6.9 Obsoleting or Rescinding a W3C Recommendation

W3C *may* rescind a Recommendation, for example if the Recommendation contains many errors that conflict with a later version or if W3C discovers burdensome patent claims that affect implementers and cannot be resolved; see the [W3C Patent Policy](http://www.w3.org/Consortium/Patent-Policy) [PUB33] and in particular [section 5](http://www.w3.org/Consortium/Patent-Policy#sec-Requirements) (bullet 10) and [section 7.5](http://www.w3.org/Consortium/Patent-Policy#sec-PAG-conclude).

W3C *may* obsolete a Recommendation, for example if the W3C Community feels that the Recommendation no longer represents best practices, or is not adopted and unlikely to be so.

In this clause, the word 'retire' is used to refer to either obsoleting or rescinding. W3C only retires entire specifications. To retire some *part* of a Recommendation, W3C follows the process for modifying a Recommendation.

The process to retire a specification may be initiated:

1. By anyone on request to the relevant Working Group (if it exists), or the TAG;
2. By the Director;
3. On the request of anyone if their request to the WG or TAG is not acted on in 90 days;
4. By 5% of the Advisory Committee.

The Director *must* announce the proposal to retire a W3C Recommendation to other W3C groups, the public, and the Advisory Committee. The announcement:

* *must* include the rationale for retiring the Recommendation;
* *should* document known implementation;
* *must* indicate that this is a Proposal to Rescind, or a proposal to Obsolete, a Recommendation;
* *must* specify the deadline for review comments, which *must* be at least four weeks after announcing the proposal;
* *must* identify known dependencies and solicit review from all dependent Working Groups;
* *must* solicit public review.

If there was any dissent in the Advisory Committee review, the Director *must* publish the substantive content of the dissent to W3C **and the public**, and *must* formally address the comment at least 14 days before any publication as a Retired Recommendation. The Advisory Committee *may* appeal the decision.

A retired Recommendation *must* be published with up to date status. The status 'Rescinded' or 'Obsoleted' should link to a page explaining the term.

In the case of a Rescinded Recommendation, the updated version *may* remove the rescinded content (i.e. the main body of the document).

Once W3C has published a Rescinded Recommendation, future W3C technical reports *must not* include normative references to that technical report.

**Note:** the original Recommendation document will continue to be available at its version-specific URL.