

Minutes from conference call on September 11, 2013.

Present from NIST: Rob Dimeo, Dan Neumann and Bill Kamitakahara
NUG members

Topic 1: Panel Assessment in July

The panel committee was charged with the task of taking a closer look at the technical merits of the NCNR and compare them to other facilities of its kind nationally and internationally.

They were very impressed with the facility: excellent national and international standing, responsiveness to users especially with the user group, commented on the good job done with the facility upgrade (on time and on budget) especially given the extensive outage, and the new consortium formed with industry (nSOFT).

Concerns: impact on travel given the budget restrictions (in particular, attending workshops and meetings helps NIST serve the user community). Fluctuations in the supply of He was also a concern. This has a strong impact on the research and the reactor itself. Reactor fuel has increased in cost by about 50 % (check this). Impact on NSF funding.

Recommendations: hold a workshop to assess the needs in terms of instrument development. It's been six years since the last workshop. The workshop will potentially be coupled with the CHRNS program. This is very much at the planning stages and the workshop will be held on 2014.

Goal of the workshop is to decide what the NCNR should look like in 2020. What instruments does the community want? This will need to feed into the CHRNS proposal, which will be submitted in approximately 1 year. The workshop program will be short, but will include many break-out groups for discussion. This can include discussion of not only instrumentation but also sample environments.

Action item: stay in close touch with Dan and Rob as NIST needs the community input

Topic 2: Facility Update

Good news was that the NCNR has its budget with initiative funding offsetting the reductions during sequestration. As a result they are moving forward with the development of VSANS, Cantor (and one more which I missed). They also got funded internally for the development of a neutron microscope in collaboration with the physics division (\$5 million / 5 yrs). Spin-echo has been dismantled and moved to the new guide hall. Currently there are 4 operating instruments (10 m SANS, prompt gamma activation analysis and 2 reflectometers) and one in

commissioning in the new guide hall. Max moved to BT-9 and is performing very well with the background reduced considerably.

Topic 3: ACNS 2014

The ACNS will be the first week of June 2014 and therefore the planned workshop will most likely come after. The user group may be involved in the planning and developing a program. Look into pulsed magnetic fields and steady state neutron facilities.

Action item: ACNS 2014, Julie is the chair of the meeting. NUG can help.

Topic 4: Health Physics Update

Completely new system with most of the training online (to be completed before the user arrives at NIST). There is now reciprocity with ORNL (for the online training). The on-site tour does still take place and the time will be earlier at 9:00 am, to accommodate users starting their experiments on the same day.

Topic 5: National User Facility Organization (NUFO)

Good idea for NIST NUG to join NUFO. They are an advocacy group, have activities such as the annual hill days. NIST cannot formally be a part of it, but the user group can.

Action item: NUG contacts NUFO to join.

Topic 6: GRC on Neutron Scattering

Last item brought up was a Gordon Research Conference on neutron scattering in Hong Kong. Good idea or not?? The general consensus was that the conference is a good idea, but perhaps not the location. The US neutron community (i.e. government employees and university researchers) are going to have difficulty attending due to cost.