

My colleague, Andy Mason, retired from SWERN in December so we are currently keeping things ticking over until his replacement starts and gets up to speed. Hugh Street from City of Bristol college will be taking over from Andy as SWERN's Joint Network Manager on the 1st February. Hugh is shortly to retire from his senior Network Management role at the college and we look forward to working with him in SWERN.

New contractual obligations with the introduction of the JPA don't seem to have caused too many headaches. From an operation point of view our out of hours obligations, which we contacted out to Logicalis, was the biggest unknown element of the changes we had to adopt. I am please to report it is working out very well with Logicalis being very pro-active and professional in this area. I am aware of other Regional Networks making use of Logicalis so would hope they are receiving as good a service as we are.

SWERN connected its first Lightpath circuit in December. A 100Mbps circuit between Universities of Bristol and Oxford for the UK-NEES UK Network for Earthquake Engineering Simulation project.

We continue to persevere to resiliently connect all our HE institutions to the SWERN backbone.

Neil Francis
SWERN

- FE college upgrades ongoing, not as rapidly as hoped
- In the process of establishing a new PoP at Workington, Cumbria
- In the process of moving PoPs at Kendal, Cumbria and Blackpool, Lancashire
- Recently completed dig, installation of ductwork and fibre to help Carlisle College move to new building
- Improved monitoring of sites and SMS notifications
- Investigations into and funding request submitted for switch for JANET lightpath upgrade
- JANET procurement audit of CANLMAN completed December 08

Craig MacDonald
CANLMAN

A very quiet period getting used to the JPA contract and its implications. We are testing out SFPs that drive a single fibre and, so far, the test pair have worked fine even at a distance of 12.8Km. We have one link slightly longer but most are shorter so if, our appeal on fibre rates in unsuccessful, we may replace the current SFPs with these thus halving the amount paid on several links.

On January 21st, AbMAN is running its third mini-Networkshop and is still attracting a reasonable number for AbMAN's size for a morning of 6 short session on network related issues.

John Linn
AbMAN

Major work on EMMAN Documentation has been completed. The EMMAN Disaster Recovery Handbook is nearly 200 pages with full details including photographs and diagrams of all PoP and edge sites. Sections of the document have been sent to all connected sites. The document also includes the EMMAN risk register (Ian has brought a copy with him if anybody is interested in looking at it). The prime time resilience test is scheduled for Tuesday 21st April 2009.

JANET(UK) has agreed to the discretionary holiday dates for the next three years. The BAP for 2008/9 has still to be agreed. The two items still outstanding are minor equipment replacement costs and the withdrawal of Business Development Funding. A small reserve has been provided.

Phase one of a project on fibre diversity is underway with new routes in Nottingham and Leicester. Planning for other phases (Loughborough, Northampton, Derby/Lincoln) has begun. The college out of band access project is now operational.

HEFCE have allocated funds for the EMMAN Information Security Service Pilot. The service is planned to go live from Summer 2009 and it is likely to be available for sites outside the region shortly after then. All eight Universities in the region are taking up the service.

EMMAN is providing technical support to a couple of sub regional partnerships (Greater Nottingham and North Northants) for fairly major projects. Relationships with local authorities continue to blossom, particularly with the corporate IT departments. Future use of the EMMAN backbone seems likely.

The EMMAN Board agreed its Corporate Strategy at its meeting in January following an away half day in October. The Board reemphasised its commitment to provide facilities for the public sector throughout the East Midlands.

EMMAN has been receiving an increased number of security items from CSIRT concerning Halls of Residences.

The EMMAN Board was briefed by David Venues and Co in January about the changes in the Companies Act that came in October 2008. They have also suggested changes in our Articles of Association.

Ian Griffiths
EMMAN Ltd

NIRAN Report

1. JANET(UK) Procurement Audit

JANET(UK) Head of Procurement + Glenn Fletcher of Achilles visited Belfast in November to perform an audit of NIRAN's past procurements and general procurement processes. NIRAN had been intending to launch an Open Procurement for NIRAN II. However, as a result of recent EU procurement-related court cases, GF advised against the Open procedure and recommended NIRAN to pursue a Restricted Procedure. This advice is based on legal case rulings, particularly the Lianakis case. In summary, this case makes clear that

- certain criteria cannot *in principle* be used as 'award criteria' to determine which is the most economically advantageous tender
- these criteria (which measure the capacity of the supplier to perform the contract, rather than assess in relative terms the value of its offer vis-à-vis those of other tenderers) can only be used at the selection (=pre-qualification) stage of a procurement
- a contracting authority must disclose the relative importance of all award criteria to suppliers prior to tender, to allow suppliers to structure their tender properly and prevent manipulation of the assessment by the authority
- this implies disclosure of the relativity of 'sub-criteria' as well as 'headline' criteria: the normal approach is to disclose the weighting

This meant that NIRAN would have to change approach and prepare a Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) in order to shortlist companies eligible to be presented with the subsequent Invitation to Tender document. This would add 37 days to the overall EU procurement process.

JANET(UK) has sent a report to NIRAN since the audit meeting, but it is not finalised as there are a number of editorial comments yet to be agreed by both parties.

2. NIRAN II Procurement

NIRAN launched its re-procurement process on 22 December 2008 with the issue of a Pre-Qualification Questionnaire in the EU journal. Much work is being done to re-write the ITT in light of the JANET(UK) audit report, not least concerning the Award Criteria section of the tender document. A dedicated set of web-pages has been created for the NIRAN II procurement at:

<http://www.niran.ac.uk/NIRAN-II/home.htm>

NIRAN would be interested in receiving copies of other RNO's ITT "Award Criteria" sections of recent Telecoms procurements to help render NIRAN's as good as possible for the evolving ITT document – to be issued early February 2009.

3. IPV6

The Network Management Agen, in conjunction with JANET(UK), enabled IPv6 on the RNEP2 circuit. This then enabled the NMA to successfully test IPv6 unicast on the Belfast NIRAN POP2 router. After testing various Cisco IOS operating system codes, and consulting with NTL a stable code has now been decided upon which will ensure compatibility and interoperability with the existing network infrastructure and its various routing protocols. Further IPv6 progress and testing is scheduled for the coming weeks and the NIRAN community will be kept informed if downtime is required.

4. Domain Name Services

During October and November 2008, the NIRAN moved all domains hosted on the old NIRAN DNS servers to new NIRAN DNS servers. Analysis was then carried out and logged to see which sites were still using the old servers for general lookups. These sites were then contacted by phone and email to ensure that their clients were reconfigured to use the new servers before the old servers were disconnected. This was successfully achieved on 25th November, with no reports of any problems. This has now brought the NIRAN DNS servers up to the latest

DNS BIND revision, on newer hardware, protecting them and the community from the latest DNS vulnerabilities.

5. Network Incidents

Seventeen network incidents were reported during the period October 08 to January 09, of which five were network related faults. The remainder comprised unscheduled site power outages and scheduled maintenance events.

Total Incidents for 3 months	Scheduled maintenance	Unscheduled local site outages	Network faults
17	4	8	5

Chris Kelly

Kentish MAN

Jon Aldington was appointed to the post of Business Manager starting in the second week of December. He has already been "dropped in the deep end" by helping prepare for the JANET(UK) Procurement Audit which took place on 15th January. The draft report is eagerly awaited.

The project to upgrade out-of-band links is now complete.

Upgrades to links to Broadstairs and Salomons Centre (Tonbridge) which provide backhaul for some FE colleges are still awaited due to delays from BT.

A new circuit request for North West Kent College of Technology turned out to be linked to a major project which included a machine room move. Unfortunately, this wasn't flagged to Kent MAN Ltd, which with hindsight could have provided more assistance for the transition. JANET(UK) is to be asked if it was aware that this was a major project and, if so, how this can be better communicated to the RNO in future.

Attempts to connect the Centre of Young People with Epilepsy by LenSE and then Kent MAN Ltd have been thwarted due to the difficulty in providing a WES circuit where the geography is challenging. Kent MAN suggested an MPLS solution with the Kent Public Sector Network, but JANET(UK) were not prepared to entertain this. A Megastream circuit to a London PoP is being installed instead.

Availability for the last quarter of 2008 was 100%.

Paul Kentish

Net North West Report

JPA

NNW supports JANET funded connections to 101 organisations (including, at last, the Imperial War Museum North and one Commercial Hall of Residence) and 8 JANET Light Path connections.

We agreed the JPA BAP in Nov 2008. My concerns about JANET not having sufficient funding proved unfounded, the delays were just down to Steve Percival's workload.

JANET have noted that we will be regularising our position with the VOA re dark fibre rates and have agreed i) that we can retain part of our RPAN surplus to cover rates we know are due from previous RPAN years and ii) to increase the JPA BAP to cover future rate bills as and when these are finalised.

NNW is in the process of finalising agreements with our members who provide services to NNW that are much more formal than what has gone before. This has meant that FEC is becoming a reality. We are also seeing the power costs associated with hosting NNW equipment being an item for discussion with sites.

NNW had its second audit from PKF before Christmas. I believe this was the last one in round two, five years after NNW were first in round one.

Branding

The response from UKMMG members for my request for a 'branding document' to edit and send to JANET was disappointing / surprising. It seems no-one has one. It should be noted that JANET indicated at the NNW Service Review meeting held earlier this month that they will be making a push on branding in the next couple of months. Perhaps UKMMG needs to come to a common position on web sites etc

LSC Funded Upgrades

The project to increase the bandwidth to FE Colleges to 100 Mbps is almost complete. Of the 62 FE Colleges funded by JANET all but 14 are now connected at 100 Mbps (or faster - one college is connected at 1 Gbps because of the distance). Upgrades to three colleges are on order which leaves 11 colleges still to be upgraded. The costs for these are being requested by the suppliers in the hope that NNW and JANET can persuade these colleges to order the upgrades.

FE Mergers

More FE colleges are merging to form large, geographically dispersed organisations. NNW is working with the colleges to explain options for their JANET links and to provide the most cost effective inter sites links.

SURFnet 2007

Our project to replace the existing SURFnet, not the Netherlands NREN but the Staffordshire University Regional Federation network, based on ATM/SDH delivered over microwave with a fibre/Ethernet based network is almost complete.

The final link we require is from Shrewsbury to Stafford. This is being provided by NTL:Telewest using a combination of their own network and a BT tail. BT have been their usual inefficient operation but are promising to complete next week, over 7 months since we ordered the link.

SuperJANET5 Exploitation Funding

We have placed the orders for the dark fibre required to complete the replacement of all our core links and dual links to NNW members with fibre. This will allow all our core links to run at 10 Gbps and to allow all members to take advantage of JANET Lightpaths and to run at 10 Gbps as and when this becomes a requirement.

We also have dark fibre as the basis of an e-Science network operating between Manchester, Liverpool, Daresbury and Jodrell Bank. This uses Transmode kit to provide 10 Gbps and 1 Gbps links.

As reported previously, we held a successful workshop with BTiNet to discuss MPLS. We are looking at this as one possible way of providing a 'structuring layer' for the JANET Lightpath Service, i.e. a way of breaking a 10 Gbps wavelength into multiple 1 Gbps circuits. An alternative approach using 'Carrier Class' Ethernet as a replacement for SDH is unlikely to go ahead. I expect to go to procurement for optical equipment to light the core fibre and the e-Research network fibre before Easter.

We also got the go-ahead for our simple approach for replacing the JANET(UK) owned JLPS equipment with NNW equipment. Orders for this will be placed shortly.

I'm speaking about our plans for dark fibre, optical networks etc at the Optical Event next week.

Tim Robinson

LENSE

LeNSE has recruited a new Services Delivery Manager (Guy Sudron) who will focus on the JDT activities and the development of new services. We also have a new Chairman and executive directors. We are in the process of commissioning new internal ICT facilities, so are late in addressing the new JANET branding. Not much LeNSE operational activity to report. The JPA contract is running smoothly. Apart from a new connection for a CableCom HoR site in Bournemouth and a late FE 100M upgrade request, there are no other changes going on. The company has commenced the process to update its long term business development strategy, but short-term opportunities may be appearing. One of these involves one Local Authority mandating back-haul bandwidth to JANET. Another, more significant, opportunity is a framework procurement initiative by our local RDA (the SEGfL) and we've been in discussion with JANET(UK) about how to liaise on this requirement. An issue with a Sponsored JANET licence for a local Science Park has arisen between JANET(UK) and one of our member universities, but is yet to be resolved.

Mike Byrne

LMN

LMN3

LMN3 is now largely complete with institutions who had relocation of premises requirements during the project remaining.

JANETLightpath

LMN has been liaising with JANET(UK) and is finalising the specification of the Cisco equipment we will be using to provide the JLP service. LMN has identified an initial specification for the equipment which can accommodate 2 by 10Gbps and initially 6 to 8 1Gbps and it is likely this may be a Cisco 3560. The main users of JLP will initially be UCL and Imperial Colleges but with this specification we are allowing for likely expansion.

Business Development Activities

1. Timetable of events

Wednesday 28th January 2009

Cisco Training opportunities

Thursday 5th of February 2009 at Winston house from 2 p.m.

Managed Back up Service:building a sustainable data storage strategy

Monday 9 -Thursday 13 February 2009

JISC event for HE software developers

Thursday 26 February 2009

JISC RSC London Green IT event

Thursday 5th March 2009 at Chandos House, Royal Society of Medicine from 2 p.m.

Training Opportunities: Cisco, ITIL and communications

Thursday 7th May 2009 at RCOG from 2 p.m.

Wireless Technologies

Thursday 11th June 2009 at Chandos House, Royal Society of Medicine from 2 p.m.

LMN Directors forum followed by the LMN summer BBQ

2. New Services

2.1 ADSL SDSL 1:1 512Kbps to 10Mbps

LMN is currently now investigating NTL and Verizon as well as Easynet to offer LMN members uncontended ADSL/SDSL by resiliently interlinking our two networks. We are using JANET for internet delivery over these connections. We are offering up to 50% discount on this service and we are targeting the community's requirement for low cost connections to their outreach and satellite sites.

2.2 ISP Connectivity

LMN has chosen Verizon to provide JANET-independent internet services. LMN will offer 35% discount on ISP connectivity for the LMN community institutions. We have already had orders from 2 LMN members, one for 100Mbps and another for 10Mbps.

Pete White