

6th TF-ECS Meeting

Prague, September 5-6, 2007

Author: Catalin Meirosu

Version: 0.1

1. Welcome, role call and agenda bashing

Erik and Fabio welcomed the participants at the 6th TF-ECS meeting. The list of registered people is included in Annex 1.

No new items were added to the agenda during the bashing section. However, the joint discussion with TF-EMC2 was rescheduled earlier during the day, after the coffee break.

2. Action items from the last meeting

All action items were closed.

3. Presentation on NAPTR

Jan briefly presented the Naming Authority Pointer standard (NAPTR, originally specified as RFC2915). NAPTR allows for rewriting DNS records based on regular expressions. As a result, e164 numbers or SIP URIs could be specified in a scalable way to allow for better automatic processing. TLS could be used as a transport protocol, but TCP was always available as a fallback option. The NAPTR expressed the receiver's preference on a certain set of features being available. Jan announced that he tested the NAPTR implementation in OpenSER 1.2. However, the implementation in SER 2.1 was not tested for the moment.

4. Joint discussion with TF-EMC2 on AAA issues for SIP deployments

Jan presented AA issues of SIP calls. One problem with digest authentication approach would be how to secure this credentials in open networks and what to use in interdomain communication. The current idea in the task force was to use a TLS session first hop and signatures or TLS for interdomain.

Diego mentioned that he was aware of a university in Spain that was working on using eduroam credentials to login to a SIP proxy. Jan replied that he thought a SIP server could be instructed to fetch credentials from a Radius server. The problem as he saw it was when could one use these things for SIP. Diego thought TTLS credentials could be used in this scenario and this was the approach of the Spanish university.

Leif noted that the IETF was working on taking the authentication mechanism from http and rewrite it so it could be used as SIP authentication. In the meantime, it would be worthwhile looking at the YXA SIP stack developed at KTH.

One way forward would be to clearly define use cases on who will authenticating to what resources or providers.

It was a general feeling that signatures would provide a more reliable solution than trust chains for interdomain scenario.

On the long term, there was agreement that the best solution would be to define SIP identities based on SAML profiles. The problem with this approach was that there was no full implementation available at the time.

Sep 5, meeting in the afternoon

Erik summarised the morning discussion as hinting towards solutions, but no ready-made implementations were available for them.

Jan thought TF-ECS could gradually move from one to the other. Erik thought the short-term solution could be skipped. Jan agreed. He also thought SPIT was not a big problem for the time being; but this was maybe because there were not many open islands.

Marco noted it would be important to avoid what happened with email. As long as the adopted solution made it clear that we could introduce security checks as soon as they would be available, we could go in that direction.

Regarding the spam problem, Erik thought that more and more mechanisms were being introduced for fighting it. Jan replied that many of them were just disturbing.

Marco said that it would be most important to have a document that explained everything, including the choices made for a direction of development or another. He volunteered to work together with Jan in this.

Fabio proposed to write a document about SIP identity and how TF-ECS would use it. The task force could try to make this document popular, perhaps even write some modules for OpenSER that do this, build a testbed with a few nodes and demonstrate how it would all work.

Fabio started a discussion on what should be the goals for the next year. He noted that the reason of existence of the task force are enhanced communication services. Erik agreed that the task force should push more on the enhanced area, but he found it very difficult to connect the islands. What we could do was provide a set of guidelines on safe ways of interconnection and the detailed recipes for all these. He wanted to enlist the help of TF-PR on stimulating local deployments.

Action item 6.1

Erik to contact TF-PR and discuss how they may help stimulate local deployments.

It was decided that the activity of the task force would focus on the cookbook. But there were not enough people willing to test the recipes, so more help in this area was definitely needed.

Action item 6.2

Fabio to contact Dennis to ask for an update on sip.edu.

Experiments and testbed

Jan reported that the NAPTR fallback solution worked quite well with openSER. In order to use it with SER, v2.1 was required but this approach was yet to be tested. Fabio concluded that the fallback would work, but such solution would be more or less useless unless someone needs encryption on the transmission channel. Jan thought this might help us to introduce the TLS between servers. Fabio noted that this solution did not address media encryption. Jan agreed that additional functionality would be required in SIP in order to address this problem.

New openSER module supported H350. There also seemed to be a direct LDAP module.

Meeting on Thursday, Sep. 6

In order to improve the feeling of ownership for Cookbook contributors, it was suggested to identify responsible people for each recipes in the cookbook and list their names in the wiki against the respective recipe. Dimitris proposed to build a SIP server software package, configured according to the cookbook recipes, that other people could download. For example, we could consider a virtualised server that could be installed in many places and maintained in a centralised manner.

Fabio thought that the heterogeneity of the OS-es installed might be a problem for the support. Dimitris answered that an OS that we were comfortable with could be supplied, and then people could experiment with the entire distribution (OS plus SIP server). Jan suggested to have either a virtual machine or a live CD.

Fabio noted that the really difficult steps were dealing with firewall and DNS when more advanced functionality was required. Simply installing the software was relatively easy. However, the complicated issues were site-specific. Dimitris replied that, in his opinion, the idea of a recommended distribution was two-fold. On one hand, to have a server installed that everybody in the group could access and check all the configuration steps, and copy all these configuration settings in their local installation. Also, we could have this virtualised for a grab-n-go solution. Having a complete ready-made distribution might attract people to just try the technology. Writing a cookbook for a specific machine with a specific setup was much easier for giving directions on the paths to follow for configuration

Jan noted that for some of the Linux distributions available as ISO files, all the management was done through a web interface. Fabio said that openSER had 4-5 distributions already included. The problem was not the basic installation, but the configuration on how to handle external entities.

Update on the Cookbook

Dimitris will work on the Glossary, chapter 2, and sample terms. Others will add to it and correct entries. One outstanding issue was a basic diagram of all the components (chapter 3) to be used as a reference in all the other recipes. Then, prepare a sample recipe to demonstrate how to use the diagram and how to reference the terms.

Fabio noted that after one year of task force activity, there was not much progress on the Cookbook. He thought the situation was of collective responsibility, and asked everybody their opinion on what should be changed, and whether it would be possible that in the coming three months a notable progress could be achieved on this.

Jan announced he will probably have less time to write on the Cookbook. He would be writing up some steps for configuring openSER, but that will be in Czech so will need translation into English.

Erik proposed to use the weekly meetings on working on TF-ECS tasks. Not necessarily via a discussion, but simply working on it on the personal tasks.

Marco suggested that when someone wrote something to the Cookbook, this could be announced to the mailing list asking people for comments. Fabio and Erik agreed this would be a good way to proceed.

Jan thought TF-ECS should probably invite implementers at universities personally to review and try the recipes. Fabio thought an internal review would need to be done first, then invite people external to the task force. Jan thought their experiences might allow these people to contribute with comments and corrections.

Fabio considered that the Cookbook probably contained the best information available for multi-domain configurations. Dimitris announced that about half of the sections in the recipe chapter are filled. However, he was not sure how ready were they. He pointed out that there was no established procedure for checking that they are readable or understandable. There were no criteria defined for this. He asked the participants whether someone went and checked the steps. Dimitris thought that the best he could do was to try to make them uniform, ensuring to have specific remarks that would be kept the same through all recipes. But these have to be deeper remarks that simply the structure. Marco said we should check whether a generic reader may understand what the purpose of a recipe was. The “goal” section had to be duly completed and meaningful. Dimitris noted that the introductory parts were missing in many of the places.

The survey of ECS deployments

Fabio built the googlemaps application to show primarily video deployments. Everything was based on an XML file sitting on a server. Currently Fabio received the descriptions and pasted them to the file. A web form could be programmed to support the introduction of the data. The generic XML file was quite complex and not all the details were displayed on the Googlemaps because of lack of features.

Action point 6.3

Catalin to put up the Googlemap online on the TF-ECS site and get Fabio in contact with TERENA webmasters.

Action point 6.4

Fabio to send Catalin the archive with all the Googlemap-related files to be put online.

Erik asked whether there will be an effort to extend the survey to NRENs not present on the tf-ecs list. Fabio suggested to first make the map available online, and then contact people.

Action point 6.5

Catalin to send tf-ecs mailing list to Fabio, Erik, and whoever else in the task force wants to have it.

Marco suggested a pointer to the map could be placed on each NREN videoconferencing service site.

nrenum.net

The initiative had 11 members. Erik suggested that Bernie and Kewin might join one of the weekly TF-ECS meetings.

Fabio announced that SWITCH decided to drop the e164.arpa project because of political and financial issues. Bernie participated in the standardisation of ENUM, and now SWITCH abandoned these efforts. Fabio asked whether this technology was still useful. He reminded the participants that ENUM was used for mapping from numbers to URIs. Marco saw e164.arpa as a distributed archive that worked well. Erik mentioned that possible solutions would be to either ask Dante to provision a service, or go to e164.org. However, all the options would involve spending money. Marco suggested to go ahead with the nrenum.net but also try to contact the people that maintain alternative trees.

Fabio noted that the situation of how nrenum.net was used resembled GDS. Although the technical solution had less problems in the approach, the people problem and the isolation was similar to GDS.

Fabio asked if anyone had experience with the Frenum or the ESN trees ? Marco reported that every time he tried to make a query it worked. The frenum tree was not centrally managed. They just kept delegations to IT ADs. In Marco's opinion, the problem with frenum was that they had non-national allocation for the trees.

Erik suggested to organise a weekly meeting together with Kewin and Bernie to discuss these issues and alternatives. He also suggested that TERENA might study the possibility of hosting the nrenum.net domain and content.

Organisational issues

Erik remains task-force co-chair. Catalin noted that in accordance with the TERENA Technical Program, there is an option for TERENA to reimburse travel expenses for task force chairs to attend task force meetings. He said this could be offered to Erik, in view of the fact that he was founding his own company. Erik thanked Catalin for the TERENA offer. Catalin also announced he would be leaving TERENA. His replacement, at least temporarily, would be Licia. Catalin thanked the participants and the co-chairs for their support and understanding during his tenure as task force secretary. Erik and Fabio thanked Catalin for his work with the task force.

Next meetings

- by VC in December. Second week, Dec 12. Start at 10am (till 12:30).
- face to face in February. Tentative date: 22nd of February. Host to be decided.

Annex 1 – Summary of the action points

Action item 6.1

Erik to contact TF-PR and discuss how they may help stimulate local deployments.

Action item 6.2

Fabio to contact Dennis to ask for an update on sip.edu.

Action point 6.3

Catalin to put up the Googlemap online on the TF-ECS site and get Fabio in contact with TERENA webmasters.

Action point 6.4

Fabio to send Catalin the archive with all the Googlemap-related files to be put online.

Action point 6.5

Catalin to send the tf-ecs mailing list to Fabio, Erik, and whoever else in the task force wants to have it.

Annex 2 - Participants

Registered

Dimitris Daskopoulos	GRNET
Erik Dobbelsteijn	SURFnet
Cătălin Meiroșu	TERENA
Jan Ruzicka	CESNET
Marco Sommani	GARR / CNR-IIT
Bo Staahle	UNI-C / Forskningsnett
Fabio Vena	SWITCH

Apologised

Andras Kovacs	NIIF/HUNGARNET
Olav Kvittem	UNINETT
Mihály Mészáros	NIIF
Rui Ribeiro	FCCN