

Conditional plan for IETF meetings in COVID-impacted venues

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Introduction

In accordance with the “Interim planning guidelines for IETF meetings in COVID-impacted venues”, an individual plan will be produced for each meeting that reflects the protocols and restrictions that are required by the venue and local regulations. In the table presented below, each numbered section starts with a specific condition and then sets out the plan that will be included in the tailored plan if that condition is met. Some of the details need to be filled in when the tailored plan is assembled, which is indicated by [TBD].

Key to symbols in heading:

- **\$** Additional cost
- **<>** Development work required
- **Sup** Additional Secretariat or NOC support required

Meeting planning

1. Personnel (volunteers, contractors and staff) availability

Condition: If for any reason, such as geographically imposed travel restrictions or concerns with health/safety, the normal complement of volunteers, contractors, and staff cannot travel.

Plan: Agree in advance the minimum personnel requirements and ensure those are met—otherwise move the meeting completely online.

Implementation:

- Ask all personnel [TBD] weeks in advance if they will attend and, counting only those that can give a firm commitment, assess if the agreed minimums are met.
- If minimums cannot be met then put out a call for volunteers to supplement those numbers with a response by [TBD] weeks.
- If the minimum still cannot be met then move the meeting completely online.

2. Pre-meeting venue visit

Condition: If any of the room or technology changes considered below need to be implemented.

Plan: Bring forward the pre-meeting venue visit to allow sufficient time for the work.

Implementation:

Bring forward the pre-meeting venue visit to at least 8 weeks prior to the start of the first onsite event.

3. Important dates

Condition: If there are factors such as venue capacity limits that will make meeting planning a longer exercise.

Plan: Revise the typical Important Dates schedule, in order to provide for a longer planning runway.

Implementation:

- Open registration no later than [TBD] weeks out from meeting, with possible changes to various important dates to accommodate new deadlines/requirements
- Request *onsite* registrations to be cancelled no later than [TBD] weeks out, to provide ample time for waitlisted registrants to pivot if [capacity limits](#) are in place.

4. Agenda structure

Condition: If any of the changes that have to be implemented require new breaks or longer breaks for such things as [sanitization protocols](#) and time taken for food service.

Plan: The IESG and IETF LLC to review the agenda structure (length of sessions, breaks, etc) in light of any specific COVID-related requirements.

Implementation:

No further details.

5. Room allocation

Condition: If there are capacity limits that affect how rooms are allocated to sessions.

Plan: Collect more detailed capacity estimates from WG chairs to support planning.

Implementation:

WG chairs asked to be diligent about estimating anticipated attendance. This will not lead to a session being cancelled due to room capacity limits as overflow areas are [also planned](#).

6. COVID Coordinator

Condition: If the IETF is responsible for ensuring that any specific COVID-related protocols and restrictions are followed by onsite IETF meeting participants.

Plan: During the meeting and the preceding registration period, a nominated individual will act as the onsite COVID Coordinator, responsible for ensuring that COVID-related protocols and restrictions are followed. The COVID Coordinator will appoint a number of deputies to act in their place, as and when required.

Implementation:

The COVID Coordinator will be appointed by the IETF LLC and IESG. This will ordinarily be the IETF Executive Director but an alternate may be appointed.

Registration

7. Fees for remote participants

Condition: If the number of onsite participants is likely to be insufficient to ensure the financial viability of the meeting.

Plan: Decide before registration opens, whether or not to charge fees for remote participants at the same rate as for fully online meetings, which is approximately $\frac{1}{3}$ the fee for onsite participation, while aiming for an in-session experience, onsite or remote, that is as similar as possible to attending a regular IETF meeting that isn't held under COVID restrictions.

Implementation:

The registration system will charge differential pricing, depending on the type of ticket.

8. Fees for onsite participants

Condition: If the cost of the COVID-related protocols, such as regular testing, is significant and needs to be borne by the IETF.

Plan: Increase onsite fees to cover the additional costs or seek additional sponsorship..

Implementation:

The additional fee is to be determined when the cost of the protocols are understood. If the costs rise after the fee is set then either the IETF LLC will cover the cost or it may decide to cancel if doing so makes the meeting financially unviable, but either way it will not ask participants for a higher fee.

9. Limited capacity venue (<>, \$)

Condition: The venue may impose a limit on how many participants can be onsite that is lower than the number of anticipated onsite participants, necessitating some form of allocation mechanism.

Plan: A first-come, first-served (FCFS) registration system that takes into consideration the global spread of participants, and that prioritises onsite participation for those with a specific role in IETF meetings. The definition of who should be prioritised is [TBD] but is expected to include NOC, WG chairs, ADs, presenters, and more.

Additionally, one-day passes will only be available for onsite participation if bought on the day and if there is sufficient available capacity.

Implementation:

Amend the registration system as follows:

- Set registration limit in registration system
- Open IETF-wide registration in batches at pre-announced times, where each is reasonable to participants from a specific region and rely on an honour system for people to register in the correct slot for their region.
- Offer to waitlist those who attempt to register after capacity is reached
- Email waitlisted participants as slots open up
- Set an earlier registration cancellation deadline, so that cancelled on-site registrations can be released back into the pool.
- A number of people choose to delay registration in order to pay for a higher price ticket and so donate to the IETF but with a FCFS system they will not be able to do that. To support this, the system will allow people to choose to pay for a higher price ticket.

And for managing the waitlist:

- Once the registration limit is reached, users cannot register as onsite participants but will still be able to:
 - Register as remote participants
 - Choose to be added to waitlist for onsite registration
- When an onsite registrant cancels their registration, the Secretariat will contact the next person on the waitlist
- Waitlisted participants will have [TBD] hours to contact Secretariat to convert remote registration to onsite

- To convert a registration, remote participants will pay balance owed (onsite rate when added to waitlist, minus fee already paid)
- If the registration slot is unclaimed, the Secretariat will contact the next person in the waitlist queue.

And for the reserved slots:

- Set up a separate registration link for roles identified as a priority for onsite participation.
- Release unused reserved slots IETF-wide no later than 2 weeks prior to Early Bird deadline

10. Self-declared vaccination status (<>, \$)

Condition: If the IETF is required to record vaccination status of attendees and possibly required to share that with a third party.

Plan: Add a vaccination status question to the registration system and provide data from it as required. Anyone who refuses to provide the information or whose data is rejected as obviously false can only register as a remote participant.

Implementation:

The registration system will be amended to include:

- Vaccination status field that is mandatory for onsite participants to fill out.
- (If required) A declaration to confirm the status
- a full explanation to those registering of why we are collecting and what will be done with their data.

11. Proof of vaccination status (<>, \$)

Condition: If the IETF is required to validate proof of vaccination upon registration, either through providing data from their vaccination record or presenting their vaccination record.

Plan: Collect documentation as required, either through the registration system or a third party system. Anyone who refuses to provide the information or whose proof is rejected can only register as a remote participant.

Implementation:

The mechanisms for verifying proof of vaccination are yet to be determined and will depend on what regulations we are required to implement. This verification and possibly the collection may be outsourced to a specialist third party.

If registration system needs to be amended then that work is to include whichever of the following is required:

- Fields for participants to enter data from their vaccination record

- Mechanism to upload a scanned copy of their vaccination record
- Automated verification of vaccination record

12. Compliance (<>)

Condition: If the IETF is responsible for ensuring that onsite participants comply with COVID-related protocols and restrictions.

Plan: Make it a condition of registration that participants agree at registration time to abide by a Participation Compliance Statement for the duration of the meeting. As set out in the planning guidelines, compliance will be enforced with exclusion from onsite participation as the final sanction.

Implementation: Add a copy of the Participation Compliance Statement and an “I agree” checkbox to the registration system that participants must check if they wish to register. We may also need a confirmation at badge collection if circumstances have changed.

The following clauses are examples of clauses that may need to be included in the statement, depending on venue protocols and restrictions or local regulations.

Reporting

- Participants who develop symptoms consistent with COVID infection, even if vaccinated, agree to report this to [TBD].

Isolation

- Participants agree to self-isolate either in their room or a designated isolation area, if requested to by the IETF or venue, until such time as they are given the all-clear to return by a medical professional.

Notification

- The IETF will notify [TBD] if an onsite participant tests as positive for COVID.

Testing

- Participants agree to be tested for COVID by qualified medical professionals as and when required by the IETF, venue, or local regulations. These tests are to be paid for by [TBD].

13. T-shirts for onsite participants (<>, \$)

Condition: If we are required (or it is best practice) to minimise the risk of infection through shared surfaces, then we need to adjust the t-shirt distribution process to account for that.

Plan: T-shirts are distributed on-site in a contactless handover.

Implementation:

- Participants select preferred t-shirt size during registration

- *Provided they have registered before [TBD] date, they receive that size onsite via contactless handover.*
- Registrations after the cutoff receive it in the post.
- The same process is applied to the Hackathon t-shirts

Venue Arrival and Check-in

14. Proof of vaccination and/or COVID-testing (\$)

Condition: If the venue or local regulations require proof of vaccination to be presented on-site and/or COVID testing.

Plan: Comply with all local requirements so long as the testing is rapid and does not require isolation, otherwise the physical meeting will not go ahead. Any participants who refuse to comply will be denied entry and will not receive a refund.

Implementation:

- This requirement is communicated well in advance if possible.
- The registration system is amended so that people must click to acknowledge this will be required.
- If the venue does this themselves then the protocol will be agreed with the venue in advance and included in the communications.
- If the venue requires IETF to manage this process, a qualified local third-party will be employed to implement this.

Rejected alternatives:

- Moving the meeting fully online if proof of vaccination and/or rapid testing is required, because there are many who have expressed a willingness to meet under those conditions.

15. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) (\$)

Condition: If the venue requires PPE to be worn by participants

Plan: Comply with local requirements so long as the PPE is reasonable, e.g. masks, otherwise the physical meeting will not go ahead.

Implementation:

- This requirement is communicated well in advance.
- The registration system is amended so that people must click to acknowledge this will be required.
- PPE will be made available onsite to all staff and attendees.

Rejected alternatives:

- Moving the meeting fully online if PPE is required, because there are many who have expressed a willingness to meet under those conditions.

16. Infection minimisation at check-in (\$, Sup)

Condition: If infection minimisation is required at check-in

Plan: Implement a suite of protective measures aimed at reducing infection risk.

Implementation:

- Place “stand here” stickers at appropriate distance apart
- (if required) Place plastic screens between staff and participants
- Sanitizing wipes, hand sanitizer freely available
- Reg staff to have PPE available if needed
- “Self-service” check-in that prints out badge
- Lanyard tree for self-selecting lanyards
- No language buttons
- Self serve badge ribbons
- No printed pocket agenda
- E-tickets for any ticketed event

Room Management

17. Managing capacity limits (<>, \$, Sup)

Condition: The rooms in the venue may have capacity limits and there may be some sessions where more people want to attend than the limits allow, even with enhanced planning

Plan: Count the number of people in a room, enforce limits and provide an overflow area.

Implementation:

To manage room numbers:

- Have someone standing outside each room (venue staff, 3rd party contractor, or Secretariat staff) with a tally counter.
- If a room reaches capacity then participants are redirected to an overflow area.

To manage overflow:

- Designate sections of the lounge or other rooms as overflow areas.
- Provide equipment (easels, signage) in the overflow areas.

Rejected alternatives:

- Using RFID tags or other means of automatically counting room numbers as that is not the IETF culture.
- Any form of self-counting as that is unreliable and there are likely to be real penalties for non-compliance.
- Per session registration or assigned seating, as that is impractical and hard to enforce.

18. Room sanitisation between sessions (\$, Sup)

Condition: If rooms need to be sanitised between sessions.

Plan: Plan for this by adjusting the agenda to allow time for it to happen between all sessions and strictly enforcing meeting end times.

Implementation:

Have a dedicated sanitation team, either provided by the hotel or a third party, that sanitises each room after a session. Request that the chairs manage their sessions so that they do not overrun.

Rejected alternatives:

- Staggering session start/end times to reduce the number of simultaneous sanitations as that would mean too much confusion for participants and the possibility that people miss breaks.

19. Isolation Room (\$, Sup)

Condition: If someone experiences COVID symptoms and is not staying at the venue hotel and immediate self-isolation is part of the required protocols.

Plan: Provide a space where someone can self-isolate if they are not staying at the venue hotel.

Implementation:

- One or more rooms will be set aside for self-isolation for those not staying at the venue hotel. This will be arranged with the venue and may be guest rooms.
- They will be locked when not in use to ensure they are not contaminated
- After use a room will be sanitised by either the venue or a third party contractor.
- All local reporting requirements will be identified and followed.
- Room is only for temporary use and someone cannot stay after sessions close for the day, by which time alternative arrangements must have been made by the occupant.

Meeting Sessions

20. In-session participation (\$, <>)

Condition: If we have a very different split of onsite/remote participants from normal physical meetings, including sessions with some chairs onsite and some remote, some with all chairs remote, and some sessions where the remote participants greatly outnumber those participating onsite.

Plan: Adapt the onsite processes and the remote participation technology to support all chairs and all participants carrying out their roles equally well whether they are onsite or remote, but without ending up with everyone onsite working via their laptops as if they were remote and thereby losing the benefit of being onsite. This includes:

- A single queue for both onsite and remote participants
- The “Show of hands” tool replacing in-room humming

Implementation:

Adapt Meetecho:

- The red button goes and is replaced by dedicated controls available for chairs that allow them to switch the display and audio in Meetecho to that of the room systems, so that it does not require someone in the room to do that.

Implement a new ‘onsite’ mode of Meetecho (or a specific onsite version):

- Still requires authentication via datatracker
- No audio so that it avoids any interference with in-room audio.
- Video, if turned on, is display only, not recording (in-room cameras will do that)
- Used by people in the room to join the queue.
- Works well on mobiles.
- Allows participation in “Show of hands” or any replacement.
- Allows sharing of slides (may not be possible on mobile devices)
- Allows chat and opens CodiMD and materials in the default device apps.
- Full chair functionality including
 - Managing queue
 - Managing participant microphones
 - Managing “Show of hands” or replacement
 - Manage screen sharing requests.

Adapt in-room technology:

- Large screens always show what is the main video stream in Meetecho so that all participants get a consistent experience.
- Enable chairs and presenters to share slides/screen simultaneously to both onsite and remote participants from in-room

- This is accomplished by adding a dedicated remotely monitored hardware by the NOC/Meetecho to properly display each meeting session. (\$, S)

Adapt in-room processes:

- Participants do not join the queue by standing at the microphone, but by using Meetecho and are told by the chair(s) when it is their turn to speak.

Rejected alternatives:

- Using a mobile or ceiling mounted omnidirectional microphone, because that requires a camera operator to track who is speaking for the remote participants to see
- Doing away with the microphone altogether and asking people to use their own devices instead, because that will cause significant audio issues.

21. Bluesheets (\$, <>)

Condition: If a paper bluesheet cannot be used because of the infection risk.

Plan: Onsite participants will need to use the 'onsite' version of Meetecho, which will automatically add their name to the bluesheet, or if they choose not to then they can enter their details into the CodiMD.

Further changes may be required to make the automatically generated bluesheets open to inspection during a session as the paper bluesheets are.

Implementation:

In fully online meetings, the bluesheets are already generated from Meetecho.

Rejected alternatives:

- Compelling all participants to use onsite Meetecho or another automated system to add their bluesheet details as this is incompatible with the culture of the IETF and unenforceable in practice.
- Any form of QR code or other session registration system outside of Meetecho as that still leaves the problem of people not using either system.

22. In-session sanitisation (\$, Sup)

Condition: If we are required to sanitise shared equipment as it is used.

Plan: Either have sanitisation supplies in each room for each participant to sanitise the shared equipment before/after they use it, or have a designated person (venue staff or third party contractor) assigned to each room who is responsible for sanitisation of equipment.

Implementation:

Sanitation equipment (wipes, sprays, disposable covers, etc) provided by each piece of shared equipment (microphone, laptop) as required, along with a “please sanitise this” sign and an instruction card.

Onsite Events

23. Side Meetings (\$, Sup)

Condition: If the IETF is responsible for ensuring any COVID related restrictions are enforced during side meetings.

Plan: Side meetings continue as normal and the two side meeting rooms are controlled, configured and sanitised by the IETF the same way as the other rooms.

Implementation:

No additional details.

24. Events with food/beverages included (\$, Sup)

Condition: If infection control practices are required for any onsite events that include food/beverages.

Plan: Restructure these events to enable food/beverages to continue to be served, while managing the risk of infection.

Implementation:

- Events to be held outside whenever possible
- Follow any venue imposed restrictions on how food can be served to participants, which may include:
 - Pre-packaged food (versus self-serve)
 - Server-served buffet (versus self-serve)
 - Seated food service only
- Increase the number of food service stations to prevent long lines
- Add beverage stations to ensure socially distanced lines (if necessary) do not cause overly long wait times.
- Place social distance floor markers for queues for food and beverage stations.
- Add hand-sanitizing stations throughout the area.

25. Quick Connections

Condition: If any form of social distancing or personal interaction protocols are in place.

Plan: Quick connections will not be held given the high degree of close personal interaction that it generates.

Implementation:
No further details.