration for all specifications not published as Internet-Drafts. Registration would not be available to Internet-Drafts from outside the IETF stream.

If an organization outside the IETF needs code points from an early registry in order to publish a standard, WG Chairs and sponsoring ADs can choose to use the process described in [I-D.ietf-ianabis-rfc7120bis], if they consider it appropriate.

6. Alternatives to Early Registry Creation

Early registry creation is an option for coordinating future allocations. It is not a requirement.

Internal lists maintained by the Working Group are another option, as long as the maintainer makes the list inaccessible after IANA creates the registry. A more formal, perhaps less risky approach is for the authors of the registry-creating document to function as the initial registrar.

In this scenario, the authors update their IANA Considerations section with allocations for other in-progress documents, assigning values and naming the appropriate document in the registry's "Reference" field. When their document is approved for publication as an RFC, IANA re-publishes the registry contents, including registrations that refer to other documents.

In this case, authors should keep in mind that the registry should be updated when registrations are changed, deleted, or transferred to other documents. In addition, if the registry's future registration policy will require RFC publication, authors should consider whether any of its initial registrations could point to a draft that will not itself be published as an RFC. It may be preferable to limit this approach to First Come First Served and Expert Review registries (and Specification Required registries, if the document declares Internet-Drafts eligible for permanent registration).

%% QUESTION FOR IANABIS: Should the paragraph above be removed? %%

7. IANA Considerations

This document defines early registry creation procedures that will be implemented by IANA.

Specifically, IANA will create early registries, manage the resulting allocation requests, track and report expiring early registries, and initiate the early registry renewal process in accordance with this document.

8. Security Considerations

If early registry creation introduces security or other concerns, IANA may ask the IESG to suspend the procedure at any time.

%% QUESTION FOR IANABIS: should any specific security considerations be documented here? %%

9. References

9.1. Normative References

[I-D.ietf-ianabis-rfc8126bis]
Baber, A. and S. Tanamal, "Guidelines for Writing an IANA Considerations Section in RFCs", Work in Progress, Internet-Draft, draft-ietf-ianabis-rfc8126bis-01, 21 February 2026, <<https://datatracker.ietf.org/doc/html/draft-ietf-ianabis-rfc8126bis-01>>.

9.2. Informative References

[I-D.ietf-ianabis-rfc7120bis]
Baber, A. and S. Tanamal, "Early IANA Code Point Allocation", Work in Progress, Internet-Draft, draft-ietf-ianabis-rfc7120bis-01, 12 February 2026, <<https://datatracker.ietf.org/doc/html/draft-ietf-ianabis-rfc7120bis-01>>.

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Author's Address

Amanda Baber
Internet Assigned Numbers Authority
PTI/ICANN
12025 Waterfront Drive
Los Angeles, 90094
United States of America
Email: amanda.baber@iana.org