

ATS-IT strategic engagement

This document outlines the strategic engagement between the AT sector and IT department for the planning and use of ICT services.

The AT sector depends on services provided by IT department to complete its mission. There is an existing cooperation between the BE and IT departments at an operational level and multiple dependencies between the ICT services they operate. This existing operational and technical cooperation will be widened across the AT sector and complemented with a strategy body to ensure the longer-term ICT activities of the AT sector and IT department are aligned and consistent with the accelerator schedules and external constraints. A multi-annual roadmap of ICT services and projects jointly engaging IT department and AT sector will be developed and maintained. The roadmap will be consistent with the CERN accelerator schedule, the departments' strategies and consider the whole lifecycle of services from initial research and technology investigations through to service retirement. The roadmap builds on and shapes the service catalogues of the departments considering dependencies and criticalities to offer functional, secure, and cost-effective solutions.

One example of the purpose and value of developing such a roadmap is the joint engagement in the review of CERN's Technical Network (TN) which serves to interconnect equipment essential for the safe operation of the CERN accelerators and to connect this equipment, via a protective gateway, to other networks at CERN. The TN is one of the most critical networks at CERN and one of the most difficult to upgrade and maintain. The TN was established some 15 years ago and has not evolved conceptually. In contrast, the global technology landscape, IT service catalogue, ATS requirements and expectations have all evolved significantly. The growing dichotomy between the static TN and the evolving outside world result in underutilization of IT department services and expertise, duplication of efforts and solutions across CERN, security holes, and exposure to the risk of future unavailability of existing TN services considered important for accelerator operations. Planning the future for accelerator operation in a functional, secure, and cost-effective manner that goes beyond the current TN requires the coordination of multiple groups within IT department, across the AT sector and experiments, with the commitment of significant resources over an extended period. As such the review of the TN would be an important entry in the ATS-IT roadmap, leading to a joint project engaging AT sector and IT department with defined requirements, objectives, phases, timelines, and resources.

There are many other examples, and a non-exhaustive list includes the Linux platform, container orchestration, tools for DevOps & collaboration, Accelerator Data Centre (CCR) disaster recovery, PCC, MALT, HPC, etc.

Mandate for ATS-IT Steering Committee

The ATS-IT steering committee is the inter-departmental governance body that deals with matters related to strategies and the planning of ICT services across IT department and the AT sector.

The ATS-IT steering committee endorses a five-year multi-annual roadmap for engagement, reviews it annually, monitors its progress and will arbitrate to resolve identified issues.

The ATS-IT steering committee is co-chaired by the heads of IT and BE departments with the support of a secretary with knowledge of the domain. The members are nominated by the co-chairs.

The ATS-IT steering committee shall meet at least four times per year and the co-chairs can call extra meetings as necessary. The agenda and documents for ATS-IT steering committee meetings should be sent out to its members at least 7 days before scheduled meetings. Minutes of the meeting are to be made accessible to members of AT sector and IT department.

Mandate for ATS-IT Technical Committee

The ATS-IT Technical Committee is the inter-departmental governance body that establishes and maintains a five-year multi-annual roadmap of ICT services and projects jointly engaging the IT department and the AT sector. The roadmap will be consistent with the CERN accelerator schedule, the departments' strategies and consider the whole lifecycle of services from initial research and technology investigations through to service retirement. The roadmap builds on and shapes the services catalogues of the departments considering dependencies and criticalities to offer functional, secure, and cost-effective solutions.

The ATS-IT Technical Committee is co-chaired by one management representative from each IT and BE departments nominated by the heads of IT and BE departments. The co-chairs are supported by a secretary with knowledge of the domain and the minutes of the meetings are to be made accessible to members of AT sector and IT department.

The ATS-IT Technical Committee reports to the ATS-IT Steering Committee.

The members are nominated by the co-chairs and are drawn from the AT sector and IT department according to their responsibilities, including service owners from the major ICT domains, directly related to the roadmap. Operational issues that were being addressed via the discontinued IT-BE technical meetings will be followed-up using existing channels with AT and IT each appointing a member to coordinate operational aspects.

The committee will identify the need for joint ATS-IT projects to implement the roadmap and monitor their subsequent progress. The project identification phase includes determining resources, timelines, and expected outcomes, to be presented to the ATS-IT Steering Committee for initial endorsement. The projects will be agreed and monitored by this committee, including objectives, timeline, and resources.

The ATS-IT Technical Committee shall meet at least ten times per year and the co-chairs can call extra meetings as necessary.