

# RIPE Task Forces: Definition and Guidelines

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## Definition:

A RIPE task force is a group of RIPE community members formed to study and report on a specific topic or issue within the RIPE community as input to community discussion.

## Creation and prerequisites:

When an issue is outside the scope of any RIPE working group or requires more in-depth analysis, the RIPE Chair can decide to form a new task force.

Before appointing task force members, the RIPE Chair consults with the community, defines the following elements, and announces them on the RIPE Discussion List:

- Rationale
- Charter
- Scope
- Methodology
- Provisional timeline

These elements provide the basic structure of the task force's work.

## Appointment and composition:

The RIPE Chair issues a call for volunteers or directly selects members from the community to form a new RIPE task force. Task force members are selected based on their experience, expertise and background. Intending task force members are expected to make the RIPE Chair aware of any relevant potential conflicts of interest.

RIPE task forces are usually composed of a relatively small number of community members. This can vary depending on the scope of the work at hand.

The task force should designate one or more chairs who are responsible for making sure that progress is made and that results will be achieved within the agreed time frame.

## Responsibilities:

When agreeing to join a RIPE task force, each member is required to be available for regular meetings and to be actively involved in the process. Being part of a task force can require a significant time commitment, especially around RIPE Meetings and other important deadlines.

## RIPE NCC staff support:

If appropriate and needed, a RIPE task force may be assigned specific RIPE NCC staff to help them in their work.

The role of RIPE NCC staff is to provide communications support and professional advice on technical issues. RIPE NCC staff can also help to capture meeting minutes and assist the task force in drafting its final output.

## **Output:**

The output of a RIPE task force is defined in its charter, and usually takes the form of a report containing analysis and recommending actions for the community to consider, or a draft document for review and possible adoption.

In the former case, the task force should publish one or more preliminary drafts of its report, so that the RIPE community has a chance to give feedback. In the latter, and depending on its charter, the task force may have responsibility for successive re-drafting of the document to take account of community feedback.

It is important that a task force identifies alternative approaches considered and also any questions on which it was unable to agree a recommendation, whether due to internal dissent or to incomplete information.

## **Implementation:**

Responsibility for the implementation of the output of a task force lies with the community rather than with the task force itself.

The RIPE Chair receives the report or draft produced by the task force and takes responsibility for guiding evaluation and building consensus on what is to be done. This may include requesting the task force to do more work or else assigning responsibility to one or more RIPE working groups, follow-up task forces or the RIPE NCC.

## **Time frame:**

When created, a RIPE task force is given a provisional timeline for its work. At its initial meeting, the task force prepares its work plan and either confirms this timeline or proposes one which seems more realistic. The task force may wish to indicate what it expects it can achieve within the provisional timeline, as well as the time it considers necessary to complete its task. When a work plan and timeline are confirmed, or subsequently revised, the RIPE Chair will acknowledge this on the RIPE Discussion List.

## **Reporting to the community:**

A RIPE task force should report on its progress regularly to the community and provide opportunities for the community to give feedback on its work.

This includes:

- Having a mailing list where the community can give input or feedback
- Publishing minutes of meetings
- Scheduling BoFs or other feedback sessions with the community
- Giving regular updates to the RIPE Chair
- Keeping the task force's web page up to date

## **Provenance:**

This document updates and expands on the information on RIPE task forces contained in Part II, Chapter 4 of the [RIPE Enhanced Cooperation Task Force](#) report.

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