

File 20101026.1100: Notes from Systems Engineering meeting:

UCDMO acknowledged receipt of the TSABI accreditation letter and are processing the entry. The baseline list has not been updated yet, but is expected any day. In last week's CDTAB meeting, UCDMO made the determination to split the remaining TORAs into two groups, deciding to rule on the data link TORA first. The three initial SABI sites were supposed to go before DSAWG in December, but none of them got their paperwork in on time. So those sites are not going to be the pushing force that the developer and PMO were hoping for to get SABI across the CDTAB threshold this month. SABI is turning into at least a 90 day process, something that is beginning to irritate the developer, Programme Office, and the service CDMOs.

The developer's installers are extremely busy. Hardware product cycles for the computers that the CDS runs on are becoming a problem again (this happened before with OS versions TSOL 2.5.1, TSOL 8, and TSOL 8 HW 4/01 and 12/02 most severely). Now it is happening again with Solaris 10 TX certified edition. The hardware vendor fails to consistently maintain its hardware refresh cycle in sync with evaluated versions of the operating system—which are the only specific releases that certain customers, namely defence contractors, are ever allowed to deploy. Banks and other commercial customers care less about Common Criteria certificates because they do not have a mandate to use only evaluated versions; they care more about device driver support for the latest chipsets, and the OS vendor follows. The result is a ludicrous situation in which the only hardware certified to run the highest-security evaluated OS cannot be purchased because it is out of production. The cost of the evaluated OS version is an order of magnitude higher per licence but the only hardware it will run on is refurbished kit on Ebay. Serious problems with sourcing hardware for classified installations have occurred at least three times in twelve years. The developer and Programme Office allocated additional funds and time to migrate to a multi-architecture OS deployment strategy for RM 5.0; the next version (6.0) will abandon the evaluated OS for an evaluated version of SE Linux, an event directly attributable to the hardware vendor's lackluster support for the CC evaluated versions of its operating system. The fact that Oracle sharply increased licence fees immediately after acquiring Sun Microsystems is, in the developer's view, a minor but reinforcing point in favour of transitioning to SE Linux.

## References