CoCom issues for Board from Committees – November 2014

RESPONSES FROM Board following 18-19 Nov meeting

1. DS Informational Item: DSSC approved several plans and policies at F2014 meeting: Strategic Action Plan; Data Provider Agreement; Data Acceptance Policy. See <http://www.iris.edu/hq/programs/ds/#policies>.
2. DS DMC to hold publication-dependent supplementary data, treated as data product, for the EPSL USArray special issue. This process amounts to an unfunded task that benefits for-profit journals at IRIS’s cost - is this desirable? DS seeks Board’s perspective on how IRIS should be interacting with authors and publishers regarding access to datasets used in publications and supplementary information.

***The Board is concerned about unfunded scope increases, and would like to have resources identified before future such arrangements are made. In general, publishers should be responsible for archival of material they publish. In this particular case authors were encouraged to submit Data Products to IRIS in parallel with their manuscript so the products are not obviously part of the reviewed publication, a distinction that the Board encourages. See Bulkmail announcement Feb. 1, 2013:*** *<http://www.iris.washington.edu/pipermail/bulkmail/2013-February/001854.html>* ***.***

***While the impact of the USArray volume seems minimal, any future such arrangements should include an identification of available resources.***

1. DSSC recommends Board should revisit strategic partnership with SCEC given what is going on at the SCEC leadership level.

*Background: When the DSSC met at SCEC for the spring meeting Phil Maechling gave a presentation about some of the SCEC activities. These including such things as providing storage for some of the visualizations they have produced in the past and also such things as acting as a host for the California velocity model. There was some concern about the costs of some of the activities but the broader issue of what should be, if any, the relationship between SCEC and IRIS. Since this is not limited to Data Services the DSSC thought the question of exactly what formal relationship should be considered between IRIS and SCEC and are therefore bringing it to the BoD of IRIS for discussion.*

***The Board supports DMS in declining unfunded projects. Unfortunately, IRIS does not have the resources to accept new data products from external groups, except through the Data Products Working Group process. The Board also thanks you for highlighting the strategic possibilities with SCEC, and is using the opportunity to discuss how to pursue opportunities for joint proposals and funded projects.***

***This and the previous query indicate a general concern with the impact of Data Products on DMC operations. The DS is encouraged to report to the Board more broadly how IRIS’s commitment to Data Products could evolve during the current rescoping effort, and the Board encourages the DSSC to evaluate the importance of Data Products relative to the resources they require.***

1. DS Several concerns have emerged after Sweetwater regarding management of large datasets. DS will work with IS to produce a policy regarding DMC costs associated with such experiments, where proposals should support the cost of archiving the initial data when the data volume is large. It should also capture the need for better coordination between IS/PASSCAL and DS so no one is surprised.  DSSC encourages IS and DS to work together on a plan that provides sustainability for these types of experiments. Given that past practice is that the DMC houses data collected through IRIS IS programs, this would be a change in policy that might surprise both PI’s and NSF and requires board consideration before it could ever be implemented. We are looking for Board agreement on this activity.

*Background: Large data sets such as these place significant demands on the resources of IRIS Data Services. The DSSC discussed the idea that at a minimum the storage costs of Large-N data sets need to be included in the project costs and the DMC should not be expected to just absorb unanticipated demands of temporary experiments that are voluminous. Even the distribution of data sets that are 10s of terabytes needs new thinking as the Internet is not viable. DS has started looking at new ways of distributing large data sets but it requires resources (human and financial) that are rather limited within current IRIS budgets.*

***The Board encourages IS and DS to develop a process and regular discussions to manage such data sets. In general, cross-directorate efforts will be critical to manage the collection and impacts of “Large-N”-type efforts, which represent significant new challenges and opportunities across IRIS. Several issues should be worked through, such as what defines a “Large-N dataset”, the formatting and delivery methods, and how appropriate costs are identified. The Board asks IS and DS to work together to produce a report outlining the issues in recovering costs for Large-N data, with recommendations, with preliminary findings presented at the Winter Board meeting.***

1. DSSC recommends an outside advisory board to IRIS include IT professionals and other key personnel; this should be IRIS-wide not per committee.

*Background: The External Panel that reviewed IRIS Data Services recommended that Data Services establish a Technical Advisory Board to better connect DS with current trends and practices particularly in the area of Information Technology and international standards. The DSSC discussed this and did not feel that the establishment of an independent TAB was an efficient use of IRIS resources. At the same time the DSSC was aware that the BoD is considering establishing an External Advisory Board and feels that having representation with technical expertise on the BoD’s advisory board was a more efficient way to address this recommendation raised by the Data Services External Review Panel.*

***The BoD is establishing an External Advisory Council. The Advisory Council will start with a small number of members and grow over time. We plan to include members from industry. While membership could include someone from the IT industry, the kinds issues the Advisory Council will be asked to provide advice on are not likely to involve the level of technical details described above. If the DMC requires ongoing advice regarding current trends and practices in Information Technology it may be better to consider adding someone with this expertise to the DMC Standing Committee or seeking some other mechanism to obtain external technical advice on a regular basis.***

1. DSSC recommends Board-level discussion between IRIS and USGS regarding archiving and distribution of strong-motion data.

*Background: While the DMC manages some strong motion data at this time, mostly from universities with strong motion sensors in their regional networks, there is not an established agreement that the DMC should become more inclusive in managing strong motion data. It is important to note that the originally envisioned amount of strong motion data in the ANSS dwarfs the amount of broad-band data and therefore would require resources to absorb and sustain the management of strong motion data. There are other groups that are already doing this such as COSMOS and the USGS NSMP. The DSSC encourages the Board to provide input as to how DS should respond with requests to manage strong motion data in a more systematic manner and how the costs should be met.*

***The Board encourages efforts to seek outside funds for these activities. Detrick will put this item on the agenda of next regular meeting with USGS contacts.***

1. DS and PASC Informational Item: development of “ph5” format for handling active-source as yet unproven; requires coordination to see if it works both at DMC and for users. It also requires coordination to ensure DMC and PIC are on the same page on this project, going forward. DS is assuming that *ph5* will be an effective way to manage active source data and at this time sees no other option, and is relying completely on PIC personnel to support the software. The PASC Rescoping Plan may impact *ph5* support by FY18.

***This item is related to the answer to #4: It is important that anything that affects IRIS’s ability to handle Large-N datasets be coordinated between IS (PASSCAL) and DS, and the development of PH5 may be an important element of developing Large-N capabilities. The Board asks management of both directorates to put together an outline of plans to implement any of these new activities. The Board should be updated on progress toward such plans by the February meeting, including full assessment of budgetary impact.***

1. TA Informational Items: (a) Issues continue with compliance for large procurements; (b) Multiyear project has quite different tasks in different years-the scale is set in early years; (c) Adapting to single work area with warehouse, office, resident staff; (d) EUS and Cascadia not supported past Sept 2015 (Cascadia has no ramp-down plan).
2. Polar and PASC: Seek approval for direct PASC involvement in Polar governance because many Polar activities leverage PIC resources; see *memo* outlining joint reporting of PNSC to ISSC and PASC.

***While the Board recognizes the impact of Polar programs on PIC operations, it seems like the issues raised in the Memo can be dealt with by the existing governance structure either handled through the designated Liaison between PASC and PNSC, through IS, or through the Portable Manager. If other issues exist that are not being adequately handled by current practices, the Board encourages PASC and PNSC to provide more information.***

1. EPO Informational Item: Developing prospectus for Masters-level summer industry internship, to be fully funded by industry; formal pitches planned Spring 2015
2. EPO: Soliciting suggestions on how new project associate (D. Sumy) may help in dissemination of best practices of other parts of IRIS. *(Note: DS is interested in capturing elements of DS workshops that relate to Best Practices, e.g. station site selection and installation, real-time transmission protocols)*

***The Board encourages EPO to engage with IDS to seek opportunities for such documents, for example associated with the Chile Workshop.***

1. PASC Informational Items: (a) Management realigned with K Anderson as main Portable contact point, and J Sweet as newly-hired Project Associate; (b) Developing Implementation Plan for reuse of unneeded TA sensors to PASSCAL pool; (c) Sustainability Committee recommendations being finalized, high concern is grossly inadequate Materials & Supplies budget vs actual expenses; (d) this was a busy RAMP year, but unfunded.
2. PASC: NSF requested a data metric for PASSCAL, but analysis shows that without FA-level of support any metric would be largely in PI hands outside PIC control.

***The Board thanks PASC for trying to accommodate NSF’s request, and concurs with PASC’s assessment given current funding levels. SMT will discuss this issue with NSF.***

1. IDS: Advanced Studies Institutes have been very successful, when linked to DS workshops. (IDS report outlines recommendations for future ASI Best Practices.) Are funds available for future piggyback ASI’s?

***There is significant synergy between the DS workshops and IDS goals. As the DS workshops have evolved from metadata workshops to Managing Data from Seismic Networks, the content of the workshops has appropriately developed to reflect new topics. ASIs that piggyback on the DS workshops have also evolved to reflect the background and skill sets of DS workshop attendees. The workshops that DS supports play an important role in developing both the technical and human capacity in developing countries. Given that the participants of the DS workshops and the ASI’s that piggyback on the DS workshops are the same, the Board encourages DS and IDS to work together to plan an integrated workshop – one that meets the goals of both DS and IDS. We anticipate that the budget available for a workshop similar to the recent workshop on Bogota (6 days) would be sufficient for such a workshop. If this is not the case, the Board would be open to considering an increased increment of funding. In the long term, the Board would like the IDSC to engage both DS and IS to assess the upcoming workshop in Chile (May 2015). Perhaps it’s time to evaluate the benefits of an annual workshop on Best Practices for Sustainable Networks moving forward. In some respects, the 2014 Bogota DS workshop already seems to be moving in this direction.***

1. IDS: regarding potential SZO, recommends significantly expanded communication with international partners, possibly coordinating with USGS and DoS to reach decision-makers. IRIS should brief USGS Internal Programs Office.

***The Board thanks IDS for pointing out these critical connections, and encourages IDS to remain engaged with SZO development efforts so that these communications can take place at appropriate points.***

1. IDS: any pan-IRIS publication database, should it be implemented, should be used on the ALMAS web site.

***The Board requests more information on what is being requested.***

1. GSN Informational Items: (a) Seismometers are reclassified as a part of intrusion detection system – will impact all International seismic experiments. (b) Analysis shows that 20% of the network is now degraded due to flat budgets and deferred maintenance with deterioration rate ~2% per year; (c) Lind Gee is moving from ASL to Menlo in January, leaving Dave Wilson as acting Scientist-in-charge until her position can be filled.

*Background on (a): The Department of Commerce has announced adoption of expanded export controls on "seismic intrusion detection systems", described as items providing the ability to “detect, classify and determine the bearing on the source of a detected signal.” While we know that our seismometers and associated equipment are not "seismic intrusion detection systems", this ruling could have a significant (unintentional) impact on any export (outbound shipping) of seismic research equipment. The export specialist at UCSD is following the issue closely and IRIS is working with UCSD to coordinate a multi-institution response that will seek to get the ruling re-worded to clarify how it does not apply to seismic research equipment.*

1. GSN: Management understaffing has delayed development of GSN Review briefing book, rescoping plan, and Quality implementation. The Acting Program Manager (Woodward) needs to be able to spend significant effort on developing the Briefing Book for the upcoming GSN Review; need short-term, focused effort on this.

***Management is addressing this issue; the Board recognizes the importance of the Review.***

1. IS GSN PASC DS Informational Item: Data Quality Principles document being developed between programs.
2. OBSIP Informational Items: (a) “reallocation” of $2300K in unspent and unallocated funds in progress; NSF/MGG is recalling c. $600K for use in core science programs. (b) plans for using reallocation for new common data logger has been stopped.