Kernel documentation

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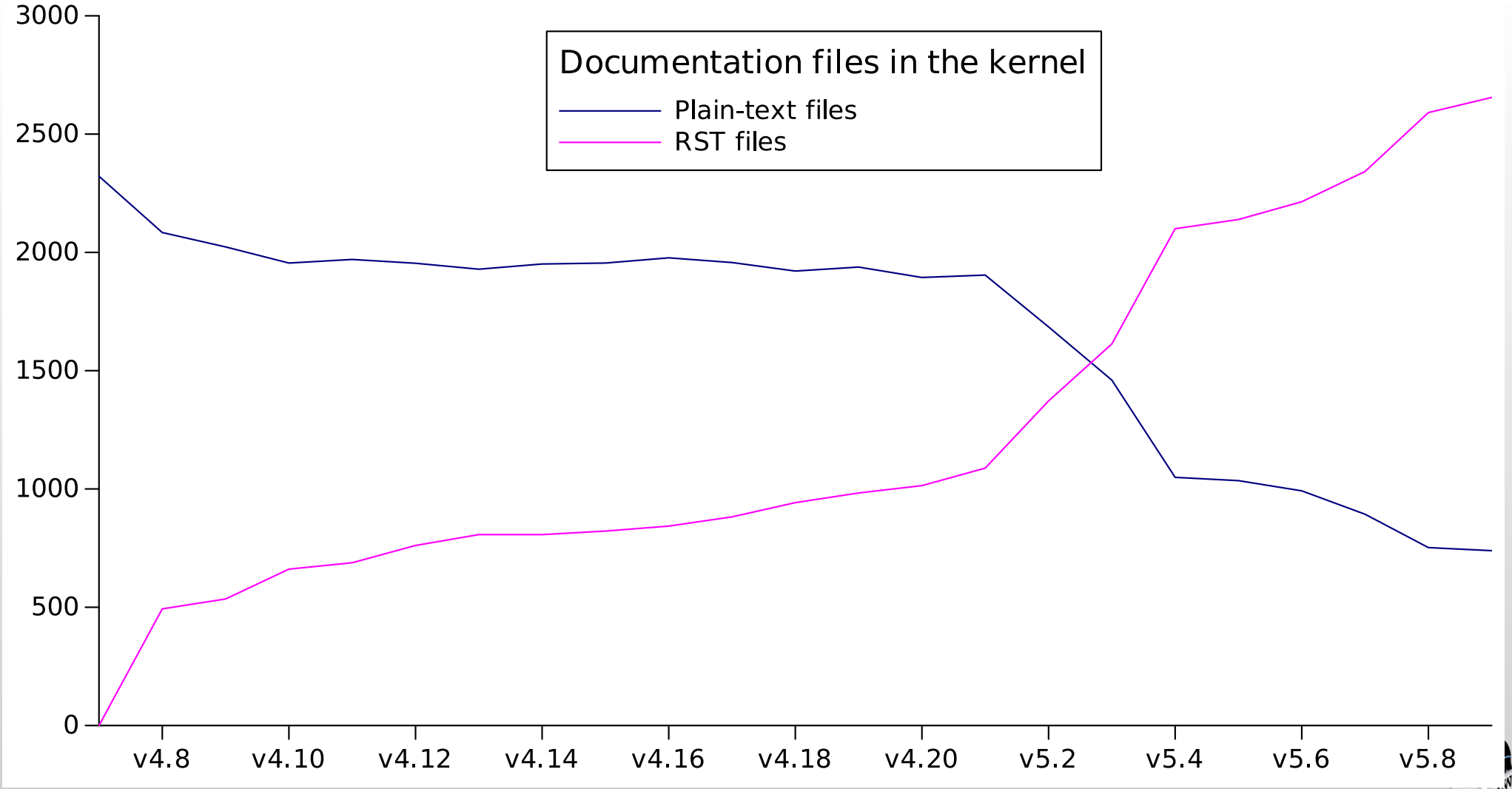
Documentation files in the kernel
Plain-text files
RST files
3000
2500
2000
1500
1000
500
0
v4.8
v4.10
v4.12
v4.14
v4.16
v4.18
v4.20
v5.2
v5.4
v5.6
v5.8

The conversion to Restructured Text
is complete

photo: Valters Krontals

What’s left to do?

Organization and integration

The Linux Kernel documentation

This is the top level of the kernel's documentation tree. Kernel documentation, like the kernel itself, is very much a work in progress; that is especially true as we work to integrate our many scattered documents into a coherent whole. Please note that improvements to the documentation are welcome; join the linux-doc list at vger.kernel.org if you want to help out.

Licensing documentation

The following describes the license of the Linux kernel source code (GPLv2), how to properly mark the license of individual files in the source tree, as well as links to the full license text.

- Linux kernel licensing rules

User-oriented documentation

The following manuals are written for *users* of the kernel — those who are trying to get it to work optimally on a given system.

- The Linux kernel user's and administrator's guide
  - Linux kernel release 5.x <http://kernel.org/>
  - The kernel's command-line parameters
  - Linux allocated devices (4.x+ version)
  - Documentation for /proc/sys
  - Hardware vulnerabilities
  - Reporting bugs
  - Security bugs
  - Bug hunting
  - Bisecting a bug
  - Tainted kernels
  - Ramoops oops/panic logger
  - Dynamic debug
  - Explaining the "No working init found." boot hang message
  - Documentation for Kdump - The kexec-based Crash Dumping Solution
  - Performance monitor support

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What we need:

A reader-friendly set of organized manuals

What we have:

A massive collection of unrelated materials

The kernel’s Sphinx dialect

We’ve added our own stuff

.. kernel-doc:: directive

function()

...

Still needed

A replacement for :c:type:

Automatic cross-references
(“see Documentation/core-api/foo.rst”)

Ancient docs

Documentation/ia64/xen.rst:

1. Download source::

```
# hg clone http://xenbits.xensource.com/ext/ia64/xen-unstable.hg
# cd xen-unstable.hg
# hg clone http://xenbits.xensource.com/ext/ia64/linux-2.6.18-xen.hg
```

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```

Spam links

Developers don’t maintain domains forever

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Developers don’t maintain domains forever

Spammers are rather more diligent

What to do with links turned bad?

Simply delete them?
Mark them as malicious?
Replace them with wayback machine links?
…?

Resistance

“My claim is that RST is shite and has no added value.”

“I hate rst and I think that anything that detracts from reading code comments in an editor is pure evil.

Personally, I've stopped using /** comments, live is better now.”

“I'm starting to loathe RST, it's an absolute failure. I'm near the point where I'm looking to write a script that will silently convert any RST crap to plain text in my commit script.”

Can we close this discussion now?

What else would you like to see from kernel documentation?

Thank you