

NTAC Intro and Overview

Colleagues,

Created at the Community Design Workshop, the Network Advisory Group (NAG) was charged with providing recommendations on a technical advisory structure that would provide advice and counsel on the design, deployment and operation of the new Internet2 Network. In a series of meetings that took place June through August, the NAG produced a report recommending a framework for a new Network Technical Advisory Committee (NTAC). The framework report and the complete minutes of the NAG meetings can be found at <http://internet2.edu/network>.

The recommendations contained the following key points and highlights:

- Community participation will drive the NTAC. The committee should provide the best technical advice by drawing upon as much expertise from the community as possible; voting members must be from the community, nominated by the community and vetted by a nominations committee.
- The NTAC should be self-organizing, determine its own structure and set the criteria for member selection.
- Committee processes and decisions must be fully transparent to the Internet2 community.
- Technical proposals will be posted after vetting by the NTAC and made available for public comment, much like the IETF RFC process.
- There will be open communication between Internet2 policy advisory groups and the NTAC.

Given the ambitious planning for the new Internet2 network, expediency is essential in establishing the procedures and mechanisms to enact the NTAC framework recommendations. It was recognized that the first NTAC members would need to be selected by an external nominating committee, such as the Internet2 Governance and Nominations Committee. Thereafter, the NTAC would be self-organizing. However, the new Governance and Nominations Committee is not yet fully established, while the deployment of the new network is moving forward aggressively. The NAG felt that a transition advisory committee should be established to provide immediate counsel and advice on technology issues related to the evolving network.

Through consultation with Internet2 staff, and approved by the NAG, members of the established Abilene Technical Advisory Committee were asked to serve on the transition NTAC. While functioning as a consultative body for the design and deployment of the new Internet2 Network, the transition committee also would lay the foundation for a sustainable NTAC consistent with the NAG recommendations.

Further recommendations for the transition NTAC include:

- The transition NTAC members will have a one-year term.
- The community can nominate individuals to serve on the transition committee.
- The NAG chair would remain as chair of the transition NTAC; however, the transition committee may choose an alternate individual to act as chair.
- The primary charge for the transition NTAC is to facilitate the chartering of short- and long-term working groups associated with various projects and activities of the new network.
- In the most recent meeting of the NTAC, discussion about working groups acknowledged the need to engage some established groups - particularly those that have relevance to the new network - as well as create new working groups. One area identified is IP commodity services. There is the need to examine options for provisioning and using commodity services through Internet2. To that end, Rob Vietzke will facilitate the startup of a working group on commodity services to seek input from campus and RON/connector representatives to identify issues and develop recommendations. The group will pick a chair among its community members as it forms.

The Internet2 website will soon include more information about the transition NTAC. Just as with the NAG, all committee meeting minutes will be available to the public. To encourage ideas from the community, a wiki for NTAC <https://wiki.internet2.edu/confluence/display/ntac/Home> has been added to the Internet2 website, and we will welcome email submissions to ntac@internet2.edu.

I am very grateful for the outstanding support and efforts of the NAG members. They have accomplished much in a short time and have recommended a practical, timely interim process to establish the transition NTAC and its vital participation with the new Internet2 Network. I look forward to working with this team.

There is much work ahead. Please consider participating as calls are made for volunteers.

Sincerely,

Paul Schopis
Chair, Network Advisory Group