



ALICE interaction with GRID user support structures

Stefano Bagnasco (INFN/ALICE)

Latchezar Betev, Patricia Mendez Lorenzo (CERN/ALICE)

WLCG workshop, Geneva 22-26 Jan 2007

ALICE Grid structure - problem reporting

λ User viewpoint

- v Single point for Grid access - AliEn
- v All Grid services (WMS, storage, file replication) are 'shielded' behind various interfaces
- v As a consequence **all problems** users are experiencing with the Grid appear as 'AliEn problems'
- v User report these to the ALICE Grid support and development teams:
 - v alice-lcg-task-force, alice-grid-analysis mailing lists
 - v AliEn Savannah
- v Users **do not report** problems directly to GGUS

ALICE Grid structure - problem reporting (2)

λ Expert viewpoint

- v Small core team o(15) experts are supporting all aspects of the ALICE Grid operations
- v They run the central and site (VO-Box) services
- v They follow up on problems with AliEn, LCG, etc... proactively
- v All tickets to GGUS (and other Grid support structures) are submitted by these experts
 - v As such these tickets are specific and contain in most cases all necessary information to follow up on the issue
 - v Most of the time, the problem reported is a 'showstopper' for the entire VO at a given site (or number of sites) and for a certain type of operation

ALICE reporting to GRID support

- λ Mostly during the SC4 FTS exercise (September to December 2006)
 - v This was used also to test the efficiency of the ticketing system
 - v All problems/failures were submitted to GGUS
 - v In parallel for expediency these had to be submitted to a regional support group (Britain, Italy)
 - v This is not necessarily known to people and creates confusion
 - v In Italy, tickets are either automatically forwarded by GGUS or directly sent to the INFNGrid ticketing system

ALICE reporting to GRID support

λ Response time to tickets

- v Difficult to gauge the dependencies - unknown who is handling your ticket
- v For some old tickets the response is “do you still see the problem”, which is rather unacceptable
- v In general, the solution is obtained more quickly through direct contact with the site/service expert (this however bypasses the GGUS)
- v **The reported problems are nearly always critical for the operation of the services:** a delay of a day/several days before the problem is fixed reduces severely the service efficiency
- v Still we have 6 tickets in status “not solved” since a long time

λ Regular tickets related to other problems as well, much lower frequency

Some ticket statistics

- λ In the last year, ALICE has submitted **117 tickets**, most of them from the beginning of the FTS tests.
 - v 53% are related to FTS issues (the server, SRM endpoints, transfers themselves, and VO-Boxes issues affecting FTS)
 - v Most critical phase was at the beginning on the FTS transfers when it was not clear what was responsible for the failure
 - v Rest of tickets have been submitted for various and different reasons (security, etc)
- λ Plus 23 directly to INFNGrid Ticketing System
 - v Mostly about Tier-1 and Tier-2 operational problems
 - v (Usually) faster than GGUS - smaller and more homogeneous
- λ **GGUS has been massively used for FTS and *not* for production.**
 - v For production we have in most of the places dedicated people which speed up the resolution of the problem.

GRID support tickets for ALICE

- λ All tickets, assigned to ALICE by the GRID support structures are submitted to the alice-lcg-task-force list
 - v Internally, these are distributed to the appropriate expert
 - v So far, this system is working well
 - v Tickets of this type are very rare

ALICE wish list & suggestions

- λ Consolidation of LCG User Support - single *efficient* entry point for all sites/regions/countries
- λ Add another priority level like “Affects the entire VO”
 - v Accessible only to selected list of experts from a VO
 - λ **GGUS is still too much slower than direct interaction**
- λ Improve the list of experts to whom the tickets must be assigned, and support direct interaction
 - v Otherwise GGUS email looks much like SPAM...
 - v Regional systems not always help (duplicate messages)
- λ More control of tickets taking a long time to fix.
 - v Weeks before a ticket is solved is not acceptable
 - v This is also responsibility of the ROC managers.