RIPE NCC Activity Plan

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1. Introduction

The RIPE NCC has been working since 1 April 1992 on the basis of an Activity Plan defined by RIPE in 1991. In September 1993 the work of the RIPE NCC has been reviewed by a RIPE panel; the results of the review have been approved by RIPE, and have been published as document ripe-099.

Based upon the review activity, the review panel recommended that a new RIPE NCC Activity Plan should be adopted, better reflecting the actual work of the RIPE NCC. This has resulted in the current document which constitutes the RIPE NCC Activity Plan for 1994 and 1995.

Sebsequent sections give background information on RIPE and the RIPE NCC. A full description of RIPE NCC activities is given, together with reporting mechanisms. Finally, administrative procedures for change control of the Activity Plan are defined.

2. Background

2.1. About RIPE

RIPE (Reseaux IP Europeens) is a collaborative organisation open to all European Internet service providers. The objective of RIPE is to ensure the necessary administrative and technical coordination to allow the operation of a pan-European IP network. RIPE does not operate a network of its own.

RIPE has been functioning since 1989. Currently more then 60 organisations participate in the work. The result of the RIPE coordination effort is that the individual end-user is presented on his desktop with a uniform IP service, irrespective of the particular network his or her workstation is attached to. In December 1993, more than 500,000 hosts throughout Europe are reachable via networks coordinated by RIPE. The total number of systems reachable worldwide is estimated at close to two million.

2.2. About the RIPE NCC

The RIPE Network Coordination Centre supports all those RIPE activities which cannot be effectively performed by volunteers from the participating organisations. Besides supporting RIPE activities in general, the RIPE NCC provides the following services to network operators:

- network management database containing information about IP networks, DNS domains, IP routing policies and contact information
- delegated Internet registry, a clearing house distributing Internet numbers (most importantly address space)
- domain name system (DNS) coordination
- graphical maps of IP networks
- repository for network operations software
- RIPE document store
- interactive information service

The RIPE NCC started operations on April 1st, 1992, and currently has 3 permanent staff members.

The RIPE NCC is embedded in RIPE. This means that the RIPE NCC Activity Plan is defined by RIPE, and that the RIPE NCC reports, at least, to RIPE on a regular basis.

The RARE association provides the formal framework for the RIPE NCC.

3. Technical - Coordination Activities

3.1. Internet Registry for Europe
The RIPE NCC will will act as the European registry for the delegation of Internet numbers. The RIPE NCC will perform this function in close cooperation and coordination with

a. The Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA)

b. The global Internet Registry (currently the Internic)

c. Local Registries of European service providers

In exceptional cases the NCC can act as the Registry of last resort for European organisations.

3.2. Maintain a database of European IP networks and their management information.
The database to be maintained will contain several classes of objects. These objects are described in detail in ripe-13.

The NCC will be responsible for the database entries; this includes

a. collection of database entries

b. checking of individual entries

c. checking of consistency and integrity of the database

Quarterly reports on changes in the contents of the database will be produced, together with statistics about the number of database entries.

3.3. Distribution of the database.
Secondary copies of the database can be installed at other sites upon request. It is the responsibility of the NCC to keep track of such secondaries. The RIPE NCC will provide assistance to local registries in setting up secondary database servers. An up to date record of secondary sites will be maintained on line.

3.4. Coordination of database exchange with other organisations.
The NCC will coordinate and execute the exchange of database information with NCC's outside Europe. The result will be that for the end user of the database one uniform set of global information will be available.

3.5. Keep a record of operational contact points.
This will consist of a list of NOC's and responsible people that will be used as a reference list for the individual NOC's to be used in case of network related incidents, including security incidents. Individual NOC's will be able to subscribe to a weekly update service.

3.6. Placement of name servers and backup servers in Europe, and beyond.
On a regular basis the interworking between the DNS name servers in Europe, and

their connections to name servers outside Europe, must be checked. Detected errors and inconsistencies must be reported. Corrective actions must be followed in case of severe problems. The result will be a consistent set of name servers.

3.7. Referral Service.
The RIPE NCC will perform a Referral Service for Internet Service providers. The NCC will do this in a fair and impartial way. The service is only available to service providers contributing to RIPE NCC funding.

3.8. Coordination with Local Registries.
The RIPE NCC will keep close contact with Local Registries in Europe. The RIPE NCC will assist such registries in setting up and maintaining their services. This activity may include presentations on the work of the RIPE NCC for broader audiences, such as relevant conferences and workshops. It may also include coordinated development of common tools.

4. Technical - Development Activities

NICs and NOCs and the NCC need special purpose software tools for their work. While some of these tools are available commercially others will have to either be obtained from the public domain or specially developed to suit local needs. The NCC will collect, develop, document and test such tools in order to make them available to the RIPE community. While some basic support will be given the NCC will not provide full support for these tools.

4.1. Database management tools.
Tools for management of the database and their maintenance are an important work item for the NCC. The result will be the availability of a consistent database.

4.2. Database querying tools.
Development and maintenance of the whois utility. The result will be a program, available from a file server, that permits remote interrogation of the database.

4.3. DNS quality control tools.
Utilities for quality control of the interworking of the DNS name servers will be developed and maintained. The result will be a set of software and documentation, available from a server.

On an ad hoc basis special projects are taking place inside the RIPE NCC. These projects are funded separately, but the NCC may give administrative, management and technical support. Therefore the following activity is defined:

4.4. Special projects.
The RIPE NCC can participate in special projects that have been approved by at least the RIPE community. The nature of the participation can be administrative, managerial or technical. The total amount of NCC participation should not exceed 20% of the NCC resources. Results of the special projects will be publicly available.

5. Administrative - RIPE Activity Support

The NCC will give the following support to the RIPE activities:

5.1. Keeping the RIPE document store.
The NCC will keep RIPE documents online and easily accessible to the RIPE community. Copies of other document stores relevant to the RIPE community, such as the repository of RFCs, will equally be provided. Modern document retrieval utilities will be installed and maintained to facilitate access to the document store.

5.2. Technical and secretarial support for studies undertaken by RIPE.
The NCC will provide technical and clerical support for RIPE studies and working groups in order to enhance continuity and coordination of the work between RIPE meetings.

5.3. Organisational support for RIPE meetings.
RIPE meeting attendance is expected to be on the order of 80 persons, meeting three times a year. The NCC will provide clerical support to organise these meetings in order to keep them productive.

6. Administrative - Reporting

The NCC will follow the following general reporting procedures:

6.1. Quarterly reports an all activities will be produced for the RIPE participating organisations and the RIPE NCC funding organisations.

6.2. Quarterly reports on outstanding problems will be produced for the RIPE participating organisations and the RIPE NCC funding organisations.

6.3. The NCC reports on its ongoing work and outstanding problems also to each RIPE meeting. These meetings currently take place three times a year.

6.4. The NCC will produce annual reports.
The annual report will contain a summary of the activities and an overview of the finacial situation.

All reports produced by the RIPE NCC will be publicly available.

7. Review and Change Control

The functioning of the RIPE NCC based on the current activity plan shall be reviewed in the fourth quarter of 1995. The review panel will consist of at least the Chairs of RIPE and the RIPE Working Groups.

The current Activity Plan can be amended on request by a full RIPE meeting which includes the organisations that are funding the RIPE NCC.