

Management Board, Thursday 31st August 2017

Minutes

(<https://indico.cern.ch/event/661566/>)

Participants:

Federico Antinori, Pietro Antonioli (vidyo), Harald Appelshaeuser, Ralf Averbeck (vidyo), Alberto Baldisseri, Peter Braun-Munzinger (vidyo), Predrag Buncic, Thomas Cormier, David Evans, Martino Gagliardi, John Harris (vidyo), Boris Hippolyte, Alex Kluge, Marco van Leeuwen, Grazia Luparello, Massimo Masera, Silvia Masciocchi (vidyo), Luciano Musa, Tapan Nayak, Werner Riegler, Enrico Scomparin (vidyo), Johanna Stachel (vidyo), Adriana Telesca, Mike Sas (vidyo), Pierre Vande Vyvre, Daicui Zhou (vidyo).

Excused: Anju Bhasin, David D. Chinellato, Jens-Jorgen Gaarhoeje, Volker Lindenstruth, Vladislav Manko

Approval of the Minutes:

Minutes from the last (27th July 2017) ALICE-MB meeting have been approved (English corrections were proposed and implemented).

Introduction: Federico Antinori

- Ongoing activities: Several activities were discussed:
 - LHCC in-depth review of ALICE to take place on 11 September (<https://indico.cern.ch/event/659522/>)
 - Initial Stages 2017 (18-22 September): Preview and approval sessions ongoing.
 - Scientific Policy Committee (SPC): 25 September: ALICE status to be presented.
 - Finance Committee on 28-29 September: presentation on CR0
 - RRB on 23-25 October: Will include an update on the data volume projections.
 - Status of shifts this year and organization of the shifts for next year

- Collaboration matters:
 - Spain in ALICE: University of Santiago de Compostela (one M&O-A member) formally ended its participation in ALICE (official letter received on 26 August). In the meantime, there has been potential interests in ALICE among high-energy experimentalists in Santiago. It has been agreed with Spanish authorities to resume participation in ALICE as soon as a viable group is formed. CERN management is involved in the discussions.
 - Pinstech (the ALICE new Associate Member from Pakistan) has started its activities in ALICE. Two colleagues with expertise in Fluka have arrived at CERN in August and will stay for one year. They have started to work on identified particle production and ITS simulations.
 - Korean groups officially made a request for reducing their shift load (for 2017 and 2018) since they are heavily involved in the upgrades (tests for the Pixel assembly). How to quantify this needs further discussion.

- NA61 request for TPC electronics: a new version of the agreement (officially approved by NA61) has been received. The agreement needs to be signed by Eckhard Elsen, Director for Research and Computing. The signing will be done after the discussion on the Fixed Target program in the Research Council on 19 September. There is also the outstanding issue of NA61 requesting the gate pulser system (not mentioned in the initial document) as part of the equipment to be transferred from ALICE. Harald Appelshaeuser has been asked to look into this and report in the next MB.
- Organisational matters:
 - Boards during APW in Amsterdam (4-8 December): it was decided to have:
 - MB on Thursday December the 7th at 5 pm
 - TB on Thursday December the 14th (week after APW)
 - First APW of 2018 (5-9 February): Both Frascati and GSI have expressed their willingness to host the APW. This will be followed up by Physics Coordination.

Report from Technical Coordination: Werner Riegler:

- The Technical Coordinator recalls that LS2 is only 1 year and 3 months away !!
- CR0: The remaining open issues regarding CR0 were discussed. The current cost reduction reflects the reduced UPS requirement as well as a 5% rebate because of the common order with LHCb. ALICE and LHCb would therefore use the same configuration staying within the budget. This includes 60 cm noise filters, and implies the use of 2 m longer and 30 cm higher containers. The current layout is more elegant with four containers in a row and better for power distribution including integrated water production. The company will demonstrate the operation of a full container in Brussels before the delivery of the first unit.
The MB has decided to go ahead with the proposal for CR0 to the Financial Committee (scheduled on 28-29 September).
- LHCC “in-depth” review (<https://indico.cern.ch/event/659522/>): the agenda of the review was presented. It consists of LS2 Installation schedule and milestone overview, ITS, MFT, TPC, Readout and Trigger system, SAMPA, FIT and O2.
- TPC production chamber tests: during the tests a fully qualified OROC chamber behaved well at the nominal HV settings but developed a short at twice the operating point. These issues will be closely followed-up. Fully qualifying the GEM chamber and HV operation in the cavern remain as critical items.
- Muon Arm additional manpower: A new Engineer from IRFU will be working in the Muon Arm. The person will coordinate the qualification of the full Muon system and share his time on the CRU firmware.

News from the Run Coordination: Grazia Luparello:

- LHC performance: Availability of stable beam is heavily affected by beam losses in 16L2. Losses at this location cause dumps, also during the ramp phase. As a consequence, the LHC is currently operating with only 1550 bunches per fill. These

running conditions will be kept till the end of 2017. The experts hope to solve the problem of losses during the YETS.

- ALICE is taking data in nominal conditions with an efficiency of ~88%. Collection of minimum bias events is ahead of schedule whereas data taking with rare triggers has fallen behind. The limitation of the number of bunches in the fills implies an increased pileup. The minimum bias trigger rate has been reduced.
- Future plans:
 - A stability test of ALICE detectors at 50 kHz Pb-Pb equivalent load of particles is planned on September the 4th to further study the RUN3 data-taking conditions.
 - Final decision on the scheduling of the pp reference run at 5 TeV will be taken at the next LHCC meeting (September 11 - 14).
- The TS2 in September has been shortened from 5 to 3 days.
- Shift booking 2017: An overview of the status of the shift booking was presented:
 - The current fractions of (un)booked shifts are (3.8%)96.2% and (30.4%)69.6% for general and on-call shifts, respectively. The remaining general shifts will be booked once the names of shifters for the reference run are fixed.
 - Last minute cancellation of shifts still happens. It is rather difficult to cover these shifts.
 - The list of 28 (out of total 105) institutes, that are currently below the 75% threshold in shift booking, was presented. Because the general shifts are almost fully booked, it was underlined that many of these institutes have very little chance to reach the threshold. Possible ways around would be to either book the shifts of overbooked institutes and to have people getting on-call training and take on-call shifts for different projects.
 - It was pointed out that negative carry-over of shifts has been taken into account in the shift accounting, but positive carry-overs (the fact that some institutes did more than the threshold last year) are not currently in the system. No consensus was reached for taking the latter into account (since it was not done either in run1 nor in run2 so far).
- Shift booking 2018: MB discussed the shift booking procedure for 2018:
 - In order to avoid that almost of the general shifts are booked within a couple of hours of opening, two options were discussed: i) implementation of booking limits based on a “booked/due percentage”. In this case, the limit for each institute would increase with time. ii) divide the year to several booking periods that would be opened on a regular basis. Arguments for and against each option were raised. In the case of i) pros is that it would allow people to have more time to book shifts and cons are that it requires much more organisation within each institute; in the case of ii) a cons is that it would prevent faculty members from booking their shifts early (as they would have to book many times each year).
 - Modification of the relative weight of the credits from central shifts vs credits for on call shifts: The possibility of lowering the number of credits for on call shifts was discussed. It was pointed out that for several projects it is already difficult to find people willing to sign for on-call shifts. One of the purposes of

having on-call shifters is to remove part of the workload of experts. For this, sufficient training is mandatory with a clear intention of continuity and long-term commitment (preferably at the institute level i.e. between Team Leaders and Project Leaders). On the one hand, training new on-call requires time and willingness of people to be trained. For the TRD project, the experts are willing to train new persons, but the response has not been good. On the other hand, the level of expertise needed varies from one project (detector) to the other, and one may be able to find people willing to be trained. It was decided to discuss the shift booking procedure separately.

- More credits to Shift Leader (SL) shifts: the possibility of assigning more credits to SL shifts was discussed. SLs will be asked to have sufficient experience, for example, have taken central shifts or SL shifts earlier. Proposals of making SLIMOS course mandatory and adding specific flags for tagging experienced shifters (so they can be encouraged to take SL shifts) were also made.
- Making the Team Leaders aware of the overbooking situation was also proposed (add booked/due percentage in the confirmation mail and automatic mail when institutes are overbooking).

News from the Offline Board: Predrag Buncic

- C-RSG (Computing Resources Scrutiny Group) processes: The information needed for the RRB was submitted to the scrutiny group on 30 August (document prepared and submitted twice a year). With respect to the last one (submitted in April), the total amount of tape resources needed in 2017 and 2018 is lowered to 7 PB due to two factors: i) the change of gas mixture in the TPC, now using Ne instead of Ar, which results in the reduction of spurious clusters and ii) an improved HLT compression of TPC data from 5.2 to 7.2. Consequently, the average event size at 150 kHz with the new compression factor is 1.55 MB. The new projection based on the aforementioned values was presented, although uncertainties are obviously large. It was reminded that, for the 2018, the gas mixture of the TPC still needs to be discussed with a clear evaluation of the performance with the current (Ne) mixture.
- The next steps for the RRB meeting were presented: it will start with answering questions from C-RSG, then preparing a face to face meeting before the presentation in the RRB and eventually pledges for 2018 are provided in REBUS.

News from the Physics Coordination: Marco Van Leeuwen

- HL-LHC/run3/4: discussions ongoing. Contact persons for key topics were identified and the activities are expected to gain momentum in the coming months.
- Preview session for Initial Stages (IS) 2017 included 10 new results (LF, HF, DQ, CF) and 2 paper proposals. The IS approvals are scheduled during 4-8 September.
- Markus Köhler will replace Anton Andronic as coordinator of the JPsi2ee PAG.

- APW Organization in Amsterdam (4-8 December): The registration fee of 300€ includes fee for workshop dinner. Registration for APW will open soon. The Management Board meeting during the APW will take place on Thursday at 17:00.
- Selection of results for Initial Stages:
 - Deuteron and nuclei production
 - J/Psi flow in p-Pb
 - Heavy-flavour electron flow in p-Pb (run 2016)

EB specified that the two papers related to the heavy-flavour results are expected to be released before Initial Stages 2017.

AOB: none

Next MB: 28th September 2017 at 14:30

Link: <https://indico.cern.ch/event/666087/>
