

From: IN%"G.Dengate@gu.edu.au" 16-MAY-1993 13:30:41.62
To: IN%"questnet-mgt@cc.uq.oz.au"
CC:
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QUESTNET

Minutes of Management Committee Meeting

Thursday 13 May 1993

Held at The University of Queensland

PRESENT

Alan Coulter (UQ) (Chair)
Greg Barnett (Bond)
Geoffrey Dengate (GU) (Secretary)
Ian Hunter (JCU)
Rod Ibell (USQ)
Geoff Huston (AARNet)
Ian Jenkins (UCQ)
John Noad (QUT)
Graham Rees (UQ)
Peter Saalmans (AARNet)
Shelley Schmidt (DBIRD)

1. WELCOME

The Chairman opened the meeting at 9.30 am. The Chairman welcomed all the members of the meeting and thanked them for their attendance. Members were advised that the AARNet members had been delayed.

2. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies; all members were present or represented. 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

THE ORDER OF THE AGENDA ITEMS WAS MODIFIED TO DELAY ITEMS OF SPECIFIC AARNET INVOLVEMENT UNTIL THE AARNET REPRESENTATIVES ARRIVED.

4. CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed.

5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES NOT COVERED ELSEWHERE

5.1 Government Relations
(Items 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, and 4.2 of 29 Nov 92)

This issue will now be covered and addressed as part of the QOLN agenda item.

5.2 AARNet Disaster Recovery/Backup
(Item 8.0a of 29 Nov 92)

Action: Geoff Huston to develop a report on disaster recovery/backup facilities for AARNet.



5.3 24 Hr, Seven day week Hub Support
(Item 15 of 29 Nov 92)

Action: Geoff Huston to consider cost implications for the AARNet budget for widening the support provided by Regional Hubs.

No progress

5.4 Access to AARNet by Students form Other Institutions
(Item 10 of 19 Feb 93)

Action: Ian Hunter to distribute details of the JCU policy and procedures in place for access for students from other institutions. This may be used as the basis for a QUESTNet policy.

CONCLD.

5.5 AARNet Affiliate Charges
(Item 11 of 19 Feb 93)

Action: Ian Hunter to draw up institutional guidelines and prices for connection of AARNet affiliates that complements the AARNet policy.

5.6 Institution Voice Links
(Item 14 of 19 Feb 93)

Action: Rod Ibell to coordinate the investigation of the use of QUESTNet links to carry voice traffic between QUESTNet institutions.

X

6. JCU/QDPI INSTITUTE FOR TROPICAL NATURAL RESOURCES

While not directly involved with the project, Ian Hunter gave a brief report based on the information he had received.

The project is still proceeding although, apparently, there is some disagreement between QDPI and JCU regarding the equipment to be purchased. In any event, the acquisition would have to go to tender.

The funds are meant to be committed by 30 June 1993, but there is strong doubts if this is possible. The siting of a supercomputer at JCU, it has been suggested, will affect the traffic on the JCU-UQ link.

7. SUPERCOMPUTER INITIATIVES

Shelley Schmidt indicated that the Government is still moving to appoint a consultant to develop a proposal by 31 July. Members were generally of the opinion that this target was extremely optimistic.

John Noad reported on the Mechanism C Grant. The money (\$1.3M) has to be committed by the end of 1993 and the working party is now proceeding on the basis of a separate acquisition to any State Government plans. Professor Paul Pritchard (Griffith) is developing the draft proposal.

1. WELCOME (CONTD.)

At this point the AARNet members (Geoff Huston and Peter Saalmans) arrived. On behalf of the members, the Chairman welcomed the new General Manager of AARNet to his first QUESTNet meeting, congratulated him on his appointment, and indicated that QUESTNet looked forward to developing a cooperative working relationship with him in the future.

8. QUESTNET/AARNET RELATIONSHIP

Alan Coulter spoke to a draft paper that represented the collective views of the Queensland institutions regarding the development of an ongoing relationship.

(Secretary's note: Rather than paraphrase Alan Coulter's paper, a full copy of the paper will be circulated separately to members.)

Geoff Huston welcomed the input and saw it as being valuable to the discussion and evolution of the relationship. He suggested that this paper should be presented to the AARNet Board of Management for its next meeting in early June. He also saw value in the Qld Vice-Chancellors indicating their support for this position.

Action: Alan Coulter to refine the paper and circulate to Directors for presentation to their respective Vice-Chancellors. and for endorsement of this position to be conveyed to the AARNet Board of Management.

9. QUEENSLAND OPEN LEARNING NETWORK

At the previous meeting of QUESTNet, Ian Jenkins was nominated as the convenor of a working party to investigate issues associated with expansion of QUESTNET to satisfy the demands of QOLN.

Associated with this investigation, Ian Jenkins and Shelley Schmidt met with representatives from a number of Government Departments, including TAFE, to look at State communications links. Interestingly, the vast majority of those present had not heard of QUESTNet, while a few had at least heard of AARNet.

As a consequence of this meeting, it was agreed that there was a definite need to promote QUESTNet, AARNet, and their resources to the State Government Departments. It was suggested that a breakfast seminar would be appropriate, possibly followed by a workshop.

Action: Graham Rees and Shelley Schmidt to coordinate arrangements for a briefing seminar on QUESTNet at its resources for State Government Departments.

Associated with this issue, the need for the development of promotional material was recognised to complement the material promoting the resources of the Internet.. No specific action was agreed upon at this stage.

10. AARNET MICROWAVE RATIONALISATION

Geoff Huston briefed the meeting on the Microwave proposals received from the various states. In addition to the Qld proposal, the other proposals included:

- SA \$500K (plus \$500K matching funds)
- WA \$250K (plus CSIRO funds)
- VIC \$620K (plus \$320K from ARC?)
- ACT \$250K
- NSW \$110K (inc UTS, Macquarie, and CSIRO)

Geoff Huston indicated that it was envisaged that such microwave technology would be cost effective for the next 3/4 year period; thereafter, later technology would need to be introduced to provide GB capacity.

Discussion took place regarding the suitability of this technology and the need for it to be introduced quickly.

It was resolved that:

microwave is the most appropriate technology to satisfy existing and near-term communications needs; the AARNet Board of Management should proceed with evaluating and funding these proposals as a matter of urgency; and the AARNet Engineering and Advisory Group be involved in the technical evaluation and consideration of technical options.

Action: Alan Coulter to write to the AARNet Board of Management requesting the Board to proceed on this matter with urgency.

11. INTERIM BOARD MEETING OF SERT

An meeting of the Interim Board of Management of SERT was held with all QUESTNet members attending as members or guests.

The minutes of this meeting will be circulated as separate correspondence. It should noted for the record that SERT has been renamed ACSAS (Australian Computer Security Advisory Service).

12. WINTER WORKSHOP (QUESTNET'93) PLANNING

Ian Jenkins tabled a draft Workshop program and spoke to the item. Shelley Schmidt advised the meeting that Alan Hayman (DBIRD) had indicated that DBIRD would contribute \$10,000 towards QUESTNet'93. Discussion followed and the following action was agreed.

Action: Geoff Huston to contact Tony Barry (ANU) re making a presentation on Online Information Access

Action: John Noad and Geoff Dengate to contact personnel within their institutions regarding a presentation on Library information access.

Action: Ian Jenkins to get more information on the SUN presentation to ensure it is suitable for the Workshop.

Action: Ian Jenkins to approach Telecom regarding a presentation on Day 3 (Networking into the Future).

Action: John Noad to investigate cheap options for transporting a number of people to/from Rockhampton for the Workshop (ie., bus/train).

Subsequent discussion regarding the '94 Workshop to be held at USQ resolved that the provisional theme would be "Wide-area network access for educational activities".

13. AARNET AFFILIATE MEMBERSHIP

There was general agreement that the policies and procedures on the affiliate membership program were unclear and it was agreed that improved documentation was required.

Action: Geoff Huston to document and distribute policies and procedures associated with the Affiliate Membership program to help and guide institutions in dealing with potential affiliates.

14. AARNET DEVELOPMENTS

Geoff Huston gave a verbal report on AARNet developments since the last meeting. The major events included the following:

Peter Saalmans commenced duties as General Manager;
Peter Elford resigned in January;
Mark Turner has been appointed to replace Peter Elford;
the link to the US was upgraded from 500kb to 768kb and
was saturated in less than two weeks;
the link to WA was increased to 2mb; and
links to PNG and FIJI are in advanced planning.

Geoff indicated that links to the Australian Federal Police are planned. He also foreshadowed that, from April 1994, the NSFnet will "close down" and, therefore, the link to Europe is compromised. This matter is still unresolved.

Alan Coulter commented on the extremely difficult environment that Geoff had been working under during the past months and thanked him for his efforts during this difficult period.

15. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Queensland Directors of Information Technology/QUESTNET Management Committee will be held on Monday, 30 August, 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 3.30 pm