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Subj: Questnet minutes

Minutes.

QUESTNET

Minutes of Management Committee Meeting

Friday 19 February 1993

Held at the University of Central Queensland

PRESENT

Alan Coulter (UQ) (Chair)  
Geoffrey Dengate (GU) (Secretary)  
Ian Hunter (JCU)  
Rod Ibell (USQ)  
Ian Jenkins (UCQ)  
John Noad (QUT)  
Shelley Schmidt (DBIRD)

APOLOGIES

Greg Barnett (BU)  
Geoff Houston (AARNet)  
Graham Rees (UQ)

1. WELCOME

The Chairman opened the meeting at 9.25 am. The Chairman welcomed all the members of the meeting and thanked them for their attendance.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were as noted above. Rod Ibell was representing the University of Southern Queensland in place of Alan McMeekin who was on leave. Shelley Schmidt was representing DBIRD (Department of Business Industry and Regional Development) representing Alan Hayman who was unable to attend.

3. ADDITIONS AND CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

A number of items were added to the agenda and the order of the items was slightly modified to allow for early discussion of the Winter Workshop and the associated planning issues.

4. CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed.

5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES NOT COVERED ELSEWHERE

The Chairman noted that the previous meeting resulted in many action items and, because of the numerous distractions since the last meeting, many of the actions items had not yet been addressed. It was requested that the Secretary produce an updated action list of any outstanding action items from the previous meeting for distribution to the members.

Action: Geoffrey Dengate to produce a list of outstanding action items from the previous meeting.

## 6. OPEN LEARNING INITIATIVE

Ian Jenkins tabled a paper from Anne Gooley, the Director of Queensland Open Learning Network. The Queensland Open Learning Network (QOLN) is established as a trust under the Queensland Minister for Education. QOLN has a mandate to develop a state-wide delivery system for tertiary education courses within Queensland. The relevance to QUESTNET is the expansion of QUESTNET from the trunk network that is already in place to provide distribution facilities to the regional sites associated with QOLN. Following discussion on this issue, the Committee agreed to establish a working party to investigate the issues involved and to make recommendations to the Management Committee. The membership of the working party to include: Ian Jenkins (Convenor), representative from James Cook University, Ross Gorham (QUT), representative from Griffith University, Rod Ibell (USQ), Graham Rees (UQ), Shelley Schmidt to liaise with Government.

Action: Ian Jenkins to convene the Working Party to investigate issues associated with expansion of QUESTNET to satisfy the demands of QOLN.

## 7. WINTER WORKSHOP PLANNING

Mr Merv Connell joined the meeting to discuss planning to date for the Winter Workshop which will be held at the University of Central Queensland in Rockhampton from 14-16 July 1993. Mr Connell tabled a brochure, preliminary announcement, and call for participation brochure which had all been previously distributed, and a document outlining current planning and progress to date. A number of points were made by the members:

The workshop should not be seen as a purely technical workshop;

Should try to have a sensible two stream program involving both technical sessions and user sessions;

Should try to attract speakers from AARNet affiliates (e.g., Sugar Research Institute);

Following lengthy discussion, four themes emerged as topic areas for discussion and presentation during the conference:

- 1) general AARNet/QUESTNET issues (explanation management and so on);
- 2) security issues associated with hacking - Federal Police; System Manager responsibilities;
- 3) distribution issues - PABX's, the role of Pacific Star and the distribution process, interaction with TAFE, QOLN, Education in general; and
- 4) access and access control. Cover topics such as network services (including libraries), affiliates, relationships with affiliates.

It was further agreed that we should try to attract a keynote speaker for each day of the workshop. Suggested names included Bill Caelli who could speak on security and Brian Cook who would speak on the delivery of information services in the future. It was noted that Merv compiled an extensive list of potential equipment suppliers and sponsors.

Registration fees were discussed. It was noted that a fee of \$110.00 for AVCC members and affiliates, \$200.00 for other attendees had already been publicised in the preliminary brochure. It was agreed that this would be interpreted as the early bird registration fee and that registrations after the early bird date cut off would be set at \$150.00 and \$250.00 respectively. The preliminary budgetary estimates based on 100 attendees would indicate a break even on roughly 100 attendees. However, facilities were such that the number of attendees could go to 400. A tour of the facilities and inspection of the 250 seat lecture theatre with full audio visual capabilities was undertaken. Members were impressed with the facilities and saw no difficulty with what had been proposed.

On behalf of the members, the Chairman thanked Mr Connell for his efforts to date and hoped that the ideas and suggestions that came out of the meeting would benefit in his planning for the workshop.

Action: Merv Connell to continue planning for the Winter Workshop as a matter of priority.

#### 8. AARNET DEVELOPMENTS

John Noad provided a verbal report on the AARNet developments to date. The AARNet Advisory Board last met in December, 1992. It appears that the AARNet Advisory Board, that formerly reported to the Standing Committee on Information Resources (SCIR), has been replaced by an AARNet Board of Management that now reports directly to the AVCC. The first meeting of the new board of management was originally scheduled for February but has been postponed to 10 March. The terms of reference and the constitution of the new board of management are not yet known. Mr Noad further pointed out that Peter Elford had resigned from AARNet. Funds had been allocated for a position during 1992. No AARNet commercial manager had been appointed. At the moment, all the technical work for AARNet is being undertaken by Geoff Houston. This was one of the reasons why Mr Houston was unable to attend today's meeting.

Members agreed that it was generally an unsatisfactory situation and that the thoughts of QUESTNET members, and the role of QUESTNET and its relationship to AARNet, should be clarified and conveyed to both the Queensland Vice-Chancellors and the new AARNet Board of Management. It was agreed that Mr Dengate would draft a letter for circulation and comment to members to be forwarded to the Queensland Vice-Chancellors as soon as possible.

Action: Geoffrey Dengate to draft a letter for comment by QUESTNET members that would be forwarded to the Vice-Chancellors, Queensland Universities outlining possible future directions of QUESTNET.

#### 9. AARNSERT DEVELOPMENTS

Members were advised that the Mechanism C proposal to establish AARNsert was unsuccessful. However, the Australian Federal Police now have a significant presence in Brisbane and are working diligently behind the scenes to address the hacking activities. Hacking attacks have decreased significantly since the Christmas period. Regular meetings with SUN have proved useful and resulted in significantly improving the security patch distribution.

The establishment of a Sun Authorised Training Centre (SATC)

located at Griffith University now provides an opportunity for System Managers and Administrators to have advanced system administration training for Sun systems.

The three Brisbane Universities were still committed to working co-operatively in the security area. UQ had allocated two people and accommodation. QUT and Griffith were allocating half a person each. The relationship with other Queensland and Australian Universities is still unresolved although it was anticipated that in the first stage other institutions would be invited to report all incidents to the SERT Organisation. It was noted that QUT would shortly be appointing a security programmer and that Griffith University would be advertising for a security programmer. It was anticipated that half of each of these individuals would be working with the AARNSert organisation. It was noted that the Board of Management had not yet formally met and that this should take place shortly to initiate activities and formally launch the initiative.

Action: Geoffrey Dengate to co-ordinate a meeting of the AARNSERT Board of Management.

#### 10. ACCESS TO AARNET BY STUDENTS FROM OTHER INSTITUTIONS

Ian Hunter raised the issue of students from other institutions (e.g., Deakin University using JCU facilities to access AARNet to connect to systems at Deakin) wanting access to the network. He indicated that students were charged \$100 per annum to use the JCU facilities. He further indicated that prior to allowing access he required a letter from the other institutions indicating that students needed access. The access was controlled by the log-in process which forced a direct link to the destination institution and did not allow log-in to local systems. It was agreed that all Queensland institutions would be consistent in the treatment of students from other institutions, and adopt the policy and procedures as currently implemented by James Cook University. It was also noted that USQ and UCQ have an existing relationship and that this relationship would remain in force.

Action: Ian Hunter to distribute exact details of the current policy and procedures in place for access for students from other institutions.

#### 11. AARNET AFFILIATE CHARGES

Ian Hunter raised the issue of the setting of charges for affiliates to access AARNet. These were the charges imposed by the institution through which the link was made which is in addition to the AARNet affiliate charges. The general consensus was that, for affiliates that had higher bandwidth of connection, the charges should be higher because of the demand on and use of local resources to gain access to AARNet. It was agreed once again that the Queensland Universities should adopt a consistent policy and pricing structure.

Action: Ian Hunter to draw up guidelines and prices for connection of AARNet affiliates.

#### 12. DEC/CSLG AGREEMENT

Ian Hunter reported that he was talking to Dianne Edwards regarding the adoption of the the US CSLG Plan for the Australian environment and that he is officially representing CAUDIT in ongoing contract negotiations.

#### 12. QTAC

On behalf of QTAC, Alan Coulter identified that the electronic availability of institution results was very important to allow processing of QTAC assessments to take place. This issue was discussed and it was generally agreed that it was essentially an administrative matter. QTAC should address these concerns about the priority given to this issue directly through the Vice-Chancellors and the Student Secretaries.

### 13. THE MECHANISM C SUPERCOMPUTING ACTIVITY

John Noad gave a verbal report of the meeting held at Griffith University on Tuesday, 16th February. The Mechanism C proposal was successful and funds to the value of \$1.4M would be forthcoming to acquire a supercomputer. Mr Noad advised that Dennis Luttrell, IPB, argued for the development of one supercomputer centre for Queensland, and that the Government was considering providing significant funds (suggested up to \$10M) to establish such a facility. Further, the Government was in the process of making an appointment of a Co-ordinator to develop the proposal and have it ready for submission to Cabinet by May.

Mr Noad indicated that the representatives of the Universities agreed that there was potential for the Universities to join in with the Government and use the Mechanism C funds to support the Government initiative. Accordingly, a sub-group was established to look at: (1) the option of supporting the Government initiative, and (2) the options open to the Universities if the Government initiative fails.

A Working Party including Ron King, Griffith University (Convenor), Paul Pritchard, Griffith University, Kevin Burridge, University of Queensland, John Noad, QUT, and a James Cook representative was formed to investigate the issues further. Early development of such a facility would impact on data communications infrastructure and, on behalf of QUESTNET, John Noad would ensure that this issue was discussed at the meeting of this working party.

Further discussion took place on the DPI supercomputing activity that was currently taking place at James Cook University. Many felt that a QUESTNET representative would be on the JCU Technical Committee and that Ian Hunter should be the logical representative. The Committee agreed that QUESTNET approach the Vice-Chancellor of James Cook University to recommend that a QUESTNET representative be on the Technical Committee.

Action: Alan Coulter, on behalf of QUESTNET, to approach the Vice-Chancellor, James Cook University, to recommend Ian Hunter represent QUESTNET on the DPI/JCU Supercomputing Initiative Technical Sub-Committee.

### 14. INSTITUTION VOICE LINKS

Rod Ibell raised the issue of using existing QUESTNET links to carry voice traffic between institutions. He raised the issue because of the significant voice traffic that has been noticed occurring between USC and UQ. Members felt that this was an initiative that should be investigated further. It was agreed that a working party was not necessary and that in the first instance Rod Ibell should co-ordinate discussions with other institutions and relevant technical people to identify relevant technical and non-technical issues.

Action: Rod Ibell to co-ordinate the investigation of the use of QUESTNET links to carry voice traffic between

QUESTNET institutions.

15. CASMAC

A general discussion of CASMAC and associated issues took place. It was generally agreed that those institutions that had a common need for implementation of specific modules should co-ordinate activities associated with the investigation of the options available for those modules.

16. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Queensland Directors of Information Technology/QUESTNET Management Committee will be held on Thursday, 13th May, 1993 at The University of Queensland in Brisbane. Coffee at 9.00 am with the meeting to start at 9.30 am.

The meeting closed at 3.40 pm