

File 20091106.0558: Weekly activity report 0109:

weekly activity report 109 (loughry)

Joe Loughry

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Attachments:

Weekly activity report no. 20091105.2111 (GMT-7) sequence no. 0109, week 4 MT

I met with Dr Martin on Wednesday after Reading Group. This week I have spent time observing activities involved in the Certification Test and Evaluation (CT&E) of a major revision of the software for a cross-domain system at Lockheed. This is a useful case study for my research because it is the first time that the C&A process (NIST Special Publication 800-53) has been used; hence both the certifier (DIA) and the developer (Lockheed) are unfamiliar with it. This is the second case study in my research, although the first is not done yet. On Monday and Wednesday I participated in the Independent Verification and Validation (IV&V) Test Director's briefing and took notes in the test lab during Alpha Testing. Alpha Test is the second of four phases of testing. The previous phase was Factory Acceptance Test (FAT) which is performed by the developer; the following phase will be Beta 1 at government (field) site in December. The final phase, called Beta 2 is a penetration test performed by NSA. Therefore, in all, four disjoint groups of people will have tested the software before it is certified: the developer, the IV&V contractor, Beta 1 site personnel, and NSA. I have been getting to know as many of these people face-to-face as possible. On Monday I have another meeting scheduled, as they have figured out that I am studying C&A standards and have been coming to me with questions about which DoD standards apply in different situations. There are many C&A standards, all interlocking and partly overlapping, some new and others superseded; I have been helping straighten them out.

Since Alpha Test is going on this week and next, I have been spending time following it at the expense of progress on the Crosstalk journal paper. I will be able to finish that paper around the end of next week at the latest.

I feel that my research is focussing to a greater degree. The dangers to watch out for now are two-fold: firstly, to avoid spending too much time trying to make things perfect; and secondly, to fit all the work I need to accomplish in the next 10 months into that limited amount of time.

Next meeting scheduled for: Wednesday, 12th November at 2:00 p.m. Oxford time.

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End of WAR 0109.

References