



Notes of the 14th RCS-IT Technical Committee held on Friday 24th May 2024

Date: 24th May 2024

Main topic(s): Critical Service Discussion with IT-CD Presentation, Action List Status, PSO status walkthrough, AOB

Present: Simone Campana, Dirk Düllmann, Armin Nairz, Arne Wiebalck, Andreas Joachim Peters, Latchezar Betev, Xavi Espinal, Pere Mato, Jan v. Eldik, James Letts, Enrico Gamberini, Micha Moskovic, Benjamin Bergia

Remote: David South, Alexander Yohei Huss, Maria Girone, Wainer Vandelli, Gianluca Cerninara, James Letts, Gavin McCance

Meeting Minutes: Andreas-Joachim Peters

Adoption of Meeting Minutes

Zhechka (offline comment): "Thanks a lot to German for the details provided about the CDS migration". **Minutes were approved.**

Announcements

Simone Campana in his function as head of engagement in IT announced a change in the RCS-ICT engagement structure starting 1st of July: Zhechka Toteva will step down as deputy, Xavi Espinal will take deputy role (and other duties in the department), Andreas Joachim Peters will take over IT manager role in RCS-ICT.

Discussion on Critical Services for RCS

Introductory discussion: This discussion aims to understand the usage of IT services to provide input to the IT program of work (POW). Its focus is on core IT services. WLCG already maintains a TWiki page of critical services and QoS. This discussion should emphasize supporting critical services and redistributing resources based on priority. It's very unlikely new resources can be added. For IT implementing Piquet services universally is challenging due to resource constraints and organizational structure.

ALICE noted that WLCG has long operated critical services with best-effort support, and this discussion does not change that understanding. The list of critical WLCG services remained



mostly unchanged except for the deletion of the BDII service recently. The commitments for these services are still based on best-effort support defined by a MoU. The discussion also sought to understand why some services are considered critical. Examples of two incidents in CMS highlighted challenges in reaching people and resolving issues promptly when critical services are involved. An annual Piquet exercise was recommended and informally agreed on.

Action: Simone to task Julia Andreeva (as lead of WLCG ops coordination) to organize a yearly test of alarm tickets raised by the experiment run coordinators, down to the piquet call.

Finally, it was emphasized that the discussion should address both data taking (WLCG) and services required by collaborations.

Discussion on Critical Services for RCS

Presentation: Arne Wiebalck IT-CD Service Criticality

The presentation focused on the IT-CD group's critical services for RCS with the aim of better understanding dependencies, differentiating between runtime, recovery and workflow and establishing an objective criticality of services based on impact and urgency. The approach included identifying outliers, disentangling aspects and proposing changes.

Key services presented:

OpenStack: Ranked 2nd place, rated as very critical - common misunderstanding by experiments: this related only to the usage of the API to manage VMs, not the infrastructure running the VMs.. This has to be clarified and 'CERN Cloud Service' has to be better specified using several sub-components.

LxPlus: Ranked 8th, but its criticality was better understood due to its importance for remote shifters, testing and interactive work. IT-CD has an interest to consolidate on the latest lxplus9 platform. Input from CMS for the lxplus future: **lxplus8** is essential for the online community during Run-3 and might be only removed after the run.

Action: James should clarify the feasibility of a potential lxplus8 retirement towards the end of Run-3 with Mark Dobson and within the CMS Computing Coordination. IT Contact for technical questions/follow-up is Arne/IT-CD.

Active Directory: Ranked 7, but should be ranked higher due to critical dependencies. Input from the community: experiments can not judge criticality of dependencies and should not need to specify indirect critical dependencies. If there is a real direct dependency on AD it should be mentioned here.

ACRON: The importance for ATLAS and SME is not fully known. Measures will be taken to further investigate its importance.



Action: Xavier to ask SMEs (Karim and Enrico) about specific ACRON criticalities and dependencies on data taking activities.

MyProxy: Medium criticality, proposed to be reviewed (lowered) due to the change once WLCG infrastructure is fully migrated to token authorization

Tunneling & CERNTS: Both critical for remote configurations, CERNTS requires fixing within a day for ALICE. Differences seen in the way experiments require CERNTS. It was noted that CERNTS has two components:

- terminal service
- remote desktop service

Action: TC chairs to initiate a discussion with ALICE about the specific needs for TS and tunneling, and include Ricardo/Vincent as ATS TC chairs, to see if there is a similar activity on ATS.

HammerCloud: Ranked 10th, outages imply demotion of grid sites.

Linux Support & Puppet: Criticality of Linux support is rated low, but is very important for node and VM installations. Configuration management was rated with almost 100% criticality.

ARGUS: Planned for decommissioning.

CERNMegaBus: It is important to know for IT-CD whether a critical alert system depends on it.

CERTMGR: Availability important for host certificates and Puppet configuration.

TEIGI: Used for secret distribution.

Follow-Up Discussion:

In the discussion, the need to change the procedure for critical service discussions was raised. It was suggested that every criticality statement should be supported by a rationale when collecting information. The exercise of evaluating critical services should be extended to all IT groups/services. For future sessions, slides should be shared a week in advance to allow for feedback. The presentation template used by IT-CD could be adopted by other groups, and combining sessions might be beneficial to not span the critical service session over (too) many RCS-ICT meetings.

The goal of classifying criticality was highlighted by Pere Mato, emphasizing that each criticality class should have an associated quality of service (QoS) and support model, ideally clear from the start. There was a note by Arne Wiebalck about the impact of role changes among senior team members in the IT-CD group on the **Lxplus/afs/Filesystem (Future scenarios for Lxplus and AFS/filesystems)** PSO, potentially delaying the process.



Next RCS-ICT Meeting

The next RCS-ICT meeting will be held on the 23rd of June.

ACTION List Review

<https://cernbox.cern.ch/s/rSEihE0hO1uJNum>

1. **Russian user status transition**:: Simone discussed issue with Pippa Wells; updates to follow.
2. **Collaborative Tools Feedback**: Eric Grancher asked for feedback to PSO via email possibly by 5th of June.
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1OnLuBjG3wiAUILZmpnjELMEjA4TtRsqi8hKTAG2SvW0/edit?usp=sharing>
3. **Container Registry**: No proposal yet from Ricardo/Simone.
4. **SciTags**: Discussed at the WLCG workshop, noted as very useful for distinguishing WLCG traffic.
5. **Security Software Supply Chain**: An ATLAS user requested a curated PyPI repository. Requirements should be discussed with the ATLAS computing coordinator. SSSC has not been a high priority until now, but this could change.
6. **Innovation Roadmap**: Comments were requested by Alberto Di Meglio in a previous RCS-ICT meeting; second round/further discussion to occur after summer.
7. **e-log PSO**: Scope and objectives are currently being rewritten.
8. **FTS Priorities**: Can now be addressed outside of RCS e.g. XRootD/FTS workshops and in experiment specific engagement meetings.

PSO Status

The PSO status update document was presented.

The discussion included:

- **Monthly Walk-through of PSO Status**: The proposal is to collect and present a monthly update on PSO status was suggested, with a reference link provided.
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1_sgm0_2P96cXEv0qJ2pIEjvGqgnADkFYEM7kR_vYEeg/edit?usp=sharing



- **Microelectronic Proposal:** Simone mentioned that the microelectronic proposal can be closed as the evaluation resulted in a decision not to proceed.
- **Critical Service PSO:** Xavier noted that critical service PSO will be removed but should result in a note, summarizing discussions and findings, to be used as input for the IT program of work (POW).
- **LHCb was in contact about** a CERN-wide chatbot solution. (?)
- **Ongoing PSO with ATS sector:** There is an ongoing PSO with ATS how to provide Large Language Model (LLM) solutions. Sofia Vallecorsa and others should be invited to present this activity of interest in RCS-ICT.

Action: TC chairs to invite representatives leading the activity with ATS (eg. Sofia Vallecorsa and Verena) to a future TC meeting.

AOB

Next Steering Committee Meeting: Next meeting is scheduled for June 14. There will be no other RCS-ICT before. The PSO status and action list can be the basis for input to the steering committee.



Actionlist

Action Item	Who	What	Deadline
2024-14-A1	Simone	Task Julia Andreeva (as lead of WLCG ops coordination) to organize a yearly test of alarm tickets raised by the experiment run coordinators, down to the piquet call.	not specified
2024-14-A2	James	Clarify the feasibility of a potential Ixplus8 retirement towards the end of Run-3 with Mark Dobson and within the CMS Computing Coordination. IT Contact for technical questions/follow-up is Arne/IT-CD.	not specified
2024-14-A3	Xavi	Ask SMEs (Karim and Enrico) about specific ACRON criticalities and dependencies on data taking activities.	not specified
2024-14-A4	TC Chairs	Initiate a discussion with ALICE about the specific needs for terminal service and tunneling - include Ricardo/Vincent as ATS TC chairs, to see if there is a similar activity on ATS.	not specified
2024-14-A	TC Chairs	Invite representatives leading the activity with ATS how to provide LLM solutions (eg. Sofia V. and Verena) to a future TC meeting.	not specified