

April 27, 2006 SHUG Executive Committee Conference Call:

Members Present (7):

Despina Louca
Mark Lumsden
David Londono
Janna Maranas
Steve Shapiro
Angus Wilkinson
Igor Zaliznyak

1. SNUG Information

SNUG is composed of representatives from all DOE user facilities.

We need a SNUG representative by May 5th to represent SHUG in the October meeting. Currently, the SNUG representative is the chair of the respective user group. The current thinking is that this representative would be a 3 year position.

Q. Should we include this on the ballot for the next election? The feeling is that this may be too far in the future.

There is some work involved in this position as meetings with Congress requires a fair bit of research as to the needs/interests of the respective Congressmen.

NSSA tried to join SNUG this past year (Roger Pynn) but the number of people was limited and he couldn't join.

However, Roger can join for this year – the meeting in Washington is scheduled for the 3rd week of October.

NUG (NIST User Group) may be interested in participating as well.

LANL/IPNS user groups should join this effort as well to boost neutron representation.

[Action Item] Angus will tell Roger about the opportunity to join.

[Action Item] Despina will contact the LANL user group.

We should be careful not to call this a lobbying effort as DOE employees are not allowed to lobby Congress.

Instead, this should be thought of as an educational effort – to educate Congress on the types of science done at these user facilities.

The message we want to send is that we want Congress to sign the President's budget.

October will be close to the appropriations meetings and purpose of the October meeting will be to remind Congress of what we do and how it benefits society.

SNUG will go as a group representing all the DOE user facilities – as opposed to the individual user group representatives meeting with Congress individually.

Everyone agrees that SHUG should have a permanent advocacy representative on SNUG.

Q. Should this person be appointed or elected? Currently, the position will need to be an appointed position with the eventual plan that it should be elected. An elected position involves a change in the SHUG bylaws as it involves adding an officer to the Executive Committee. These bylaw changes need to be voted on and, consequently, can't be enforced until after the next election. As this is too far in the future, the position should be appointed for the time being.

2. SHUG Survey for HFIR

The results of a SHUG survey discussing issues at HFIR are tabulated and indicate that the 3 most important issues for users are:

1. Source reliability – importance of having the reactor run on a reliable schedule to facilitate planning of experiments and travel.
2. The value of the HFIR cold source to their research effort.
3. Extreme sample environments – high magnetic field, pressure, etc.

These results weren't surprising.

One question rated surprisingly low in the survey, namely, would the SANS/Reflectometer at HFIR be valuable to your research effort. It is believed that the reason this question rated so low is the audience who responded to the survey. Even though the survey was sent to the entire SHUG email list, it is quite likely that most of the responses came from recent HFIR users. Due to the current instrument suite in the user program, this means primarily hard condensed matter users working on the triple-axis. As such, it's not surprising that the SANS and Reflectometers were not considered essential to their research.

3. HFIR Review

The HFIR review is scheduled for May 23rd-25th.

There will be a closed session with representation from SHUG and several recent users together with the review committee.

Despina has agreed to attend this meeting.

It would be nice to have an additional representative from SHUG – Steve Shapiro and/or Igor Zaliznyak will most likely be able to attend as well.

4. Nominations for vice-chair

As per our bylaws, we need to elect a vice-chair from the current set of executive committee members. This person will act as chair after the next election and will also serve a 3rd 1.5 year term as past chair.

[Action Item] It was agreed that we would simply rank the 4 eligible members and email the ranked list to Despina. If anyone is not willing to be vice-chair, their name will be removed from the list.

5. ACNS Breakout Session

SHUG has reserved a room for Wednesday afternoon at the ACNS for a breakout session.

What should we discuss?

One possibility is to have Thom Mason, Ian Anderson, and Steve Nagler discuss the management changes at SNS/HFIR (the merging of the two organizations into a single neutron directorate).

A second idea would be to discuss the HFIR cold source project with particular focus on the capabilities of the SANS. It is agreed that this seems like a better topic – we can get Greg Smith to arrange some presentations.

[Action Item] We will put together a flyer to advertise the SHUG session. This will be distributed by email and possibly handed out at the registration desk.

On a related note, there are already some hotel issues with the Saturday night before the start of ACNS. This only really impacts people attending the Sunday workshops.

6. SHUG Web Site

The idea of having a Wiki for the SHUG web site was proposed previously. It is clear that this will not work under the current scheme of having ORNL manage the web site due to computer security concerns. We should remember this as a future option particularly if we can have the web site managed elsewhere (for instance, through JINS).

[Action Item] It is suggested that should have a SNS/HFIR news column with bulleted news items. Mark will set up the news entry on the web site.