

FORMAL METHODS EUROPE

Minutes of 7th Meeting held in Brussels on 7 December 1993

Present : Angela Alapide
Daniel Cabedo
Tim Denvir
Joseph Garrel
Cliff Jones
Peter Larsen
Alejandro Moya
Nico Plat
Kees Pronk
Martyn Thomas
Joan Vilaplana

1. Minutes of previous meetings

No minutes were taken of the 6th meeting, held during FME '93, since the normal FME business was not conducted; rather, a free ranging discussion on FME took place. The minutes of the 5th meeting held on 18 February 1993 in Brussels have been distributed, and any unfulfilled actions arising from there are summarized at the end of these present minutes.

2. Status of FME

Martyn Thomas reported on the status of FME. The first newsletter, which is a joint publication with BCS FACS, had been distributed and received by all present except the delegates from Spain. Steps will be taken to include them on the mailing list (action 7.1 MCT and BTB).

Tim Denvir reported that one industrial seminar had taken place at the Ada in Aerospace conference. Industrial seminar representatives have been found for all EC countries except for Ireland, Spain, Portugal and Greece. Angela Alapide reported later that she had conducted a number of seminars in Italy. Martyn Thomas requested that the seminar programme should be the major topic of the next committee meeting.

Martyn Thomas expressed an intention to set up a database of applications and experiences of formal methods. This should not be exclusive to Europe and could use the files from Peter Ryan as a starting point.

3. Report from CEC

Alejandro Moya reported that Esprit (and hence ESSI) have moved from DGXIII to DGIII. There was not much consequent change yet, but the organisation was starting to have contacts with vertical industrial sectors. Research remains non-sectorial but establishing close links with vertical sectors. This is all part of a more general trend.

Framework IV of Esprit has been approved by the EC and is now with the council of ministers. The EC hope for a final decision from the summit by 10 December. If it is approved the first call will be issued in September 1994, but this will slip significantly if, perhaps on account of the forthcoming election in the European Parliament, it is not approved before the end of 1993.

The content of Framework IV will reflect user and sectorial needs, and may include non-collaborative actions such as are found in ESSI. The preparation for the work-programme will follow three streams:

1. Industrial working groups
2. Industrial panels assessing the sectorial needs for the programme
3. Workshops, which could include input from groups such as FME.

Framework IV will move closer to the market and be more application-driven, but the Basic Research Programme will still be protected.

Concerning FME, the EC has spent quite a lot on formal methods initiatives, but penetration has been slow. They would like to see an acceleration and promotion of the use of formal methods. Their division sees safety-critical applications as important, but they want to see the technology being application-driven.

In response to a question from Cliff Jones and Martyn Thomas on whether the EC would fund developments such as advanced theorem provers, Alejandro Moya advised sending a case to David Talbot. Cliff Jones and Martyn Thomas agreed to do so (action 7.2). The necessary motivation may be to obtain assertions from potential users that they would use such a tool.

4. Report on FME '93

Peter Larsen reported that 157 people from 17 countries attended FME '93. A surplus of 94k Dr had resulted. All agreed that FME '93 had been a very successful event.

5. Treasurer's Report

See attached sheet.

Kees Pronk had investigated the issue of FME becoming an EEG (European Economic Grouping). There were several problems with this. EEG's are normally oriented to industrial organisations. An EEG would not, for example, be able to give a float to an FME conference treasurer. There are very specific regulations regarding entering and leaving the grouping. It was therefore decided that this was not a sensible route for FME, especially in view of FME's non-commercial nature. The appropriate legal status of FME remains unresolved.

6. FME '94

The delegates from Ramon Llull University, IN and the other organisations in Barcelona presented a comprehensive breakdown of responsibilities in the local organisation of FME '94 and a detailed estimated budget. While some estimates may be slightly high and others slightly low, the totals seemed well-worked out and realistic, resulting in reasonable registration rates estimated at present as:

Tutorial (2 days)	238 e.c.u.s.
Conference (3 days)	334 e.c.u.s.
Symposium (5 days)	540 e.c.u.s.

The FME committee accepted the estimated budget and comprehensive organisational plans which were presented.

Some detailed actions were agreed:

- Tim Denvir would contact Springer, consulting Jim Woodcock, regarding publishing the proceedings in the LNCS series (action 7.3).
- Tim Denvir would ask the newsletter editor to send the mailing list to the FME '94 local organisers to merge with their publicity mail list (action 7.4).
- Peter Larsen reported that he had sent an ASCII version of the Call for Papers to newsgroups.
- Tim Denvir agreed to progress the selection and invitation of invited speakers for FME '94 (action 7.5).
- Tim Denvir would explore the encouraging of specific tutorial presentations. Tutorial presenters may be given free registration as an incentive. Details of previous tutorial offerings for which there was not space in FME '93 can be obtained from Jim Woodcock. A tutorial on the integration of formal methods with

structured methods or requirements analysis was suggested.

7. Industrial Seminars

Two industrial seminars have taken place: CRI gave a tutorial on formal methods at the Ada in Aerospace conference on 8 November in Brussels, and Angela Alapide reported on a series of seminars given within the 18-company Space S W Italia group, also in November. In order to maintain good records of seminars given and to report on them to the FME committee and the EC, Tim Denvir will contact all industrial national representatives asking them to provide such details (Action 7.6). Useful topics for the seminars include integration of formal methods with other aspects of the SW development process, management, metrics and results.

It was suggested that a file of case studies and references to other material should be maintained. Martyn Thomas will start this using the files from Peter Ryan (action 7.7).

There remains to be found industrial representatives for Greece, Portugal and Ireland. Tim Denvir will invite Micheal Mac An Airchinnigh to be the representative for Ireland (action 7.8). Cliff Jones suggested Jose Oliveira as either a representative or a source of suggestions for Portugal. Contact will be made with him (action 7.9: note Jose Oliveira has agreed to be the representative for Portugal). Tim Denvir will enquire at Lloyd's Register regarding a suitable contact in HelenTec for a Greek representative (action 7.10).

Martyn Thomas proposed that by the next meeting, proposals should be assembled regarding industrial seminars, including speakers and specific events. To this end Tim Denvir will initiate a register of speakers and ask the industrial representatives and others for suggestions (action 7.11).

8. Newsletter

The first joint FME - FACS newsletter was distributed and well received. The FME committee wished to express its thanks and congratulations to the editors. There was a general discussion on future contents of the newsletter.

It was agreed that the names of the three FME officers (chairman, secretary, treasurer) and the industrial representatives should appear on the back of the newsletter (action 7.12).

Peter Larsen had contributed to the previous issue of the FACS newsletter, but had not received a copy. Tim Denvir will try to arrange for one to be sent to him (action 7.13).

There were suggestions for a new books column (Cliff Jones) and a "regular flow of success stories".

9. Other Business

Cliff Jones offered to maintain ftp files on Books, Courses, Tools, and Industrial Experience Reports.

Tim Denvir proposed to set up a database of information on formal methods tools. Details would be distributed free to members of FME (and FACS). Tool suppliers would normally be charged a fee to have details of their tools entered on to the database, but (in return for the distribution of the details to FME and FACS members) those tool suppliers who contribute demonstrations of their tools at the FME symposium or the Refinement Workshops will not be charged for the first year of entry in the database. Since this database would provide a service to FME members, Tim Denvir hoped that FME's name could be associated with it. The committee agreed to the database being set up as proposed.

It was suggested that the FME committee meetings would be enhanced if a technical presentation could be included in the agenda. Martyn Thomas asked members to tell him who they would like to hear speak at such a technical presentation (action 7.14 - all).

FME '96: it had been agreed at a previous committee meeting that Jim Woodcock's offer at Oxford University as a venue would, if again available, be accepted as a venue for FME '96, which should be scheduled for the spring of 1996. A request will be sent to Jim Woodcock to this effect, in the hope that he can report on a provisional booking at the next meeting (action 7.15).

10. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the FME committee will be on Thursday 14 April 1994 at 10.00 in Brussels.

The first (and probably only) meeting of the FME '94 programme committee will take place in Barcelona on 7-8 May 1994. At that point papers, tutorial proposals etc. should be in the referees reports received and the final selections should be made at the meeting.

Summary of Actions

Brought forward

3/3 Offer seminar to AIM project

JN

3/5 Offer seminar to Safety Critical Club area

New Actions

- 7/1 Delegates from Spain on newsletter mailing list MCT, TD
- 7/2 Send case for theorem prover to D. Talbot MCT, CBJ
- 7/3 FME '94 proceedings in LNCS TD
- 7/4 Send newsletter mailing list to FME '94 organisers TD
- 7/5 Invited speakers for FME '94 TD
- 7/6 Record industrial seminars held TD
- 7/7 Initiate file of case studies etc. MCT
- 7/8 Invite industrial representative for Ireland TD
- 7/9 Invite industrial representative for Portugal TD
- 7/10 Enquire at L.R. re Greek representative TD
- 7/11 Initiate register of speakers TD
- 7/12 List FME Officers and representatives in Newsletter TD
- 7/13 Send last FACS FACTS to Peter Larsen TD
- 7/14 Tell Martyn Thomas who we would like to hear speak at
future FME committee meetings all

Tim Denvir
10.1.94

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