CN/DPG/92/MIN/1

THE CN DIVISIONAL PLANNING GROUP

Minutes of the Meeting held on 27th. January 1992

PRESENT: R.Brun, J.J.Bunn(Secretary), B.Carpenter, F.Gagliardi, D.Jacobs, S.Jarp, J.–C.Juvet, E.McIntosh, M.Metcalf, A.Osborne, J.Richards, L.M.Robertson, A.G.Silverman, D.O. Williams(Chairman)

- *MINUTES OF LAST MEETING (CN/DPG/91/MIN/6), AND MATTERS ARISING*

The Minutes were accepted without modification. There were no comments on the Action List.

- *CHAIRMAN'S REPORT*

DOW made some statements of general interest:

1. There was a high probability that the Cray would be kept on maintenance until the end of 1993.
2. The GP–MIMD–2 Esprit proposal, if approved, might lead to the installation of a 1024 node T9000 machine at CERN. CN had requested, as part of the project, three dedicated staff posts. However, delivery of a full system with reasonable software before mid 1994 looked doubtful. As there was little generally known about the machine in CN, Willers and Dobin–son would be invited to a future DPG to present it.
3. He had been talking with Thinking Machines, Kendall Square and Siemens. He had impressed the need for them all to come up with very competetive pricing and/or joint project proposals, if they wished to install machines at CERN.

The CERN view of price performance tends to be defined by leading edge workstations, rather than traditional supercomputers.

DOW asked RB to set up a group which would define several models for CERN computing. It would also discuss the suitability, relative power, relative cost and appropriate fields of applica–tions for the machines discussed above, and others. RB will report back to the next DPG with initial progress. **Action: Rene Brun**

- *3490E CARTRIDGE UNITS*

JCJ presented three scenarios for the installation of one or more robots which could handle 3490E cartridges. Copies of his slides are attached. The 3490E cartridge has a capacity of 400 MBytes when written without compaction, and 20–40% more than this when the data are compacted. If the length of the tape in the cartridge is doubled, then a corresponding increase in the capacity is possible.

There was a discussion of views on the different scenarios. These are not reported on further here, since recent developments have changed the situation significantly. The subject would be returned to at the next DPG.

- *RS6000 ENGINEERS' FARM PLANS*

DJ described the possible installation of a set of eight RS6000 machines under a joint project agreement with IBM Rome, which would be used as a workstation farm for numerically intensive engineering applications. The packages which would run in the farm (ANSYS, TOSCA, CASTEM, etc.) were mainly commercial software, so there would be no possibility of tinkering with the source code. In fact, one of the main reasons for picking the RS6000 had been that support was available from the various companies for that platform. The farm, interconnected by high–speed (210 Mbit/sec) serial optical channels (as well as by Ethernet), would use some software provided by IBM called PVM (Parallel Virtual Machine) to aid in attaining parallelisation of the applica–tions. The whole farm would be named PARC.

Copies of DJ’s slides are attached.

- *ANY OTHER BUSINESS*

  DOW confirmed that the next CN Division Programme of Work meeting would be held between the 4th. and 7th. of October, 1992.

Table 1: Action Items

Name	Entry Date	Target Date	Task
D.Williams	April 1991	Summer 1991	Produce cover note for Costs paper
S.Jarp	May 1991	End 1991	Manpower estimate for AIX/ESA introduction
F.Fluckiger	November 1991	1992	Give Computer Colloquium on Multimedia
M.Dimou	November 1991	1992	Present X.500
J.Bunn	November 1991	1992	Present VMS/RISC
R.Brun	January 1992	1992	Task Force on Computing Models