

## RACC Meeting Minutes No. 163 (11/30/05)

1. Purpose: A regularly scheduled meeting of the RACC was held from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. EST in Room 3246 on Wednesday, November 30, 2005, to discuss and address national and regional AWIPS issues, problems and concerns.
2. Regions In Attendance: The following regions (and other NWS organizations) participated in the conference call: **ERH**: Neal DiPasquale; **SRH**: Eric Howieson; **WRH**: Gar Nelson; **CRH**: Bill Gery, Greg Noonan; **ARH**: Phil Mieczynski; **PRH**: Bill Ward; **GSD**: Joanne Edwards, Mark Mathewson, Carl Bullock; **NWSTC**: Randy Schupbach; **Warning Decision Training Branch**: Mike Magsig, Timm Decker
3. Discussion Items: The following topics were discussed/briefed at the meeting:

- a. Status of OB6: On December 5, the delta upgrade of all the patches for OB6 will be installed on the NHDA system at WSH. All of the patches will be tested from Tuesday through Friday during that week. On Tuesday December 6, Keene will install the same patches at BCQ; testing will occur Wednesday through Friday. If all goes well, then on December 13, Keene will install the same software on the NMTR and NMTW systems (also located at WSH). On Dec. 14, 15, 19, and 20, additional installs (2 per day) will be scheduled. As many operational WFOs and RFC as possible will be installed. (NOTE: Frank/Sanford will coordinate these upgrades with the AWIPS regional focal points)

To test the complete OB6 install (combined NGIT DVD plus delta upgrade) five new beta sites will be used.

1. Phase 1 and 2 is scheduled to be installed on the WNCF system Dec. 13 and 14. The phase 3 install should occur on Dec. 21.
2. VUY will do the phase 1 and 2 install on Dec. 19 and 20 and phase 3 in the first week in January.
- 3/4. An operational WFO and RFC will do the phase 1 and 2 installs the first week in January. On January 10th the WFO and January 11th the RFC is scheduled to do phase 3.
5. A second WFO will install phase 1 and 2 (around 1/18 and 1/19) and do phase 3 January 25. Deployment of OB6 is scheduled around February 1.

- b. Software Development Process and NCF Support Items: Bill Ward of the Pacific Region brought up several sub-topics to discuss at this portion of the RACC. These are listed below:

- o **Opening Trouble Tickets** – Not all offices are calling the NCF and opening trouble tickets on every issue. There is some reluctance to open the trouble tickets because of non-understandability of the problem at both the office and at NCF. Bill had recently been told by one of his offices that they have a really rough time with the night shifts, which unfortunately is what we have to deal with in the Pacific Region largely due to the time difference. It seems that most of the truly strong folks at NCF are on the day shift and most of the new folks are on the night shift. There has also been a training problem in the past with the NCF personnel, Bill is hoping that is not continued with the new contractor.

Andy Nappi, the Mission Assurance Manager from Raytheon, stated that he is not aware of any reluctance for sites to open trouble tickets but would like to know if there is any reluctance in the future. Randy Chambers asked that sites contact him immediately if they perceive a reluctance to open a trouble ticket with the NCF. Randy also stated that the NCF could re-arrange experts onto different shifts if the need arises. Andy added that there is training scheduled for the NCF next week, as well as other on-going training efforts.

- o **Use of Infolists and Problems** – Many folks like to try and see what others have done via posting listserver question or looking at listserver archives to correct a problem. Some sites often will take this route rather than open a trouble ticket. Bill personally believes that a trouble ticket should be opened first, if nothing else to at least document the time, date and nature of the problem. At times, the NCF has been less experienced in certain software aspects and they had to inform the field that they would have to wait until a second/third support (day shifts) was available. The WSH response is similar to the item above as these two items are tied in together.

- o **The RAP/RPP Process** – The RAP/RPP process had its own listserver and even weekly teleconferences where problems were identified and passed back to the developers. This worked very effectively and got to the root of many problems long before they ever got fielded. Once the RAP/RPP process was killed, there was truly no one to go to other than the IFPS listserver, as the NCF are not knowledgeable on all aspects of GFE. The GFE trouble tickets were generally passed on to either MDL or GSD. Therefore, everyone soon learned they were not going to get immediate help, so why open a trouble ticket. The WSH response is Raytheon/Keene would look into the resources available for 24/7 support on all software in the AWIPS baseline but it's possible that this could impact the resources involved in developing the software.

Bill does not know if this is the same story across all of the other software suites on AWIPS or not. But he can personally say that there were a great number of times where he would call in a problem only to have it passed on or turned into a DR. Rarely if ever did he ever get called back on the status of a ticket. The WSH response concerning the status of trouble tickets for the sites needs a lot more in-house coordination and Randy Chambers took the action item to take the lead in light of differing opinions during this RACC on how to accomplish this goal.

- o **Application Process Release** – Bill realizes that the Application Release Process is being developed, but hopes that it can take on some of the characteristics of the old RAP/RPP process. Some of the best testing has been done by folks going into WSH and GSD and pumping out products and checking them against requirements to make sure they matched for new software and builds. The other good tests are done in the field and at the regional level where machines are not operational. Edwin Welles of the OS&T marked down the positive aspects of the old RAP process so as to consider how they might be incorporated into the new application process release.

Bill has always hoped that the WES boxes would be brought up to the same level as AWIPS where it could become a fertile ground for doing testing. But it still lags behind AWIPS and is missing many applications that are on AWIPS. This hurts the field and the entire training

process. There was a general consensus among the regions and Raytheon/Keene will keep this in mind.

c. Focal Point/Participants Reports, Problems and Concerns:

Alaska Region: nothing significant to report.

Central Region: nothing significant to report.

Eastern Region: The WFO/RFC in State College is physically moving next week. The site will be out of operation for up to a week. The deputy director would like everyone to do their part in assisting with the backup duties while the site is out. Of particular concern is that CTP is a NWWS uplink. Another particular concern is that there have been problems in the past with service backup for IFPS/GFE and it can take days to correct. Randy Chambers took the action item to look into the issue as he is familiar with IFPS backup issues.

Pacific Region: nothing significant to report.

Southern Region: nothing significant to report.

Western Region: What is the status of the postgres support in relation to the RFC in Portland, OR? Andy Nappi responded that they have several people on their staff at Raytheon that have postgres expertise. In addition, they are hiring a consultant that worked for the hydro people at WSH and he has AWIPS postgres expertise. He will be on board with Raytheon within a week or two and will assist with the work needed for the beta sites. Several more people will be coming on board in January.

GSD: Joanne Edwards will provide information on proposed new functionality for radar all tilts display. This functionality is proposed for OB7.

NWSTC: The Engineering Handbook has a good write up in Information Note #1 about the trouble ticket process. This was written in 1997 and it could use some updating. We are passing this along in light of the earlier conversations concerning trouble tickets.

Warning Decision Training Branch: We are working the postgres issues and trying to get the WES to work with OB6. We are awaiting the patches for OB6 so we can incorporate them into the WES.

**The next RACC is scheduled for Wednesday, December 14, 2005. If you know of any agenda items you wish to be discussed at this RACC, please e-mail them to Jim Stenpeck and cc Wayne Martin. This is to ensure that all of the appropriate WSH personnel attend this RACC to address your issues.**