Task Force on Network Operation Centres

The mandate of the Task Force TF-NOC, established under the auspices of the TERENA Technical Programme, officially terminates in August 2013. The work item leaders, acting as co-chairs in the absence of the former chair, Stefan Liström, propose to re-charter the Task Force for a fixed interim period (18 months) with a light-weight Terms of Reference described below as a transition towards future Special Interest Groups made available by the TERENA Technical Programme.

Terms of Reference

TF-NOC has clearly been a useful way to share information between members of the community, to collect how things are done inside the different types of NOCs and to discuss how to enhance them, especially during the face-to-face meetings. Some examples are the standardized flash talks (http://www.TERENA.org/activities/tf-noc/nocs.html) but there are also many other examples of presentations about taxonomy, standardization or the tools for several kinds of functionalities which - according to the survey carried out by the Task Force- are of principal interests for the community.

All this information needs to be constantly updated as new tools, standards or developments of interest for the NOCs changes. Moreover, one of the outcomes of the Task Force is that the members of this community are extremely busy people dealing with the daily operations of their networks. As a direct consequence, many of them cannot afford to invest the load of work that involves being an action leader or writing deliverables as expected from a Task Force. Nevertheless, it is clear that there is a strong interest from the members to remain part of this community and one of the main goals of the continuation of the TF-NOC is to keep the strengths and interests of the community, to continue sharing and investigating within the spirit of openness and collaboration. New TF-NOC would act as a catalyst, organizing meetings, small workshops or BoFs co-located with other related group-meetings or relevant conferences (such as GN3plus-APM, TERENA Network Architects, etc.).

TF-NOC could be considered as complementary to other groups like GN3plus-APM or GN3plus-JRA1/2, but with a broader scope and audience, including network engineers, system engineers, operation managers, service integrators, software developers and project managers, not only from NRENs but also from institutions, campus networks, regional networks, etc.
The main topics covered by the TF-NOC would include, but would not be limited to:

1. To facilitate knowledge exchange and collaboration for leading staff members of Network Operation Centres (NOCs) as well as network engineers involved in the integration and optimization of NOC tools and processes in order to foster the development and improvement of NOCs, primarily within the research and education community.

2. To explore and get an understanding of the taxonomy of Network Operation Centres, collecting information on how NOCs do things and then discuss how to enhance them and document this for future reference.

3. To offer a forum for exchanging and promoting ideas, experience and knowledge on NOC tools, functions, workflows, procedures and best practices, making communication easier.

4. To facilitate the inter-NOC discussions in case of multi-domain services.

5. To liaise with other communities such as GN3plus-APM, GN3plus-JRA1/2, and EGI.eu.

6. To foster face-to-face and online meetings, providing a breeding ground to discuss, elaborate and disseminate early thoughts, brought in by members of the research and education community that can evolve into projects or services.

The TF-NOC co-chairs propose to organize the new Task Force as an open forum with a core team or Steering Committee formed by 3 or 4 co-chairs as a following-up of TF-NOC with the support and under the auspices of TERENA. The Task Force would need to maintain a mailing list (currently tf-noc@terena.org) for communication between the participants, a website and a wiki for the relevant information that should come up from the Task Force. The information on this wiki would be kept up to date by the Steering Committee members and the mailing list and wiki archives would be publicly available. The Steering Committee would also organize 2 meetings per year with the help of the members of the Task Force and would be fully responsible for the content of the meetings and the production of deliverables, if any. The secretary of the TF-NOC would be appointed by TERENA and would be responsible for taking the minutes at these two meeting, and for making logistical arrangements if needed. TF-NOC could also organize other small workshops or BoFs co-located with other meetings. In this case, if there is a request for the help of any TERENA staff, it would be subject to approval of the TERENA Management Team.
TF-NOC Steering Committee should meet via video conference every two months, in order to decide the contents of the meetings and the possible relevant topics to keep the momentum of the group going, with no pre-established mandates or actions, but with a clear commitment to keep the community together and to find the most valuable topics for it, making reports on specific topics if necessary. TF-NOC Steering Committee would make periodic reports to explain the evolution of the community and to insure that the activities of the TF-NOC comply with the main objectives for what it was created and the needs of the research and education community.

Some of the action leaders and the new NOC manager for NORDUnet volunteer to be the co-chairs of the proposed Task Force. TF-NOC Steering Committee would be potentially formed by the following volunteers:

- Maria Isabel Gandia (CESCA)
- Pieter Hanssens (Belnet)
- Jonny Lundin (NORDUnet)
- Brian Nisbet (HEAnet)

Any of the members can leave the steering committee at any time and can be replaced by other volunteers, if any. The TERENA Technical Committee could decide about the members of the Steering Committee if there are many candidates available and there is no consensus inside the community.

The mandate of TF-NOC will run from September 2013 to March 2015. TF-NOC proposal is subject to approval by the TERENA Technical Committee.