

# Getting Perl modules into Debian

Debian's Perl team from an end-user perspective

Tim Retout

11th September 2010  
HantsLUG @ IBM Hursley



# What is the Debian Perl team?

- Maintain about 2000 Perl packages within Debian
- Both official Debian Developers and sponsees
- Around 70-80 committers,<sup>1</sup> but most activity from a small core team
- Also indirectly contributes most of the Perl packages in Debian's derivatives (e.g. Ubuntu).

---

<sup>1</sup><http://www.ohloh.net/p/pkg-perl>



How do you install Perl modules?

- `apt-get install libfoo-perl`
- Backports for older releases
- CPAN for unpackaged modules

CPAN (the tool) is configured to play nicely with Debian packages, but does not install packages when satisfying dependencies.



# When a module isn't packaged

If the Perl module you need is not available, you have several options:

- 1 Install it with CPAN, and handle future upgrades yourself.
- 2 File an RFP (Request for package) bug in Debian.<sup>2</sup>
- 3 Build yourself a private Debian package with dh-make-perl, and handle future upgrades yourself.
- 4 Get involved and contribute it back to Debian!

Getting involved is easier than you think.

---

<sup>2</sup><http://pkg-perl.alioth.debian.org/howto/RFP.html>



The Perl team uses tools to speed up packaging.

- [alioth.debian.org](http://alioth.debian.org) for team management
- git for most packages
- <http://bugs.debian.org/>
- Package Entropy Tracker (PET)
- IRC (#debian-perl on OFTC)
- Two mailing lists - one for discussion, one to receive automated messages

<http://pkg-perl.alioth.debian.org/> links to all of these.



# Getting involved - joining the team

- Create an alioth account
- Apply to join the pkg-perl group on alioth
- Introduce yourself on the debian-perl mailing list
- Optionally use IRC for realtime communication

<http://wiki.debian.org/Teams/DebianPerlGroup/Welcome>



# Creating a package - dh-make-perl

dh-make-perl can jump-start creating a new Perl package.

- `apt-get install dh-make-perl` and read the man page.
- Run `dh-make-perl --cpan Module::Name`.
- Add `--pkg-perl` if you are packaging for the team.
- `dh-make-perl` will create a git repository
- Then run `debuild` and hack until it builds.
- Use `cme check dpkg` or `cme edit dpkg`<sup>3</sup>
- you can commit locally to keep track of your work

If you don't want to contribute it to Debian, you could stop here.

---

<sup>3</sup>install `libconfig-model-tkui-perl` to get `cme`



4

- Use `git-import-dsc --pristine-tar` to inject new packages
- `git-buildpackage -us -uc` for building
- `git-import-orig --uscan --pristine-tar` for upstream upgrades
- `gbp-pull` to retrieve work done by team members
- `git-dcg -Ra` to update the changelog from your commits

Set the suite to 'UNRELEASED' in `debian/changelog` for now.  
Commits are logged to IRC.



---

<sup>4</sup><http://pkg-perl.alioth.debian.org/git.html>



One of the more tricky parts of packaging is getting the build dependencies correct. cowbuilder is a tool for building packages in a clean chroot:

- `sudo apt-get install cowbuilder`
- `sudo cowbuilder --create`
- `sudo cowbuilder --build libfoo-perl_1.0-1.dsc`
- Can also integrate it into `svn-buildpackage`.

Check the test suite gets run!



# Creating a package - lintian

We want Debian packages to be of high quality. lintian is a tool that can check for common problems.

- `sudo apt-get install lintian`
- `lintian -iI --pedantic --color=auto libfoo-perl_1.0-1_amd64.changes`
- Can also integrate it with `debuild/cowbuilder`



# Creating a package - getting feedback

Once you think your package is ready for review, mark it as such:

- `dch -r`
- (or `'s/UNRELEASED/unstable/'` in `debian/changelog`)
- `git commit -m 'dch -r; ready for review'`
- `git push --all`

The package status will be changed automatically in PET.



# Creating a package - what next?

- You are likely to get feedback via IRC or email.
- Sometimes TODO lists are left for you in debian/changelog by the reviewer, with the suite set back to UNRELEASED.
- Once the reviewer is happy, they will upload the package and tag the release in git.



# Questions?

<diocles@debian.org> <dod@debian.org>

