

UK MAN Managers Group

Notes of Meeting held on 27 April 2006 at HEFCE, London

Present:

Dave Vinograd (Convenor)	
Mike Byrne (Deputy Convenor)	LeNSE
Kit Powell (Secretary)	SWERN
Barry Forde	C&NLMAN
Paul Kentish	Kent MAN
Malcolm Pitcher	NetNorthWest
Ed Carter	YHMAN
David Hayling	Kentish MAN
Andrew Kerl	LMN
Jason Bain	NorMAN
Joe Burns	NIRAN
James Hendry	MidMAN
John Linn	AbMAN
Andy Mason	SWERN
Ian Griffiths	EMMAN
Steve Percival	UKERNA (from item 5)
Denis Russell	UKERNA (from item 5)
David Stedham	North Wales MAN
Jem Taylor	UHI
Linda McCormick	ClydeNET
Mike Whitehead	FaTMAN
Roger Williams	WNL

Apologies were received from:

Chris Cheney	“EastNet”
Tim Robinson	NetNorthWest

1 Notes of previous meeting

1.1 Accuracy

There were no corrections to the minutes of the previous meeting held on 25 January 2006.

1.2 Optical Networking Workshop Outcome

The Practical Optical Networking Workshop organised by UKERNA on 16 March 2006 had been well attended and received. It was agreed that it had met its objectives.

There followed a discussion on whether further events covering this area were needed, and what form they might take. It was felt that the delivery of special-purpose bandwidth was of the most pressing interest. There were a number of possibilities, including forming part of a SJ5 planning RUSI meeting, and a joint meeting with UCISA-NG. The consensus was that we should:

- suggest a joint meeting with UCISA-NG, which would concentrate on the delivery of special-purpose bandwidth within institutions; David Stedham undertook to liaise with UCISA-NG on this.

Action: David Stedham

- ask each RNO how it intends to deliver special-purpose bandwidth across its region.

Action: secretary to elicit and collate

- discuss the RN proposals for special-purpose bandwidth delivery with UKERNA at the next SJ5 planning meeting.

2 Report from RPAN contract changes team

Ian Griffiths introduced the discussion. He said that the changes requested by the Group to the SJ5 amendment had all been proposed to UKERNA, and accepted. He believed that all RNOs had now signed the amendment, and nine had submitted SJ5 Transition Plans.

Turning to the guidelines to Manches circulated by Bob Day, which reflected the input from the Group's negotiation team, he pointed out that these effectively would turn RPAN 2 from a 3-year contract to a 2 +2-year one. There was a brief discussion of the possibility that an RNO might not be prepared to enter into an additional year's commitment, but it was agreed that this was unlikely enough not to be considered.

Jason Bain asked whether the statement in clauses 16 and 17, that payments for upgrades arising from an Upgrade Proposal would be under the same provisions as applied to SuperJANET5 funding, meant that the same 60-day payment terms would apply. Ian agreed to check whether this would be the case.

Dave Vinograd drew the meeting's attention to clause 25 (f), which made the RPAN reserve the "first port of call" for funding upgrades arising out of proposals to improve reliability and resilience (though not those arising out of the requirement for additional circuit or equipment capacity). The meeting felt that this was a reasonable use of the RPAN reserve, assuming of course that it held any funds. He also observed that an RNO which was refused an upgrade to correct problems due to internal traffic growth (clause 14) would be forced to continue to meet the service levels and that this needed further discussion.

Dave outlined the timetable: the plan was that Manches would be instructed by 19 May 2006 to prepare a draft, which would be made available for comment to the RNOs. The JISC had agreed funding for UKMMG legal advice. The aim was to have the new contract ready for approval at the UKMMG meeting on 26 June 2006.

Ian Griffiths said that his understanding was that RNOs would be shown a version whose base was RPAN 2 with the consolidated amendments applied, and the new provisions marked up as changes. (The incorporation of the amendments had been gone through by UKERNA with the Group's representatives and did not present any points that needed discussion.)

John Linn remarked that some of the provisions, for example those relating to SJ5 resilience testing, in principle more properly formed part of the Service Definition annex than of the main contract, which would more easily enable obligations arising from them to be passed on to third parties. The negotiation team agreed that this was desirable and to take it up with UKERNA, though with little expectation of it being welcomed.

3 Report the SLA negotiation team

Jason Bain said that there had been little activity. The radical and wholesale changes to the JANET SLA would not be discussed until the next round of talks starting in August 2006. There were no changes to the SLA for the coming year.

4 Report from JDAG

Mike Byrne reported that JDAG had met on 26 April 2006. He had hoped that the *Joint Development Programme 2005/6* document would have been revised by now, but this had yet to happen. He would circulate it as soon as it was produced.

Mike then reported on the projects in hand.

Phase II QoS

Steady progress was being made. Testing, including IP Premium and LBE, was planned during the SJ5 migration window. It had not been straightforward to organise the tests.

He would be pleased to see IP Plus re-introduced into the project, and this was being discussed.

Mike would produce and circulate a summary of the responses to the QoS survey. He noted that the major interest relates to IP telephony, but within institutions' networks. He thought the main issues in QoS implementation for RNs would be around the demarcations between them and UKERNA on one side and the institutions on the other.

Special-purpose bandwidth

This had been covered earlier in the meeting.

IP multicast

A revised version of the IPv4 multicast document, and a new one for IPv6 multicast, were now in draft. The new beacon service was also being documented.

IPv6

The v6 guide was now in draft and awaiting comments. He hoped that it would be possible to include material on MPLS in v6. He would circulate the document as soon as it was produced. The IPv6 workshop would be re-run in September 2006.

UKERNA were producing a more general v6 briefing document with a wider audience.

Jason Bain said that he expected v6 to be part of the SLD for RNs for the 2008-09 year.

John Linn recommended the 6NET documentation. He also remarked that the cost of v6 implementation increased as the edge of the network was approached.

Performance measurement and monitoring

David Hayling reported that he had circulated Andrew Cormack's draft *Policy on Operational Use of Network Traffic Data* to the Group. He would appreciate any comments, which he would pass on.

Linda McCormick noted that there could be resource issues if flow information was to be retained for long periods. David pointed out that the retention periods in the document were *maxima*. He passed on a comment from Andrew Cormack that the Information Commissioner has indicated IP addresses should be considered to be personal data

Reliability and resilience

Mike Byrne said that there had been little activity since the production of the Duke and Jordan report. UKERNA were considering producing a document providing advice in this area for institutions. JDAG had asked for a view of the document prior to its distribution in case there were implications for RNs.

Development champions

Mike Byrne said the concept had not really taken off, possibly from a lack of a clear understanding of what was involved. In his view, a champion should:

- have an interest in the JANET development being successfully completed
- keep informed of the progress and developments in the whole related area
- report to JDAG, and through it to UKMMG.

He urged champions to be more active in producing feedback and in reporting. To encourage this, they would be invited to attend a future JDAG meeting in person.

Mike then reviewed the status of the projects in respect of their champions:

QoS: Tim Robinson. Mike would discuss with Tim.

Bandwidth: no champion as project has not yet started.

IPv6: John Linn.

Multicast: Roger Williams would discuss with Chris. John Linn also agreed to provide input for Chris.

[Steve Percival and Denis Russell joined the meeting at this point.]

Measurement and monitoring: David Hayling. David said that this area was currently very quiet, due to commitments in other activities of those involved.

Ian Griffiths drew the meeting's attention to the Development Group of the JISC, which considered requests for development funding. These were normally from UKERNA, but there was no reason why other bodies, such as UKMMG, should not also seek funds for developments.

There was a general feeling that there was a need for a non-platform-specific workshop on configuring routing and multicast on regional networks for SJ5. Steve Percival said that he would discuss this with Jeremy Sharp. In this context David

Hayling reported problems being encountered in Kent MAN with running multicast on Cisco 720BXL supervisors, and asked any other RN with any information about this to contact him.

5 UKERNA issues

5.1 SJ5 status

Denis Russell reported that the backbone delivery was on track and would be complete by 5 May 2006; the NOSC had started testing.

The routers were to be delivered by 16 May 2006, and the backbone routing infrastructure should be running by 6 June 2006.

There had been regrettable delays in Verizon's build of the collector arcs, though he hoped more rapid progress would be made now that the backbone was completed. He was aware that not all the expected Verizon visits to RNEPs had taken place, and asked all RNs to send him as soon as possible brief summaries of the status of the Verizon installation process at each RNEP, noting any issues that may have arisen.

Action: all RNOs

5.2 SJ5 fibre routes

Denis said that he had to report that despite the best efforts of UKERNA and RNOs there were instances in which Verizon's collector arc fibre shared common paths with RN infrastructure. While UKERNA recognised that this was undesirable, the priority was to complete the SJ5 build on time, and only when this had been done would measures to remove commonality be considered.

Ian Griffiths pointed out that information on Verizon routes was also needed urgently for RNs who were putting in *new* regional links, so that they could be configured to avoid commonality. Denis agreed that the information provided to date was incomplete, but was not sanguine about the prospect of better being made available.

5.3 SJ5 rollout timetable

Denis said that Rolly Trice would shortly circulate in draft a timetable for RN transitions to SJ5. The dates were expected to be rather earlier than those previously indicated. RNOs were free to provide feedback on any local implications (for example coincidence with staff holidays) that needed to be taken into account.

Despite the strongly and universally expressed opposition of RNOs to any transition activity during clearing, this could not be ruled out if circumstances dictated.

It was noted in this context that YHMAN had identified in its Transition Plan the September start-of-session period for FEIs. This was comparable with clearing in importance to the institutions concerned.

5.4 SJ5 Transition Plans

Review of the Transition Plans that had been submitted was now complete; no major problems had been identified. Letters to RNOs would be sent in the week beginning 1 May 2006.

5.5 UKERNA-RNO issues

Steve Percival noted that:

- the six-monthly RPAN contract reviews were now being organised.
- the connection upgrades for English FEIs were almost complete
- another 18 ACL connections were about to be sent out to RNOs for quotes

He said that the problems arising from the merger of JANET-connected institutions, with a reduction in the number of connections provided by RNOs and consequent loss of funding, had been noted. A change in the principle of funding was being discussed by which the funding bodies could specify more than one connection for a single institution's sites.

5.6 Other matters

Mike Byrne asked about RNO audits under the RPAN contract. Steve said the nearly all RNOs had now been audited within the three years planned for the process. It was expected that audits would continue to be made, though their future form and frequency might change.

John Linn asked for information about the migration of schools networks from SJ4 to SJ5.

Barry Forde asked if more information was available about the Verizon fibre breaks in the Warrington area on 17-18 March 2006. Steve said that he was not closely involved in following progress on this, but would ensure that any relevant information was circulated to the RNs affected.

Barry further asked if, to mitigate the risks arising from the commonality between C&NLMAN's infrastructure and Verizon's SJ5 collector arc, UKERNA would allow the RN to have a connection to another provider by peering both with it and JANET.

John Linn asked if any radical change in the JANET SLA could be agreed in time to affect the content of the RPAN 3 contract. Steve Percival said that the process of SLA review would not start until August 2006, and its outcome could therefore not affect RPAN 3.

6 Liaison with Chairs of MANs Group

Ian Griffiths reported that he had looked into the matter of the confidentiality, or otherwise, of this group's minutes. Confidentiality was nowhere noted, but he would continue to follow this up. Jim Hendry pointed out that even if the minutes were made available, the practice of issuing them very shortly before the next meeting made it difficult for issues arising from them to be discussed before it. The next CoM meeting was on 11 July 2006.

Ed Carter said that the first meeting of the joint UKERNA-CoM working group would take place, to discuss the RPAN 3 contract model, on 8 May 2006; another meeting is pencilled in for the first half of June.

Some general discussion ensued on issues surrounding potential changes to UKERNA's relationship with the MANs. Dave Vinograd asked if it would be possible

for UKERNA's view of the outcome of the discussions of the joint working group to be presented to the next UKMMG meeting in June; it was agreed that this would not be possible as the working group's conclusions would have first to be considered by the full CoM meeting in July.

7 UCISA-NG

David Stedham reported on the 9 February 2006 meeting.

Concerning changes to the JANET SLA, the group would be telling the TAU that:

1. 09:00 was too late for interruptions to service for maintenance to finish;
2. many sites were fully operational during bank holidays, and these should be considered as working days for JANET operational purposes;
3. a PI for access to DNS root servers should be added;
4. NG feels that the measurement of availability of a site's connectivity to JANET should not take account of the funding of multiple connections: self-funded and JANET circuits should be treated identically. It was noted that elements of this policy were already reflected in the SLA.

Funding had been obtained for updating the good practice guides produced NG committees.

A recent VoIP event had been well attended and received.

Christine Cooper was standing down as chair. Ian Griffiths would be the new chair.

8 Dates of future meetings

Monday 26 June 2006, Edinburgh

Monday 9 October 2006, HEFCE London (ClydeNET to pay for catering)

Wednesday 10 January 2007, HEFCE London

9 Other business

9.1 Fibre-optic rating

Jem Taylor asked for advice from other RNOs on how to respond to notices of assessment for rates for fibre-optic plant such as that recently received by UHI. It transpired the several other Scottish RNs had received similar notices. The consensus was that the best course was to negotiate the best discount rather than seek exemption. Also noted that high discounts were available to organisations constituted as charities.

9.2 Verizon racks

Linda McCormick commented on the poor state of the SJ5 rack installed by Verizon at one of their RNEPs, noted also by other RNOs.

9.3 Use of GE ports on SJ5 PoS boards

Kit Powell asked if there was expected to be any restriction on RNs using the additional gigabit Ethernet ports on the Cisco OC-48 PoS boards installed to connect RN routers to SJ5 collector arcs. No-one present saw any reason why they should not be used as the RNO pleased.