Attendees:
ABRFC – Billy Olsen
CNRFC – Pete Fickenscher
NERFC – Rob Shedd, Ron Horwood
NWRFC – Harold Opitz, Joe Intermill
NOHRSC – John Halquist
Deltares – Edwin Welles
OCWWS HSD – Randy Rieman, Dave Riley
OHD – Jon Roe, Chris Dietz, Lee Cajina

Pre-reading:
  o Support Log distributed via chps_ops on May 5, 2010

1. Health check on Support Log (major issues, show stoppers)

    NERFC: the support log item titled "spontaneous logout" is more accurately "CHPS OC crash".
    NE has seen this a few times but it's inconsistent. It appears to be related to the MODS display.
    No logging/output is produced, making troubleshooting difficult. Edwin has not been able to
    reproduce. We asked that when it happens the RFC notes who reported it, which workstation, and
    whether the workstation had a 1, 2, or 3 screen configuration.

    CNRFC hasn't installed the latest release yet. They have not seen any OC crashes.

    ABRFC's biggest issue is the CM crash. The MC recovery tool doesn't seem to help. The last
    time they saw this was on Tuesday. PeterG is looking into this item.

    NWRFC wasn't present for this part of the meeting.

    Chris asked where we are regarding system performance. ABRFC says it's "reasonable". Deltares
    still has more improvements coming in the next patch.

    HSD is logging issues as they arise, and are also addressing some CAT-2 problems. HSEB is
    about to begin support assistance; we are working out procedures with HSD. Non-urgent CAT-2
    issues will be used as learning/training exercises for HSEB and HSD; urgent issues (if any) will
    be addressed by Deltares until HSD comes up to speed.

    Chris noted some MPE issues on the CHPS support log. Joe Gofus maintains a separate inventory
    of MPE "show stoppers", so why are they in the CHPS log too? Sometimes the problem arises in
    a CHPS context but isn't clear whether or not the issue is with MPE so the issue necessarily gets
    logged under CHPS. Suggested action is that once the item is found to be a non-CHPS issue it is
    CLOSED in the CHPS support log, with a note to say the item has been handed off to the other
    non-CHPS system. RonH pointed out that we don't want any issue to fall through the cracks
    because we can't figure out where to log it.

    OHD has now switched on the Amazon replacement (TOC is now part of OOS not OCIO, and
    their procedures are more complicated). RandyR (HSD) will be speaking with RandyB (OHD
    ITSG) today about installing FogBugZ.

2. Summer Release – content, timing

From CAT meeting notes and various discussions Chris has observed that the "June" release (also known as the "Summer" release) is now apparently delayed to late July/early August. Some of this delay is because of an extension of test procedures recommended at the end of the last SAT: the CAT requested that Deltares-USA avoid wasting field time by conduct their own test procedures first; the CAT also recommended conducting SAT at an RFC instead of on the NHOR which doesn't adequately represent an RFC. The outcome of these recommendations is the need for additional testing. Chris's point is that Deltares has made an implicit assumption to increase the amount of testing and delay release to the field; rather than (as she had expected) close the build earlier to accommodate the extra testing and release it to the field on schedule. Which one does the CAT prefer?

The answer depends on the release content. The release fixes major problems, addresses performance, and provides some stability so we can focus on moving into full operations by the Fall. The patch contains:
   o   Fixes for memory leaks in the IFD (the cause of ABRFC's IFD lock-ups)
   o   Some troubleshooting code to get more information on the MODS synching problem at NERFC. Edwin has been able to reproduce, but not Andre (but see ** below)
   o   A fix for the CM crashing problem
   o   Miscellaneous other fixes. (e.g., correction to T0, the local versus server runs issue at CNRFC, improved management when a model stops during a workflow, replication of NWSRFS handling of MODS 'effective date', and some other small things).

** However, this morning Andre was finally able to reproduce the MODS synching problem. Deltares doesn't think it makes sense to distribute the troubleshooting code, and prefers to hold up the patch in order to field the fix. There is overhead associated with preparing a release – it isn't as simple as compiling and putting on an FTP site – there's much more formality involved. Therefore if we delay the patch, we might as well wait for the "June" release instead. With Chris's suggestion we close the build early in order to stick to the original release schedule perhaps the "June" release is the way to go.

What might this schedule look like? Edwin presented a very rough schedule: close the build on May 15, 2 weeks to stabilize in NL and in USA, conduct OHD SAT the first week in June, then field and conduct SAT in mid-June.

NWRFC is concerned that they will have gone 2 months between releases and prefers to see a patch sooner. Could they get an early version of the "June" release now? Perhaps they could help find problems along with Deltares-USA and OHD.

Chris pointed out that this is completely contrary to the recommendation coming out of the last SAT. OHD, OCWWS, and Deltares all advised against providing a development drop, unless NWRFC is willing to lower its expectations of the release stability, and will accept the risk of increased problems.

Also the current version would not contain the fix for MOD synching problem. Deltares would also have to deliver another update when the MODS sync fix is ready – that would be disruptive. Plus it all diverts Andre's attention.

NERFC desperately needs the MODS-synching fix; their forecasters have given up using CHPS because of the problem and there is a lot of agitation and concern. NE would like to have confidence that the MODS synching fix works properly before it's released.

Are we suggesting a permanent change to the SAT strategy, or is this a one-off occurrence? Since the group didn't come to a conclusion we agreed to discuss more during the workshop next week. We also need to look at what will be in the "September" release.

NERFC also pointed out that they want to see the system up and running at CAT offices before the software is released to the CAT-II RFCs.

Action: none.

3. Agenda for workshop next week

Several items on Day 3 seem unnecessary – for example Hank/Mark asked if the CAT really wants a repeat of the same Graphics Generator demo? No, they do not want a repeat. They would like a general status update on XEFS. Those CAT members not involved in the XEFS meetings are interested in hearing about the accomplishments in the past 3 months, and what can be expected in the next 6 months.

We will spend the first workshop session discussing the agenda; no need to discuss it further here.

Action: Chris to find out from Hank if "batch mode" Graphics Generator is available.

4. Other items

The CAT-II workshop is coming soon; what is the purpose and who should attend? Chris assumes a similar structure as last year in Tulsa. However we only had 2 days then and now we have 3. We should discuss next week. Meanwhile Chris will ask the CAT-II what topics they would like to see addressed at the workshop.

DB sync on NERFC – RandyR said it's complete and seems to be working but he'd like to see it run for 24 hours to be sure.

NERFC said the change to grids retention didn't show up in the recent release. Edwin said it's a change to the sync profile files, not software. Edwin will have Peter contact the RFCs. A brief recap: if a forecaster switches between workstations/OCs on different days there's potential for gaps to appear in the grids displays, although the data are actually all there. Deltares would like to have the solution be the same at all RFCs (a "national" solution) to avoid extra work and potential for accidental overwrites of local implementations. Edwin will contact Peter. Once Peter has made the changes, the CATs should monitor to see if there's a big change in the length of time to synchronize.

What's the status of the archive project? Prototype hardware is on order. There's nothing for Deltares to do yet. In May/June JohnH would like to determine local needs for metadata; then he'd like to present a schema by the FEWS User meeting in November.

Regarding the SHEF-to-XML converter: JohnH has a working version but he's waiting for input (sample SHEF files) from the CAT. He has reviewed local data feeds and has grabbed some products. He will discuss further next week. It turns out there's not a one-to-one correlation between SHEF parameter codes and PI parameters; more like many to one. MAP is encoded differently by different offices. If this converter is for internal use we can determine our own relationships. The XML files are schematically correct but John hasn't tried ingesting into CHPS yet.

Action: Chris to poll the CAT-II on topics they would like to see addressed at the June workshop.
Action: Edwin to get Peter to update the sync profile files for the CAT RFCs.

Next meeting: CAT workshop is next week. Next conference call will be on Thursday May 20, 2010.