ECB/QVR Steering Committee

Electronic Council Book–Query/View/Reporting System Steering Committee
Date: Wed., August 28, 2002
Time: 10:00 a.m.–noon
Location: Rockledge 2, 9th Floor Conference Room
Advocate: Thor Fjellstedt

Next Meeting: Wed., September 25, 10:00 a.m.–noon, Rockledge 2, 9th Floor Conf. Room

Action Items

1. (Thor) Delineate in a report the long- and short-term vision and goals of the QVR/ICE project, including its relationship with eRA. Present this report to eRA as well as ICs. This report also should enumerate the multiple ways QVR meets user needs.
2. (Thor) Survey the ICs to determine whether there would be a higher interest in scientific coding tools or in portfolio management. Should time and effort be put into developing a prototype database that QVR could access or should the project begin with a data-entry tool (a la Jim Seach's) to enhance putting data into the proposed database? Send survey via the ECB listserv.

New Directions for QVR

This meeting was a discussion about how to move forward in the development of QVR despite the lack of support and funds by the eRA Project Team.

The current direction of the ECB/QVR, as presented at the July meeting, is for the functionality of QVR and ECB to be incorporated into an eRA tool. Once this tool is released, the QVR and ECB, as separate software application tools, would be turned off. The two developers of QVR and ECB would be assigned to other projects.

Thor led the meeting to explore ways to stop the elimination of the QVR and ECB, seek ways to continue their development and find dollars to fund the project and the two developers.

Some of the cogent discussion points follow.

- There's a place for tools like QVR/ECB, both of which have brought change to the NIH. Thor, as Advocate, wants to get the input and needs of ECB/QVR users and take them to the eRA project team. eRA has to respond to users' needs and not develop programs dictated by developers. This group needs to advocate for what they need. Group members should send their input and concerns to Thor and he'll advocate for them to Dr. John McGowan (JJ), eRA Project Manager and the eRA Project Team.
- IC-Specific Data and the QVR would "morph" into the ICE (IC Extension) and the long list of QVR enhancements would be incorporated. It would encompass all current features in the QVR and address frozen and dynamic data.
- There would be a central database, which would draw data from the IRDB and IC databases. ICs would use ECB/QVR to query this database instead of eRA's IRDB. This central database would be a front end in place of an eRA front end. The database would be a superset of all systems.

- A question was raised regarding spending money on the development of a new front end when there will be a coding system (CRISP) and other applications and tools in the NIH-wide eRA system. Why should ICs spend money on an IC system rather than on an NIH-wide system? ICs would have to make the decision as to whether to support this project and/or the eRA project.
- Thor proposed that the infrastructure for the database be funded and supported by eRA and customized pages be funded by ICs. The goal would be to provide a tool that would save costs and answer the needs of users. It might be possible to continue the project dependent upon IC support only. Pete Morton has given CIT support to QVR, according to Thor.
- There will be reporting tools in IMPAC II, with a promise to incorporate the functionality of ECB and QVR into them. Development of the ICE database and continuation of the ECB and QVR will compete with the eRA project for financial support.

Action: **(Thor) Delineate in a report the long- and short-term vision and goals of the QVR/ICE project, including the relationship with eRA. Present this report to eRA as well as ICs. This report also should enumerate the multiple ways QVR meets user needs.**

- QVR has a lot of power now, and it provides ways to track information, such as grants that will be up for Congressional discussion, that aren't going to be available to the staff outside the eRA target audience of the grant process. For example, many people provide reports in response to Federal requests for statistical data that now can be gathered using QVR. The people preparing these reports may not have access to eRA tools allowing them to retrieve this information. However, it was noted that eRA tools will be available to everyone who can use them, not just those with particular roles.
- As QVR was developed, this group identified the user communities and then made sure that the QVR met their needs. Most of the needs were hitherto unmet. There were 22,000 uses of QVR in July.
- There are many levels of expertise. The QVR offers a tool for non-sophisticated users, providing predefined criteria. For higher-level users, there are many tools for ad hot querying, which will be available in eRA. It is not clear whether or not eRA tools will address the non-sophisticated user's needs.
- The QVR development process, which is different than the eRA development process, provided rapid deployment of new enhancements and functionalities. This could be a good process for the eRA project, which Thor will advocate.
- Jim Seach developed a data-entry tool that could be used in conjunction with the QVR/ICE project. It is not, however, a coding or reporting tool but rather a data capture tool.
- When IMPAC II is fully deployed, all ICs will be able to access its database (IRDB) directly. Its applications and tools will provide most of the functionality required by ICs to process grants through their entire life cycle.
- The Program Portal, which will be released in November, will offer portfolio management to Program Officials. As a portal, it is not intended as a coding tool but rather data retrieval and management tool.

The goal of this group is to move ahead with the QVR, morphing it into ICE, to see if it meets needs. To determine needs, Thor should approach those involved in coding, Program, Budget and Science Policy/Program Planning. The group agreed that Program-level coding functionality is of the highest interest.

Action: **(Thor) Survey the ICs to determine whether there would be a higher interest in scientific coding tools or in portfolio management. Should time and effort be put into developing a prototype database that QVR could access or should the project begin with a data-entry tool (a la Jim Seach's) to enhance putting data into the proposed database? Send survey via the ECB listserv.**

Future Meetings

Sept. 25	Rockledge 2, 9th Floor
Oct. 23	Rockledge 2, Rooms 6201 & 6199
Nov. 27	Rockledge 2, 9th Floor
Dec. 18	Rockledge 2, 9th Floor

Attendance

Bashir, Karen (NIA)
Buckley, Cathy (CIT)
Casavant, Don (NIGMS)
Chacko, George (CSR)
Colbert, Penny (NICHD)
Connors, Anne (NIAMS)
Fay, Rob (NIDDK)
Fischetti, Greg (NCI)
Fitzpatrick, Carol (NCCAM)
Fjellstedt, Thor (OER) Advocate
Florance, Valerie (NLM)
Hall, Granville (OD)
Hardman, Anne (NIA)
Hudgings, Carole (NINR)
Ikeda, Rick (NIGMS)
Januszewski, Joe (CIT)
Lee, Delores (NCRR)
Levenson, Darlene (NICHD)
Martin, Carol (NIGRI)
Mason, Tom (CIT)
McHale, Carolyn (CIT)
Mohale, Archana (FIC)
O'Neill, Ray (NIAID)
Onken, Jim (NIGMS)
Parker, Marie (NIAID)
Seppala, Sandy (LTS/OCO), Recorder
Tiedemann, Don (CIT)
Williamson, Mary Ann (NIDCR)
Yarlagadda, Bhushan (NIGMS)