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P. Andersson
Ionio Systems
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YANG module file name convention
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Abstract

This document presents YANG module file name convention. The convention extends the current YANG module file name using revision-date, with the YANG semantic version extension. The YANG semantic version extension allows for an informative version to be associated with a particular YANG module revision.

This documents updates RFCs 6020, 7950, and 9907.

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1. Introduction

This document defines the YANG module file name convention. It extends the current convention defined in [RFC6020], [RFC7950], and [RFC9907], which uses revision-date, with the YANG semantic version extension defined in [I-D.ietf-netmod-yang-semver].

1.1. Terminology

The key words "MUST", "MUST NOT", "REQUIRED", "SHALL", "SHALL NOT", "SHOULD", "SHOULD NOT", "RECOMMENDED", "NOT RECOMMENDED", "MAY", and "OPTIONAL" in this document are to be interpreted as described in BCP 14 [RFC2119] [RFC8174] when, and only when, they appear in all capitals, as shown here.

1.2. Motivation

The motivation for using YANG semantic version instead of revision date is that it conveys additional information to the user. A revision date only tells the user that it has been updated, while, for instance, a YANG Semver version can tell the user about the module's compatibility level at a glance. Having this information available as early as possible, i.e. in the module file name, makes it possible to quickly identify the module revision; compared to searching in the file contents and checking the revisions. Having the YANG semantic version visible in the file name will make it easier to handle large sets of YANG modules.

2. YANG Module File Names

This section updates Section 5.2 of [RFC7950], Section 5.2 of [RFC6020], and Section 3.2 of [RFC9907].

If a revision has an associated YANG semantic version (ysv:version) then a YANG file **MUST** be created that use the YANG semantic version in the file name. Additionally, a YANG file with the revision-date **MAY** be created. The name of the files **SHOULD** be of the form:

```
module-or-submodule-name ['@' (ysv:version) / '@' (revision-date)]  
    ( '.yang' / '.yin' )
```

E.g., acme-router-module@2.0.3.yang or
acme-router-module@2024-05-15.yang.

In short, the YANG semantic version file name scheme is recommended, as its use will convey compatibility status at a glance without the need to read the module.

If the YANG module (or submodule) has an associated YANG semantic version (ysv:version), then a file name that use the YANG semantic version **MUST** be created. In addition, a file with the revision date in the file name **MAY** be created as well.

2.1. Coexistence with YANG Semver

As can be seen above, all valid identifiers for YANG semantic version are valid in the file name as well. See more details for YANG Semver identifiers in Section 4.3 of [I-D.ietf-netmod-yang-semver].

The following example is a valid YANG module file name

example-module@2.3.1_non_compatible+build2237refM443ss.yang

One consequence of this is that there might exist two modules derived from version 2.0.0 with the same X.Y.Z digits (2.0.1) but different version labels:

2.0.1-draft-superman-super-stuff-03

2.0.1-draft-batman-cool-addition-07 (a competing draft)

3. Operational Considerations

The delimiter symbol for YANG Semver is "@", the at sign. The same symbol is also used for revision-date. The patterns for YANG Semver and revision-date will never match the same string, and it is easy to visually identify each of the conventions.

4. IANA Considerations

For complete guidance on how to handle YANG modules in RFCs and IANA registries, with regards to [I-D.ietf-netmod-yang-module-versioning], [I-D.ietf-netmod-yang-semver], and YANG module file names, see [I-D.ietf-netmod-iana-yang-guidance].

The "YANG Module Names" Registry need to support YANG modules with both the existing file name convention and the file name convention defined in this document.

The registry MUST create a file with a YANG semantic version if the YANG module (or submodule) has an associated YANG semantic version (ysv:version). The registry MUST also create a file with the YANG module using a file name with the revision date. It MUST be ensured that the files' contents are identical.

5. Security Considerations

There are no security considerations for this draft.

6. References

6.1. Normative References

[I-D.ietf-netmod-iana-yang-guidance]

Wilton, R., "Guidance for Managing YANG Modules in RFCs and IANA Registries", Work in Progress, Internet-Draft, draft-ietf-netmod-iana-yang-guidance-02, 14 April 2026, <<https://datatracker.ietf.org/doc/html/draft-ietf-netmod-iana-yang-guidance-02>>.

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[RFC9907] Bierman, A., Boucadair, M., Ed., and Q. Wu, "Guidelines for Authors and Reviewers of Documents Containing YANG Data Models", BCP 216, RFC 9907, DOI 10.17487/RFC9907, March 2026, <<https://www.rfc-editor.org/info/rfc9907>>.

6.2. Informative References

Appendix A. Known Incompatibilities

There are currently no known publicly available tools that support the YANG semantic version file name schema. There are known proprietary tooling that already uses the file name schema presented in this document.

At the IETF 119 Hackathon, there was a project that investigated the feasibility to modify popular YANG tooling to support the proposed schema. There was a successful attempt to modify pyang to support the file name schema and also "recommended-min" previously included in [I-D.ietf-netmod-yang-module-versioning]. Furthermore, there were efforts in researching yanger and libyang to support the schema, but the hackathon ended before these projects could be concluded.

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Author's Address

Per Andersson
Ionio Systems
Email: per.ietf@ionio.se