“Computer Account Lifetimes”

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Computer Account Lifetimes

- **Overview**
  - Background
    - Current situation, timeline, legal aspects, scope
  - Users
  - “Accounts” (Central Computing Resources)
    - Expirations
    - Process
    - Actions

- **Acknowledgments**
  - Desktop Forum members, J.J. Blaising, E. Gianolio, C. Onions, W. van Leersum, R. Woolnough
Computer Account Lifetimes: Background

- **Current situation**
  - Central computing accounts
    - Creation well defined
    - Expiration relying on
      - Computer administrators
      - Annual account review: “6 unused+ 6 blocked months”
      - Periods of uncertainty: “months”
  - Current process does not address responsibilities related to central computing facilities (e.g., administrators of mailing lists, Web sites)
  - Computer security is a major concern

... prepare a clean-up and inform users
Computer Account Lifetimes: Background

- **Timeline**
  - 14 June 2000, ACCU: “Revoking Computer Accounts” (M. Delfino)
  - 7 March 2001, ACCU: “Update on Computing” (M. Delfino)
  - 4 December 2002, ACCU: “Revoking computer Accounts” (T. Cass)
    - [http://cern.ch/ep-div/ACCU/Minutes/Previousminutes/Minutes58.pdf](http://cern.ch/ep-div/ACCU/Minutes/Previousminutes/Minutes58.pdf)
  - 9 October 2003, Desktop Forum: “Computer Account Lifetimes” (L. Pregernig)
      - Subsequent discussions and feedback: J.J. Blaising, E. Gianolio, C. Onions, R. Woolnough
      - Implementation recommended (with some changes of the expiration times)
Computer Account Lifetimes: Background

- **Legal aspects**
    - Sets out the basic rules for the use of CERN computing facilities
    - Complemented by subsidiary rules to be able to manage the basic rules in a more flexible way in a fast moving field
    - If the user's work changes s/he must inform the service manager and revoke access to the account(s)
    - User signature on account registration form: agreement to abide by these rules
  - **New subsidiary rule** will address the lifetime of central computing accounts and related responsibilities (central computing resources)
Computer Account Lifetimes: Scope

- **Included in the scope**
  - **Central computing resources**
    - Central accounts:
      - AFS and Plus, mail and NICE, AIS, Other (Parc, tapes, etc.)
    - Central computing responsibilities and facilities:
      - Administrator of mailing lists (Listbox), PC/system administrator, Web site owner/administrator, remote access (VPN), e-group membership (permissions), use of CERN-licensed software

- **Outside the scope**
  - Accounts managed by other units, like
    - Experiment-specific (CMS, Atlas, etc.)
    - User-community specific (engineering cluster) accounts
Computer Account Lifetimes: Users

- **Categories of members of the personnel**
  - Staff members and assimilated members of the personnel (MPE)
    - Staff, Fellows (FELL)
  - Associated members of the personnel (MPA)
    - Associates (CASS, PDAS, PJAS, UPAS, USAS)
    - Students (ADMI, CHIL, DOCT, SUMM, TECH)
    - Users (“…sent by the institution”)
  - Apprentices (APPR)

- **Other**
  - Retired staff (RETR)
    - With continuing activities (e.g., guides of the visitor service)
  - External company affiliated (CNST, ENTC, TEMC)
  - External (“CERN parenting”), external experiment collaborators (5,600+!)

Reference: Administrative Circular Nº 11, Rev.1
(HR Database abbreviations in parenthesis)
Computer Account Lifetimes: Expirations

Computer Account Lifetimes

- Adm. Trainee, Apprentice, External Company Affiliated
- Children of CERN Personnel, Summer Students
- Associates, CERN Staff at end of contract, "External"*, Fellows, PhD and Technical Students, Users
- CERN Staff: Retiring*

* except special continuing activities

Legend:
- Remote Access
- Listbox
- Administrator, e-group
- Website(s)
- Accounts

Departure Date + 2 Months
Computer Account Lifetimes: Process

- **Triggers**
  - End of contract or affiliation, or periodic (6-month) review for “external” (e.g., experiment collaborators)
  - Change of (HR) category
  
- Annual account review
  - Accounts unused for 6 months
  - Accounts blocked for 6 months

[Diagram of process flow]
Computer Account Lifetime: Process

- **Notify**
  - Users and external experiment collaborators and their “supervisors” by email
    - Users spending less than 50% at CERN: 3 months before contract end
    - Other users: 28 days before contract end
    - External experiment collaborators: 28 days before expiration
  - Others
    - By departure procedure (DAO)
    - Reference date (“D-Day”): departure date (if sooner than contract end)
  - Include in notice the obligation of transferring information and responsibilities (e.g., Web site, administrative permissions)

- **“Supervisors”**
  - Users and external experiment collaborators: team leader
  - Retired staff and “External”: CERN “parent”
  - All others: CERN supervisor/contract manager

- **“Safety net”**
  - Yearly account review
Computer Account Lifetime: Actions

- **Publish rules and have them “counter-signed”**
  - Clearly defined and written into contract and on registration form
    - Clarifies expectations and avoids misunderstandings
    - Currently summer students and children of CERN personnel are informed
  - Inform authorizers about their obligations

- **Integrate rules into departure/affiliation/service change procedure**
  - In preparation: CRA (Computing Resources Administration)
    - Linked to HR database to provide automatic triggers
    - Information consolidation “single-source lookup”
    - Maintain current review process until CRA is ready

- **Effective: 1 February 2005 (target date)**
Computer Account Lifetimes: Questions?