Debian

Package Acceptance in Debian
Challenges and Opportunities

Andreas Tille

Debian

Brest, 14. July 2025

Liberté
Égalité
Fraternité

Thank you.

Sorry.

This is a BoF

Please interrupt me at all time

Please also see the pad
https://pad.dc25.debconf.org/p/3-package-acceptance-in-debian-challenges-and-o
and feel free to add your ideas **at bottom**

- Tearing down hurdles
- Making people talk to each other
- Asking questions to learn
- Finally: DPL is responsible for delegations

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- *Great intro given by Luke Faraone*

  transcript

- Direct outcome: *Accept + Bug report*

→ Works if we talk to each other

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- Good chance to do repeated copyright review
- *Technical review*
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- *Requesting MR for automatic NEW processing*

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- Hybrid format: onsite + remote participants
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  Fix issues as they come by

- Doing releases
  In sync with several other teams

- Coding tooling
  Python, PostgreSQL, Shell

- NEW processing (+ overrides, removals)
  Main day-to-day work

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- "Packages wait long in queue – frustrating for contributors"
- Comments
  - Huge amount of work is actually done really fast → thanks a lot
  - Very senseless about mentors queue is rather slow queue
- Causes:
  - Manual review of every file
  - Legal uncertainty about copyright issue
  - Individual bottleneck - all processing on a single ftp

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- *Last onboarding call*
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DAK Tooling & Contributions

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- Full releases are knowledge-heavy

- Documentation exists, but not easy to follow
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- Suggestion: training release in virtual machine

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  - Tag packages
  - Delegate to NMT'er
  - Follow identify by the 7dtr by BoF below

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- New packages end up on a single host in US and do not leave this before being accepted by ftpmaster.
- Historically, U.S. export laws required Debian to *notify authorities* (BXA) about cryptographic software.
- Regulations have changed (since 2021), thus Debian likely no longer needs to report cryptographic packages–if we can ensure source and binary are published at the same time..
- Non-free packages may still require careful handling if they contain proprietary code or undisclosed crypto.
- **Open questions:**
    - Should reporting continue for non-free packages?
    - How do we check if source is already public?
    - Can we let more developers access the NEW queue?
- **Next steps:**
  Debian is re-evaluating policies to match updated legal advice and ensure compliance while easing internal workflows.

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- Consequences from the discussion need to be implemented
- Will host containing NEW queue outside US solve the problem?
- Pending questions holding up process reform
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    2. Pet birds feed might tension exitable cells
    3. Make friendly for busy NEWs

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  - Forward test might enable modern cots
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- Private IRC used for internal coordination
- MRs on Salsa
- Public call: Tell us what help is needed!

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Communication channels

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- New members might bring in new ideas
- Enhancing documentation and communication
- Stronger connection between ftpmaster and developer community

Vision & Culture

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- Reliance on a single host restricts scalability
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- We need volunteers to join the team
- Once blockers are solved the team
  - Finds consensus for a new policy
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Volunteers please raise your hand

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Applause.

Slides available at
https://people.debian.org/~tille/talks/
Andreas Tille <tille@debian.org>