



**Formal Methods Europe
Minutes of the 42nd meeting
Held at McMaster University, Hamilton ON, Canada
24 August 2006**

Present at the meeting were:

- Bernhard Aichernig [TU Graz]
- Raymond Boute [University of Gent]
- Ana Calvalcanti [University of York]
- Jin Song Dong [National University of Singapore]
- Alessandro Fantechi [University of Florence]
- John Fitzgerald (Chairman) [Newcastle University]
- Stefania Gnesi [ISTI]
- Randolph Johnson [NSA]
- Peter Gorm Larsen [Engineering College Aarhus]
- Mark Lawford [McMaster University]
- Volkmar Lotz [SAP]
- Dominique Mery [Université Nancy I]
- David von Oheimb [Siemens]
- Jose Nũno Oliveira [University of Minho]
- Tobias Nipkow [TU Mũnchen]
- Kees Pronk (Treasurer) [Delft University of Technology]
- Abnik Roychoudhury [National University of Singapore]
- Shin Sahara [CSK]
- Bernhard Schätz [TU Mũnchen]
- Emil Sekerinski [McMaster University]
- Kelda Sholdice [Ryerson University]
- Werner Stephan [DFKI]
- Marcel Verhoef [CHESS]
- Alan Wassying [McMaster]
- Jim Woodcock [University of York]

Apologies had been received from: Nico Plat (Secretary), Bruce Watson, Eerke Boiten, Derek Andrews, Dino Mandrioli. Minutes prepared by Marcel Verhoef.

1 Welcome

John Fitzgerald welcomed all those present at the meeting. He thanked Emil Sekerinski and his team at McMaster for hosting and organising this business meeting and congratulated him and the program committee for putting up such an excellent FM symposium, for the first time outside Europe. The meeting extended its warm support to FME Secretary Nico Plat who could not attend due to private circumstances.

2 Agree upon agenda

The agenda was agreed.

3 Minutes of the 41st meeting held in London, UK, on 24 April 2006

The minutes of the 41st meeting were approved without modification.



4 Action list

Action 39/8: José Oliveira to provide a plan for further activities of the FME Education Subgroup
Remains open. Discussed under agenda item 10 (Education Subgroup).

Action 40/2: Bernhard Aichernig to further promote and provide structure for FME's Wiki
Remains open. Discussed under agenda item 11(FME website / Wiki).

Action 40/3: Bernhard Aichernig to coordinate discussion on on-line publications by FME
Remains open. Discussed under agenda item 11(FME website / Wiki).

Action 41/1: Juan Bicarregui to write a text on the motivation to use formal methods for software development.
Remains open. John Fitzgerald will remind Juan.

Action 41/2: Cliff Jones and Juan Bicarregui to make a proposal on possible contribution of FME to the CG6 effort
Closed. Contact between CBJ/JCB and Jim Woodcock has been established wrt. this action item.

Action 41/3: Nico Plat to setup Wiki-software for ForTIA
Closed. Nico has provided a Wiki facility for ForTIA.

Action 41/4: Nico Plat to ask Judi Romijn to serve on the FME Audit Committee for 2006
Closed. Judi has agreed to serve as an auditor.

Action 41/5: Kees Pronk to invite the member to submit plans for further achieving FME's goals with possible financial commitment by FME
Closed. Kees has sent an invitation to the membership.

Action 41/6: FME Board to make a plan for the coming period
Remains open.

Action 41/7: Nico Plat to make a flyer on FME for distribution during FM'06

Closed. A flyer had been produced and was available at the Symposium.

Action 41/8: Bernhard Aichernig to slim down FME's web site and move material related to formal methods to the Wiki

Remains open. Discussed under agenda item 11 (FME website / Wiki).

Action 41/9: Nico Plat to put forward a proposal to solve the current problems with FME's mailing lists

Remains open.

5 FM symposium 2006 at McMaster, Canada

Tobias Nipkow, the program co-chair of FM'06, provided a short report on behalf of the program committee. In total 145 academic papers were submitted from 31 countries. 36 papers were accepted from 19 countries which puts the acceptance rate at 25%. John Fitzgerald thanked Tobias, Jay Misra and the members of the program committee for delivering such a high quality technical program.

Emil Sekerinski (right) reported on behalf of the local organizers at McMaster. The conference has attracted 200 participants overall with 85 participants for the technical symposium and 75 student registrations. The tutorials and workshops were particularly well attended. Since the break-even point has been passed, it is expected that the conference will deliver a modest surplus. The meeting congratulated McMaster for making the first non-European event such a big success.



Jim Woodcock reported on the doctoral symposium, which was also very well attended and attracted 23 submissions. The overall quality was high and all participants appreciated the very positive atmosphere and stimulating discussions. The meeting concluded that the doctoral symposium is an excellent addition to the conference and should become a standard part of the FM symposium package. For the first time in the history of FM, best paper awards are given at the conference dinner for the best papers in both the main academic symposium as well as the doctoral symposium.



Alan Wassyn (above, right) gave a preview of the best paper award, a piece of Inuit art made out of special paper. The figure symbolizes "leading the way"..

6 FM symposium 2008 at Åbo University, Turku, Finland

Stefania Gnesi reported that the team at Åbo Akademi University's Turku Centre for Computer

Science in Finland is making good progress with the organisation of FM 2008 under the leadership of Prof. Kaisa Sere.. The symposium will be held from 26-30 May 2008. Stefania reminded the meeting that in 1999 we organised the World Conference on Formal Methods. If we wish to have such an event in 2009, ten years after, then organisation should start as soon as possible. The meeting agreed that this would be an excellent idea and potential organisers are asked to submit a proposal to the board via Stefania.

7 ForTIA

Volkmar Lotz (ForTIA chair) reported on the progress of ForTIA, in particular on the Industry Day that was held the day before this business meeting. A progress report had already been delivered and discussed at the previous meeting in London. With respect to Industry Day 2006, in the morning 80 participants attended the session, this number dropped to 50 in the afternoon. The concept of invited talks as a parallel track to the main academic symposium had again proven to be very successful. Analysis of the audience response forms show that 70% of the attendees rated the talks as good to excellent. 90% of the audience indicated that they would attend I-Day again if it would be offered at the next symposium. Volkmar reported that the ForTIA board is seeking volunteers to organise the next event at Turku, in close cooperation with the local organisers. It was suggested that mobile computing and telecommunications might be a suitable theme for the event, due to the high local relevance.

Action 42/1: Volkmar to discuss I-Day theme and possible co-organiser from local industry with the Ábo team.

8 Grant applications for small projects

A "small grants process" was initiated by Kees Pronk (Treasurer) by e-mail to the FME membership. Seven proposals were received and all are under review at the time of the meeting. The FME board would announce mid September which proposals had been successful.

9 Sponsorships

FME sponsors several formal method related events each year. Kees Pronk (Treasurer) reports that there is still some budget available to support events in this calendar year.

10 FME Education Subgroup

José Oliveira (Convener of the Education Subgroup) reported on progress. The second FME Education workshop was scheduled for Saturday 26 August and interest in the event had been very encouraging. The theme of the workshop was "how-to get good classroom examples", with the aim to create a repository for teaching purposes. The survey of teaching courses was progressing – all the collected data is currently being put into a database at University of Minho for easy access. José proposed a "little challenge", inspired by the Grand Challenge initiative, to show the added value of formal techniques by annotating public resources, such as the Wikipedia, with formal specifications.

11 FME web site/Wiki

Bernhard Aichernig reported that there had been only limited progress on the FME web-site and the Wiki since the London meeting in April. Lack of resources caused a slow migration from the static FME web pages to the Wiki. In particular, extra moderators are needed to migrate and update the tools and application databases which are out-of-date. Furthermore, a discussion needs to be initiated to discuss the role of FME in publications. Bernhard suggested that, in the short-term the Wiki will provide a new means to disseminate information to a wide audience. Comments on the structure of the Wiki are very much appreciated. On long term, the question should be raised of whether FME should become a publisher, for example by making all papers on-line available or to start its own on-line journal.

12 Date and place of the next meeting

The next meeting will be held on 7th February at the BCS offices in London, UK. This date is tentative, to be confirmed.

13 Other Business

Kees Pronk has indicated that he wishes to retire from the board at the next AGM in 2007, having been on the board of FME (and its predecessor) since 1991. In order to ensure a smooth transition, involving hand-over of several bank accounts, the board has decided to announce this vacancy formally ahead of time and ask for nominations for suitable candidates. Peter Gorm Larsen nominated Marcel Verhoef (currently the ForTIA treasurer) as the successor to Kees Pronk. Marcel is willing to take on this new role in 2007. If no other candidate is nominated, the board will proceed with the necessary arrangements for the transfer of (legal) responsibilities to Marcel such that a formal handover (by normal majority voting) is possible at the next AGM. The meeting agreed to this procedure *nem con*.

Summary of actions

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Action 40/2: Bernhard Aichernig to further promote and provide structure for FME's Wiki

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Action 42/1: Volkmar Lotz to discuss Industry Day 2008 theme and co-organiser from local industry with the Åbo team.