

**AV-CC**

## Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee

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### AARNet Meeting Report

#### Research Network Managers - Pacific Region

Hosted by IBM Pacific - Hong Kong 26 July 1991

#### Attendees:

Dr C T Pan	Korea
Mr Chen	Korea
Professor Jun Murai	Japan
Dr Nam Ng	Hong Kong
Dr Sukho Lee	Korea
Dr Choi	Korea
Mr Huston	Australia

This meeting was attended by representatives of the national research networks of Australia, Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Korea. The representatives present were the operational managers of their respective networks in all cases.

The meeting was hosted by IBM Pacific to explore issues relating to research networking in the Pacific and potential roles that IBM might wish to play.

#### Background

Communication networks are seen as a major strategic concern of IBM. In terms of continued market position and growth communications networks are now playing a major role, and IBM wish to increase their presence within this broad area as a major platform for their continued market domination. In particular they perceive a supportive role in networking activity as being an appropriate medium for a continued high profile within the academic sector, and in parallel within supportive activity in the USA and Europe, IBM wish to achieve a similar favourable position within the Asia Pacific region.

#### Meeting Notes

Following the introductory remarks, IBM presented a brief overview of their involvement with the NSFNet, and the subsequent T3 upgrade to this network. The NSFNet uses IBM platforms as the routing units, and IBM have placed a significant level of support into this activity.

IBM also highlighted their role in the AURORA gigabit testbed within the US. (one of five gigabit testbeds being undertaken through a 3 year program coordinated by the Corporation for National Research Initiatives (CNRI)). They are prototyping a 640Mbit wide area network using sonet (OC12) optical transport technology and a 6.4 Gbit switching bus architecture.

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Following this presentation IBM lead a discussion of common regional issues in the research network domain.

Four nations indicated a strong involvement in high speed research networks (the exception being Honk Kong, where infrastructural facilities are not well established at present).

General discussion followed regarding the importance of the international connection aspect of the national facilities, where again a common position of high strategic importance was attached to international connectivity, with the United States nominated as the current major traffic partner.

The respective roles of ANS, the NSF, US transit permissions and future directions of the US, Europe and the Pacific region was highlighted by the attendees. Concern was expressed about the future of transit across the US after 1992, as the NSF have not indicated their position and intended role following the expiration of the 5 year NSFNet backbone network program.

The attendees at the meeting indicated that if IBM were to provide support for infrastructural links, then there was no desire to have such support displace existing link arrangements. The meeting voiced the position that the most beneficial area of possible support was in the area of supporting regional links (ie the so-called North South links along the Western Pacific rim). Such links are ones which will prove strategically important for the region as an entity, but existing national networks' ??? objectives effectively dictate a program of primary link support only at this stage.

The meeting also indicated that services and applications development were major topics within each national agenda and that national programs of support could be focussed on this area as a productive effort.

The meeting agreed that in terms of the formation of a regional grouping to assist in coordinating the various international networking efforts, the meeting to be held in Honolulu was considered to be the significant formative meeting, and that regional network connectivity will continue to progress irrespective of IBM's possible supportive role.

## Conclusions

The meeting did not progress to any specific plans or proposed activities, and could best be described as a fact finding exercise by IBM as the only realistic outcome.

Certainly there is a considerable degree of caution being shown by all countries, in dealing with IBM, such that all present agreed to place IBM involvement into those areas which are not immediate (mission-critical) key areas of national net strategy. This was perhaps an unknown factor to IBM before the meeting. As a consequence it is anticipated that some time may elapse before IBM return with a more specific proposal.

A proactive position by the proposed Asia Pacific Coordinating group (APCCIRN) may be the most appropriate action at this stage.