CN/DPG/91/MIN/2

THE CN DIVISIONAL PLANNING GROUP

Minutes of the Meeting held on 15th. April 1991

PRESENT: R.Brun, J.J.Bunn(Secretary), F.Carminati, B.Carpenter, F.Fluckiger, F.Gagliardi, F. Hemmer, D.Jacobs, S.Jarp, J.–C.Juvet, E.McIntosh, M.Metcalf, A.Osborne, I. Reguero, H.R.Renshall, J.Richards, L.M.Robertson, D.O.Williams(Chairman).

- *MINUTES OF LAST MEETING (CN/DPG/91/MIN/1), AND MATTERS ARISING*

DOW said that he would produce a cover note for the Costs paper (CN/DPG/91/1).

- *TAPE MOUNTS ANALYSIS (H.R.RENSHALL)*

HRR presented several transparencies (copies, marked up in HRR–Draw, attached at the end of these Minutes) describing his analysis of tape mounts over the course of 1990. He had felt it more representative to take a whole year, rather than just the previous three months, as initially proposed.

Some interesting facts the analysis had thrown up (picked at random by the secretary):

— On average, the equipment in the Centre coped with 1450 mounts a day.
— On average, there were 4.7 mounts of each volume in the vault (but only 2.6 for round tapes).
— Only ten percent of the volumes in the vault were mounted on more than one system.
— A "ready–rack" of 5000 cartridges (in the robot?) would save a lot of operator–assisted mounts.

HRR's figures provoked some discussion. In particular, it was wondered whether, given the low percentage of tapes that were mounted on more than one system, the fear that introducing IBM double density drives (3490s) would wreak havoc on other systems, was to a large extent unfounded. Also, some people wished to know into which category (Monte Carlo, Raw data etc.) the 10% of the tapes that accounted for 50% of the mounts, fell.

HRR will present some firmer conclusions at a future meeting.

- *HOME DIRECTORY SERVER (L.M.ROBERTSON, A.G.SILVERMAN)*

LMR described the mandate and status of the "Workstation Fileservices Project", referring to a Memorandum sent to the DPG (no reference number) on that subject. Until the end of June 1991, the project would be in an information gathering phase. By the end of September the project would have defined a proposal for implementation. It was agreed that LMR or AGS should give a report on progress at the June meeting of the DPG.

LMR said that the main vendors (IBM, DEC, HP, Sun) had received a letter describing the project's mandate, and it was hoped that this would provoke some input from them. BC said that, as regards representation on the project, he would find a "mature" workstation user from CS group to participate.

The question was raised as to why PCs and Macintoshs were excluded from the scope of the project. It was felt by some that the institutional file system to be adopted should fully cater for these machines, while others felt that this would introduce too much complication.

- *DISTRIBUTED FILE SYSTEMS (F. HEMMER)*

FH presented his transparencies dealing with the various Unix file systems available (copies attached to these Minutes). In particular, he dealt with NFS and AFS. There was no experience of AFS at CERN, yet. NFS was quite widely used, by small groups of users such as RB and his colleagues in AS group. They were in general quite happy with NFS. Disadvantages of NFS included a lack of support for file movement, problematic management issues such as location transparency etc., and difference between manufacturers' implementations.

AFS looked more interesting for CERN in the long term. Parts of Version 4.0 were reputedly contained in current OSF DCE snapshots (note to chairman – do we need a glossary of terms?!). IF AFS worked well, it could be the institutional file system for CERN. If it didn't, then it was unclear that CERN could hope to maintain any such system.

Since the meeting, FH has provided the following text from an OSF electronic bulletin in March:

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DCE Snapshot 3

The third DCE snapshot is scheduled to ship to DCE
snapshot licensees at the end of this month, and will
contain a working subset of each DCE component. Included
in the snapshot are more complete versions of RPC, Cell
Directory, Threads, and Time services. It will also
included, for the first time, working parts of the
Security and File system services. For more information
about DCE snapshot program ....
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- *ANY OTHER BUSINESS*

MM announced that the final version of the Fortran 90 standard had been submitted to the X3 committee. He predicted that an ISO standard would appear in September. But he was reluctant to estimate the arrival date of the first Fortran 90 compiler.

- *NEXT MEETING*

The next meeting of the DPG will be at 10:00 on Monday May 13th. in Conference Room 1.