

# OPENCHAIN Specification

Version 2.0 (DRAFT) 2019.02.20

## **Trusting the Open Source from which Software Solutions are built**

**DRAFT:** This is the draft of the next version 2.0 of the OpenChain specification. Changes made over the previous 1.2 version can be found in a [special marked up version](#) of this draft. Section 0 provides a high level summary of changes made. The most recent updates made to the text that have been generally accepted can be found in **blue** highlights. Recommended updates still under discussion can be found in **yellow** highlights. We are targeting to release a new version of the specification in April 2019.

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## 0) What Changed Log (temporary section)

We provide a summary of changes made to version 1.2 of the Specification. This is a temporary section that will be removed in the final version. The updates include:

- Changed version number from 1.2 to 2.0
- Overhauled the Introduction section to make it more concise and up to date.
- Overhauled the training section to move from a more prescriptive to a less prescriptive requirement. Now gives more flexibility to an organization to define the roles and responsibilities and how to ensure those fulfilling the roles are properly trained. We replaced the term training with the two concepts used by the ISO 9001:2015 standard: Competency and Awareness.
- Removed section title terms for Goal 1, Goal 2, ... Goal 6. They didn't represent goals as much as they represented facets of a program.
- Standardized on the term Open Source. The previous specification uses both terms "Open Source" and the "FOSS (Free and Open Source)" interchangeable. It was acknowledged that the term Open Source is more widely recognized and understood for the following reasons: i) Some users of the current specification have pointed out there was confusion between the term Open Source Software and FOSS. This was particularly true for first time readers; ii) Open Source represents a superset (inclusive); iii) The large majority of major foundations use the de facto term Open Source (e.g., Apache, Eclipse, OSI, Linux, OpenStack, Cloud Foundry, ...); iv) Most commercial organizations externally use the de facto term Open Source; v) It is also consistent with the term "Open Source Program Office" which represents a major target audience of the specification; vi) The term Open Source is de facto in Asia, largely used in North America and mixed yet dominant in Europe; Translations would be simplified by the use of a single term;
- Program Scope Declaration (section 1.4) was added. Provides the flexibility to construct a compliance program that best fits the scope of a given organization's needs. Some organizations could choose to maintain a compliance program for a specific product line while others could choose the program scope to govern software releases of the entire organization. Large organizations may prefer the former example while smaller organizations may prefer the latter.
- Changes Section 2 to deemphasize specific roles and emphasize expected tasks to be performed instead. For instance the Open Source Liaison role was removed. Because we are moving in the direction of ISO 9001, we needed to make the spec less prescriptive. However the responsibility remains which are described in requirements 2.1 and 2.2.
- Update the definition for Identified Licenses to make clear that the supplied software can range in open source composition from 0% to 100% open source.
- Updated requirement 3.1 text to make clear the bill of materials consist of open source components.
- Added a tag line to the title page to succinctly describe the essence of the spec in one sentence.
- Minor edits were made throughout the document to improve readability.

## 1) Introduction

We define a core set of requirements that a high quality Open Source compliance program is expected to satisfy. Our objective is to provide a benchmark that builds trust between organizations exchanging software with regard to the use of open source. Specification conformance ensures an organization delivers the correct set of compliance artifacts (e.g., legal notices, source code ...) required to achieve license compliance for the open source software from which their solutions are comprised. We focus on the “what” and “why” qualities of a compliance program as opposed to the “how” and “when” considerations. This ensures a level of flexibility that enables different organizations to tailor their policies and processes that best fit their size, goals and scope. For instance, the scope of a compliance program may support a single product line or the entire organization.

Section 2 introduces definitions of key terms used throughout the specification. Section 3 presents the requirements where each includes a list of one or more Verification Material items. The Verification Materials represent the evidence that must exist in order for a given requirement to be considered satisfied. Once all the requirements have been met, the compliance program would be considered an **OPENCHAIN** Conforming Program. Although it is not required for the Verification Materials to be made public, an organization may choose to provide them under an NDA or upon request.

Additional clarification on how to interpret the specification can be obtained by reviewing the Specification [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#).

## 2) Definitions

**Compliance Artifacts** - a collection of artifacts which represent the output of the Open Source compliance program for **the Supplied Software**. The collection may include (but are not limited to) one or more of the following: source code, attribution notices, copyright notices, copy of licenses, modification notifications, written offers, Open Source component bill of materials, SPDX documents and so forth.

**Open Source Software (Open Source)** - software subject to one or more licenses that meet the Open Source Definition published by the Open Source Initiative (OpenSource.org) or the Free Software Definition (published by the Free Software Foundation) or similar license.

~~**Open Source Liaison** - a designated person who is assigned to receive external Open Source inquiries.~~

**Identified Licenses** - a set of Open Source Software licenses identified as a result of following an appropriate method of identifying **Open Source components from which the Supplied Software is comprised**.

**OpenChain Conforming Program (Program)** - a program that satisfies all the requirements of this specification.

**Software Staff** - any employee or contractor that defines, contributes to or has responsibility for preparing Supplied Software. Depending on the organization, that may include (but is not limited to) software developers, release engineers, quality engineers, product marketing and product management.

**SPDX** or Software Package Data Exchange - the format standard created by the SPDX Working Group for exchanging license and copyright information for a given software package. A description of the SPDX specification can be found at [www.spdx.org](http://www.spdx.org).

**Supplied Software** - software that an organization **distributes** to third parties (e.g., other organizations or individuals).

**Verification Materials** - evidence that must exist in order for a given requirement to be considered satisfied.

## 3) Requirements

### 1.0 Program Foundation

#### 1.1 Policy

A written Open Source policy exists that governs Open Source license compliance of the Supplied Software. The policy must be internally communicated.

**Verification Material(s):**

- 1.1.1 A documented Open Source policy.
- 1.1.2 A documented procedure that makes Software Staff aware of the existence of the Open Source policy (e.g., via training, internal wiki, or other practical communication method).

**Rationale:**

To ensure steps are taken to create, record and make Software Staff aware of the existence of an Open Source policy. Although no requirements are provided here on what should be included in the policy, other sections may impose requirements on the policy.

#### 1.2 Competence

The organization shall:

- Identify the roles and the corresponding responsibilities of those roles that affects the performance and effectiveness of the Program;
- Determine the necessary competence of person(s) fulfilling each role
- Ensure that these persons are competent on the basis of appropriate education, training, and/or experience;
- Where applicable, take actions to acquire the necessary competence; and
- Retain appropriate documented information as evidence of competence.

**Verification Material(s):**

- 1.2.1 A documented list of roles with corresponding responsibilities for the different participates in the Open Source compliance program.
- 1.2.2 A document that identifies the competencies for each role.
- 1.2.3 Documented evidence of assessed competence for each program participant.

**Rationale:**

To ensure that the program participants have obtain a sufficient level of competence for their respected roles and responsibilities.

#### 1.3 Awareness

The organization shall ensure that persons doing work are aware of:

- a) The Open Source policy;
- b) Relevant Open Source objectives;

- c) **Their contribution to the effectiveness of the Open Source compliance program; and**
- d) **The implications of not conforming to the Open source compliance program requirements.**

**Verification Material(s):**

- 1.3.1 Documented evidence of assessed awareness for each program participant including compliance program's open source objectives, ones contribution within the program and implications of non-conformance.

**Rationale:**

To ensure program participants have obtain a sufficient level of awareness for their respected roles and responsibilities within the compliance program.

## 1.4 Program Scope

**Different compliance programs may be governed by different levels of scope. For example, a program could govern a single product line, an entire department or an entire organization. The scope designation needs to be declared for each program seeking conformance.**

**Verification Material(s):**

- 1.4.1 A written statement that clearly defines the scope of the program.

**Rationale:**

To provide the flexibility to construct a compliance program that best fits the scope of an organization's needs. Some organizations could choose to maintain a compliance program for a specific product line while others could choose the program scope to govern software releases of the entire organization. Large organizations may prefer the former example while smaller organizations may prefer the latter.

## 1.5 License Obligations

**A process exists for reviewing the Identified Licenses to determine the obligations, restrictions and rights granted by each license.**

**Verification Material(s):**

- 1.3.1 A documented procedure to review and document the obligations, restrictions and rights granted by each Identified License.

**Rationale:**

To ensure a process exists for reviewing and identifying the license obligations for each Identified License for the various use cases an organization may encounter.

## 2.0 Relevant Tasks Defined and Supported

### 2.1 **Maintain a process to effectively respond to external Open Source inquiries. Publicly identify a means by which a third party can make an Open Source compliance inquiry.**

**Verification Material(s):**

- 2.1.1 Publicly visible method **that allows** any third party **to make an Open Source compliance inquiry** (e.g., via a published contact email address, or the Linux Foundation's Open Compliance Directory).
- 2.1.2 An internal documented procedure for responding to third party Open Source compliance inquiries.

**Rationale:**

To ensure there is a reasonable way for third parties to contact the organization with regard to Open Source compliance inquiries and that the organization is prepared to effectively respond.

### 2.2 **Identify and Resource Open Source Compliance Task(s).**

- **Assign accountability to ensure the successful execution of Open Source compliance tasks.**
- **Open Source compliance tasks are sufficiently resourced:**
  - **Time to perform the tasks have been allocated; and**
  - **Commercially reasonable budget has been allocated.**
- **A process exists for reviewing and updating the policy and supporting tasks;**
- **Legal expertise pertaining to Open Source compliance is accessible to those who may need such guidance; and**
- **A process exists for the resolution of Open Source compliance issues.**

**Verification Material(s):**

- 2.2.1 Document with name of persons, group or function in Open Source Compliance role(s) identified.
- 2.2.2 The identified roles have been properly staffed and adequate funding provided.
- 2.2.2 Identification of legal expertise available to address Open Source Compliance matters which could be internal or external.
- 2.2.3 A documented procedure that assigns internal responsibilities for Open Source compliance.
- 2.2.4 A documented procedure for handling the review and remediation of non-compliant cases.

**Rationale:**

To ensure: i) Open Source compliance responsibilities are effectively supported and resourced and ii) policies and supporting processes are regularly updated to accommodate changes in Open Source compliance best practices.



### 3.0 Open Source Content Review and Approval

- 3.1 A process exists for creating and managing a bill of materials which includes each Open Source component (and its Identified Licenses) from which the Supplied Software is comprised.**

**Verification Material(s):**

- 3.1.1 A documented procedure for identifying, tracking and archiving information about the collection of Open Source components from which the Supplied Software is comprised.
- 3.1.2 Open Source component records for the Supplied Software which demonstrates the documented procedure was properly followed.

**Rationale:**

To ensure a process exists for creating and managing a Open Source component bill of materials used to construct the Supplied Software. A bill of materials is needed to support the systematic review of each component's license terms to understand the obligations and restrictions as it applies to the distribution of the Supplied Software.

- 3.2 The Open Source compliance program must be capable of handling common Open Source license use cases encountered by Software Staff for Supplied Software, which may include the following use cases (note that the list is neither exhaustive, nor may all of the use cases apply):**

- distributed in binary form;
- distributed in source form;
- integrated with other Open Source such that it may trigger copyleft obligations;
- contains modified Open Source;
- contains Open Source or other software under an incompatible license interacting with other components within the Supplied Software; and/or
- contains Open Source with attribution requirements.

**Verification Material(s):**

- 3.2.1 A documented procedure for handling the common Open Source license use cases for the Open Source components of the Supplied Software.

**Rationale:**

To ensure the program is sufficiently robust to handle an organization's common Open Source license use cases. That a procedure exists to support this activity and that the procedure is followed.

## 4.0 Compliance Artifact Creation and Delivery

### 4.1 A process exists for creating the set of Compliance Artifacts for the Supplied Software.

#### Verification Material(s):

- 4.1.1 A documented procedure that ensures the Compliance Artifacts are prepared and distributed with the Supplied Software as required by the Identified Licenses.
- 4.1.2 A documented procedure for archiving copies of the Compliance Artifacts of the Supplied Software - where the archive is planned to exist for at least 12 months since the last offer of the Supplied Software or as required by the Identified Licenses (whichever is longer). Records exist that demonstrate the procedure has been properly followed.

#### Rationale:

To ensure the complete collection of Compliance Artifacts accompany the Supplied Software as required by the Identified Licenses along with other reports created as part of the Open Source review process.

## 5.0 Understand Open Source Community Engagement

### 5.1 A written policy exists that governs contributions to Open Source projects by the organization. The policy must be internally communicated.

**Verification Material(s):**

- 5.1.1 A documented Open Source contribution policy.
- 5.1.2 A documented procedure that makes all Software Staff aware of the existence of the Open Source contribution policy (e.g., via training, internal wiki, or other practical communication method).

**Rationale:**

To ensure an organization has given reasonable consideration to developing a policy with respect to publicly contributing to Open Source. The Open Source contribution policy can be made a part of the overall Open Source policy of an organization or be its own separate policy. In the situation where contributions are limited or not permitted at all, a policy should exist making that position clear.

### 5.2 If an organization permits contributions to Open Source projects then a process exists that implements the Open Source contribution policy outlined in Section 5.1.

**Verification Material(s):**

- 5.2.1 Provided the Open Source contribution policy permits contributions, a documented procedure that governs Open Source contributions.

**Rationale:**

To ensure an organization has a documented process for how the organization publicly contributes Open Source. A policy may exist such that contributions are not permitted at all. In that situation it is understood that no procedure may exist and this requirement would nevertheless be met.

## 6.0 Verify Adherence to OpenChain Requirements

- 6.1 In order for a compliance program to be deemed OpenChain Conforming, the organization must affirm that the program satisfies the requirements presented in this specification.**

**Verification Material(s):**

- 6.1.1 A document affirming the program satisfies all the requirements of this document, OpenChain Specification version 2.0.

**Rationale:**

To ensure that if an organization declares that it has a program that is OpenChain Conforming, that such program has met all the requirements of this specification. The mere meeting of a subset of these requirements would not be considered sufficient.

- 6.2 Conformance with this version of the specification will last 18 months from the date conformance validation was obtained. The conformance validation registration procedure can be found on the OpenChain project's website.**

**Verification Material(s):**

- 6.2.1 The organization affirms the existence of a program that meets all the requirements of this document, OpenChain Specification version 2.0, within the past 18 months of obtaining conformance validation.

**Rationale:**

It is important for the organization to remain current with the specification if that organization wants to assert program conformance over time. This requirement ensures that the program's supporting processes and controls do not erode if an organization continues to assert program conformance over time.

## Appendix I: Language Translations

To facilitate global adoption we welcome efforts to translate the specification into different languages. Because OpenChain functions as an open source project translations are driven by those willing to contribute their time and expertise to perform translations under the terms of the CC-BY 4.0 license and the project's translation policy. The details of the policy and available translations can be found on the OpenChain project [specification webpage](#).