



## Participating in the IETF Internet Standards Process

"You are in a maze of twisty little passages, all alike"

Lucy Lynch [llynch@uoregon.edu](mailto:llynch@uoregon.edu)

(University of Oregon, NSRC, and IETF Volunteer)

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# The IETF - <http://www.ietf.org/>

- Internet Engineering Task Force
- Formed in 1986 – twenty years ago!
- A producer of Internet Standards
  - there are others: ISO, ITU, W3, etc.
- Development Process open to all
- All documents open and free of charge
  - RFC series, Internet Drafts (IDs), etc.

# IETF “Standards”

- become standards only when/because people use them
- there is no formal recognition for IETF standards by governments or “approved” standards organization
- contributions are all from individuals (regardless of employer)

“rough consensus and running code”

“The IETF is a large, open international community of network designers which includes engineers, operators, vendors and researchers who are committed to the architecture, evolution and smooth operation of the global Internet.”

*(paraphrased from Brian Carpenter, IETF Chair)*

“It is a fundamental principle of the IETF that the decisions in any Working Group (WG) are reached by consensus on the group mailing list, not in the face-to-face meetings. This means that anyone who is active on a mailing list can take part in the process”

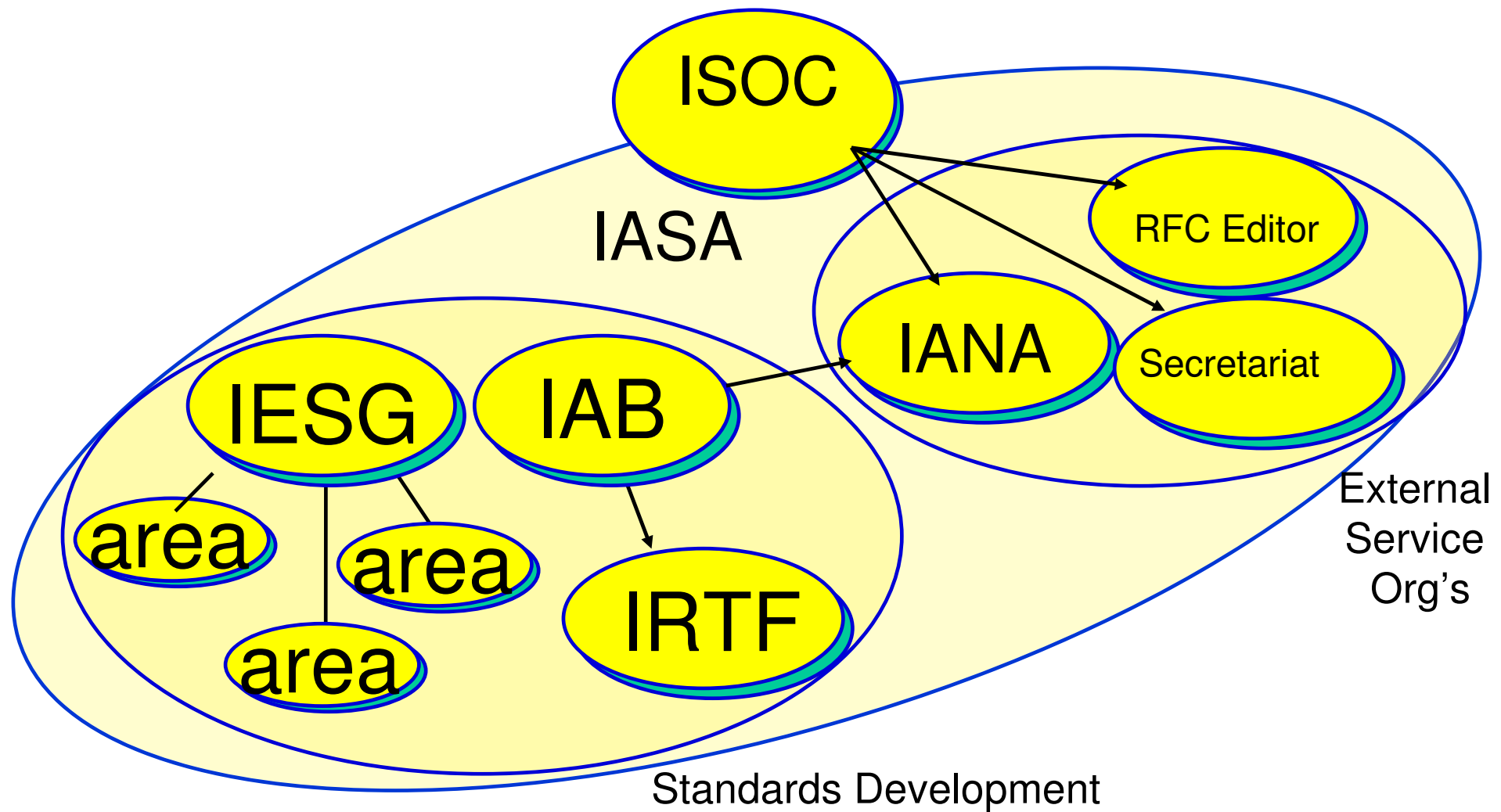
# It sounds easy...

- Join a couple of mailing lists
  - This is where the work happens
- Read the drafts (and the list archive)
- Ask questions
- Talk to people (take it off list, if needed)
- Look for common ground
- Ask for help/help others
- If you disagree, speak up!

...not so

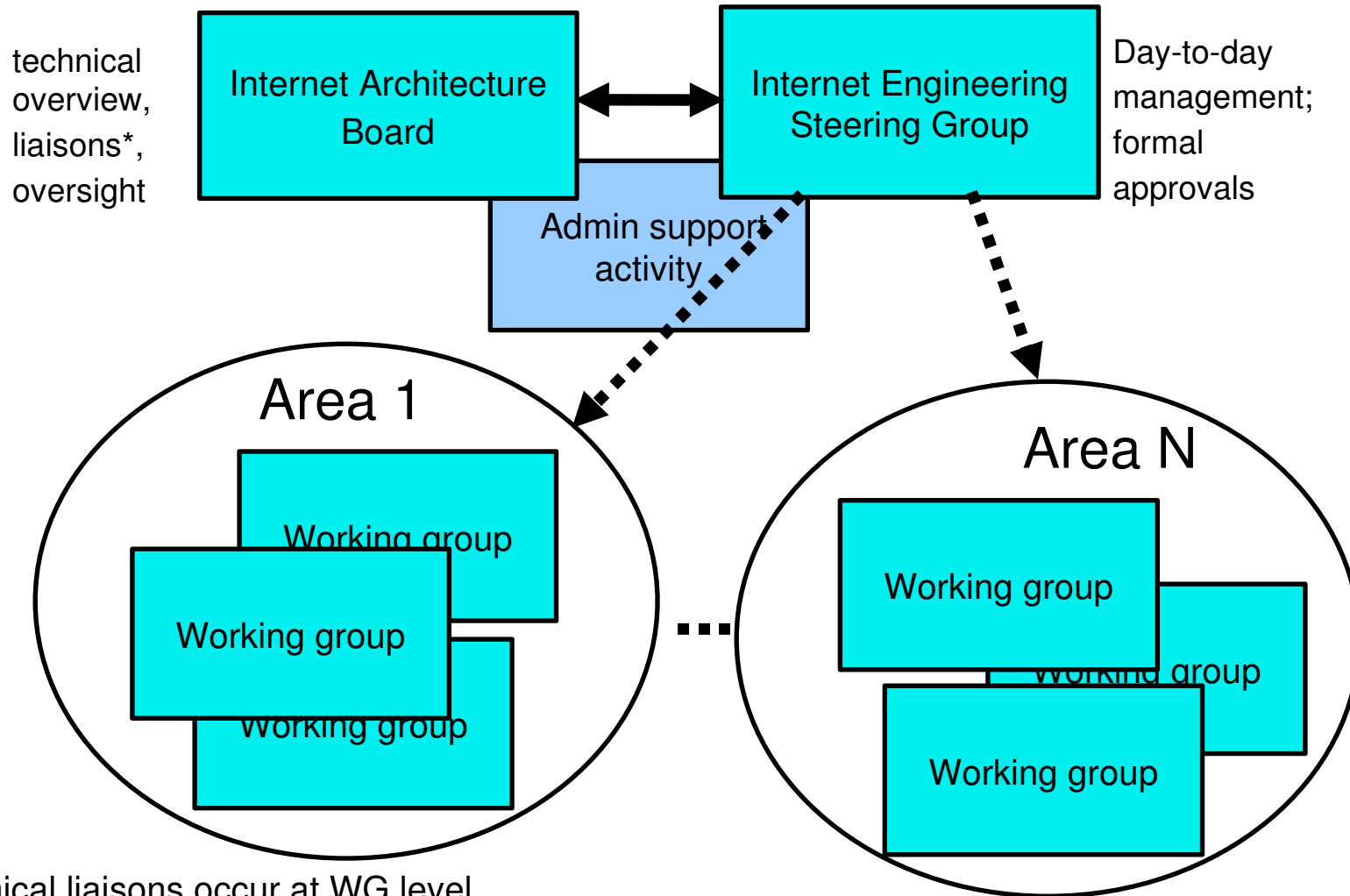
I said the IETF process was open, I didn't say it was transparent. Over the last 20 years, the IETF has built up many layers that can be hard to penetrate. It has a complex administrative structure, a very formal process for advancing and publishing documents, and a special language of insider terms and jokes. There are also well known characters (both good and bad).

# Structure of the IETF



**WOW! That's a lot of I's**

# Structure of the IETF

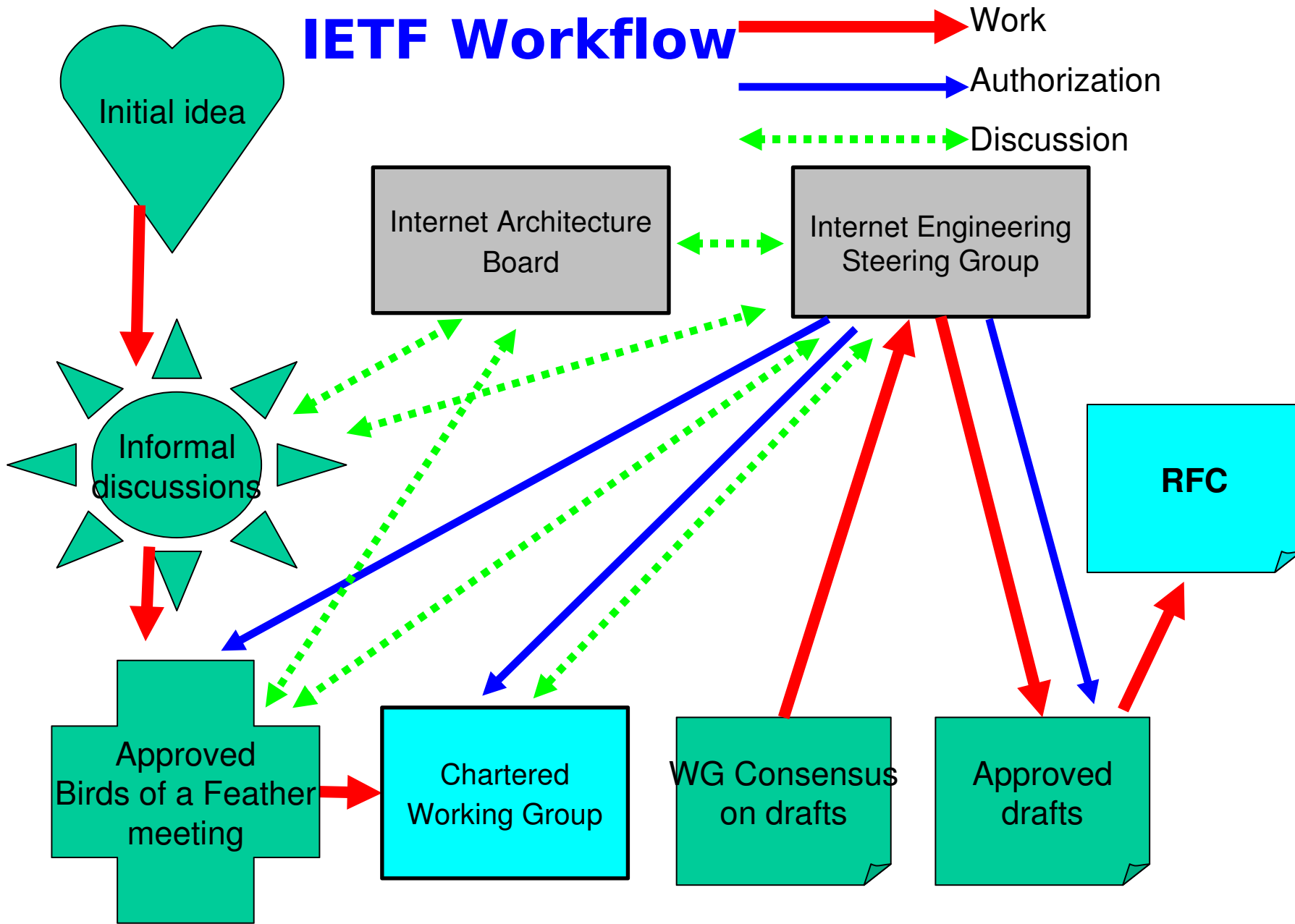


\*technical liaisons occur at WG level

# IETF Areas

- Applications
- General
- Internet
- Operations and Management
- Real-Time Applications and Infrastructure
- Routing
- Security
- Transport

# IETF Workflow



You are here ^

# Jumping In

A couple of strategies for getting started:

- Start in the middle – join the list for a chartered Working Group (WG)
- Join a WG that matches your expertise or area of interest.
- Follow the authors and the drafts you already know.

# Tips and Tools

- IETF Working Groups by Area - Charters

<http://www.ietf.org/html.charters/wg-dir.html>

- Workgroup Status Pages.

<http://tools.ietf.org/wg/>

- The RFC-Editor search engines

<http://www.rfc-editor.org>

- IETF author search tools

<http://www.arbo.com/tools/authorstats.html>

# A few examples

Anybody know Joe Abley? He's authored an Internet Draft in the GROW WG on anycast:

<http://www.arkko.com/tools/stats/joeabley.html>

<http://www.ietf.org/html.charters/grow-charter.html>

<http://tools.ietf.org/wg/grow/>

If you know Joe, you may be interested in his work and you might like GROW.

# Following a draft

Alan Barret mentioned a current ID during his presentation on “Policies Proposals in AfriNIC Region”:

- draft-ietf-idr-as4bytes-12.txt

^^^^ a clue – this is an IDR doc

- So see: <http://tools.ietf.org/wg/idr/>

You'll find this draft and lots more BGP stuff!

# Of interest to AfriNIC

Looking for an opportunity to author a doc?

There is an informational RFC with several well known authors that could use an update:

- RFC 2901 <http://tools.ietf.org/html/2901>

“Administrative Internet Infrastructure Guide”

When this document was written (2000) there were only 3 RIRs... ARIN, RIPE, and APNIC

I have been an IETF volunteer for about 10 years and I still get lost... but I've found some good people to work with and some work that needs to be done.

The IETF needs more operators and it needs more input from places out the US/EU so please, join a list!

QUESTIONS?

# IETF Mission - RFC 3935

*“The mission of the IETF is to produce high quality, relevant technical and engineering documents that influence the way people design, use, and manage the Internet in such a way as to make the Internet work better.*

*These documents include protocol standards, best current practices, and informational documents of various kinds.”*