EARN EXECUTIVE - CONFIDENTIAL TO THE EARN EXECUTIVE

Organisation of technical work in EARN
Approved by the EARN Executive, April 1989
To be issued for comment to the BOD and then to EARNTECH

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1 EARNTECH

The technical group we call EARNTECH was originally formed as a closed
group with a limited number of delegates per country as the technical
supplement to the BOD.

In time EARNTECH, as measured by the number of people on the (closed)
EARNTECH lists, has grown to more than 160 people, persons from all
over the world, essentially being an open group although one of the
list owners must put a person on the list. Many people are only on the
list to listen, and the EARNTECH discussion is also propagated to
other distribution lists.

After the NOG was defined, there is no reason to have an EARNTECH with
a limited number of members per country. Countries like Germany and
France with more that a hundred nodes naturally have more technical
people than a country like Luxembourg with only one node. Also,
technical questions within EARN is so wide a notion that probably
nobody can have a reasonably deep understanding of and interest in
all.

Therefore the EARNTECH will be declared as an entirely open group,
which could meet at EARN conventions and have a distribution list for
very general and introductory questions for node administrators, like
we have the EARN-UG list for users. There are about 500 nodes so that
the potential number of members in EARNTECH is maybe more than 500,
since the group would be completely open and some nodes could have
more than one technically active person.

The purpose of the EARNTECH will be information exchange, but also
initial discussions providing input for work being performed in either
existing or new project groups or thematic groups as described below.

There will be no formal structure in EARNTECH.

2 Project and permanent operations groups

For projects and operations purposes we need well defined groups with specific responsibilities and goals. The EARN manager and/or the Executive member responsible for the specific area will chair such a group and be responsible for policy and economic aspects of the work, for securing funds and for reporting to the Executive and the Board. The project groups will normally have their own distribution list, open for review but with subscription by owner.

The EARN-NOG is such a group which is established with the responsibility for the international backbone. Its members are primarily working at international EARN nodes, responsible for key operations tasks or special experts.

The EARN-X25 group is established from people at the switch sites and those working with the G-boxes and E-boxes and others who may contribute to the project. The goal of the group is to get the X.25 backbone working according to the OSI migration plan.

The EARNSTAT group is established with people from international nodes and others contributing to the goal of providing statistic of the EARN traffic, primarily the international part, to provide a basis for configuration and routing and maybe cost sharing.

New project groups can be established by the Executive, but if funds are needed for purposes outside of the current budget, then a decision is required in the Board.

3 Thematic groups.

Many technical developments may be important for the development of EARN on a short or long term perspective and thus warrant the establishment of a technical group of people interested in or experts in specific areas of networking. The work in such groups would typically be focused on areas where no EARN projects are (yet) established.

Examples are the existing X.400 group, the EARN-SNA group and the groups working with specific tools like NETSERV and LISTSERV.

The thematic groups will be open or closed and organise and elect a chairman as they see fit. Executive members may or may not participate for liaison purposes. The groups may produce reports and recommendations which would be submitted either to an existing project

group for information or to the Executive or the Board if decisions on policy or money are recommended.

The thematic groups would work with normally public distribution lists and meet at EARN conventions or other occasions where many participants have a chance to be together.

The initiative to start a new thematic group may come from anywhere, and the creation of new groups should be announced in EARNTECH so as to draw participants from a wide audience.