

## Redmine - Feature #35839

### API: Unable to distinguish between user and group, for the assigned\_to field

2021-09-02 14:40 - Aed Art

<b>Status:</b> New	<b>Start date:</b>
<b>Priority:</b> Normal	<b>Due date:</b>
<b>Assignee:</b>	<b>% Done:</b> 0%
<b>Category:</b> REST API	<b>Estimated time:</b> 0.00 hour
<b>Target version:</b>	
<b>Resolution:</b>	
<b>Description</b>	
<p>The `assigned_to` field for the `issues` resource, and the `default_assignee` for the `projects` resource return either a reference to an existing user or a group.</p> <p>Yet, it's not possible to distinguish whether it is one or the other - at least not an easy one via the API.</p> <p>Developers might have to perform additional requests to be API, in hopes of being able to determine if it's user reference or a group. This might not be as easy as it sounds. You only have the name to match against, which depending on display setting, a user's name will be outputted differently in the reference, making it a bit frustrating attempting to compare against.</p> <p>Furthermore, there is always a change that a group shares the same id as a user (<i>do not have enough understanding of the database schema</i>)?</p>	
<b>Possible Solution</b>	
<p>Add a new property to the `assigned_to` and `default_assignee` references, indicating exactly it's type.</p> <p>E.g:</p> <pre>{   "assigned_to": {     "id": 1234,     "name": "Development Group",     "type": 'group',   } }  {   "default_assignee": {     "id": 1234,     "name": "James T. Brandon Jr.",     "type": 'user',   } }</pre>	

## History

#1 - 2021-09-02 23:37 - Mischa The Evil

- Category changed from Plugin API to REST API

Just two notes:

Aed Art wrote:

[...]

You only have the name to match against, [...]

AFAIK you'll also get its id.

| *Furthermore, there is always a chance that a group shares the same id as a user [...]*

I don't think that can happen.

Nevertheless, I agree that there should be a way for an API-user to determine what kind of Principal they are given.

## **#2 - 2021-09-06 19:16 - Holger Just**

- *Tracker changed from Defect to Feature*

| *Furthermore, there is always a chance that a group shares the same id as a user (do not have enough understanding of the database schema)?*

Users and groups are both stored in the same database table users. Thus each principal (user or group) has a unique ID by definition.

Mischa The Evil wrote:

| *Nevertheless, I agree that there should be a way for an API-user to determine what kind of Principal they are given.*

I agree. For the author and assignees, we should distinguish three cases:

- regular user
- anonymous user
- group

Adding it to the API responses of most objects which have user references (e.g. issues, watchers, wiki pages, news, boards, ...) would probably be a good idea to make it easier to get additional information about the references user (e.g. to decide whether to use /users/ID.json or /groups/ID.json).

Maybe we could just add a hard-coded `Principal#api_type` (or similar) method for the various Principal sub-classes and use this method in the API views the same way we currently use `principal#name` there.