

SYSTEM REGULATION

17.02.03 Trans Texas Videoconference Network

Approved September 29, 1995

Revised April 30, 2002

Revised January 16, 2004

Supplements System Policy 11.01

1. GENERAL

1.1 Trans Texas Videoconference Network (TTVN) is the Wide Area Network (WAN) for The Texas A&M University System, and provides data network services to all of the System components, as well as to a number of affiliated school districts, institutions of higher education, and other nonprofit entities that have developed a relationship with the System.

1.2 The TAMU System Telecommunications Council (Council) was formed to make decisions regarding the strategic operations of the TTVN. This Council is composed of one representative from each System component and is chaired by the Texas A&M University Director of Educational Broadcast Services (EBS).

2. COST

2.1 Each System component using TTVN will be assessed an annual operating and maintenance charge. Any funds not expended in a current year will be used to enhance the replacement inventory or to build a reserve for future expenses. The Council will review the proposed budget each year. The Council will develop, review, and recommend an on-going 2-3 year plan for network expansion and operation.

2.2 The TTVN budget will be prepared by the Texas A&M University Director of EBS through the Texas A&M University Associate Provost for Information Technology, and will be submitted to the Vice Chancellor for Business Services each year so it can be considered within the System budget guidelines. The budget will represent the cost of operations for the network for the coming year. Each System component will be assessed annually an amount to cover operating costs, hardware and software maintenance costs, and an annual capital equipment budget. Non-System sites will pay an annual affiliation fee.

3. MAINTENANCE AND UPGRADES

Requests for maintenance of equipment and software upgrades are made to EBS by accessing the TTVN website or calling EBS and asking for TTVN. Requests for upgrades are routed through the Director of EBS, who will evaluate the request and present a recommendation to the Council for approval. This will serve to maintain the compatibility and uniformity of the systems across the entire network. It will be TTVN's goal to continue

to seek efficiencies in the network through the application of automation techniques and appropriate future technologies.

4. EXPANSION

Any proposed addition or expansion will be evaluated and approved by the Council. It is essential that any expansion be planned and coordinated to allow for significant lead times for equipment and circuit installation. Expansion is likely to come in four areas:

- (1) expansion of interactive video nodes, either at existing sites or new sites;
- (2) requests for expansion to non-System sites;
- (3) requests for circuits to support data connections; and/or
- (4) increases in bandwidth from a component or affiliate site to the hub.

4.1 Expansion of Interactive Video Nodes

4.1.1 If a proposed site is a component of the System, the component will present a proposal through the Director of EBS to the Council if the expansion will have an impact on the other nodes in the network. This proposal will include the mechanism for covering the cost of the requested capital equipment that effects network operation. The equipment at the proposed site must be approved by TTVN Engineering (a division of EBS) if it will utilize central TTVN resources and qualify for TTVN maintenance and help services. This is to ensure equipment compatibility and that on-going maintenance and training can be provided cost effectively.

4.1.2 The Director of EBS, through the TTVN staff, evaluates the technical feasibility of expansion, presents recommendations to the Council and seeks approval of the Council to act on the recommendation or a modified version that the Council might suggest.

4.1.3 The cost of the telecommunications circuit to be included in the expanded backbone will be considered for inclusion in the total annual cost allocated to the component making the request.

4.2 Expansion to Non-System Sites for Video or Data

4.2.1 All costs associated with the expansion of the network to non-System entities are to be borne by the non-System entity. These costs include the cost of the hardware at the non-System site, any hardware required at the connecting System site, and all circuit costs from the System site to the proposed site. In addition, the non-System site will be assessed an annual affiliation fee that represents a portion of the cost of the backbone network and its support. These non-System entities will be referred to as affiliates.

4.2.2 Non-System organizations will prepare a proposed expansion plan and present it to their System connection partner. The System connection partner

will act as the non-System organization's sponsor and will present their plan to the Director of EBS for evaluation. The Director of EBS will present the plan and recommendations to the Council for approval. The sponsoring System component must demonstrate the benefit of the affiliation to the System.

4.2.3 Part of the evaluation of the expansion plan will be the impact of the expansion on the host site and the network capacity. The evaluation will include recommendations from the Director of EBS for approval by the Council regarding alternate circuit design and additional network equipment.

4.3 Circuits for Data

To extend the network and/or interactive video capability to secondary locations, the cost of the circuit from the secondary site to the TTVN backbone or hub along with any required equipment will be the responsibility of the secondary organization. A proposal for expansion must be made through the Director of EBS to the Council for approval. The circuits will be ordered by EBS through the Texas A&M University Telecommunication Office and the monthly costs billed to the component or affiliate.

4.4 Bandwidth Expansion for Data

To increase backbone bandwidth from a component or affiliate site to the hub, a proposal must be made through the Director of EBS to the Council for approval. The Texas A&M University Associate Provost for Information Technology will make recommendations to the Council on the proposal, weighing the availability of bandwidth across the System, current traffic patterns, bandwidth availability to the Internet, and other factors as deemed necessary. Cost of the circuits along with capital costs will be paid by the component or affiliate. Annual circuit costs will be paid by the component or affiliate.

5. OPERATION OF TTVN

5.1 The TTVN staff, which reports to the Director of EBS, is responsible for the operation, scheduling, training, engineering and maintenance of the network. This includes all data transmission systems and member H.320 and H.323 video systems.

5.2 A TTVN Facility Coordinator will be designated by each component or affiliate to assist users of each TTVN videoconference facility. Each video room on the network will have a coordinator assigned to it.

5.3 Access to TTVN Video Facilities

The success of the TTVN depends on the ability to access the interactive video locations on a scheduled basis. Components of the System or affiliates of the System may request access to TTVN according to the following guidelines:

- 5.3.1 Requests should be submitted to the TTVN Scheduling Office in College Station.
 - 5.3.2 Scheduling of TTVN usage must conform to the scheduled activities at the host location. Priority use is assigned to regularly scheduled academic program classes. As time permits within that schedule, access will be made available to other users of TTVN.
 - 5.3.3 When a user of TTVN is not part of the host location, the user will provide an operator who has been trained in the operation of TTVN equipment. Appropriate training may be requested by contacting TTVN staff at EBS. For short-term conferences, the user may contract with the host location for a trained operator.
 - 5.3.4 If the user requests access to the TTVN location outside the normal operating hours, the user must coordinate appropriate access and security arrangements with the host location. Weekend and after-hours use may also require a minimal fee to cover the cost of personnel at the location. This is to be determined by the location. Fees will only be charged to cover unusual cases. In no case will fees be collected as a revenue generating activity for network services.
- 5.4 EBS is responsible for data connectivity up to the TTVN router at each component site. Components may not connect any outside institutions to TTVN or to their internal LAN for the purposes of reselling TTVN network services such as Internet or central video resources. A connection for resale would be considered an affiliation, and would require an appropriate affiliation fee be paid.

CONTACT FOR INTERPRETATION: Texas A&M University Director of Educational Broadcast Services

HISTORY: Last Version: April 30, 2002

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