

[draft-ietf-geopriv-policy-25](#)

Status

- Prior to IETF#81 we had a discussion about changing the obfuscation algorithm in the document.
- At IETF#81 we decided to only document the limitations since it will be difficult to provide the features we had initially intended to offer.
- Draft version -25 documents this change.

New Section

13.4. Location Obscuring Limitations

Location obscuring attempts to remove information about the location of a Target. The effectiveness of location obscuring is determined by how much uncertainty a Location Recipient has about the location of the Target. A location obscuring algorithm is effective if the Location Recipient cannot recover a location with better uncertainty than the obscuring algorithm was instructed to add.

Effective location obscuring is difficult. The amount of information that can be recovered by a determined and resourceful Location Recipient can be considerably more than is immediately apparent. A concise summary of the challenges is included in [duckham10].

Cont.

A Location Recipient in possession of external information about the Target or geographical area that is reported can make assumptions or guesses aided by that information to recover more accurate location information. This is true even when a single location is reported, but it is especially true when multiple locations are reported for the same Target over time.

Furthermore, a Location Recipient that attempts to recover past locations for a Target can use later reported locations to further refine any recovered location. A location obscuring algorithm typically does not have any information about the future location of the Target.

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The degree to which location information can be effectively degraded by an obscuring algorithm depends on the information that is used by the obscuring algorithm. If the information available to the obscuring algorithm is both more extensive and more effectively employed than the information available to the Location Recipient, then location obscuring might be effective.

Obscured locations can still serve a purpose where a Location Recipient is willing to respect privacy. A privacy-respecting Location Recipient can choose to interpret the existence of uncertainty as a request from a Rule Maker to not recover location.

Location obscuring is unlikely to be effective against a more determined or resourceful adversary. Withholding location information entirely is perhaps the most effective method of ensuring that it is not recovered. However, a caution: omitted data also conveys some information.