

SLAC Users Organization Executive Committee

Stanford Linear Accelerator Center

P.O. Box 4349

Stanford, CA 94309

Telephone: (650) 926-4505 • (650) 926-2683 • E-mail: SLUODESK@SLAC.STANFORD.EDU
<http://www.slac.stanford.edu/grp/rd/sluc/SLUO.html>

March 16, 1998

MINUTES OF THE MARCH 16, 1998 MEETING OF THE USERS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Present: G. Bonneaud, L. Cominsky, C. Damerell, R. de Sangro, C. Hearty, S. Hertzbach, R. Jacobsen, N. Roe, T. Schalk, T. Mattison, and R. Dufresne.

Agenda

- Approval of minutes
- Reports from Sub-committees
- SLUO Office Report/Discussion
- Discussion of Annual Meeting
- Lunch with Directorate
- Lab's Vision of SLUO Office
- Travel Reimbursement
- Future Meetings

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting on January 15, 1998 were approved as distributed. L. Cominsky noted that the final comments on these minutes were not received until March 4, 1998, and stated that in the future, committee members and administrators will have one week from the receipt of the draft minutes to comment before the minutes will be issued to the public.

Reports from Sub-committees

Computing: R. de Sangro reported that the new terminals are in place in the SCS first floor area. There is also a new sign on Room 111 stating the rules for use of the terminals in this room. SLUO should send out an e-mail to the users stating that the terminals are now available for use by users. The notice should also be attached to the SLUO home page, together with links to the rules for use, and how to get an account, etc. SLUO thanks Richard Mount for helping to get this done so quickly.

Insurance: L. Cominsky distributed the new version (dated 2/25/98) of the insurance memo. It has been approved by the appropriate administrators at SLAC, including Rachel Claus. C. Hearty noted that the Stanford Visiting Scholar medical insurance plan seems to only apply to foreign visitors on J-1 visas, and did not work for his postdocs, nor does it appear to work for US citizens who are employed by

foreign employers. His postdocs were referred to Blue Cross by the Stanford campus insurance people. He suggested that the phone number of the campus people be included in the memo. R. Dufresne also mentioned that SLAC policies require that anyone who works at SLAC must have medical insurance. This point should also be added to the memo. R. de Sangro is also inquiring about obtaining additional rental car insurance through Avcar. (The current Stanford contract with Avcar currently does not allow additional liability insurance purchase, as Stanford is self-insured.) Foreign visitors rent cars through Avcar, for research purposes (not just SLUO meetings). They get a good rate on the rental, the fees are charged to their accounts at SLAC, but are not covered by SLACs rental car insurance policy. The Avcar policy provides minimal liability coverage (\$30,000) and collision damage to the rental car. This level of liability coverage is not adequate. This point should be raised with the directorate. Perhaps a separate contract for non-US drivers is needed here.

Housing: R. Dufresne reported that she has been reminded by Ute Hayes from the SLAC Housing Office that the local housing crunch is very severe, and that people who use SLAC housing should be honest about personal habits which may impact the rental situation, such as smoking. In many cases, smoking, even outside, is not acceptable in those places which require no smoking. Misrepresentation of these types of things may affect all future SLAC users. N. Roe reported that the notice to users to contact SLAC Housing well in advance of their need has been distributed and has had a positive effect on getting users to contact the Housing office early. It was too late to make arrangements for housing on the Stanford campus for this summer.

Space: S. Willocq reported via e-mail that the space situation is proceeding slowly. The space survey at SLAC has been completed, and space requests are now being gathered. Offices will be needed in less than 2 months by people coming to SLAC to work on Babar. G. Bonneaud reports that 55- 70 closed offices will be needed in May. Using the space survey, S. Williams has located 110 desks which are currently empty.

SLUO Office Report/Discussion

R. Dufresne distributed a memo from Rachel Claus which states the most recent version of the lobbying ban by DOE contractors or employees. We cannot send out e-mail to SLUO from SLAC computers that urge political activities.

S. Hertzbach discussed differing views of the SLUO office: support of Executive Committee business, single point contact for users for entry into the SLAC system, database, badge and dosimeter responsibilities, or providing administrative support for all users. The Executive Committee does not support this latter, expanded role, and thinks that administrative support for users should be provided by the experimental groups. The Committee also thinks that another employee in the SLUO office is required to handle the tasks that are currently assigned.

Annual Meeting Discussion

T. Schalk reported that Michael Turner has accepted our invitation to speak on Cosmology at the Annual Meeting. Dr. Richter has invited Dr. Ernie Moniz

(Undersecretary of Energy) to speak on the future of the DOE's science programs, and this invitation has been accepted. Charlie Baltay has agreed to speak about the ILC physics and detector working groups. John O'Fallon from DOE has also accepted our invitation to discuss budgetary priorities within DOE. We had discussed other speakers, but now that Dr. Moniz has accepted, we may have to combine or eliminate some of the presentations considered earlier.

Lunch with Directorate

The lunch meeting was held with Drs. Richter, Williams, Mount and P. A. Moore.

Office Space Update: Williams has spent time analyzing the results of the office space survey and needs requests. The belief is that the lab can handle approximately 130 new people by reorganizing space. Things should be able to be moved starting in May, and space will be assigned to the experiments, who will further sub-divide the areas. SLAC is asking for a new building, but this will not solve any immediate problems, even if approved next year. There are currently 110 empty desks at SLAC, most not centrally located, and 20 of which are in the warehouse. Babar's request is for 79 (2-desk) offices to accommodate 180 people, starting in May. Babar currently has 105 user desks (for non-SLAC employees). Dr. Richter asked us to estimate the space needs in the equilibrium state (i.e., after the installation phase, when the Babar experiment is running normally). G. Bonneaud will meet with Steve Williams to discuss these matters further.

SLUO Office functions: We have prioritized tasks for the SLUO office. D. Leith has agreed to supply adequate assistance to ensure that these tasks are done, but they will not all be carried out until this assistance materializes. The upcoming crunch in May will stress the situation further, so assistance should be in place by then. This is the third year in a row that SLAC has had to lay off people, so a strong case must be made for additional hires in the SLUO office.

Rental Car Insurance: Our concerns should be discussed with Jerry Jobe. Dr. Richter suggested that perhaps European collaborators could get VISA or American Express cards which cover their insurance needs. However, it was noted by J. Fry (in correspondence received after the meeting) that this coverage only work for US residents. In any event, using a personal credit card does not allow travellers to charge their SLAC accounts. P. A. Moore will find out who the right person is to ask about this and tell L. Cominsky.

Budget Discussion: The DOE budget request appears to have increased, but it is hard to tell what exactly is going on with the appropriations bill (Energy and Water, 85% is the DOE budget) that covers the DOE. Clinton's budget decreases the water projects part by \$800 million for next year, and increases the science program budget by \$600 million. Congress may not want to cut their water projects this much, so it appears that the budget may be \$1.4 billion dollars short of pleasing everyone. The Senate may decide by early April. The science request has increased by 10%, most of which is due to the spallation neutron source. Other things have only increased by 1.6%, for inflation, and the first numbers for SLAC are less than requested. This may affect the length of the first Babar run, and the growth rate of the ILC programs. The ESA experiment is on the calendar for a solo run, which is cheaper than running with Babar.

Annual Meeting: Dr. Richter requested a copy of the agenda, so that Dr. Moniz can be scheduled appropriately. T. Schalk will show our draft agenda to Burt to get feedback.

HEPAP Gilman report: It said to push ahead quickly with the design report on the ILC and let them take another look at it when the report is finished. It also encouraged R&D on muon colliders and ultrahigh-energy hadron colliders, and more funding for non-accelerator experiments.

Lab's Vision of SLUO Office

Jean Lee distributed a draft memo that describes the role, responsibilities and management of the SLUO office. There is a commitment from the Research Division Director to support the staffing of the SLUO office so that these responsibilities can be met. In the past year, temporary support has been used by the SLUO office for such tasks as data base entry, meeting support and archiving. S. Hertzbach mentioned the impending new user crunch expected in May, and the impact on the SLUO office. He thinks that it would be ideal to have a new, permanent staff member on board by then. Cominsky mentioned that the wording of the draft memo may be interpreted to mean that administrative support was to be provided to the user community and this is not supported by the Executive Committee. Jean Lee mentioned that upgrades to the new database software are in the works (and may be released in a month) that will allow the experiment groups to do a lot of the data entry that can currently be done only by the SLUO office. However, T. Mattison mentioned that the problem is not data entry but validation, and this must still be done by the SLUO office, before accounts and numbers can be issued. Jean Lee also presented a revised task list that is based on the one presented and reviewed at the previous Executive Committee meeting. A few of the original tasks have been deleted, as a result of discussions between Hertzbach and Leith. Some of the remaining tasks may eventually be simplified or eliminated by better data base management. N. Roe suggested that we hire a temporary full time support person for the summer. This hire can then be reevaluated in the fall, in the hope that the new data base system will lessen the workload. Some discussion took place about the administrative support of users and the strong feeling of the Executive Committee that this work belongs to the experimental groups, and is not part of the SLUO duties. The Executive Committee will ask David Leith to hire one full time person immediately (even if they are hired as a temporary employee), so that they can be trained and functional by May.

Travel Reimbursement

We have been asked to propose a travel policy so that a more realistic budget can be defined. (The \$10,000 allocation for this year is already spent.) There is a perception by the Directorate that SLUO is being asked to pay for travel when experimental work is being done. However, the out-of-town members who travel to SLAC for SLUO meetings share the costs of their trips between SLUO and their experiments. Outgoing SLUO Chair U. Nauenberg stated at the 9/8/97 Executive Committee meeting that the lab policy was that SLAC would pay SLUO committee members for transportation costs plus 2 days lodging and per diem. [Note added

by S. Hertzbach: This is Nauenberg's understanding of the agreement he had with the SLAC Directorate on reimbursement for travel to SLUO Executive Committee meetings. The Directorate believes the agreement was for reimbursement on a much more limited basis. This difference is one aspect of the travel reimbursement problems that SLUO and the Directorate must resolve.] However, Committee members noted that in order to accommodate a Saturday night stay requires 3 days (which accommodates SLUO meetings on Monday or Friday). It was suggested that one way to save money is to try to do video-conferences, but they may cost more than travel, in most cases. G. Bonneaud stated that it was unfair to change the reimbursement policy in the middle of a year, as many Europeans have already made their travel arrangements based on the current policy. Also, the policy of transportation plus 2 days only works if the members of the committee stay on for other business. Otherwise, it may cost four days of per diem for Europeans to attend the SLUO meeting. J. Fry added (in comments received after the meeting) that the level of international participation in SLUO is at an all-time high, and that this should have been expected to raise travel costs accordingly. Other suggestions included amending the SLUO Charter at the Annual Meeting so that only 4 or 5 Committee meetings are required per year, rather than the current six. Another problem is the timeliness of the reimbursement to the committee members. It is not acceptable for the travel checks to be delayed for two months following a meeting, as that means that the committee members are out of pocket for the expenses for even longer. SLAC has changed banks for the travel checks, and the closest branch is in San Francisco. If reimbursement checks are received just before departure, it is not possible for the Europeans to cash the checks before leaving the area. They must deposit the checks at home, and then pay the money conversion fee (7.5%).

Future Meetings

The next meeting of the SLUO Executive Committee will be held on Monday May 11, 1998. The SLUO Annual Meeting will be on Wednesday July 15, 1998, with a short Executive Committee meeting at the end of the day.

Minutes submitted by

L. Cominsky
Secretary/Treasurer
Users Executive Committee