English Language
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Proposal for the revision of WIPO Standard ST.90

*Document prepared by* the *API Task Force Co-Leaders*

## Summary

The API Task Force proposes a revision to WIPO Standard ST.90, including the replacement of obsolete internet industry standards and conventions with up-to-date references, improvements to the clarity and consistency of certain rule descriptions, an enhanced format for Annex I of ST.90, "List of RESTful Web Service Design Rules and Conventions" and better integration of the vocabulary from WIPO ST.97 in Annex II of ST.90.

## Background

The API Task Force is responsible for revising WIPO ST.90, under Task No. 56, the description of which reads as follows:

*“Ensure the necessary revisions and updates of WIPO Standard ST.90; support the International Bureau in promoting and implementing WIPO Standard ST.90; and promote the API Catalog for Intellectual Property.”*

At its eighth session in 2020, the CWS adopted WIPO Standard ST.90, entitled *“Recommendation for Processing and Communicating Intellectual Property Data Using Web APIs (Application Programming Interfaces)”*.

At its tenth session, the CWS approved version 1.1 of WIPO Standard ST.90, which included references to the newly adopted WIPO Standard ST.97, as well as other necessary editorial updates. The revised version was published in January 2023.

In undertaking Task No. 64, the API Task Force met virtually on a quarterly basis throughout 2025 and discussed improvements to WIPO Standard ST.90. Additionally, a joint meeting of the API and XML4IP Task Forces was held in a hybrid format in Geneva and online from July 21 to 24, 2025. During the meeting, the Task Forces collaborated on a draft revision of WIPO Standard ST.90, with the aim of:

* Updating references to obsolete standards and conventions, including several Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) Requests for Comments (RFCs);
* Revising several rule descriptions to align with the latest guidelines defined by the IETF;
* Adding additional necessary examples to clarify implementation;
* Making editorial improvements and minor grammatical corrections;
* Improving the readability of Annex I; and
* Including references to the WIPO Standard ST.97 vocabulary in Annex II of the WIPO Standard ST.90.

Further details regarding the work of the Task Force since the last session of the CWS are explained in document CWS/13/8.

## Proposal for revision

The API Task Force has prepared a proposal for the revision of WIPO Standard ST.90 for consideration by the CWS and, where appropriate, approval. The proposed revision to the Standard is included as the Annex to this document and all changes are tracked. Strike-through text indicates deletion and underlined text indicates addition.

The proposed changes to WIPO ST.90 can be summarized as follows:

1. Outdated references to several IETFRFCs have been replaced with current equivalents. The list of RFCs is available at: [www.ietf.org](http://www.ietf.org). The following rules of ST.90 were affected by these updates:

* Replacement of RFC 7231 with RFC 9110 affects rules [RSG-20], [RSG-28], [RSG-66], [RSG-102], [RSG-103], [RSG-114], [RSG-115] and [RSG-138];
* Replacement of RFC 2616 with RFC 9110 affects rules [RSG-33], [RSG-34], [RSG-35], [RSG-36], [RSG-37], [RSG-38], [RSG-39], [RSG-46], [RSG-47], [RSG-48], [RSJ-49], [RSG-50], [RSG-51], [RSG-52], [RSG-53], [RSG-54], [RSG-55], [RSG-56], [RSG-57], [RSG-58], [RSG-59], [RSG-60] and [RSG-91];
* Replacement of RFC 7240 with RFC 8144 affects rule [RSG-112]; and
* Replacement of RFC 3339 with RFC 9557 affects rules [CS-01], [CS-02], [CS-03], [CS-04] and [CS-05].

1. Several rule descriptions have been revised for improved clarity and alignment with current IETF practices:

* The description of the following Rules was improved to make it clearer or fix minor editorial errors: [RSG-12], [RSG-23], [RSG-31], [RSG-44], [RSG-46], [RSG-121], [RSJ-150] and [RSJ-152];
* For Rule [RSG-18], the obligation level of query parameters has been changed from MUST to SHOULD. Additionally, the second sentence of the original description of the Rule has been removed due to a contradiction with the first part;
* Regarding Rules [RSG-50] and [RSG-54], their descriptions were revised to reflect changes from RFC 2616 to RFC 9110. DELETE and TRACE methods are now defined as “MUST” be idempotent instead of “MUST NOT”; and
* Regarding Rules [RSG-80], [RSG-82] and [RSG-97], requirements were relaxed to allow for more flexible implementation.

1. New examples have been added where necessary to clarify the application of rules and facilitate better understanding.
2. Minor editorial improvements and grammatical corrections have been applied throughout the document to enhance readability and accuracy.
3. The reference to WIPO Standard ST.97 vocabulary is included in Annex II of WIPO Standard ST.90.
4. For the usability of the Annex I of ST.90 (*“List of Restful Web Service Design Rules and Conventions”*), it is replaced with a standalone Excel file. The current Annex I of ST.90 version 1.1 includes four compliance tables, which are lengthy and difficult to navigate. A link to download the Excel file is included in Annex I of ST.90. The proposed Excel file:

* Consolidate all four compliance levels (AJ, AX, AAJ, AAX) into a single sheet;
* Use an “X” to indicate applicable rules for each compliance level; and
* Support filtering to enhance navigation and usability.

At the time of preparing this document, the API Task Force Co-leaders and the Secretariat, reviewed the latest version of the revised WIPO Standard ST.90, as previously approved by the Task Force. During this review, several additional improvements were identified. Therefore, the further changes have been proposed, which can be summarized as follows:

1. In paragraph 34 of the Standard, delete the phrase “(or HTTP Verbs)” to ensure consistency with RFC 9110, which uses the term “methods” rather than “verbs”;
2. In Rule [RSG-31], improve the description to eliminate potential confusion with [RSG-12];
3. In Rule [RSG-36], improve the description to clarify that the 255-byte limit is a recommended practical consideration, not a strict requirement, to avoid conflict with RFC 9110, which allows for an 8000-byte limit;
4. In Rules [RSG-44] and [RSG-46], improve the descriptions to ensure alignment with RFC 9110;
5. In Rule [RSG-46], add “By default” to the description to prevent misinterpretation, particularly in relation to [RSG-47];
6. In Rule [RSG-49], replace the word “content” with “media” in the rule description;
7. In Rule [RSG-66], replace the reference to RFC 7238, which was first obsoleted by RFC 7538 and later by RFC 9110;
8. In paragraph 57 of ST.90, update the query parameter from fullName to personFullName to ensure consistency with WIPO Standard ST.97 and the XML example in WIPO Standard ST.96;
9. In Rule [RSG-91], replace the reference to IETF RFC 9110 with RFC 9112;
10. In Rules [RSG-102] and [RSG-103], replace the reference to RFC 7232, with RFC 9110;
11. In Rule [RSG-115], add a missing reference to Section 15.3.3 of RFC 9110;
12. Rename Rule CSJ-11 to CS-11 to reflect that the rule may also apply to enumerations in XML, not just JSON; and
13. In paragraph 24 of ST.90, replace the reference to RFC 7807 with RFC 9110. It should be noted that neither RFC 7807 nor RFC 9457 directly references HTTP status codes, but they are defined in RFC 9110. A more accurate and complete reference has been added to the HTTP status code registry maintained by the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA).

## Versioning

The revision to WIPO Standard ST.90 is proposed as version 2.0. This is due to the proposed changes, including the changes to Rules [RSG-50] and [RSG-54] from MUST NOT to MUST, are not considered backwards compatible with version 1.1, and therefore this is considered a major update.

*The CWS is invited to:*

1. *note the contents of this document and its Annex;*
2. *consider and approve the proposal for revision to WIPO Standard ST.90 as indicated above in paragraphs 6 to 8 above and detailed in the Annex to the present document; and*
3. *approve the new version number as version 2.0 of WIPO Standard ST.90, as indicated in paragraph 9 above.*

[Annex (revised WIPO Standard ST.90) follows]