

EARN Document

Title: BITNET answer to EARN request on listservers
co-ordination
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Mail from Alain Auroux to Jim Conklin

As you know, since July this year, Eric Thomas, who developed and maintains LISTSERV, stopped supporting it for EARN sites, and to distribute the latest version (version 1.6) to EARN, except to a few selected sites which signed a new contract with him.

In the mean time, EARN signed a contract with Eric Thomas which gives us the right to distribute the previous version, 1.5o, to (and only to) EARN sites. This contract also allows us to to develop our own version of LISTSERV based on LISTSERV 1.5o. This EARN version of LISTSERV is called LISTEARN.

LISTEARN is developed, supported and distributed by Turgut Kalfaoglu (address above) who works full time for EARN, and is paid by EARN.

For the time being, LISTSERV and LISTEARN are fully inter-operable but, although we wish to keep this full inter-operability, it is not guaranteed, as we do not master LISTSERV development, and we are starting to develop a LISTEARN - LISTSERV gateway called LISTGATE.

During a recent meeting of the EARN operations group (NOG), It was agreed that an agreement was necessary with BITNET over responsibility for defining the backbone status of EARN listservers in the BITNET version of PEERS NAMES.

The EARN Executive Committee endorsed the NOG view, and decided to send to BITNET and NETNORTH the enclosed NOG declaration:

Listservers in use are in use on both networks
whose operation is governed by certain data files
(PEERS NAMES and LINKSWT FILE). These data files are

currently being maintained by two persons, of whom one takes responsibility for servers within EARN, and the other takes responsibility for the servers on the other networks.

It is important that these data files are kept in close synchronization in order to avoid disruption of service and imposition of unnecessary remedial work on the personnel at server sites.

EARN wishes therefore to conclude an agreement with BITNET to co-ordinate update of these files and to establish appropriate assignment of responsibilities for the data representing our respective networks.

May I please have your answer to the above statement.

Thanks and best regards,

Alain Auroux
EARN Manager

Reply from Jim Conklin <CONKLIN@BITNIC> to Alain Auroux <AUROUX@FRORS12>

cc: CREN Board list <CREN-BD@BITNIC>,
Frode Griesen <NEUFRODE@NEUVM1>,
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Alain,

By copy of this reply, I forward your request to the CREN Board (where I assume it will be considered by the Board's Policy and Services Committees) for its consideration. You are, of course, aware that the implementation of the desirable goal is nontrivial for BITNET, as it currently is using the services of Eric Thomas for maintaining the files you mention. It is also not clear to me that LISTSERV is the long-term solution to the services it is currently providing, though it certainly appears to be the solution for the next couple of years, and we'd better make it operate properly! Maintenance of those lists by BITNIC staff will require time to be taken from other tasks, however, and I'm not prepared to commit to that yet, especially without explicit understanding of the trade-offs by the CREN Board.

Jim

Reply from NETNORTH

As far as I'm concerned, what is happening within the BITNET and the NetNorth networks with respect to LISTSERV is happening to NetNorth's satisfaction. If EARN wishes to conclude an agreement with BITNET to ensure harmonization between LISTSERV and alternate code developed by EARN, I think EARN should go ahead and do that. I see no need to conclude a separate agreement with NetNorth; that would only introduce unneeded confusion.