SES-123-87
16 June 1987

MEMORANDUM FOR: Distribution

THROUGH: Chief, Requirements Analysis Branch, ADD/ESG/FBIS

FROM: Laird Steinberg
                  Systems Engineering Support, GE

SUBJECT: Field Bureau Automation ERB Meeting Report

1. An FBA Engineering Review Board was held on 16 June 1987 at 1300. See Attachment A for the list of attendees. See Attachment B for the agenda.

2. [   ] opened the meeting and reviewed the minutes of the   STAT
last FBA ERB meeting.

   a. The ERB meeting schedule has been changed. Beginning 30 June 1987, the meetings will be held weekly on Tuesday at 1300.

   b. The draft FBA CM Policy has been reviewed by C/ESG. Twila will be discussing it with C/ESG later this week.

   c. The Paraguay visit was a success. There was a problem with a cable, a Victor PC motherboard, the connection with the Black Box (the result of incorrect Black Box documentation), and corrupted BACH software. These problems were resolved by the LEC engineer, who was impressed by the technical knowledge of the Bureau personnel.

   d. The numbering of DRs from Vienna is now in sync with ERB DR numbering thru DR-AU-007-87. Twila will send a message to Vienna confirming their correction.

   e. C/ESG has agreed with the FBA ERB recommendation to delay consideration of a LAN installation at Cologne until calendar year 1988.

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      f. [_____] and Scott Carpenter presented their trip   STAT
report on their visit to the S & T Units. They addressed the list of
required equipment and recommended a sequence of deliveries. PROD
will upgrade the stand alone S & T Unit equipment; providing Victor
PCs, software and equipment compatible with FBA-1 LAN systems. This
will enable the FBA ERB and LEC to provide maintenance and sparing
support to the S & T Units. Specifically, G/Net boards, LAN software
and hardware will not be shipped to the S & T Units until resources
are available to support a LAN installation.

      3. Twila reviewed the status of open DRs. See Attachment C for the
DR Status Report.

      a. DR-SK-003-86   Copal Printer

      LOGS has shipped the new Epson printer to replace the Copal
printer. DR remains open pending arrival of the printer at Seoul.

      b. DR-MB-003-86   IBM PC Disk Problem

      The ERB is waiting for notification that the bureau has received
the diagnostic software, reformatting instructions and replacement
disk. DR remains open pending arrival and results of reformatting
efforts.

      c. DR-AU-034-86   Comscribe Printers

      Vienna would like to use Comscribe printers on the FBA-1 system
LAN. Scott will present the results of his technical investigation
at the next FBA ERB meeting. However, he advised the ERB that the
Comscribe 1 and 3 printers are no longer being manufactured.

      d. DR-AU-044-86   LIPS-10 Laser Printer

      Vienna has experienced repeated paper jams in the LIPS-10 Laser
printer. Scott will present the results of his technical
investigation at the next ERB meeting. Joe Barrett advised the ERB
that LEC will be delivering Data Products laser printers to the
Bureaus, beginning with the installation of the FBA-1 system at
Bangkok. The LIPS-10 laser printers at Vienna and Hong Kong will
eventually be returned to FBIS Headquarters for use at Reston, and
replaced with Data Products laser printers. [_____] will send a   STAT
message to advise Vienna and Hong Kong.

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    e. DR-AU-001-87   FBA TRANSMIT

Vienna has requested opening a 2nd transmit port/line in order to send channel checks and keep the alt-route open. This is currently handled by Vienna with an off-line workstation. Joe Barrett presented the LEC technical analysis of the DR. The ERB decided that this is a request to change the current system baseline, and determined this DR to be non-discrepant. This request will be investigated as an RFC. LEC will prepare the RFC and provide an impact analysis to the ERB. DR remains open pending preparation of the RFC.

    f. DR-AU-002-87   FBA-1 TRANSMIT Software Interface

The most recent version of the TRANSMIT software, with the output buffer delays removed, is being used in Vienna and Key West. This version of the TRANSMIT software will be the baseline for future FBA-1 system installations. DR is closed.

    g. DR-AU-005-87   File Server Disk Space

Vienna has a problem with Press Agency files, (many of which are junk), over-filling the file server disk space. Regardless of the length of the message, a full 4 kbyte segment is used for each message. As a result, the file server disk space will fill up within 4 days versus the planned 7 day storage capability. The minimum 4 kbyte block size can not be changed. Temporarily, the solution is to purge the files more frequently. However, this process requires manual review of each file and is time consuming. LEC is investigating this problem. DR remains open.

    h. DR-AU-006-87   Incomplete APA-BTA Message

Vienna has experienced a problem with incomplete APA-BTA press agency messages. The problem was caused by the database finding a word containing another press agency code and opening another code number where the remainder of the message was stored. Vienna solved the problem by changing the start of message sequence code from ATA to ATA plus one space. DR is closed.

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    i. DR-AU-007-87   Intermittent Operation of Yugo IBM PCs

Vienna has had 2 IBM failures. The problem appears to be associated with the hard cards. No spares exist at the bureau or at LEC. Vienna has requested two new Victors to replace the IBMs which will be returned to Headquarters. LEC is providing them. LEC will make a recommendation on whether the ERB should upgrade the old IBM PCs at the other bureaus. DR remains open.

    j. DR-HK-001-87   IBM PC/XT Disk Drive Failure

Hong Kong has experienced an IBM floppy disk drive failure. They fixed the problem by replacing the disk drive with one from a Forum PC. Hong Kong plans to return the disk drive to Headquarters for repair. Twila will send a message telling Hong Kong not to pouch the disk drive. DR is closed.

4. Twila reported on the status of the FBA-1 System at Vienna.

    a. The ZFX problem, which has existed since April is being written up as a DR by Scott. The large number of ZFXs received by Vienna is a result of garbling of the first lines of outgoing messages in their primary circuit. Vienna has been investigating the problem and believes it is caused by an incompatibility between the bureau and embassy modems. [   ] has sent a message with questions regarding the specifics of the problem.　　　　　　　STAT

    b. Vienna has received bids for the voltage regulator. The cost for an electronically controlled electro-mechanical voltage regulator will be between $8,000 and $9,000. A surge protector is also required for each PC. LEC is preparing to send the surge protectors. An in-depth field power survey was conducted at Vienna and is recommended for all FBA installations. Twila will talk to C/FED about having the survey done, preferably by a regional person because of familiarity with the local power.

    c. There has been a backlog in communications and editing at Vienna, although no formal complaint exists. Apparently, the proximity of the printers to the editors encourages the monitors to interrupt and question the editors regarding the status of their print outs.

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        d.   Joe brought back a list of possible future RFCs to the FBA-1
system from Vienna.

        (1) The Press Agency UDB log utility holds a weeks worth of
information and is very large. Vienna recommends making a
separate log by agency.

        (2) Many more items come through the APA line than are
required. Vienna requests a stand alone PC to sort and print the
desired items.

        (3) A desire to view the Press Agency items without having
to copy the file first, providing fewer key strokes to read-in.
This would require a software change.

        e.   Scott will present a technical evaluation of suggestions
received from Vienna at the next ERB.

        f.   The System Administrator position guide in Vienna needs to be
evaluated and updated. Someone will be sent in September.

5.   Twila also reported on the status of Key West.

        a.   The Key West back-fit installation of the baseline FBA-1
TRANSMIT interface software experienced a hardware problem in the
Black Box. This problem was resolved by correcting the parity switch
settings in the Black Box. Currently, Key West is successfully
operating with the same software configuration as Vienna, and is not
experiencing the ZFX problem.

        b.   Key West has received one of their printer paper stands and
an additional one is being provided. Jerry will check into the
availability of another Comscribe printer.

        c.   The new monitor has arrived at Key West. The bureau has been
advised to return the failed monitor to LEC.

        d.   Key West has also complained about the LEC documentation of
their upgrade. Apparently, the schematics provided (actually a block
diagram) were not representative of what was installed. They also
complained of poor materials.

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6. Twila reported on the status of the installation at Hong Kong.

    a. No word has been received from the installation team. The
equipment has arrived at the Bureau. Additional equipment is being
shipped tomorrow.

    b. [   ] is leaving for Hong Kong at the end of the   STAT
week of 22 June 1987. [   ] is going out around 1 July 1987.   STAT
Travel of additional team members is not confirmed at this time.

    c. A Protocal signal analyzer may need to be sent to Hong Kong.
Confirmation of the need to ship the signal analyzer will be received
17 June 1987.

7. Open Discussion covered the following topics:

    a. ADD is responsible for bureau communications upgrades. FED
will not take on the upgrades of printers. The FBA ERB is
responsible for all FBA equipment and printers, except the
Comscribe/Extel printers and other commo printers. LEC requires
clarification of responsibility with regard to the printers. This
situation is being investigated.

    b. The DR Procedures in use at Vienna appear to be working. No
feedback (negative or positive) has been received. Hong Kong is
currently using the procedures.   Bill Stanbridge will confirm which
bureaus have not received the DR procedures, and a copy of the
procedures will be pouched to them. All bureaus should implement
these procedures upon receipt.

    c. PC security procedures are currently being developed for the
bureaus.

    d. Write Now 1.51 software is now being used by Vienna and Key
West. Twila will have it sent out with CRW's Bach 1.3a package being
released 24 June 1987.

    e. Currently, a modem in Vienna is being used by LEC to down
load information from Plainfield. Vienna recommends that this be
done in each bureau in an off-line stand alone mode. This request
should be addressed as an RFC. The ERB recognizes the potential for
mis-use of the modem and the impact to security procedures.

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  f.   The ERB will prepare an RFC to the Key West system baseline. This RFC will propose removing the ASCII to Baudot converter from the Key West commo circuit when FBIS Headquarters transitions from the MIDAS system to the AFS system. If the RFC is approved and implemented Key West would become the first bureau to use ASCII communications with Headquarters.

  g.   The ERB wants to recognize Ed Knox for his efforts and thank him for his contributions.

  8.   The next Field Bureau ERB is scheduled for Thursday, 25 June at 1300.

        Laird Steinberg

Attachments:
  A.   FBA ERB Attendees
  B.   FBA ERB Agenda
  C.   DR Status Report

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DS&T/FBIS/ESG/ADD/SES:LSteinberg:mlh/527-8600 (16JUN87)

Distribution:
Original - C/ESG
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       1 - SA/OPS
       1 - W. Pratt, COTR
       1 - T. Forrest, Bur. Seg. Mgr.
       1 - LEC
       1 - GE/SES Staff
       1 - GE/SES Chrono
       1 - ADD Staff
       1 - ADD Chrono
      14 - Bureau Chiefs
       1 - Cologne
       3 - S & T Units

ATTACHMENT A

FBA ERB Attendees

T. Engle
E. Knox
D. Bernholz
J. Berthiaume
A. Coffin
W. Stanbridge
S. Carpenter
L. Steinberg
J. Barrett
T. Forrest
M. Tanigawa

ATTACHMENT B

FBA ERB AGENDA

1) Review of Minutes
        ERB Meeting Schedule
        Draft FBA CM Policy Status
        Paraguay visit results
        Vienna DR Numbering
        C/ESG decision on Cologne LAN
        S & T Unit Requirements

2) Review of DR Status
        DR-SK-003-86 Copal Printer
        DR-MB-003-86 IBM PC Disk Problem
        DR-AU-034-86 Comscribe Printers
        DR-AU-044-86 LIPS-10 Laser Printer
        DR-AU-001-87 FBA TRANSMIT
        DR-AU-002-87 FBA-1 TRANSMIT Software Interface
        DR-AU-005-87 File Server Disk Space
        DR-HK-001-87 IBM PC/XT Disk Failure

3) Vienna Status
        ZFX Requests
        Voltage Regulator Bids
        Power Improvements
        Failure of 2 IBMs

4) Key West Status
        Failed Monitor
        Additional Printer
        DTS Interface

5) Hong Kong Status
        Equipment
        LEC Installation Team

6) Open Discussion

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