InCommon TAC Meeting 2020-02-27

February 27, 2020

Attending: Matt Brookover, Keith Wessel, Mizuki Karasawa, Eric Kool-Brown, Mark Rank, Judith Bush, Janemarie Duh, Mary McKee, Matthew Economou, Eric Goodman

With: David Walker, Dean Woodbeck, Nick Roy, Ian Young, David Bantz, Les LaCroix, Dave Shafer, Jessica Coltrin, IJ Kim, Steve Zoppi, Kevin Morooney, Shannon Roddy, Albert Wu

Intellectual Property Reminder - All Internet2 activities are governed by the Internet2 Intellectual Property Framework.

Public Content Notice - TAC minutes are public documents. Please let the TAC and note taker know if you plan to discuss something of a sensitive nature.

International Update

The first NISO Plus conference just wrapped up in Baltimore. NISO is the US-based standards organization responsible for various information standards relevant to the library and publishing world (e.g., JATS, COUNTER). They did something a bit different with the conference format, splitting sessions into two 45 minute chunks with a short break between them. The first chunk was presentation, and the second was pure Q&A. This led to some VERY strong engagement with the audience, as they had time during the break to digest some of what they heard and chat with colleagues, and then come back with minimal time pressure to ask thoughtful questions. There were about 250+ people at the conference, with four tracks per session period.

SeamlessAccess had two full sessions, both of which were well attended. I think the most useful feedback from it was during the session offered by Lisa Hinchliffe and Ralph Youngen, where they talked as much about what SeamlessAccess is NOT as they talked about what it is. This was very enlightening to the attendees, and the feedback was positive. You can see some of the chatter via the twitter thread: https://twitter.com/search?q=%23seamlessaccess%20%23nisoplus20&src=typed_query

Moving beyond SeamlessAccess, the eduGAIN Town Hall and the T&I Hackathon are still a "go" for the end of March. About 12 people are currently registered for the hackathon, and the TownHall reached capacity at 65 a few weeks ago. I expect presentations from the Town Hall will end up on their wiki page: https://wiki.geant.org/display/eduGAIN/Trust+and+Identity+Townhall+2020

In REFEDS-land, the Best Practices for Error Handling Working Group is meeting weekly (for now). Their work is building off the ACAMP session (https://bit.ly/2rOYgI1) from December 2019. The group's wiki page links to the working document, agendas, and notes: https://wiki.refeds.org/display/GROUPS/Best+Practice+around+Error+Handling

T&I and Ops Updates

The Shibboleth IdPv4 will change the default to use GCM for outbound encryption, rather than block cyphers. This fits with a recommendation by the Deployment Profile WG that people transition to GCM. InCommon could introduce a change to metadata to publish a set of cypher support elements for SPs. This would encourage SPs to opt into the stronger encryption algorithm. One thought is to reconstitute an Ops Advisory Group to work through the issues. Shib IdP 4.0.0 Beta 2 includes the change, but it will not affect those who upgrade, only fresh installs.

2020 Priorities

Test Federation - Albert Wu, Eric Kool-Brown, Matt Brookover, Janemarie Duh, Judith Bush met last week to discuss a potential Test Federation working group

- Interfederation testing would be out of scope
- Want to help those interested in InCommon to kick the tires on the Shib software before they spend time installing and configuring the software
- Would also provide a resource for the InCommon Academy's Shibboleth installation workshops
- Could also include test containers
- Would not be limited to using Shibboleth, but could bring your test instance

The subgroup intends to meet once more to clarify a few issues.

SP Getting Started Guide and Cloud Cookbook - David Walker and Albert Wu have been working on an onboarding guide to help SPs join federations in a more streamlined and consistent fashion. Geared to commercial vendors. Building on work on the SP Onboarding working group. Assuming no experience with federation (or SAML) and little understanding of how higher education works. The hope is to start producing content by the end of March and putting things out for review.

SAML Readiness

How do we function as a federation as more organizations move to vendor solutions that don't support multilateral federation? Part of the challenge is getting departments and others on campus to understand why central IT takes the approach that they do.

Duke has a SAML readiness form that is presented to vendors. This approach has helped Duke central IT to remove the perception of IT as the bad guy. Helps demonstrate that this is a standard that works for thousands of others. This puts the pressure on vendors to adhere to a standard. Could this approach be used federation-wide? Similar approach to REN-ISAC creating the HECVAT.

This could dovetail into the getting started/cookbook work mentioned earlier.

Another question to consider - how do we engage our Microsoft contacts that are willing to listen about what we mean by "federation" as opposed to what Microsoft thinks about "federation."

Next Meeting - Thursday, March 12, 2020