

## RACC Meeting Minutes No. 195 (3/21/07)

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, March 21, 2007, to discuss and address national and regional AWIPS issues, problems and concerns.

2. Regions In Attendance: The following regions (and other NWS organizations outside of Silver Spring) participated in the conference call: **ERH**: Joe Palko; **SRH**: Eric Howieson; **WRH**: Gar Nelson; **CRH**: Bill Gery; **ARH**: Phil Mieczynski; **PRH**: Bill Ward; **Warning Decision Training Branch**: Timm Decker;

3. Discussion Items: The following topics were discussed/briefed at the meeting:

a. Status of AWIPS OB7.2, OB7.2.1 and OB8.1:

*Major Release OB7.2*: The installations at WFOs are nearing completion and continue to be relatively error free, taking about 3-4 hours to complete.

*Maintenance Release OB7.2.1*: Beta testing at selected sites is proceeding and only a few relatively minor issues have been encountered. The installation instructions have been revised with feedback received from the beta sites. The updated instructions have been provided to the beta sites for review and for use in the next two planned installations. The readiness review to determine if the OB7.2.1 software is ready for national deployment is scheduled for April 3. Depending upon the results of that meeting, the national deployment of the maintenance release is tentatively scheduled to begin on April 9. Completion of the Mod Note for the LX workstation replacement is a prerequisite for the installation of the maintenance release.

*Major Release OB8.1*: The Alpha Test Phase began on Monday, March 19. The first alpha installation occurred today at the Raytheon test platform and went relatively well, taking approximately 3 hours to complete. We are in the process of selecting Beta Sites, and request a response from each AWIPS Regional Focal Point by March 26. Two prerequisites for this release are the installation of the CPSBN replacement and OB7.2.1.

Raytheon will begin a new pilot project in OB8.1, the GFE Pre-Release. This project will provide the opportunity to evaluate early versions of the GFESuite software to allow selected sites to make modifications of text formatters, smart tools, and other local applications required to support their operations prior to the national deployment of the AWIPS OB8.1 Release.

There has been a request to find out if the pilot project can be extended to allow all WFOs to participate. Thuy Tran, the government point of contact for this project, is working with Raytheon to request that staff from all WFO sites participate in the GFE Pre-Release Project. Raytheon is evaluating the impact of that proposed change and will make a determination in the next few weeks. We are planning to request selection of the GFE Pre-Release pilot sites later this week.

Karen Tepera from Raytheon briefed the group and stated the security patch CDs were shipped

to all sites on March 20. All sites should have the disks by the end of this week. All sites should be caught up on all security issues with the installation of these patches. Raytheon is also finishing up on the DR selection for upcoming AWIPS Major Release OB8.2. The DS Decommissioning Release is in the alpha phase. The SMTP activation is in the testing phase and going well. There are 6 beta WFOs that have been running with SMTP for a week and are expected to remain activated.

b. Status of AWIPS OB5/6/7 SBN Product Activation: The 2005/2006 TOC moratorium and numerous other factors resulted in the delay of 23 products that were scheduled for inclusion in AWIPS OB5, OB6, and OB7. In July 2006, a group convened to work through the activations of these 23 backlogged products. To date, 15 products have been activated (with 5 products being activated in the first quarter of this year) and 8 remain to be activated. The status and plans for the remaining activations were briefed by Brian Gockel using the Excel spreadsheet titled "AWIPS Data Management – OS&T SEC Analysis Branch – March 21, 2007".

It should be noted that item #7 (GFS BUFR Soundings) on the spreadsheet is now available as of today on the SBN and all sites should see it on their D2D. We are currently working on getting the SREF grids to NOAAPORT (items 11, 12, and 13) with a best estimate by March 28. Four items remain (# 9, 15, 16, and 22) to be activated and we hope to get these on the SBN by sometime in May.

Brian is working with Raytheon on getting the upcoming OB8.1 products out onto the SBN.

c. CWSU Password Expiration in OB7.2: Wayne Martin gave the group this briefing. A new security feature introduced in OB7.2 is the automated password expiration of individual user accounts. The passwords on the individual user accounts expire after 90 days and must be changed. When logging into an AWIPS workstation, individual user accounts are notified when their password is about to expire and given an opportunity to change the password. The CWSU workstation, used to access AWIPS, is not a baseline AWIPS workstation and does not have the AWIPS software installed on it. The CWSU workstation logs into its host AWIPS system and starts AWIPS applications such as D2D. On the CWSU workstation display there are icons to automatically log into the host AWIPS workstation and start AWIPS applications. The CWSU workstation uses Secure Shell (SSH) to automatically log into the host AWIPS system without the host AWIPS system asking for the CWSU forecaster's password. In this automated configuration, the CWSU forecaster does not see the warning messages from AWIPS informing the CWSU forecaster that their AWIPS password is about to expire and must be changed. When the CWSU forecaster password expires on the AWIPS system, SSH access is terminated until the password is changed. The result is that CWSU forecaster can unexpectedly lose access to their host AWIPS system because of an expired password.

There is a temporary solution to the password expiration. The Anchorage CWSU forecasters were the first to discover that their passwords had expired and they were locked out of AWIPS. Based upon this experience, a procedure was developed which allows the CWSU forecaster to manually log into AWIPS, verify when their password will expire and change the password if required. The step-by-step procedure is being emailed to each AWIPS system that supports a CWSU. A permanent solution, which OS&T is working on, allows for a more automated

solution in which the CWSU forecasters can verify when their password is going to expire and change the password if required.

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

Andy Nappi: The SMTP testing is going well and we should have a readiness review on March 30. The first rollout is expected the first week of April. The Alaska Region sites will be activated next Monday, March 26.

Alaska Region: All of our sites are up to OB7.2 except site AFC and they were re-scheduled for April 10. We have been having problems with vacuuming the PostGres data base when the NCF notifies a site to do so. The instructions we use in the region are dated a year ago. The procedures being followed locks up the data base and causes problems with CRS. The NCF has to go in and reboot the DXs. Are there more recent instructions? Nobody on the call was aware of more recent instructions and Kevin Johnson of the NCF took the action to call Phil Mieczynski after this call to discuss the issue further.

Central Region: Bill Gery brought up the problem with the routerStoreNetcdf problem and it breaking some applications. Bill was not aware that the NCF will push out a 7.1 version of this software to all sites in the next few days. Site BCQ installed OB7.2.1 yesterday and it went well. Most of our sites are receiving the new workstations.

Eastern Region: Site PHI installed OB7.2.1 recently and they are having problems with 12Planet and it is not making sounds on the new workstations. A trouble ticket has been opened up with the NCF. (Editor's Note: Other pre-OB7.2.1 sites have also reported this problem). We have responded to the modem nest inquiries sent out by James Washington of the NCF. Jim Lane responded that it is important that the other regions respond quickly as WSH needs to know the requirements and can allocate the needed money by this summer.

Pacific Region: Bill Ward expressly thanked Jim Lane and Mary Buckingham for their help with the CPSBN instructions.

Southern Region: nothing significant to report.

Western Region: nothing significant to report.

Warning Decision Training Branch: nothing significant to report.

**The next RACC is scheduled for Wednesday, April 4, 2007. If you know of any agenda items you wish to be discussed at this RACC, please e-mail them to Jim Stenpeck and cc Frank Lucadamo. This is to ensure that all of the appropriate WSH personnel attend this RACC to address your issues.**