FORMAL METHODS EUROPE
Minutes of the 17th Meeting held at The European Commission, Brussels, on 21 October 1996

Present:	Eric Delalonde	**Apologies:**	Angela Alapide
	Dines Bjørner		Dominique Bolignano
	Tim Denvir		Manfred Broy
	René Jacquart		Andrew Butterfield
	Cliff Jones		John Fitzgerald
	Peter Lucas (Chair)		Marie-Claude Gaudel
	Alejandro Moya		Peter Gorm Larsen
	José Oliveira		Nico Plat
	Jan Storbank Pedersen		
	Kees Pronk		
	Wolfgang Reisig		
	Jim Woodcock		

Item 1: Minutes of the 16th meeting

Matters Arising

Action 10/5: Provide a periodic report on FME to the Commission. Peter Lucas, Kees Pronk and Tim Denvir will put this in hand soon. **Continues PL, KP, TD**

Action 13/3: Peter Lucas to write to members of the committee who have not attended the last four meetings. Tim Denvir to derive the relevant list of members from the records of minutes. **Continues PL**

Action 16/4: Tim Denvir will forward guidelines for national web pages to those who have volunteered to supply them (PL, PGL, M-CG, KS, GA, NP). **Continues TD**

Action 16/5: Cliff Jones to incorporate a pointer from the FACJ web pages to the FME web pages. **Continues CBJ**

Item 2: Review of ESSI projects

FMEInfRes

Tim Denvir reported on the FMEInfRes project. Web pages have been set up for the project (the root being at http://www.cs.tcd.ie/FME), and these link to the two databases on applications and tools, the frequently asked questions and the bibliographies. Also the first issue of the newsletter has been produced (copies distributed at the meeting) and other paper-based promotional material. The project web sites currently hosted at Trinity College Dublin and the University of Newcastle also provide information about FME and search and browse facilities for the databases and context queries for the bibliographies.

National pages will be set up which link to the project pages and provide information of national significance, such as companies which can supply expertise, national organisations and clubs, events and so on. So far national pages are present for Ireland and the UK and more are imminent for Denmark and the Netherlands.

Further work in the next quarter includes guidelines for further national pages (8 by the end of the project), obtaining more entries for the applications databases, improving the format of entries for the

databases, and further releases of both databases, the bibliographies, the FAQs and another issue of the newsletter.

Alejandro Moya suggested that the Bibliographics could be partitioned according to application domain, in much the same way as the applications databases is, rather than just the specification method or language. He also suggested that the newsletter could be accessible from the web pages.

FMEIndSem

Peter Lucas reported on the FMEIndSem project, which has been in progress for only four months. An additional seminar, beyond those in the original plan, has been scheduled in Finland. The German seminar will be combined with ENCRESS. The Austrian seminar will be held in co-operation with the Austrian Computer Society and the Austrian Software Safety and Quality SIG. The UK seminar will be held in co-operation with the IEE and (probably) the British Computer Society Formal Aspects of Computing SIG.

5,000 leaflets advertising the seminars have been printed and the mailing list for distributing these is being updated. An advisory board has been set up and the project has a web site at http://www.ifad.dk/projects/femindsem.

FM Guides

Eric Delalonde reported on the FM Guides project. Its aim is to produce multimedia material illustrating formal methods success stories. A WWW page (at http://demain.cgs.fr/formal) on the high speed Internet supported by French Cable TV, a subsidiary of France Telecom, is being developed.

A first take of a video film has been produced, to be broadcast on "Computer Channel", another part of France Telecom, which provides computer training material by satellite TV, in December. This film was shown to the meeting. Three video films are to be produced. Documents have been produced and have been distributed at five trade fairs.

The partners are SSI, Italy, who have recent experiences of using formal methods, IFAD, Denmark, who have the most specialised experience, and CAP Gemini Sogeti, France, who have experience with SDL and VDM++.

Inter-project co-ordination

This was a concern of Alejandro Moya. Peter Gorm Larsen is a member of all three project teams and is maintaining continuous communication between them. Other actions will be taken to ensure co-ordination, in particular to provide links to each other's web pages.

Action 17/1: Dissemination action teams to ensure co-ordination between actions, in particular to provide links to each other's web pages. (TD, ED, PGL)

FMEBestLib Proposal

Alejandro Moya told the meeting that this proposal had not been recommended for funding this time. Although the proposal scored quite well in the evaluation process, they felt that they should wait until more progress had been made with the existing FMEInfRes project. The proposal can be resubmitted in time for a subsequent call.

Item 3: FME'96

Jim Woodcock presented the financial report of FME'96. This is attached. A considerable surplus of £29k (about 36kECU) resulted from the higher than budgeted attendance.

Item 4: FME'97

All calls for papers have now been distributed.

Funding the PC meeting, a cost of approximately £8k (10kECU), will be difficult to meet within the budget now that the rules for funding travel to EC supported meetings has changed such that the travel for a maximum of five attendees can be subsidised. This results in a possible deficit of £5.5k (7kECU) for the symposium. After discussion, it was agreed that the budget for the symposium should be adjusted to reflect the splitting of this potential deficit three ways :

- readjust the conference budget in terms of break-even number of delegates and delegate fees;

- a subsidy from FME to be part of the planned income; and

- plan an overall deficit

Each of these measures should be planned to cater for one third of the otherwise expected deficit, ie 2.3kECU each.

Action 17/2: Adjust FME'97 Symposium budget to split the deficit due to the change in travel support for the PC meeting. (PL, KP)

Item 5: FME'99

It was proposed and agreed that Dines Bjørner should be PC chairman and Rene Jacquart should be Organising chairman.

The following points were made by Dines Bjørner and others during the discussion :

- the event could be associated with organisations such as IEEE, ACM, IFIP, ETAPS so as to include their organisational facilities, but the FME format, focusing on industry, should be kept;

- the event should be a world congress with 4-500 delegates; this requires extended preparation;

- the event needs to be linked to commercial interests by means, e.g. of co-locating and associating with user conventions;

- the scale of such an event would involve more financial risks than FME could reasonably take unless other sponsors or underwriters were found;

- organisationally, Toulouse can easily cope with a conference of up to 2,000 delegates;

- the possibility of orienting the event by application sectors was discussed; an application rather than technical (e.g. by method) focus was preferred;

- separate chairpersons for the different sectors are recommended. Possible sectors are; energy, telecommunications, medical informatics, railways, aerospace, automation, CIM, finance, business progress re-engineering, construction, instrumentation;

- a two-level structure with 3 or 4 parallel streams and plenary sessions is envisaged with about 400 delegates in total;

- the cost for the less wealthy should be kept down;

- JW suggested that the event could be joint with another regular event such as the Refinement Workshops or ZUM;

- DB suggested the format could be a five-day conference and additional tutorials;

- chairpersons with experience of the industrial sector strands need to be identified;

- **Action 17/3:** a more detailed budget plan will be needed by the next physical (RJ);

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- the organisers need to work closely with a company/ies such as Verilog to co-locate the event with a user convention;

- **Action 17/4:** the legal responsibilities of financing a conference on this scale are too great for individuals to bear and so a legally constituted organisation for FME needs to be explored; Kees Pronk will make a proposal; (KP)

- Association with an event like TAPSOFT could lead to too academic a flavour;

- the date proposed for FME'99 is the autumn 1999;

- **Action 17/5:** DB assisted by RJ will initiate finding chairs for the industry-specific sectors; DB will start to establish a programme committee and other structures for the event, in particular exploring the feasibility of 3 or 4 separate sector oriented sub-programmes, and contacting some of the other organisations hoped to be associated with the event such as ACM and IEEE. In this he will be assisted by FME (PL). RJ will initiate the organisational and local planning in particular contacting possible local industrial associates, by the next FME physical meeting in 6 months. (DB, RJ, PL)

Item 6: New EC regulation on funding travel for meetings

Travel funding for a maximum of five delegates only can now be funded. This is an EC-wide new regulation and does not seem to be negotiable.

Item 7: Next meetings

The next meeting will be held "electronically" by e-mail during the week of 13-17 January 1997. The subsequent meeting will be held in Toulouse on Saturday 15 March 1997.

Item 8: Other Business

- Wolfgang Reisig reported on the successful Advanced Petri Nets course held in October. He also told the meeting of a planned conference in Japan on "models and methods for concurrent systems'. The organisers have funds but no tradition in the area so are looking for a framework of names for support as committee members. Jim Woodcock volunteered to be put forward.

- Gottfried Egger has resigned from the committee. He will nominate a replacement from Daimler Benz

Summary of Actions

Carried Forward

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New Actions

Action 17/1: Dissemination action teams to ensure co-ordination between actions, in particular to provide links to each other's web pages. (TD, ED, PGL)

Action 17/2: Adjust FME'97 Symposium budget to split the deficit due to the change in travel support for the PC meeting. (PL, KP)

Action 17/3: Produce a more detailed budget plan by the next physical FME Committee Meeting. (RJ)

Action 17/4: Kees Pronk to make a proposal regarding the construction of a legally constituted organisation for FME. (KP)

Action 17/5: DB assisted by RJ will initiate finding chairs for the industry-specific sectors; DB will start to establish a programme committee and other structures for the event, in particular exploring the feasibility of 3 or 4 separate sector oriented sub-programmes, and contacting some of the other organisations hoped to be associated with the event such as ACM and IEEE. In this he will be assisted by FME (PL). RJ will initiate the organisational and local planning in particular contacting possible local industrial associates, by the next FME physical meeting in 6 months. (DB, RJ, PL)

Tim Denvir, pp John Fitzgerald
Secretary, FME
25 October 1996