eRA Project Team Meeting Minutes

Date:	Tuesday, September 9, 2003
Time:	9:00–11:00 a.m.
Location:	6700 B Rockledge, Room 1205
Chair:	JJ McGowan

Next Meeting: Tuesday, September 23, 9:00 a.m., 6700 B Rockledge, Room 1205

Action Items

1. (Jim Cain) Investigate having OMA hire an independent contractor to certify "reliability" of the eRA system.

2. (Jim Cain) Once an independent evaluation of eRA System "reliability" is complete, provide to Marcia Hahn a written response to the question: "Does the current level of security in the system give us the assurance that the existing system is "reliable" from a document authenticity point of view?"

3. (Advocates) Send any high-level ideas that may be used for break-out sessions at the Project Team retreat to Amy Burns and JJ McGowan.

Attachments

❑ eRA Support and Reporting of NIH Sponsored Research (JJ McGowan): http://era.nih.gov/Docs/DrZerhouni_09092003_final.pdf

❑ ATSIG: The Future is Now (Steve Hausman): http://era.nih.gov/Docs/ATSIG.pdf

❑ eRA Program Module Update (Israel Lederhendler): http://era.nih.gov/Docs/PGM_Update_09092003.pdf

Project Report

JJ McGowan

JJ quickly reviewed the slides prepared for his meeting with Dr. Zerhouni. The presentation focused on several key topics, including: co-investigator and key personnel tracking, enterprise reporting of scientific spending, and status of E-Grants activities (eRA and Grants.gov). *See attached presentation for details.*

The team raised a concern that requests by OPDIVs for customization and enhancement of the eRA systems are already consuming Advocate time. Jim Cain noted that OPDIVs have been instructed to use the eRA system "*as is*" whenever possible and to make efforts to adapt to the current system. JJ instructed the Advocates to have OPDIVs bring policy issues between OPDIVs and eRA to Andrea Brandon and Charlie Havekost in the Department.

ATSIG: The Future Is Now

Steve Hausman

Steve Hausman recently formed the Advanced Technologies Special Interest Group (ATSIG) as part of his outreach effort to disseminate information on Advanced Technologies. The link to the ATSIG website is on the Advanced Technologies web page on the eRA website.

To give the team a flavor of the kind of information that can be found under the Advanced Technologies umbrella, he touched on some of the up and coming technologies, such as, nanotechnology, grid computing, DARPA and the "Grand Challenge" and Apres XP. *See attached presentation for details.*

Program Update

Izja Lederhendler

Izja provided an update on the Program (PGM) module. He reviewed basic design goals, operations, features implemented in the Summer release and features currently in development. A short demonstration following his presentation showed the team how PGM assists users in typical daily tasks. *See attached presentation for details.*

Electronic Files & Legality of Scanned Signatures

Marcia Hahn

A small group of Chief Grant Management Officials (GMOs) met recently to discuss the issue of recognizing electronic files as official grant files and the legality of scanned signatures. Although efforts to work through official OMA channels to NARA continue, the group decided to approach the issue from another angle as well. Marcia found a phrase in section C.2.b.(2).(e). of HHS GPD 3.06 that states: "Applicable documents must be included in hard copy (including electronic documents, such as e-mail request for prior approval) **or must be referenced to a separate file or repository**."

Latching on to that small phrase, the group requested that Regina White send a note to the Department advising them that NIH would officially recognize electronically generated and/or stored documents as the official grant file (MEMORANDUM: NIH Recognizing Electronic Files as Official Grant File Repository).

In a companion action, the group requested that OPERA secure an official OGC opinion concerning the legality of scanned signatures as the original. Regina recently received a response on her inquiry. To be able to use electronic records as evidence, the government must establish that the records were generated and maintained by a "trustworthy" process. The electronic process must reliably show who transmitted a piece of information to the agency, when it was transmitted, and that it has not been altered either intentionally or inadvertently.

Action: **(Jim Cain) Investigate having OMA hire an independent contractor to certify "reliability" of the eRA system.**

Action: **(Jim Cain) Once an independent evaluation of eRA System "reliability" is complete, provide to Marcia Hahn a written response to the question: "Does the**

> **current level of security in the system give us the assurance that the existing system is "reliable" from a document authenticity point of view?"**

Marcia encouraged the team also to think in terms of maintaining the integrity of original documents. Updates to documents should always be done in a way that maintains the historical records in tact (i.e., files are not overwritten when updated).

The team asked how appendices would be handled when using an electronic file repository. Marcia indicated that it would be unreasonable to expect all appendix documents to fit nicely into electronic formats and that a combination of electronic and other repositories will be needed. JJ mentioned that many times supporting documents are included in the appendices out of convenience only and are not required as part of the grant. A clear explanation of official appendix information is necessary.

eRA Project Team Retreat Update

Amy Burns

The eRA Project Team Retreat—*Resetting the Vision—*will take place October 9–10, 2003, at the Harbourtowne Golf Resort & Conference Center in St. Michaels, MD.

The agenda is pending approval and will be posted on the eRA website shortly.

JJ asked the team to provide any high-level ideas that may be used for break-out sessions to Amy Burns and himself.

Action: **(Advocates) Send any high-level ideas that may be used for break-out sessions at the Project Team retreat to Amy Burns and JJ McGowan.**

Attendees

Austin, Patricia (OER/COB)	Fitzgerald, Steve (RN Solutions)	Morris, Richard (NIAID)
Bradley, Eileen (CSR)	Gaines, Patti (OER)	Morton, Larry (OER)
Burns, Amy (LTS/COB)	Gibb, Scarlett (COB)	Morton, Pete (CIT)
Caban, Carlos (OER)	Goodman, Mike (OD/OER)	Panniers, Richard (CSR)
Cain, Jim (OER)	Hahn, Marchia (OER/OPERA)	Ratnanather, Chanath (Z-Tech)
Carter, Dave (OER)	Hausman, Steve (NIAMS)	Siegert, Mark (OPERA)
Collie, Krishna (RN Solutions)	Lederhendler, Israel (NIMH)	Silverman, Jay (NGIT)
Copeland, Zoe-Ann (OD/OER)	Liberman, Ellen (NEI)	Sinnett, Everett (CSR/OD)
Cox, Michael (OER)	Loewe, Michael (NINDS)	Soto, Tracy (OD/DEIS)
Cummins, Sheri (LTS/COB)	Martin, Carol (NHGRI)	Tucker, Jim (OER)
	McGowan, JJ (NIAID)	Van Brunt, Virginia (LTS)
		Zucker, Sherry (DEIS