

Minutes of the 20th meeting of the Steering and Overview Committee of the Swiss-Norwegian Beamlines

The meeting took place at Saint Jean de Chepy (30 km from Grenoble) on 3rd and 4th June 2002.

Present :

SOC Members : D. Nicholson (Chairman)
G. Chapuis*, C Baerlocher, D. Banner, E. Hough, H-P Weber
*stand in for Hans-Beat Bürgi

Observer : N. Maras
B. Patterson

Technical Advisor : P. Pattison

Meeting's Secretary : C. Heurtebise

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1 Approval of the Agenda

The Agenda was approved.

2. A. Approval of the minutes of Dec 3-4, 2001 meeting

The minutes of the 19th SOC meeting (3rd December 2001) were approved.

2. B. Review and results of actions decided at last meeting.

19.2.1 Send circular to Users regarding macromolecular crystallography new procedures
done January 2002

19.2.2 Project Director to send a letter, re. SNBL salaries, to SOC members. Not done.
Reissued as 20.3.2.

19.2.3 Project Director to write a letter to SOC outlining all of UNIL's "hidden" contributions. **Done**
SOC chairman to respond with a letter to UNIL acknowledging its past contributions.
To be done when appropriate

19.2.4 Regarding recruitment of SNBL staff, the following should be taken into account concerning applicant's qualifications: "given comparable qualifications, preference is to be given to the Norwegian applicant" – **Done**

19.2.5 Not Done. Reissued as 20.2.1

20.2.1. SLS contract of Philip Pattison. Gervais Chapuis to get a written confirmation regarding the exact date of the extension of the contract and the amount of the funding. Date : done – See e-mail from Friso van der Veen dated 09/07/02

19.3.1 Letter to be written by SOC Chairman to UNIL Accounting. Mr. Wyss will be reminded of SNBL's organizational structure (Project Director + Executive Assistant) are the interface between SNBLC and UNIL Accounting. Mr. Wyss will also be asked to give a clear definition of what he means by "mode standard". SOC need to know the deadlines for payment or reimbursement of invoices. **Done**

19.3.2 Chairman to write letter to Nils Maraas stating that the Financial Report 99/00 has been approved by SOC. David Nicholson. **Done**

19.3.3 Letter to UNIL, Pierre Wyss, requesting confirmation of expected income. (SNBL provides a list and UNIL checks the amounts). Hans-Peter Weber. **Done**

Letter to UNIL, Pierre Wyss, regarding the Users' Credit (amount reimbursed to SNBL by ESRF) : SOC is in favour of using a single account number so as to find this amount quickly and without any misunderstanding. Suggestion from Hans-Beat Buergi : put this amount in an account number "various subventions". Hans-Peter Weber. **Done, but Pierre Wyss says it is not feasible.**

19.3.4 An explanation has to be given regarding the deviation from the allotted General Expenses in the budget . Reasons for deviations larger than CHF10,000 must be accounted for in the Financial Report. Hans-Peter Weber. **See under Spending 2000-2001.**

19.3.5 Budget for 2002/2003 to be presented in the same format as in the Excel sheet presented at the 19.SOC meeting of December 01. **Reissued as 20.2.3.**

20.2.3. Budget presented in new format for 21st SOC meeting. Hans-Peter Weber and Chantal Heurtebise

19.4.1 Hans-Beat Buergi asked Nils Maraas to provide him with the amendments to the CH-N contract in writing. **Done**

19.6.1 Ed Hough to work hard on the report from the Standing Committee. **Reissued as 20.2.3.**

20.2.4. Report from Standing Committee. Action to be reformulated. Deadline Next SOC Meeting. Ed Hough.

19.7.1 Philip Pattison to send a copy of his transparencies by e-mail to Nils Maraas. **Done**

19.8.1 Transferring the Beamline handbook which should be on the Web. **Done**
Updating SNBL Web pages. **Done**

19.8.2 Activity Report to be done by Hans-Peter Weber. **Done, but reissued as 20.2.4**
David Banner suggested that future work be distributed amongst contributors so as to avoid having one person doing an enormous amount of work. This is the way David Banner is doing it, and it still takes him a minimum of three weeks.

20.2.4 Activity Report 2000 has been sent to all SOC Members. Comments from SOC Members expected by **17th June 2002. SOC Members**

19.9.1 Hans-Peter Weber, Philip Pattison and Ken Knudsen to work out a line of actions. re.SNBL's answer to KUMA's commissioning. **Done**
Send answer to Hans-Beat Buergi for comments, who is to transmit it to Chairman. **Done**
Chairman to write then a letter to KUMA. **Done**

19.9.2 A precise specification should be requested from the companies as to exactly what they will provide. **Done**

19.9.3 Period of commissioning time (referring mainly to CCD) to be discussed at next SOC meeting. **Done**

19.12.1 David Nicholson to investigate the different meetings taking place. **No suitable meetings in Norway. David Nicholson and Hans-Peter Weber will try to find a solution.**

19.14.1 In the circular to Users to be mentioned that Long Term Proposals are encouraged. Mention also that Users should also apply to ESRF on SNBL. **Done. Philip Pattison to check when Long Term Proposals will be available on other CRG beamlines.**

19.16.1 Actions to be reissued in the current minutes so as to avoid having old actions mixed up together with new ones. **Done**

19.17.1 The next SOC meeting will be either just before or just after Sunday 2nd June 2002. **Done**

3. Budgetary Matters

3.A. Spending 2001-2002, as of 31st March 2002

Hans-Peter Weber mentioned that as predicted by him at the December 2001 SOC meeting the figures in the spending for 2000-2001 were temporary, that changes due to the use of more accurate exchange ratios would yield a somewhat different picture. (See attached new spending sheet for 2000-2001) – Appendix N° 1.

The amount of Euro 22'000 set aside by SOC at its 18th meeting, during the budget discussion 2001-2002, should be included in a Revolving Fund to permit purchase –if needed- of items before the funds granted for their purchase come in. When the funds finally arrive, the same amount should be put back into the Revolving Fund. The principle of a Revolving Fund is accepted by SOC as a means to increase the flexibility of SNBL operations.

Bruce Patterson would like to have a copy of the spending sheet for the first 6 months of the current budget year, w/o personnel expenses.

20.3.1. Hans-Peter Weber to work out a scheme to implement payment per shift from Users for helium. The minimum should be 50% of the real cost.

3.B Audit Preliminary results

The accounts should have been audited before the 1st May 2002.

Nils Maras would like to know what documents UNIL is supposed to deliver to SOC. It was also mentioned that SOC should negotiate firm dates with UNIL Accounting.

3.C.1. Budget of Oct. 1, 2002-2003 and beyond.

SOC discussed Hans-Beat Buergi's (HBB) version of the 2002-2003 budget, as outlined in his e-mail of May 27, 2002. Hans Peter Weber (HPW) started the discussion by giving his response to the points raised by HBB.

The first comment concerned the claim that Oleksii Kuznetsov is not helping on the beamlines. This was new to HPW, who noted that Oleksii did in fact assist with experiments on the beamlines. The Director pointed out that a) if some of his staff members were not happy with Oleksii's services this should have been brought to his attention much earlier, and not during a SOC meeting and b) training of Oleksii K. to be of even greater user assistance should have been performed by staff without much ado. In support, Philip Pattison underlined that Oleksii's main contribution was working on the computing side but not on the beamlines.

The second HBB comment concerned with HPW's salary, which is split 35:65 between UNIL the Swiss NSF. HBB stated that the Swiss party (through Gervais Chapuis) proposed that 95% of the salary of the beamlines director be included in the SNBL budget. To which David Banner replied that this issue was new to him and had most certainly never been discussed at SUG's last meeting.

The third comment dealt with salary histories. Chantal Heurtebise voiced her astonishment that the beamlines director had not been consulted about the collection of personal data. Ed Hough was critical about the way the affair had been conducted and that some of the staff had found the process unsettling – one of them even had consulted his trade union. It was decided to make the salary question the subject of an action to be implemented shortly (see actions).

The fourth comment dealt with the need for replacing the aging SNBL vehicle; HBB suggested that the case for a replacement was not sufficiently documented. In an overhead presentation in support of a replacement, HPW gave examples of transport requirements e.g. transporting equipment from UNIL and ETHZ. The most recent example was in response to a request from a user group for a cryostat. This bulky item carried from ETHZ to Grenoble. Gervais Chapuis asked who is permitted to use the car to which Hans-Peter Weber replied : SNBL staff. Then Gervais Chapuis asked who would be allowed to drive the car, to which the director answered that any appropriate person would be permitted to use the car on SNBL business. Philip Pattison underlined that he has not used the SNBL car recently.

In summary, most SOC members agreed that a new car was needed. However, rules should be drawn up regarding the use of the vehicle; it was also mentioned that a logbook be kept. It was also emphasised that the car was at the disposal of the beamlines Director and staff delegated by him.

HPW gave the following reasons for not implementing HBB's new format for the 2002-2003 budget:

°Continually changing the form of the presentation, currencies used (Euros!), etc. (as done in the past) make it difficult for people to get to grips with the information presented. Constancy in accounting rules, presentation, etc, is one of the key factors in building and preserving a bond of trust between an accountant and his client. The errors made by HBB in his version of the budget 2002-2003 underlined this point

- Specific comments on HBB's format by Hans-Peter Weber:
 - the salaries are not correct
 - all the other items budgeted seem to be correct.

Regarding the total for energy and consumables, HPW accepted CHF30,300 although he had budgeted CHF 37,000 and SOC should accept his figure as being realistic.

Nils Maras suggests that a line for "Budget Uncertainties" should be added.

It has also been required that on the Budget, in the new format, the budget for 2001/2002 and the spendings for this same period.

20.3.2. Another accurate budget for 2002-2003 is to be issued together with the salary policy. Hans-Peter Weber – Deadline 28/06/2002.
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3.C.2.Salary policy for 2002-2003 and beyond

Nils Maras pointed out that the budget on the total salary increase should be decided at the present SOC meeting. The cost of living should be compensated, as there has been no increase in the past years. The increase according to HBB suggestion should also be taken into account.

20.3.3. It was decided that a committee including Hans-Peter Weber, Philip Pattison and Chantal Heurtebise should discuss the implementation of the increase. Then Ed Hough is to supervise the effort, together with David Nicholson. Ed Hough is to report on the outcome by the 28/06/2002. **Done. See appendix N°**

The total amount decided by SOC for salary increases is as follows:

- on merit, seniority etc CHF 15,000.00
- on cost of living CHF 10,000.00

The double appointment mentioned by HBB regarding Chantal Heurtebise is no longer relevant.

3.D. The future financing (Oct. 2002-Sept.2003)

Amounts per category :

- Personnel Expenses	CHF 883,000
- Maintenance and Running	CHF 239,600
- Energy	CHF 35,000
- Infrastructure	CHF 225,800
TOTAL	CHF 1,383,400

This would mean CHF 691,700 for both Switzerland and Norway.

For the purpose of the contract, this corresponds to a total of CHF **1,3 M**, and the 50/50 shares are CHF 650.000 and NOK **3,371,000**.

4. Legal Matters

4.A The CH-N Contract. Renewal discussions

Negotiations are planned on Wednesday 5th June . Nils Maras pointed out that the most difficult part is the budget and the 50/50 contributions.

4.B. Any other legal matters.

To be discussed together with the new contract on Wednesday 5th June 2002.

4.C Norwegian requirements for future accounting.

Transferring the accounting from UNIL to another institution either in CH or in N. Long-term stable solution needed.

Ed Hough had a meeting the previous week with the Norwegian Committee. The conclusion is that the accounting problem has to be solved. Ed Hough put forth the following resolution from the N side:

“There is widespread concern within the N-SNBL community that the present accounting via UNIL is unsatisfactory and must be changed. Alternative solutions involving CH or N institutions were discussed”.

Ed Hough also expressed concerns from the N-side that SNBL is being dominated by UNIL

Echoing the N resolution, SOC required of the Project Director that, *“in collaboration with funding bodies within CH or N, he find an efficient institutional alternative, preferably in time for the next 21st SOC meeting. UNIL is not excluded from this process.”*

Hans-Peter Weber emphasized that difficulties with accounting will continue, that it was futile to insist on better meeting deadlines as long as a long-term solution, preferably at another institution, had not been found.

Gervais Chapuis said that the situation is complex because there are many sources of subventions, many accounts and funds to deal with. The international nature of the project creates an additional problem. Thus the nature of the accounting has a high degree of complexity per se. In future there will be only one source from Switzerland and one from Norway. Switzerland and Norway have to find a mutually acceptable solution.

5. SNBL/ESRF: Future Prospects

5.A. SNBL Vision. Report from Standing Committee.

Report from Standing Committee reissued as action 20.2.3.

5.B. EXAFS + Powder Diffractometer Upgrade

The chairman informed SOC that CHF 320.000 has already been granted from the National Science Foundation(CH), CHF 50.000 from ETHZ(Roel Prins) and NOK 71 000 from Trondheim (David Nicholson) and that the N-side will apply to the Norwegian Research Council for NOK 8-900.000.

6.A. Operational Status of SNBL, 1st semester 2001-2002.

Presentation done by Philip Pattison, see Appendix N° 2.

Commissioning time:

The shutdown period during spring 2003 will be discussed at the next SOC meeting.

6.B Presence of staff in Grenoble prior to and after SOC meetings.

This suggestion was presented to SOC by Gervais Chapuis on behalf of HBB (ref. email from HBB).

SOC discussed HBB's suggestion. While understanding his concerns, SOC does not feel that this solution is appropriate, SOC impresses on the Project Director the need to provide necessary documentation and information within time limits set by SOC. For example, the Agenda should be sent two weeks before SOC. SOC was informed that the staff believed that this was done but due to a mistake regarding the e-mail system the message was actually not sent and no warning given by the computer. This caused a delay and the present Agenda did not reach SOC members on the 15th May as it was meant to.

The budget was also late.

Time limits to be discussed together with the new contract on Wednesday 5th June.

Gervais Chapuis underlines that at least one person should be available before and after SOC meeting.

7. Publicity.

7.A SNBL Web site.

The web page has to be re-worked as the background pattern used makes reading a little difficult.

7.B. Activity Report

This report has to be approved by SOC members. (Deadline for the comments : 17th June)

8. Instrumentation

8.A Single-crystal diffractometer

- Control software: see Philip Pattison's presentation – Appendix N° 2.
- Kuma diffractometer. The software is operational, but still a bit buggy. See PP on this, plus e-mails.
- CCD detector. Ed Hough sent a new letter third week of May to three firms, with replies requested by 24th June 2002. The firms contacted are : Oxford Diffraction Ltd, X-Ray Research GmbH and Bruker AXS GmbH. Requirements and clear specifications are to be written down related to payment.
- EXAFS commissioning. This was discussed in Philip Pattison's presentation, see Appendix N° 2.

8.B. Commissioning Time.

The possibility of having the beamline A off in April and May 2003 was discussed. Users will have to be informed of this reduced time, which would be on prorata with ESRF (this would mean roughly 50 shifts for SNBL beamtime).

This recommendation is approved by SOC.

9. Powder Diffraction Service.

Hans-Peter Weber says that this is working well. Philip Pattison mentioned that this service was used by Radovan Cerny, Novartis, Christian Baerlocher, B. Hauback. Good data was collected.

This service is not free of charge as agreed during 19th SOC meeting. It is invoiced CHF 250 per shift. Invoicing will be done soon for those who have used this service before this present SOC meeting (CH to see Phil and HP to get names and number of shifts.)

10 In-House Research

There has been three reports. Could those reports be also available on the web, together with the other experimental reports.

- Jon Are Beukes : Order-disorder in perovskites – Correlation with Transport Properties.
Shifts : 3
- Philip Pattison: Crystallographic Symmetry of Antiferromagnetic MnO.
Shifts: 6
- Philip Pattison & Wouter Van Beek : Powder Diffraction Study of the Double Perovskite Systems.
Shifts : 3.

11. SNBL Highlights Meeting 2003 in Norway, June 2003

David Nicholson is to try to find a suitable meeting place for SNBL Highlights in June 2003.

12. Other Matters.

Gervais Chapuis says that apparently all the money has not yet come in.

Hans-Peter Weber underlines that for 2000/2001, all the subventions seem to have come in, but that it was difficult to find out, from lack of web access for that period. For 2001/2002, subventions are still expected.

Nils Maras pointed out that for the next budget 2002/2003, there is a need for an extra CHF 83,400.

20.12.1 Budget 02/03, extra money needed CHF 83,400. Deadline to find this extra money has been set for 31st March 2003. The beamlines director will not order any capital equipment on the budget, unless this additional money has been provided.

At next SOC meeting, a new Chairman will be elected on the Swiss side at the beginning of the meeting.

13. 1st SNBL Lecturer.

SOC thanks Hermann Emerich on his lecture on Focussing X-rays which has been greatly appreciated by all.

14. Discussion of Proposals.

127 shifts to be scheduled on each beamline
64 shifts are for the ESRF and buffer time
Which makes a total of 191 shifts

All proposals with a B grade and above will be granted beam time.

15. Summary of Actions to Be Taken.

The following actions were added at this stage.

20.15.1. Company's car. A comparison of costs for a company's car with the use of a rental car, a private car to be drawn by Hans-Peter Weber. Deadline 30.06.2002

20.15.2. A circular to Users to be sent by 01/09/2002 in which should be mentioned that Hans-Peter Weber needs assistance regarding the Activity Report.

20.15.3. The deadline for the first Draft of the minutes has been set to 17/06/2002. **Done.**

20.15.4. The 21st SOC meeting will take place on Thursday 5th December and Friday 6th December. These dates are to be confirmed by SOC members. Deadline 01/10/02.

16. The Final Word from the Director.

Budget: The Director expressed his satisfaction at having a budget for 2002-2003. But he warned his SOC colleagues that with the minimal budget approved at the meeting the SNBL will only be able to operate; upgrades, however, will have to be deferred.

Accounting: The Director thanked SOC for at last having given the project team some liberty to find an acceptable accounting service.

Proposals: The Director found it very gratifying that both XAFS users and Swiss NSF have kept their words: the former have submitted proposals in increasing numbers, and on a high scientific level, the latter has just funded an XAFS upgrade of the SNBL, on a level even surpassing the CCD detector. The Director also expressed his satisfaction that proposals for PX still come from Swiss users. All sorts of unpleasant problems would arise if some instruments were used solely by users from one partner country.

Ethical upgrade: The Director pleaded for different manners of personal interaction. He is tired of the use of innuendos by some SOC members. The never ending use of such misleading statements poisons any working atmosphere. As one example, he brought up the often repeated claim that SNBL' director was not welcome at SLS and that therefore contacts with SLS should be left to someone else. To quell this unpleasant rumor, he mentioned that he had contacted Friso van der Veen, the scientific director of SLS. The latter had assured him that the SLS welcomed him. FvdV had emphasized that: *“as to the mutual contacts between individual SLS and SNBL scientists, including [SNBL's director], [he was] quite happy the way things [went]. We see each other regularly and inform each other about developments at both sides. The scientific facilities complement each other to a large extent, and of course there is a competitive element, as there should always be”*. [quoted with the express permission of FvdV].

17. Decided during SOC meeting.

SOC has taken note of the Beamline Scientist's reaction to the Project Director's letter and encourages the Project Director and the Beamline Scientist to solve this problem as soon as possible.