

Internet2 Future Wireless Working Group Meeting Summary 3-14-2024

Attendees,

Jeff Reel, Amel Caldwell, Joe Clary, Nash Higgins, Richard Letts, Jim Jokl, Howard Pfeffer, Sara Jeanes, Marissa Kato, Mike Atkins-ND, John Simpkins

Summary

Jeff discussed the minutes from the previous meeting and the response to the Request for Proposal (RFP) for a neutral host network platform, which received a better-than-expected 12 responses. The team plans to review these submissions by early April, with potential for a second round of questions. They also reflected on a recent event in Chicago, with positive feedback on the networking opportunities and sessions, including those focused on private wireless. Mike noted higher engagement and interest in private LTE compared to the previous year. Richard and Joe confirmed their attendance and positive impression of Mike's session.

Marissa brought up the challenge of providing fiber connectivity for services in larger venues and events, questioning how other universities are handling this issue.

Nash from Texas A&M explained that they typically build new pathways or expand existing ones when more capacity is needed, and they work with outside third parties when necessary. The team discussed their experiences and strategies for managing fiber networks at their respective institutions. Joe and Richard shared their approach of limiting the number of strands given to a building to prevent overuse. They also mentioned charging monthly rates to prevent excessive use. Mike shared that at Notre Dame, they have certified personnel to handle fiber maintenance and subcontract for large projects. They also discussed the practice of replacing old copper with new fiber for better utility management. Marissa and Mike noted that while they don't charge for fiber installation, they are cautious about the amount they provide to vendors. They also discussed the challenge of managing fiber networks at their institutions, particularly in response to emergencies or accidents.

The team discussed potential future integrations and challenges. Mike raised a question about whether they should consider implementing ClearPass, a move away from Cisco ICE, and how to integrate provision/deprovision. John and Mike joined the conversation late, expressing curiosity about the possible integration. Mike and Howard discussed the standards landscape, with Mike suggesting that there isn't a clear standard. The team also discussed the possibility of using Okta and the potential for interaction between different types of credentials. Howard suggested that it would be unlikely for core vendors to implement it.

John and Howard discussed the possibility of inviting vendors to present after the RFP process. Jeff suggested that if group members came across a vendor of interest, they should reach out to him and set up a time for the vendor to speak. Jeff also mentioned that the group should wait until after the RFP closes to avoid any potential conflicts.

The team discussed the handling of classified information on campus and the development of an on-premise service to store such data. Marissa sought feedback on the use of wireless connectivity for these environments. Mike and Marissa agreed that VPN encryption is typically used for such data, irrespective of whether it's accessed via wired or wireless connections. Richard pointed out that the sensitivity of data requires clear definition, with some organizations using fiber connections to maintain security. Mike shared his experiences with testing different devices in a secure architecture setting at a wireless conference. A future plan to move towards WPA 3 encryption was discussed.

Next meeting is planned for April 11th via Zoom.