MINUTES OF THE MAY 12, 1995 MEETING OF THE USERS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE


Approval of Minutes

There were no amendments to the minutes of the previous meeting on 2/14/95.

Report from Space Committee

Fero reported that SSC modular furniture has been installed in the maze area near the SLUO Office. There are 16 desk-units, most of which are now allocated to named users. There is universal agreement that the new arrangement is a major improvement, and the Committee was favourably impressed with the speed and efficiency of the installation. One minor problem is that lockable cabinets appear to have been scrambled between units, so that ‘one key fits many’; this will be fixed (see later).

Johnson reported that he has been in touch with Finn Halbo, the new SLAC ‘space czar’, who has made a site-wide inventory of desks that are available, or will be freed by movements to the new Physics and Engineering Building. Halbo thinks there is enough space for the anticipated flux of summer visitors. The contractor is expected to make the new building available before the end of May. Migration of BaBar people from Central Lab should take place in June, whence SSC modular furniture will be installed in the ground-floor maze; there will be 32 desk-units, most of which have been allocated to BaBar users. One building in SLC City will be freed up by this migration.

Johnson mentioned that the office building located in the parking lot outside the Users’ Warehouse, presently occupied by Purchasing, may be relinquished as a cost-saving measure. The building is presently rented, though SLAC is considering an option to purchase it if a strong case can be made for retaining the office space. The Committee seized upon the opportunity for fresh air and exercise to make an inspection of this building, and were favourably impressed with the 10 quality offices there. All were agreed to recommend retention of this building for user offices, taking advantage of its proximity to the user services provided in the Warehouse.
Network Rewiring

Huber reported that the rewiring of the ethernet reported in the last Minutes is now projected to be completed by the end of September, far ahead of the previous expectation. All four sites – SCS, A&E, Central Lab and the Annex – will be rewired in three stages: i) installation/connection of closets, ii) connections to desktops and iii) activation, with two twisted-pair connections per telephone site. Several members expressed concern that converters may be needed to hook up their terminals/workstations/PCs to the new network. Post-meeting investigations suggest that SLAC will provide these for devices now at the Lab.

The existing MICOM lines will probably not be removed, which pleased a number of Committee members who use them heavily, though their use will be ‘discouraged’. It still remains to estimate how many PHONET lines are needed for Macs.

Desktop Terminals

Porter reported that the SLAC Desktop Terminals Committee, which had met weekly after its formation early in 1995, has not met since a presentation to the Associate Directors’ Meeting on April 7. The process of interviewing selected individuals at SLAC for their views on desktop terminal choices was started, but is not yet complete. Porter repeated his concern, expressed at the last SLUO Committee Meeting, that the Desktop Terminals Committee is focusing primarily on PCs and Macs, at the expense of devices for scientific use. The lack of consideration of Unix devices for scientific purposes was also noted in some of the interview responses. The Committee agreed that this is a very serious issue that should be pursued vigorously at the next Desktop Terminals Committee meeting. Nauenberg added that he will include this topic in a letter to the Director outlining SLUO’s broader concerns (see later).

Networking Committee

Usher reported that, to the best of his knowledge, there has still been no meeting of the fabled SLAC Network Committee. Toki mentioned that a DoE Networking Committee has recommended that, in the face of financial limitations, either connections overseas be reduced, or the T1 (1.5 MBit/s) → T3 (45 MBit/s) conversion be slowed down. Neither of these options is attractive, the former causing particular concern to participants in experiments overseas. Toki noted also that there are problems with the NSF network conversion; remote logins are painful due to overloaded lines and slow response times, and off-site collaborators are having problems connecting to DoE Labs.
WWW Policy Committee

Despite a plethora of SLAC committees devoted to various aspects of World-Wide Web, Huber reported that she has yet to hear of a meeting of the committee on policy for SLAC Web contents, for which a SLUO representative was specifically requested.

Funding Issues

Nauenberg reported that he, Merritt (U. Chicago), Lubatti (U. Washington) and Skuja (U. Maryland) had given invited presentations at the March 3 HEPAP meeting and outlined university group concerns about the funding of high energy physics. Nauenberg estimated that DoE-supported university groups had lost about 20% in purchasing power over the last 6 years, with a consequent shrinking of the university infrastructure, especially in terms of engineering and technical support. A HEPAP sub-committee has been formed to look into this further. In addition, the General Accounting Office has decided to investigate the balance of HEP infrastructure between the national laboratories and the universities.

Koffler expressed concern over funding for the BaBar detector and hoped that university resources would be utilised as much as possible for engineering and fabrication work.

As is now well known, Secretary O’Leary has proposed cutbacks in the DoE budget of about 10% this year and about 17% next year, which would cause a significant reduction in DoE administrative staff. In this climate there is little optimism that the ‘Drell bump’ will be funded. A letter signed by the SLUO Committee was mailed to John Myers (Chair, House Sub-committee on Energy and Water Development), John Kasich (Chair, House Budget Committee), and Robert Walker (Chair, House Committee on Science) last Friday, and has also been faxed.

The DPF is hosting a meeting in Washington on June 6 or 7, and will also meet with Walker. SLUO is invited to send three representatives to this meeting. Nauenberg requested that Committee members find out if they are able to attend so that names can be submitted.

SLUO Office

There was a further lengthy discussion of the role and function of the SLUO Office. Work will continue between the SLUO Chair, the Users’ Secretary Margaret Helton, and the Research Division to ensure that the SLUO Office functions optimally as a service to both the user community and to SLAC.
Discussions with Management

Neither the Director nor the Associate Director of the Research Division was able to attend. Noting that the Director has not met with the Committee since last October, Nauenberg will draft a letter to Richter outlining a list of SLUO’s primary concerns. The Research Division was represented by Steve Williams.

Williams reported on the installation of the SSC furniture in the Annex, the move to the new building, and plans for further installation of SSC furniture (see earlier). The Committee thanked the Research Division for the efficient Annex conversion and looked forward to the renovation of the Central Lab maze. Williams said that the mazes in End-station A, Annex 2nd floor (SLD area) and the Theory Group are also targeted for refurbishment, and he hopes to order more units from SSC Lab. The Annex conversion cost about $700 per desk, significantly less than originally feared. Further chairs to match the new units are needed and will be requested. Williams agreed to look into having the locks on cabinets organised rationally.

The Committee requested that the office building in the Warehouse parking lot be retained for user use.

Three new X-terminals are now in the Annex public terminal pool, and a further two are located in the BaBar Central Lab maze.

Williams also showed the draft SLAC schedule for FY 1995-1998 (attached to these minutes). The Committee recognized the challenge the busy SLAC program presents to management, and the significant amount of work and careful consideration that goes into forming the SLAC schedule. Nevertheless, the Committee expressed its concern about the proposed SLC running schedule. For the purposes of planning it is not unreasonable to estimate the average $Z$ rate over the next three years to be somewhere between 1.5 and 2.0 times the 1994/95 average rate, leading to an expectation of between 5k and 6.6k $Z$s per week. According to the schedule shown there are 17 weeks of running in FY1996, with perhaps an additional 4 weeks in June, 21 weeks shown in FY1997, and 18 weeks in FY1998 assuming 2 weeks for Arc/Final-Focus turn-on. This yields 56 weeks minimum. However, though one expects that every attempt will be made to minimize the impact of PEP II commissioning, it is probably fair to assume a 10-20% loss in delivered luminosity in FY1997 and FY1998. This yields about 50 weeks of running or between 250k and 350k $Z$s. If it is assumed that FY 1998 is the last year of SLC running, the stated Laboratory goal of integrating 500k $Z$s with the new SLD vertex detector does not appear to be achievable with the present schedule. A more realistic schedule would provide for at least 86 weeks of running for a $Z$ total of between 430k and 570k. The Committee encouraged SLAC management to utilize fully the time between now and PEP II turn-on to meet the stated goals for the SLC/SLD program.

Reorganisation of SLUO Committee

Nauenberg said that Richard Yamamoto, ex-Chair, has suggested that the Committee consider having ex-officio past-Chairperson and Chairperson-elect members, in order to aid continuity between SLUO ‘administrations’; it was also suggested
that, in order to increase participation in the role of Chair, only one term of office be allowed. These suggestions received a rather lukewarm response from the Committee. The consensus was that this is a solution to a non-problem, and that the present system has worked well. Furthermore, the logistics of choosing a Chairperson-elect one year ahead of her/his term are awkward and require a Committee Member to be elected Chair only at either the beginning or the end of her/his first year. This was felt to be restrictive. Furthermore, all were agreed that good Chairpersons should be allowed to serve for as long as the Committee wants to elect them, up to the their three-year term limit.

**SLAC Tour Guides**

Nina Adelmann-Stolar made a request for graduate students to serve as SLAC tour-guides. Tours take place throughout the week and are very valuable for promoting SLAC and high energy physics in general. Guides are remunerated handsomely for their two-hour tours and the program is targeted to aid graduate students. Anyone interested should send a message to PAO@SLAC.STANFORD.EDU. (An e-mail request has also been sent to the SLUO mailing list).

**Next SLUO Executive Meeting**

The next Executive Committee meeting will be on Friday July 14.

**Annual Users’ Meeting**

The date of the Annual Meeting has been changed from September 7 to September 29. There was a brief discussion of the agenda. It was agreed to invite a senior DoE official, to try to secure a presentation on the funding of science from a prominent politician, and to invite an eminent celebrity to give a pedagogical physics talk.

Minutes submitted by,

Philip Burrows
Secretary/Treasurer
Users Executive Committee