ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF CERN USERS

Minutes of the 42nd meeting held on 2 December 1998


Apologies: F. Barao, Z. Hajduk, K. Huitu, S. Komamiya, M. Martinez, N. Produit, A. Read, P. Závada

* part time

Agenda

1. Chairman's remarks
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. News from the CERN Management
4. Minutes of the previous meeting
5. Matters arising
6. The CERN Stores
7. Physics Courses for Teachers
8. The CERN Kindergarten
9. Users' Office News
10. Meeting Dates for 1999
11. Any Other Business
12. Agenda for the next meeting

DRAFT Agenda for the meeting to be held on Wednesday, 3 March 1999

1. Chairman's remarks
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. News from the CERN Management
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1. CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS
Opening the meeting, P. Bagnaia, the Chairman, welcomed P. Soler, the second additional Delegate for non-Member States who was unable to attend the previous meeting. He welcomed M. Chmeissani, K. Korcyl, E. Lilleløv, J. Ridky and H. Suter representing the Delegates from Spain, Poland, Norway, the Czech Republic and Switzerland respectively.

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA
The agenda was adopted without change.

3. NEWS FROM THE CERN MANAGEMENT
The Director-General presented the outstanding performance statistics for CERN's accelerators in 1998, all of which had broken records. These results depended on the effective functioning of CERN as a whole, and the credit should go to all CERN staff. He then briefly reviewed developments at CERN during his five-year mandate as Director-General. These included:
i) the approval of the LHC, which ensured the future of European particle physics and of CERN for the next quarter of a century,
ii) the outstanding performance of the accelerators, which had delivered more particles to the experiments than expected when they were originally approved, and ingenious ideas and additional investments that would allow (e.g.) LEP to go 10% higher in energy than foreseen four years ago, and the continuation of low-energy antiproton physics at CERN,
iii) the "globalization" of the LHC project, with contributions to the accelerator from many countries, including Japan, Russia and the USA, now agreed, and
iv) a marked improvement of relations between the staff and the CERN Council, Management and Users, in which regard he thanked the Staff Association for the very constructive role that their representatives had played in TREF and in ACCU.
The DG concluded by recalling that the next few years would be very challenging for CERN. The successes of the accelerators, which were based on the excellent work of the staff and past investments, should not blind Users or Delegates to the fact that staff numbers were going down, budgets were tight, and calculated risks would have to be taken in reducing consolidation and postponing preventive maintenance in the coming years. However, CERN could and would rise to the challenge and he was sure that the Organization's future would be as glorious as its past. The Chairman thanked the Director General and L. Foà, Director for Research, for all their support given to ACCU during the past five years.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING
The Minutes of the 41st meeting were adopted as a correct record.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES
D. Stickland regretted that the introduction of the No Smoking rule at CERN had received so little publicity, and felt that the general impression was that the rule could be ignored. He requested positive action, improved publicity, and that the promised designated smoking areas be created. M. Robin, Director of Administration, agreed to increase publicity, and to request Division Leaders to designate appropriate areas for smokers. The Chairman reminded the meeting that a note concerning the tax situation in France had been published in the Weekly Bulletin and also circulated to ACCU Delegates by the Secretary.

Although each Delegate presented verbally his/her country's understanding of the tax problem vis à vis France, the Chairman requested that each Delegate submit a written summary to the Secretary. The Director of Administration informed ACCU that CERN defends the position that France can not tax monies paid by CERN to Users, and awaits a reply. L. Foà thought that, in general, it should not be a problem as Users are not allowed to receive subsistence for more than 6 months at a time. However, he noted that Project Associates are not protected in the same way as Staff.

The Chairman, concluded the discussion asking Delegates to follow the situation for their colleagues and report back to ACCU.

R. Voss informed the meeting that the technology is available to post CERN News that everybody is 'deemed to have read' on the Web. A policy decision is requested from the Management.

6. THE CERN STORES
M. Robin, Director of Administration, showed the distribution of refunds from purchases made through the CERN Stores to teams in 1998. These refunds had been introduced for a trial period at the time the Stores were instructed to become self sufficient. The External Audit considers that the advantages to Teams is minimal (a total refund of KCHF 200 in 1998) and the Management would like therefore to cease this practice from 1 January 1999. The Chairman noted that this would imply an increase of 6% to Teams in purchases made at the Stores, but wondered if a refund would be made to all Teams and Groups if the Stores made a profit.

D. Stickland asked for the terms of reference of self-financing, and pointed out that the greatest amount of money involved is internal to CERN, whereas the Teams bought in money. In reply, M. Robin said that CERN manpower, which has been greatly reduced in recent times, is not included, but does include external contractors. The Logistics Advisory Committee (LAC) must monitor the situation.

ACCU agreed to the proposal of the External Audit, but requested feedback in September 1999.

7. PHYSICS COURSES FOR TEACHERS & THE SUMMER STUDENT PROGRAMME
J. Salicio Diez, presented the eligibility requirements for summer students, and the programme proposed for their stay at CERN which varies from 8 to 13 weeks. There were 156 Summer Students in 1998 selected from 862 applicants. Included in the 156 students were 10 Summer Students from the United States supported by the National Science Foundation. The quota for each Member State is based on that Member State's contribution to the CERN budget.

The High School Teachers' Pilot Programme (HSTPP) took place during the summer of 1998, and was made available for up to 10 teachers for a period of three weeks. Nine teachers from 7 Member States participated despite the relative short notice given. Feedback, both positive and negative, has been received from the participants which will be noted by the Management in its deliberations concerning the future. It should be noted, however, that a strong component of the HSTPP is its outreach potential.

8. THE CERN KINDERGARTEN
J.-P. Matheys, for the Staff Association, presented an overview of the CERN Kindergarten which has a high staff to children ratio. There are 6 classes for 80 children ranging from 2 1/2 to 6 years of age, of whom some 20 are also catered for in the afternoon. In addition the school operates a 'Garderie' for about 15 children on 3 half–days per week. The school is operated through the Staff Association, and is managed by a small committee of 6 people representing the Staff Association, the Staff, parents and the teachers. The monthly fees are CHF 500, unchanged since several years, and CHF 18 per half–day in the 'Garderie'. For Users with a low income, the Staff Association offers a rebate of CHF 100. The fees are adjusted so as to just balance the budget.

Replying to questions, J.-P. Matheys said that the Staff Association had investigated extending the facilities to children below the age of 2 1/2, but found it to be impracticable as different legislation applies. The premises are inappropriate, more staff would be required, and it would not be financially viable. The Director of Administration said that CERN had tried in vain to find a solution with local crèches. A study made in 1997 for a CERN crèche was found to be too expensive. However, it is not excluded to reopen the discussion on this issue depending on the budget available.

Concluding, J.-P. Matheys said that about 15–20% of the children were children of Users, and considered that enrollment for at least one month was a reasonable minimum duration.

9. USERS' OFFICE NEWS
B. Pattison referred to the trial period for requesting transport to the airport etc. after 4.30 p.m. had shown that, if the rules are followed, the cost to the Organization was not excessive, and that the Director of Administration had agreed.
to allow the practice to continue. The situation would be closely monitored to ensure that the scheme was not being abused. Problems have been encountered at Geneva Airport when luggage failed to arrive on the same plane. CERN had informed the airport authorities at the time of sensitive security problems that CERN would not accept delivery of late luggage. B. Pattison has discussed this with the appropriate CERN services who have agreed to accept such deliveries (B33 during working hours and the gate guardians outside working hours) on condition that the individual goes immediately to retrieve their luggage. The Lost Luggage Office at the Airport will be advised of this by C. Ducastel. Discussions are progressing concerning CERN cars registered in France. Feedback is awaited from the French authorities.

10. MEETING DATES FOR 1999
These were agreed to be 3 March, 9 June, 15 September and 8 December. However, the Secretary pointed out that the date of the June meeting might have to change to 8 June due to a request from the Director General designate. (Secretary's note: 8 June is confirmed)

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS
The Chairman thanked those Delegates whose mandates expired at the end of 1998 in case they were not extended.

12. AGENDA FOR THE NEXT MEETING (3 March 1999)
The agenda for the next meeting will be announced in due course.

Bryan Pattison