

On Copying Conditions

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- The case for going further than RFC 2026.
 - Compatibility with free software licenses.
 - Examples of disallowed “good” uses.
 - Fear of non-official RFCs.
- My proposed license text.

Practical problems today

- Debian GNU/Linux cannot include RFCs because the license is considered non-free.
 - Debian's Free Software Guidelines:
http://www.debian.org/social_contract#guidelines
 - Presumably, Debian would also remove all excerpts from RFCs in software, although no effort to identify all RFC excerpts has been started yet.

Practical problems today

- FreeBSD 6.0 remove RFC excerpts from documentation because they fear the IETF license may not permit this use.
 - getaddrinfo(3), getnameinfo(3), ...
 - <http://www.freebsd.org/releases/6.0R/relnotes-i386.html#DOC>
- The origin was OpenBSD.
 - Itojun discussed the issue with IAB. He noticed KAME/Solaris was re-using RFC text in man pages.
 - RFC 3667 was the then-current license.
 - Brought to the attention of the IPR WG, which should solve it in 3978, unclear if that happened.

Practical problems today (continued)

- Extracting and adapting material from RFCs in source code and source code comments.
 - In free software, the license typically require that the text must be modifiable.
 - Apache, Samba, LibIDN, GnuTLS, OpenSSL, BIND, GNU SASL...
- Incorporating large tables of data in software.
 - For example, StringPrep code points and MIME charset names.
 - GNU Libidn, IBM ICU, VeriSign XCODE, ...
- ASN.1 schemas are adapted for use with particular ASN.1 compilers. Heavy modifications, with no intended wire changes.

Practical problems today (continued)

- Source code or header files in RFCs. Frequently modified after adaptation.
 - SHA-1, getaddrinfo, Punycode (IDN), SCTP checksum algorithm, ...
- Material incorporated into manuals or online help. Frequently modified, to adapt to the target audience.

Other useful usages

where a “field of use” permission would not work

- University teacher want to use text material from RFCs in a network course. The modification MAY result in an incompatible protocol.
- Develop incompatible behaviour derived from deployed protocols and implementations.
 - Protocol extensions are typically developed this way. For example, NSEC3 breaks DNSSEC but there are three experimental implementations. Experiments using these software provide feedback to the WG.

My proposed license text

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Fear of non-official RFCs

- Problem: Mallory modify a RFC and then claim their modified protocol is a product of the IETF.
- Questionable whether this is a practical problem.
- Restricting copying conditions does not prevent this threat. Anyone can write a document, not inherited from an RFC, and claim it is an IETF document.
- Consequently, restrictive copying conditions is not the proper tool to solve this problem.
- Moreover, we have other tools to mitigate this problem, e.g., trademark laws.

IPR WG Charter

- A reminder for those of you who didn't read the WG charter:

“If there consensus of the working group for a different IPR policy than the one described in RFC 2026, the working group will seek to amend its charter to make it clear that it is changing the status quo.”

- As far as I can tell, no such consensus has been established.

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Missing from BCP 78

- Right to make the derivative works permitted by RFC 2026.
- My goal here: going further than RFC 2026, to align with needs from the free software community.
- The right to distribute unmodified RFCs:
 - Addressed in Scott's -01 draft, after I raised this issue. Word crafting still required.
 - My proposal solve this issue through license text.