

RACC Meeting Minutes No. 166 (1/18/06)

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, January 18, 2006, 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, Cindy Scott; **SRH**: Eric Howieson; **WRH**: Gar Nelson, Andy Edman, Mark Mollner; **CRH**: Bill Gery, Greg Noonan, Pete Browning; **ARH**: Phil Mieczynski; **PRH**: Ken Waters, Bill Ward; **GSD**: Carl Bullock; **NWSTC**: Tim Totusek, Joe Rick? **Warning Decision Training Branch**: Mike Magsig, Timm Decker;
3. Discussion Items: The following topics were discussed/briefed at the meeting:
 - a. Status of OB6: All the beta OB6 sites (except PTR) have gone to the final version of OB6. Today, RAH is installing phase 1 and will install phase 2 tomorrow and phase 3 on January 25. Site KRF has already installed phases 1 and 2 and will do phase 3 next Tuesday. The SVR date is scheduled for January 27 with deployment set for February 6. We will send out an e-mail detailing the instructions for the upcoming field deployment. Basically, we will proceed with 2 sites per day for the first 3 weeks and possibly go to 3 sites per day by the end of February. The hours and days will remain the same as in the past with the previous contractor.

The NMAP that was delivered for the OB6 baseline does not work with the new operating system. NCEP is working on solving this problem. If the problem cannot be solved before the final DVDs are cut, then we will have to deliver the updated NMAP to sites at a later date without it being included in the final DVD being readied for field deployment.

Ashley Kells brought up several potential show stoppers that could delay the February 6 deployment. The first is DR 16772, "Procedures Involving GFS Model Data Don't work." It was discovered that after a site installs OB6, any procedure that involves the display of GFS model data (specifically AVN211 grids) will not work. GSD stated that it has come up with a fix and is currently testing it and it should make it into the final cut of the DVD.

Ashley also stated that Mike Moss of the SST discovered an issue dealing with looking at GFS model data in OB6. The problem is the GFS has 41 valid forecast times in OB6. But the D2D can only display 32 frames. There are several workarounds for this problem. This problem has existed for awhile and was originally documented in DR 15868 – Major. Site MRX also documented this problem in DR16683 and is also a Major. This problem becomes a bigger issue in OB6 in that the three display options of the GFS in OB5 (GFS80 [old AVN], GFS [combination] and gfsLR [old MRF]) become two (GFS40 and GFS). After some discussion, the consensus among the focal points was that this is a major and not a critically operational problem.

- b. Summary of OB7 and OB8 Release Plans: Russ Ingraham of Keane sent out to the RACC distribution list a software maintenance release schedule (for 2006) in advance of this RACC.

Both Russ and Ed Mandel referred to a chart of the software schedule in their discussion of upcoming OB7 and OB8.

The proposal is that OB7 will be divided and delivered in 2 releases, a R1 (likely to be named 7.1) and a R2 (likely to be named 7.2). R1 would contain infrastructure, some applications (GFE, AVNFPS, gridded MOS), and limited DRs. R2 would contain baseline functionality and more DRs. We have looked at OB8 as being delivered in 3 releases, but we need to see if we can manage 2 releases before attempting 3. OB7 will be a learning experience for us as we attempt to get quality releases to the field sooner.

Russ also stated that he heard concerns from various field and headquarters personnel since he came on board with the new contract. The 5 major concerns are a) better quality of the releases and better testing by the developers and during the Software Integration Testing (SWIT), b) better quality of the releases when installed, c) more frequent and faster delivery to the sites, d) easier and smaller installs of between 4-6 hours, e) the NCF personnel would be trained not only for field deployment but for the beta sites.

Also, the exact contents of 7.1 and 7.2 will be shared with the regions at the next SREC occurring in a few weeks.

The trouble ticket (TT) process was discussed in some detail. Sites have complained in the past that they call the NCF on a problem and a TT is generated and then they never hear about the solution again until maybe when the next software release comes out. At past RACCs, Mike Moss of the SST has mentioned that the sites can call him if they find out the TT is in the SST queue and would like the TT bumped up to a higher priority. James Washington of the NCF stated that he is working on finding contact points in other WSH units where a TT is in a queue. This would help provide sites with information on the status of a particular TT that they're interested in.

The Training Center mentioned that the training needs that Russ brought up still need to be worked out with Raytheon. A contact person in the Office of Climate, Water, and Weather Services was provided to Russ Ingraham for future discussions on this topic.

Andy Edman of the Western Region asked that Ed Mandel inform the field when the three items that were supposed to be part of the next applications release (but have been held up) become available. Ed agreed to do so.

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

Ashley Kells: The All Tilts changes (using the arrow keys without using the shift key for easier All Tilts manipulation) to be placed in upcoming OB7 can be placed at field sites once they install OB6. If a site wants this change to be ATAN'ed after they install OB6, please contact Ashley Kells of the SST.

Alaska Region: The NMAP issue is reported as TT #239135 in case anybody wants to find out the status of it. Steve Schotz informed Phil that a possible solution to the problem is being tested

and hopefully it can be resolved within 2 weeks.

Central Region: nothing significant to report.

Eastern Region: Our MSD and SOD people have received complaints from the field and the private sector concerning inconsistencies with the climate data reports provided by AWIPS, ASOS and the NCDC in Asheville. About a year ago, somebody in our region reported this in and a TT was generated but we never heard any more about the status of this problem. After some discussion ensued, it was determined that Neal would need to provide the RACC more information on this problem to help determine who should get the action item.

Pacific Region: nothing significant to report.

Southern Region: nothing significant to report.

Western Region: We would like 3 points addressed before the field deployment of OB6. The first is that the PTR trouble ticket dealing with maximum users be fixed. Edwin Welles stated this problem will be resolved in time for deployment to begin. The second issue is the Raytheon support plan being in place (Edwin says it will be) and the third issue is for a postgres expert to assist PTR with their postgres issues. Edwin Welles stated that such an expert has been hired by Raytheon and will be working on the issue.

Andy Edman summarized three general action items that need to be done by various NWS components in the near future. The first is to make the trouble ticket process more efficient, the second is to get the new firewall project on track and the third is to disseminate the build process and its capabilities and timeframe to the field.

GSD: nothing significant to report.

NWSTC: nothing significant to report.

Warning Decision Training Branch: We are working with the latest version of the WES for OB6. One problem encountered is with the FFMP applications but we have a workaround for it and are optimistic.

The next RACC is scheduled for Wednesday, February 1, 2006. 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.