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W3C *may* obsolete a Recommendation, for example if the W3C Community decides that the Recommendation no longer represents best practices, or is not adopted and is unlikely to be adopted. Obsoletion *may* be reversed, using the same process as for obsoleting a Recommendation.

In this clause, the word 'retire' is used to refer to either obsoleting or rescinding a Recommendation. W3C only retires entire Recommendations. To retire some *part* of a Recommendation, W3C follows the process for modifying a Recommendation in section <<xref 6.7>>.

The process to retire a specification may be initiated:

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

*Either A:*

[[A The Director *must* announce the proposal to retire a W3C Recommendation to other W3C groups using at least the mailing list for all chairs, the public, and by starting an Advisory Committee review. The announcement:

* *must* indicate that this is a Proposal to Rescind, or a proposal to Obsolete, or a proposal to reverse Obsoletion of, a Recommendation;
* *must* identify the Recommendation (by stable URL);
* *must* include the rationale for retiring the Recommendation;
* *should* document known implementation;
* *must* identify known dependencies and solicit review from all dependent Working Groups;
* *must* solicit public review;
* *must* specify the deadline for review comments, which *must* be at least four weeks after the Director's announcement.

/A]]

*or B:*

[[B

The initiator (WG, TAG, Director, the portion of the AC, or the individual) *must* announce the proposal to retire a W3C Recommendation to other W3C groups using at least the mailing list for all chairs, and the public, such that it has wide review. The announcement:

* *must* indicate that this is a Proposal to Rescind, or a proposal to Obsolete, or a proposal to reverse Obsoletion of, a Recommendation;
* *must* identify the Recommendation (by stable URL);
* *must* include the rationale for retiring the Recommendation;
* *should* document known implementation;
* *must* identify known dependencies and solicit review from all dependent Working Groups;
* *must* solicit public review;
* *must* specify the deadline for review comments, which *must* be at least four weeks after the Director's announcement.

If the initiator decides to proceed after this wide review, the Director starts an Advisory Committee review. That review must include consideration of the results of the wide review above.

/B]]

After the AC review, the Director decides whether to proceed.

If there is 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 Director's decision.

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

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