User Community Board (UCB)

Meeting:	Teleconference meeting
Date and Time:	Wed 16 February 2011 at 9AM
Venue:	Amsterdam, Netherlands
Agenda:	https://www.egi.eu/indico/confModifParticipants.py/addPending?confId=313

Participants

Name and Surname	Abbr.	Organisation	Membership[1]
Stephen Brewer	SB	EGI.eu	Chair
Alexandre Bonvin	AB	eNMR/WeNMR	Member
Antonio Lagana	AL	UNIPG	Member
Claudio Vuerli	CV	INAF	Member
Gergely Sipos	GS	EGI.eu	Member
Ian Bird	IB	WLCG	Member
Jamie Shiers	JS	WLCG	Member
Johan Montagnat	JM	CNRS	Member
Karolis Eigelis	KE	EGI.eu	Observer
Maria Girone	MG	WLCG	Member
Mark Santcroos	MS	AMC	Member
Martin Wynne	MW	OeRC	Member
Monique Petitdider	MP	CNRS	Member
Nuno Ferreira	NF	EGI.eu	Observer
Richard Mclennan	RM	EGI.eu	Observer
Steven Newhouse (present for 15 minutes)	SN	EGI.eu	Member
Sy Holsinger	SH	EGI.eu	Sec Support
Tristan Glatard	TG	CNRS	Member
Yannick Legre	YL	HealthGrid	Member

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[1] Member, Observer, Attendee, Secretarial Support

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting held on 30 Nov 2010 were reviewed. No other additions/corrections were reported therefore the minutes were approved as a correct record of the proceedings.

AGENDA BASHING

No comments to agenda

ACTION REVIEWS

Update of action items were incorporated into Action Summary at end of document.

ITEMS OF BUSINESS

- USAG report
- Update on requirements gathering
- Requirements discussion
  - Requirements Tracker
  - Application database
  - Training Services
  - VO Services
  - Operations Portal
  - Middleware
  - Data
  - Authentication
- Update on User Forum 11
- Summing up and agreement on future actions
- Next Meeting

LIST OF ACTIONS

Item 1 – Requirements Gathering

GS presented the USAG report from 2nd meeting providing an overview of the purpose of the USAG and the tools discussed: Requirements Tracker, Training services (calendar, material repository, trainer database), Application Databases, VO services (for monitoring and accounting), GGUS helpdesk, Operations Portal (VO registration and validation part). Resulting from this was a list of requirements within the various tools. The floor was open for anyone to provide feedback on the list of requirements, validity of each, etc.

GS: Regarding the VO Services, documentation of the NAGIOS service is being finalised.

TG: Asked if there was a release to download.

GS: Don't have to install your own box, you can contact the VO services group and they can plug you in to the services offered by that group.

SB: It offers introductory services for new VRCs, as they grow, other more specific services may be chosen.

The operations portal was also discussed about supporting the annual re-validation of VOs and defining and supporting site and VO decommissioning procedures.

SB: open the floor to any question or comments

AL: Very important to have instructions for new communities that are developing – for example new VOs within the Comp. Chem community.

GS: Suggested that we work together with these new Comp. Chem VOs and as part of their support we produce White paper or other guides for communities.

SB: Said it would be good to produce a white paper for the process

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ACTION 02/01 - **UCST:** to produce a "getting started guide" for communities as part of the support given to new Comp.Chem VOs.

Item 2 – Tracking Requirements

NF presented an update on requirements gathering covering the processing, investigation and analysis that have been taking place on the emerging prioritised requirements. He presented the requirements tracking, update on prioritized RT tickets and current status as well as the availability of the RT manual and prioritised the MW requirements identified at 1st UCB meeting.

NF: These requirements need to be further detailed, as they are too generic and called upon the community to provide further information in order to take forward technical solution. Each requirement will be ticketed in order to assign responsibilities to individuals to provide what is specifically the problem.

TG: What is the status of the online feedback form on the website and the effect it will have with the move to RT.

GS: The web form remains online as RT may not be the most suitable interface for everyone; it is still one of the options for submitting requirementsJM: Systems are sometimes too complex and push people away from taking the time to learn and use them, therefore never obtaining the requirements. SB: Always a difficult balance to obtain not just the requirements, but also the level of detailed required in order to take them forward and the importance of each. So we are working with the TCB to make this as targeted as possible from a technological perspective and from a user perspective.

SB: Asked for any other comments – nothing was mentioned – so the meeting broke for coffee – everyone was expected to return roughly 20mins to resume at 10:40.

10:55 meeting resumes with a discussion on requirements after some conference call issues.

SB: Kicked off the next session with the overall objectives of the discussions referring to NF's slides mentioning the middleware and service requirements, which should be discussed, and the VRC process offline.

JM: Understands the process, but doesn't understand what happens after the ticket is submitted. Some tickets include long comments - in those cases it is difficult to understand where we are with the problem, what's important, what's not, etc.

ACTION 02/02 - UCST: Investigate and implement solution to provide multiple views within requirement tickets to separate the detailed discussion from the summary.

SB: Has made a note and repeated it is this balance we are looking for, so we could argue that the summary should be maintained as the detail is acquired.

Item 3 – Training

TB: What training infrastructure is available if we want to organise hands-on training – what is the process to book this infrastructure?

SB: Training infrastructure is not formally part of EGI-InSPIRE or other EGI-related project.

SB: The provision of training infrastructures is responsibility of NGIs. This is something to keep up to date in order to make available in the training marketplace.

GS: The GILDA VO was available for the training. We need to understand whether this and other infrastructures are offered by NGIs for the EGI training community.

ACTION 02/03 - UCST: Investigate what is the availability of training in terms of resources and services.

SB: This is the purpose of the marketplace, to make available what is available and to whom – through virtualisation will open up new opportunities for this.

AB: The problem is not the infrastructure, but the certificates to allow users to access the infrastructure even on a one-day purpose, and having access to ALL services.

YL: How can we apply for the certificates if we don't know the names of the students or have proper identification for each student?

ACTION 02/04 - UCST: Investigate certificate possibilities for training – What is the current situation with GILDA? What services and for whom are they available? What are the possibilities to join in with sites?

AB: Short-term certificates are required for trainings that use the WNMR infrastructure.

YL: Trainers – we sent names, but still don't see them in the accredited trainer database.

SB: Difficulty in accrediting trainers and keeping information update to date. We are working on making this more automated and detailed.

YL: People are giving training and not accredited?

SB: We do not have an official accreditation process, list of people are legacy names from EGEE. Do we need list of active trainers?

YL: On the EGI pages, there is a list of names. If people are training and not part of that list, loose credit or question those trainers? Would be fair to put all trainers to will provide trainers as that list looks like those people are accredited

GS: Keeping the trainers' database manually up to date requires strong commitment and engagement from trainers and NGIs. We could not achieve this in the past. Moreover, it is not clear how much value this database has for user communities. Is a trainer database useful for your community?

ACTION 02/05 - UCST: The trainers list on website does need to be updated however, this is not an immediate priority. It was agreed that information about trainers should be automatically collected from the details published about training events. However, this is not an immediate priority. Remove the database from the website until an automated mechanism for update is available.

AB: Sites that provide training on a regular basis would be more informative than people's names and is also more important to have a list of available events.

No other participant answered.

Item 4 – Middleware Requirements

SB: Requirements that will be passed on to EMI and other DCI projects – before discussing points in details any points in addition to NF slides.

Data

Data management requirements were discussed.

It was noted that data management requirements are not captured in the system yet. It was reported that UCST has not received many detailed requirements under this heading. Nevertheless the committee agreed that this was a topic to be added to the list of high level requirements.

MP: This is long standing requirement.

SB: Yes, we agree, but the details need to be sent to UCB, not generalities.

ACTION 02/06 - UCST: See if we can obtain a roadmap from EMI concerning services provided for data management. UCST will continue to attempt to capture specific examples in this area.

MW: There will definitely be some things from Arts and Humanities regarding this issue. We have meetings coming up, so we will submit more specific requirements around data that will result and we will submit.

It was agreed that MW would submit a placeholder request before the TCB to initiate this process.

ACTION 02/07 - ALL: Add specific requirements around data management into RT - put in place holders for general requirements for things that will be further detailed and a timeline for when detailed requirements will come through.

AB: Entered one this morning about data storing.

SB: This highlights the point the level of detail that we are looking for, through the various stages of requirement gathering.

Authentication

Authentication issues were discussed.

It was noted that different level of support are provided by the different CAs in different countries – for example, the Dutch one works well, as does France. However, there are countries where getting a certificate is still too difficult for many of our users.

GS: Acknowledged that the heterogeneity of CAs can be a problem. Robot certificates, training certificates and federated authentication mechanisms can be solutions in some cases. We should produce a white paper describing   the different authentication systems and where to get proper information.

ACTION 02/08 - UCST: Produce a white paper on different authentication processes and procedures, which would group different requests together. Provide an overview of possible solutions for infrastructure access (normal certs, TERENA certs, robot certs, training certs, federated authentication).

Ticketing system

SB: Opened floor for discussion.

SB: Better error messages from the middlewareis still a requirement.

SB: Another request is "Fix known bugs before adding new features."

AB: Is there a list of known bugs?

GS: They are the open tickets in GGUS. Trying to use that as a metrics – valid metrics as the value is provided by the submitter not the resolver.

SB: Important to group tickets for higher-level requirements – we will add text to take forward to TCB.

AB: Looking at the dashboard, difficult to filter and understand what is there.

NF: This can be customised.

AB: Example, just want to be able to filter those open and those closed.

ACTION 02/09 - UCST: Setup user community dashboards that list only the open tickets and exclude closed tickets.

AB: Is there a time limit to tickets? – the submitter may leave, then ticket will never be solved or solution never be needed – should be some level of follow up during development.

ACTION 02/10 - UCST: It was agreed that UCST should add time-based triggers to poll submitters to ensure the continued validity of requirement requests

Coherency of command line commands, parameters and APIs

SB: Any comments– is this still a priority?

JM: What is the backward compatibility between middleware releases?

GS: According to the UMD roadmap full backward compatibility is provided between minor releases X.y and X.z. This not guaranteed between major releases: X.y and X+1.y.

SB: Could middleware compatibility be listed in the Application Database?

GS: Yes, this can be added as a feature, but how well this field will be filled out by the application owners is a question.

SB: Automated emails can be generated by AppDB for application owners to invite them to update application profile after middleware upgrades.

GS: This is a good idea.

ACTION 02/11 - UCST: Add more details about middleware compatibility to AppDB and automate the updates of application profiles within the application database.

AB: User interface is important, should be available for something other than Linux, such as MAC OSX (dare say Windows?).

GS: There were presentations on such services at the EGI/EGEEevents.

ACTION 02/12 – UCST: Identify NGIs that work on and provide user interfaces for other than Scientific Linux platforms and circulate information about these services to UCB.

Better feedback about jobs, automated resubmission of jobs that are stuck on sites

SB: This has really already been discussed at the previous UCB – still a valid priority?

AB: Quite detailed information about the execution environments must be queried and collected by the jobs in order to send this in case of failure to GGUS. Such reports should be provided by the middleware, minimising the overhead on jobs, submitters, and developers. Need a list of parameters that you get back from running a job – you have to ask specifically to understand where the job ran and how it did – failed jobs you have to re-enter the system to find out what happened.

ACTION 02/13 – UCST: Collect and circulate information about the middleware services and interfaces that can provide extended information about jobs and the execution environments these jobs run within. If these turn out to be insufficient, then a user requirement can be opened against UMD.

Configuration / Installation

AB: Middleware updates require the configuration first, then the update. If the configuration turns out to be wrong, the system must be reinstalled. Configurations must be changeable after the installation.

Item 5 – OLAs / MoUs

GS presented NGI Support outlining the goals to facilitate the work of the UST and communication as the key enabler. Therefore, the communications channels were outlined covering technical services, emails lists, EGI-InSPIRE Quarterly Report, NGI surveys, EGI events such as user/technical forums, and the RT requirement tracking system.

TG: OLAs between sites and VOs. Have started to produce documents, but it is unclear on what are the next steps – If a VO is to sign a OLA with a site or NGIs – what will be the relation between these documents – so just a clearer picture?

GS: Operations teams are working on a standard OLA that every site must acknowledge. This OLA is almost final only a couple of NGIs' inputs need to be merged. NGIs become responsible for accepting and validating sites within their countries only if the sites meet this OLA. The VOs are satisfied with level the services that are already in this OLA do not have to agree on any other OLA with sites. However, if a VO requires additional services (or quality of services) on top of this OLA, then these VOs should prepare extra OLA with the sites. This must happen through the NGIs who validate and operate the sites.

TG: Need to clarify what services are available to the individual VO. OLA must cover the question of what VOs can and cannot do on the site (e.g. cannot write into directory X in LFC, cannot run pilot jobs, etc.)

GS: Yes, this needs to be defined. This can be done after the infrastructure OLA is known.

AB: Try not to over bureaucratise procedures to bog down the system.

TG: Needs to be a light as possible, but things need to be formalised so people cannot say no as they have in the past.

YL: OLA is to ensure availability of data.

GS: Site decommissioning will be part of this OLA.

Item 6 – Update on User Forum 2011

UCST will be hosting various workshops and sessions at the User Forum in Vilnius. These should be of interest to many in the different research communities as well as in the support teams of the NGIs. Many development teams including EMI will also be present and are looking forward to meeting the users. GS introduced the event that is co-organised by EGI and EMI and event details such as the website, programme agenda, registration, etc. He covered areas or topics of the programme, which includes 6/7 parallel sessions in addition to the plenary session on each day + demos and posters.

SB: Where and when to organise user community workshops?

ACTION 02/14 to ALL: send through any events or workshops being held in your communities.

Item 7 – Final Summary

SB: This has been a good meeting to reinforce requirements. 3 or 4 MoUs close to being finalised – hopefully by Vilnius to announce formal collaborations.

AOB

None

Action Summary

ID	Resp.	Description	Status[2]
01/02	EGI.eu dissemination	Clarify the dissemination and collaboration opportunities with VRCs - start with publications and workshops that are reported by the HUCs in the QR.	OPEN
01/08	VRCs	Some participants expressed their desire to have EGI attend one of their own conferences. The presence of EGI representatives would be quite beneficial in order to change the conservative way the communities do things. VRCs to notify the UCST of meeting they would like to attend.	OPEN

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[2] NEW, OPEN, CLOSED, REJECTED

		Action for UCST: Remind UCB members to inform UCST about their upcoming events.	
02/01	UCST	to produce a "getting started guide" for communities as part of the support given to new Comp.Chem VOs.	NEW
02/02	UCST	Investigate and implement solution to provide multiple views within requirement tickets to separate the detailed discussion from the summary.	NEW
02/03	UCST	Investigate what is the availability of training in terms of resources and services.	NEW
02/04	UCST	Investigate certificate possibilities for training – What is the current situation with GILDA? What services and for whom are they available? What are the possibilities to join in with sites?	NEW
02/05	UCST	The trainers list on website does need to be updated however, this is not an immediate priority. It was agreed that information about trainers should be automatically collected from the details published about training events. However, this is not an immediate priority. Remove the database from the website until an automated mechanism for update is available.	NEW
02/06	YL	See if we can obtain a roadmap from EMI concerning services provided for data management. UCST will continue to attempt to capture specific examples in this area.	NEW
02/07	ALL	Add specific requirements around data management into RT - put in place holders for general requirements for things that will be further detailed and a timeline for when detailed requirements will come through.	NEW
02/08	UCST	Produce a white paper on different authentication processes and procedures, which would group different requests together. Provide an overview of possible solutions for infrastructure access (normal certs, TERENA certs, robot certs, training certs, federated authentication).	NEW
02/09	UCST	Setup user community dashboards that list only the open tickets and exclude closed tickets.	NEW
02/10	UCST	It was agreed that UCST should add time-based triggers to poll submitters to ensure the continued validity of requirement requests	NEW
02/11	UCST	Add more details about middleware compatibility to AppDB and automate the updates of application profiles within the application database.	NEW
02/12	UCST	Identify NGIs that work on and provide user interfaces for other than Scientific Linux platforms and circulate information about these services to UCB.	NEW

02/13	UCST	Collect and circulate information about the middleware services and interfaces that can provide extended information about jobs and the execution environments these jobs run within. If these turn out to be insufficient, then a user requirement can be opened against UMD.	NEW
02/14	ALL	send through any events or workshops being held in your communities. (Relates to action 01/02)	NEW

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 12:40

Date for Next Meeting

To be agreed via mailing list.

Minutes prepared by: Sy Holsinger, 18/02/2011

Minutes Approved: Group Chair Steve Brewer

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