

Notes of UK MAN Managers Group

Meeting held on 14 October 2008 at HEFCE, London.

Present:

Mike Abel	MidMAN	
Jason Bain	NorMAN	
Mike Byrne	LeNSE	
Ed Carter	YHMAN	
Geoff Cooper	LMN	
Neil Francis	SWERN	
Ian Griffiths	EMMAN	
David Hayling	Kent MAN Ltd	
Mark Jameson	CANLMAN	
Chris Kelly	NIRAN	
Paul Kentish	Kent MAN Ltd	
Andrew Kerl	LMN	morning only
John Linn	AbMAN	
Craig Macdonald	CANLMAN	
Linda McCormick	ClydeNET	
Tim Robinson	NNW	
Ian Sugden	SWERN	
Jem Taylor	UHI Network	
Rolly Trice	JANET(UK)	afternoon only
David Vinograd	-	Chair
Peter White	LMN	
Mike Whitehead	FaTMAN	
Sam Wilson	EaStMAN	Notetaker

0. Chairman's remarks

DV raised the question of whether he should continue as chair. He offered to continue if requested. Discussion covered whether any possible advantage of the chair not being tied to any one RN and therefore having no position to protect, was outweighed by likely future expectations. Such expectations might include a more formal role in JPA negotiations and a general expectation of higher level representation from the group. JB and TR also hinted at future proposals for changes in the JISC and related areas. It was agreed that given the expanded role of UKMMG, that it would be better if the chair was a member of an RNO. DV concurred and agreed to arrange a new election for both the chair and deputy position.

Further discussion was had about the position of chair and deputy of UKMMG. Options were discussed: whether a 3 year term from October to October was sensible; whether the deputy would succeed to the chair (making an effective 6 year term); whether the chair's and deputy's terms should run out of phase with each other. There was also discussion of whether there should be a more formal constitution for UKMMG and whether there needed to be other office bearers.

DV suggested that suggested nominations for the positions should be made privately to him but that discussion of the process be carried out in public on the mailing list.

The discussion then moved to the distinction in aim between JDT and UKMMG. It's not clear whether JANET(UK) might be wanting to use JDT to communicate items that they would previously have brought to UKMMG. Unless RNOs agree a policy of sending entirely technical staff to JDT there would be a risk that the operational and organisational areas might become blurred (as may have been the case with 13 Oct's JDT session on procurement, which some members of UKMMG had decided to attend because that item had appeared on the agenda). JL pointed out that any technical staff would have to be senior enough to spot non-technical items that would have to be taken back to the executive. There was general agreement that the fielding of technical staff at JDT would ensure that JANET(UK) came to UKMMG to discuss policy. JB pointed out that UKMMG is enshrined in the JPA for negotiating the contract and any changes to the list of operational documents. The JDT gets to modify the Operations Manual.

IG pointed out that John Littledale had said that the attendees at JDT need not be the RNO's

JDT members as notified to JANET(UK). DV suggested that there needed to be a UKMMG member present at JDT meetings to feed back to UKMMG. LMcC offered to take on that role since she would be attending JDT anyway.

IG suggested that the UKMMG website ought to be updated and PW (LMN) offered to do this.

1. Notes of previous meeting

(produced by CANLMAN) 1 July 2008 at UCL, London

a) Accuracy

CK pointed out that in item 1b NIRAN had in fact reported their IPv6 status to the group.

The minutes were otherwise accepted as accurate.

b) Matters arising

Previous ACTION: Remaining MANs to circulate their IPv6 status. **COMPLETE**

Current status was reported. All but UHI have now implemented IPv6 unicast; some had not implemented IPv6 multicast. It's not clear how many services and customers for IPv6 multicast there are. JL had only been able to find one IPv6 multicast source.

Previous ACTION: GC to speak to JANET about single helpdesk number with automatic call routing **COMPLETE**

Action seems to have been superseded; JANET(UK) have circulated customers with a single number for all support calls (though this is not necessarily the same number in every region). TR noted that the JANET web site had not had that information updated when he had checked before. It still did not have the updated hours announced at the JDT meeting yesterday. GC suggested that RNOs ought to welcome being the channel for JANET(UK)'s communication with sites, but that, conversely, JANET(UK) should be more actively involving RNOs in talking to other customers.

Previous ACTION: MB to request that letters to sites are vetted by the site's RNO.

MB reported that JANET(UK) refuse to allow RNOs to vet communications with their customers (noted that this is the opposite stance than the previous point). Meeting agreed that a cc: would be the minimum courtesy demands, though GC noted that a single copy of a proforma letter would be sufficient. Agreed to raise this with RT during the afternoon session.

ACTION: MB agreed to carry on this action if necessary

Previous ACTION: JL to bring up IPv6 router licensing issues with TDA. **CARRIED FORWARD**

Previous ACTION: MB to invite user group representatives from JANET run MANs. **COMPLETE**

MB reported that MA was here as a result of this invitation, but that it had been difficult to raise a response from other potential contacts.

ACTION: MB to contact David Stedham as a representative of the Welsh RNO.

Previous ACTION: TR to supply SAG reporting feedback requirements to RT **CARRIED FORWARD**

2. JANET Partner Agreement

All have signed except for UHI who are awaiting JPA-lite from JANET(UK). TR pointed out that we have not had the BAP notified yet. Discussion ensued on whether this was important - JANET(UK) have already made payments but the issue is whether those are effectively overpayments if the BAP turns out to be lower than requested. Agreed to raise this with RT in the afternoon session. IG pointed out that the system was predicated on MANs having a reserve. Some MANs which had been running without a reserve had been promised one, which was a further call on this year's budget.

3. Items from the JDT meeting of 13 October

MB remarked on the absence of discussion of JANET services. Discussion ensued of what constitutes a "service" and whether it was only those things noted as services in the JPA, basically the transfer of IP packets.

JL asked whether the procurement audit described at the JDT meeting was part of the general audit required in the JPA. JB pointed out that it was a distinct item in the JPA.

MB raised the question of funding for needed changes following JANET(UK)'s change in the design of the JANET Lightpath service. TR pointed out that the SJ5 funding had been intended to cover the provision of lightpaths across the MANs and noted that NNW had discovered that 10G with MPLS was cheaper than providing multiple 1G connections. JB pointed out that SJ5 money had not necessarily been spent on providing lightpath capability, and that the spend had been reviewed and approved by JANET(UK). There was a general feeling that consultation had been lacking - no paper had been published and no discussion initiated, though presumably the TDA had signed off the plan (even if they weren't allowed to say so).

IG commented that the procurement session had raised issues for him regarding the required turnaround for new JANET customer lines, the probable requirement for framework agreements and the necessity to include rental payments in the threshold for European procurements. Discussion followed and the sense of the meeting was that IG's updated understanding was correct.

4. Halls of Residence (Mike Byrne)

Arising from debate at the previous meeting re JANET(UK)'s relationship with CableCom and Unite. RT has now renegotiated JANET(UK)'s agreement with 3rd party suppliers to give JANET(UK) a say on who provides circuits to connect private halls to JANET. (The problem arose because, for instance, LeNSE has NEOS PoPs and no other providers are allowed to install circuits.) It was recognised that the connection of 3rd parties creates difficulties for JANET(UK) as well as for some RNOs. IG remarked that the EMMAN Board now only approves connections from private residences if the relevant institution agrees.

Topic to be continued at the next meeting.

6. Netflow Project/Netsight 2 (David Hayling)

DH reported there was no progress on the Netflow Project as all efforts had gone into the Netsight 2 project.

Netsight 2, this raised some other problems: JANET(UK) had asked for a freeze of Netsight 1 configurations, expecting Netsight 2 to be in place shortly, but given the delay DH at least was ignoring that request; JL pointed out that Netsight 2's functionality was not as was shown during the pilot; Netsight 1 was now supposed to be being maintained until Easter '09, but TR pointed out that system maintenance had expired in July 08. DH agreed to mail Mark Leese for an update on the maintenance situation, but it was also agreed to bring the matter up with RT in the afternoon session.

ACTION: DH to email Mark Leese for update on Netsight 1 maintenance situation.

5. Direct Connection of Schools/Academies

EC raised the issue of responding to JANET(UK) with connection quotations for schools but then not receiving further feedback from JANET(UK) as to whether these requests will ever be followed up. This also frustrates our suppliers. There was a discussion of whether and how schools are and should be connected. There is a range of current practice with some private schools and academies being connected to RNOs or Institutions as sponsored connections. LEA schools might also be connected, as are LEAs' own networks. IG reported that EMMAN refuses to connect an LEA school without the LEA's consent, and that Derby LEA's network was connected to the MAN. It was not clear to the meeting whether JANET(UK) might have plans for connecting schools in various ways, but MJ believed that they did, but that the policy was tied up with the even more complex issue of negotiating with RBCs. TR agreed to ask JANET(UK) whether they have a policy. It seemed that there were three main choices: a school might have a JANET nominated connection; they might have a sponsored connection to a RN; or they might have a sponsored connection via an Institution.

The consensus of the meeting was that there could not be a shared policy for all RNs but that each RN should have its own policy.

ACTION: TR to ask JANET(UK) about their policy for connecting schools

7. Report from SLA negotiation team (Jason Bain)

JB reported that there was basically nothing to report. The SLA had been split and had been operational from 1 November 2007. Some changes had been made from 1 August 2008 but not at the IP level. The negotiating subgroup continued to be available. It was agreed to remind RT during the afternoon session that the subgroup was still in existence and to ask if JANET(UK) had any further changes planned.

It was asked whether the meeting required any changes to the SLA. JL remarked that the multicast specification in the SLA is not sufficient to run a service - a successful multicast service requires more than packet transport. The discussion which ensued covered whether UCISA-NG was an appropriate venue for taking this forward, whether it was sufficient to update the SLA or whether there needs to be a new operational document under the JPA (which would be the responsibility of UKMMG to specify). The conclusion was that the work be taken to UCISA-NG and that JB will prompt JANET(UK) for any changes required.

ACTION: JB prompt JANET(UK) for future changes to SLA

ACTION: IG agreed to canvass UCISA-NG members to bring up multicast service levels for SLA

8. Items from the TDA (Rolly Trice)

Refer to section 9.

9. JANET(UK) issues (Rolly Trice)

RT opened by suggesting that the current format of UKMMG, with what he characterised as a trades union meeting in the morning followed by a "kick the employer" session in the afternoon was not working for him. He stated that JANET(UK) were looking to institute a separate meeting with RNO managers. IG initiated a discussion on the separation of operational matters from policy matters. RT contributed that there were major topics coming up that would need closer liaison between the RNOs and JANET(UK), and noted that topics that had come up in the morning sessions of previous minutes could have been dealt with directly with JANET(UK). MW pointed out that the minutes record discussions, not conclusions. He also noted that JANET(UK) needed to discuss contractual issues and that ought not to be done in a group which included bodies which were not in that contractual relationship with JANET(UK), notably UHI. JANET(UK) needs a vehicle to manage contracts with managers of MANs. It might not meet as regularly as UKMMG. GC remarked that the form of the agenda was set in the early days of UKMMG and it was intended that the morning session covered material of no interest to UKERNA/JANET(UK). There was no intention to bash JANET(UK). MW remarked that we should all have a common interest in serving customers.

Matters arising from minutes:

IPv6: the status was reported: UHI have not implemented IPv6, but will do when requested by a customer; other RNs have implemented IPv6 unicast but Kent MAN, CANLMAN, EaStMAN and NIRAN have not implemented multicast. The issue of how to verify multicast operation in the absence of sources or clients was highlighted.

Out of Hours cover: most MANs have cover in place or are in process, several using the JANET(UK) service. It was noted that the JANET(UK) website did not yet reflect the extended hours reported at the JDT meeting.

Communications with customers: The discussion arising from MB's action to request that letters from JANET(UK) to sites are vetted by the site's RNO was revisited. RT agreed to investigate areas where communications did not work well.

ACTION: TR to collect examples of communication difficulties

Halls of Residence: RT has drafted a new contract which will apply to new connections, and

which allows JANET(UK) to stipulate the circuit provider. The result is three different types of connection: (a) via CableCom or Unite circuits to JANET as a supplementary connection under schedule 2; (b) via CableCom or Unite circuits to an RNO router port as a nominated connection under schedule 4; and (c) via RNO circuits under schedule 4. The RNO would be responsible for the circuit under option (c). IG sought clarification over whether cabinet space should be included in the ancillary BAP. Apparently it should not. JL asked whether any changes would be retrospective and RT thought it unlikely.

Sub-TV: RT tabled copies of email to MANS-LIAISON clarifying the situation with Sub-TV following the previous meeting. In short, the situation seems to be OK.

SAP broadcast storms: following issues with this and the filtering advice offered by JANET(UK), RT asked if anyone had not implemented the filtering. No one admitted to it.

Framework agreement discussions at JDT: JANET(UK) is intending to launch framework procurements for circuits. JANET(UK)'s procurement manager will be expecting to find a senior RNO manager to sit on the procurement panel. There was discussion about the geographic issues with this: some counties have different requirements for suppliers; JANET regions do not match telco regions. IG initiated a discussion about how often circuits have to be reprocured under framework agreements. In summary: framework agreements can last for a maximum of 4 years; contracts called off under a framework agreement can be of no longer duration than the framework, i.e. 4 years, but may be called off at any time during the validity of the framework agreement, so a contract called off in the last year of a framework agreement may extend 3-4 years after the end of the framework; circuits procured under a framework will have to be reprocured even though they meet requirements; incumbents may have an advantage in not having to reinstall, but other providers must be offered the chance to install at zero cost.

Funding for callout under JPA: RNOs may opt in or opt out. JANET(UK) will mail RNOs for their decision.

Matters arising from the morning session:

BAP: RT was asked when the BAPs would be announced. He said that Steve Percival had said "soon" yesterday. The issues noted under JANET Partner Agreement above were brought to RT's attention.

TDA: RT was asked about the work of the TDA. He reported that: the architecture document is not complete but is simmering away; new JANET Lightpath arrangements are as reported at the JDT meeting; EC is producing an architecture diagram. Some unease was expressed about how the JANET Lightpath change was introduced. IG asked how changes such as the change to the Lightpath service will be announced in future, e.g. a possible process would be TDA discussion followed by announcement at JDT or UKMMG meeting, or by email if the timing did not require waiting for a meeting. DV asked if there was a fiscal criterion for deciding if a particular change was an operational or a management issue. LMcC asked if any kind of functional spec could be made available for new services.

ACTION: RT agreed to find out how JANET(UK) ITT documents could be made available.

MB initiated a discussion of whether the TDA takes RN architectures into account when developing new services. DV remarked that a design review process was standard for software, why not for JANET/RNs? Shouldn't a wider audience be sought? TR said the current situation was the reverse of how the TDA had been envisaged: it was supposed to be reviewing RN architecture but now it was specifying what the RNs needed to support. RT said that the architecture document was having detail removed because it was too complex, but its production might be overtaken by the SuperJANET 6 (possibly JANET 6) requirements analysis.

Schools: MB stated that RNOs needed better information about how schools should be connected. DV pointed out the problems that had occurred with the way that circuit quotes were asked for and whether they were purely indicative or intended to be formal quotes, and that RNOs had different philosophies for connecting schools. He asked (on behalf of the meeting) what JANET(UK)'s view of the issues was and did it have an overall plan for schools connection. RT did not know.

Netsight: The question of the continuing hardware maintenance for Netsight 1 machines was brought up and misgivings expressed about how the Netsight 2 rollout was running slow. It was also noted that recent announcements about Netsight had been sent to both the netsight-managers list and to mans-liaison. RT was asked to ensure that future

announcements continue to be sent to mans-liaison.

ACTION: RT to ask Netsight 2 team to mail announcements to mans-liaison as well as netsight-managers.

There was also a discussion about JANET(UK)'s internal communications - different parts of JANET(UK) seem to ask for the same information. RT said that JANET(UK)'s teams and processes were being reorganised and agreed to bring or provide references to new organisational charts.

ACTION: RT report on new JANET(UK) organisational charts

Previous ACTION: RT to advise CK [on whether NIRAN could obtain a 3rd connection, given the extended outages on the existing connections].

The response from RT was that NIRAN would not be receiving a 3rd connection.

10. RN Reports

Submitted reports were distributed prior to the meeting.

11. Liaison with

a) Other groups: Chairs of MANs (Ian Griffiths)b) UCISA-NG 30 September 2008 (Ian Griffiths)

Nothing to report.

12. Dates of future meetings

a) 21/01/09 at HEFCE, London
Lunch: CANLMAN
Minutes: FATMAN

b) 29/04/09 London
Lunch: NIRAN

c) 24/6/09 London
Lunch: tbd

13. AOB

LMcC asked who other RNOs were using for out-of-hours cover. Two are using Logicalis (YHMAN under the national framework agreement, SWERN under an independent contract). LMcC said ClydeNET were considering ntl: who said they were already providing cover for an RNO.

JT again raised the question of being asked to provide quotes for connections, not just about the distinction between indicative and full quotes but also that in some cases it was revealed later that more than one RNO had been asked to quote for connecting the same customer. In some cases it was obvious that there was no clear choice of RNO but it would surely be sensible for the RNOs to confer. RT agreed that that would seem to make sense.