



ROD Newsletter

April 2011 Issue

The COD and Operational Documentation team: Malgorzata Krakowian, Marcin Radecki, Luuk Uljee, Vera Hansper, Ernst Pijper and Ron Trompert

Introduction

Apart from our regular topics, we will look back on our sessions at the EGI User Forum in Vilnius. The three sessions that we have organised, i.e. operational documentation, training and ROD, that were very successful and very well attended. The attendance widely exceeded our expectations. Thanks for joining us in Vilnius.

In addition, Malgorzata Krakowian has compiled some very nice ROD training videos. She will discuss these videos later on in this newsletter.

Further, the ROD of the NGI_FI will introduce itself and say something on how the Grid Oversight operations are organised within their Operations Centre, etcetera.

Although the EGI User Forum has not even started yet, it is good to think ahead and to bring the EGI Tech Forum, which will be held in Lyon, France in September this year, to your attention. There will be a substantial amount of time available for Grid operations. Of course, the Grid Oversight activity plans to organise sessions at the Tech Forum. Currently, we are thinking about some advanced training since most ROD people already went through the basic training. We would very much appreciate your input on topics you like to be discussed there. As always, we expect you to join us there.

Input on the newsletter and Grid Oversight is very much welcomed by us. You can contact us by email at: central-operator-on-duty@mailman.egi.eu. A complete project glossary is provided at the following page: <http://www.egi.eu/results/glossary/>

The ROD Session at the EGI User Forum

During the ROD session there were four presentations. The first one was from Marcin Radecki discussing the Grid Oversight work. In the second presentation, Gonalo Borges from the NGI IBERGRID gave a very nice presentation on the IBERGRID operations and their experiences with the regionalised operational tools. Finally there was a slot on operational tools where two presentations were given by Cyril L'Orphelin on the status and roadmap of the operational portal and Emir Imamagic on the SAM roadmap. The presentations can be downloaded from: <https://www.egi.eu/indico/sessionDisplay.py?sessionId=9&confId=207#20110411>. We were very pleased with the fact that no less than 35 people were attending this session.



Video tutorials

COD team has started using new technology to pass info to ROD members. You can now learn your duties by watching our video tutorials!

The series will contain 6 parts:

1. **How to become a ROD member** – 7 steps which should be done to become a ROD member
2. **Operations tools** – a brief introduction of operations tools needed by a ROD member to perform their duties
3. **How to handle alarms** – an instruction how to manage alarms on the Operations Portal (ticket creation, closing and masking alarms)
4. **How to handle tickets** – an instruction how to manage tickets on the Operations Portal (ticket creation, updating and closing tickets)
5. **Issues escalated to COD** – an introduction of cases which are escalated to COD and how to deal with them
6. **Operations portal** – a brief introduction of the Operations Portal tools

Currently the first two videos are available and you can find links to them on ROD wiki page:

https://wiki.egi.eu/wiki/Grid_operations_oversight/ROD#Videos_tutorials. All videos will be uploaded to YouTube soon.

Next episodes will be added accordingly and we will let you know about them in future ROD newsletters.

If needed, further episodes may be filmed to supplement the learning process. So we are waiting for your suggestions.

Metrics

In this issue of the ROD newsletter we are going explain the **ROD workload** metric. This metric shows the **number of items** appearing in **ROD dashboard** for a given month, which includes:

1. New alarms (without assigned ticket) older than 24h
2. All tickets opened by ROD

The goal of this metric is to provide an overview of how demanding the ROD duties are. It can also be understood as “How much work is required to maintain the infrastructure?”

To properly interpret this metric we need to understand what can influence the number of alarms and tickets. What is vital to know is that some of them **are under ROD control** and some **are not**.



What ROD can do to reduce the number of items?

1. close alarms which are already in OK status
 - if the status is OK for at least 24 hours in a row
 - if you have confirmation from site admin that the problem is solved)
2. open one ticket for alarms which have the same cause
3. mask alarms which have the same cause
4. encourage and help site administrators to fix incidents within 24 h

What can increase the number in spite of the ROD team effort?

1. Number of sites and services in your region
2. New middleware version introduction – there might be some problems with the update procedure or bugs
3. Holidays time – less staff responsiveness
4. Problems with operations tools
5. Site admins expertise - how fast can the problem be fixed

As you can see there are many reasons why this metric can be high or low, so it cannot be interpreted outside from surrounding circumstances. If you have high ROD workload it doesn't exactly have to mean that you are performing bad ROD support. But in the same time it doesn't mean that you shouldn't take effort to reduce this number.

What is worth highlighting is the fact that if you want to check if the situation in your region is progressing you should not compare yourself to other Operations Centres but to yourself in the past months.

Note: you can find the newest Operations Support metrics on ROD wiki page

[https://wiki.egi.eu/wiki/Grid_operations_oversight/ROD#ROD_performance - Operations Support Metrics](https://wiki.egi.eu/wiki/Grid_operations_oversight/ROD#ROD_performance_-_Operations_Support_Metrics)

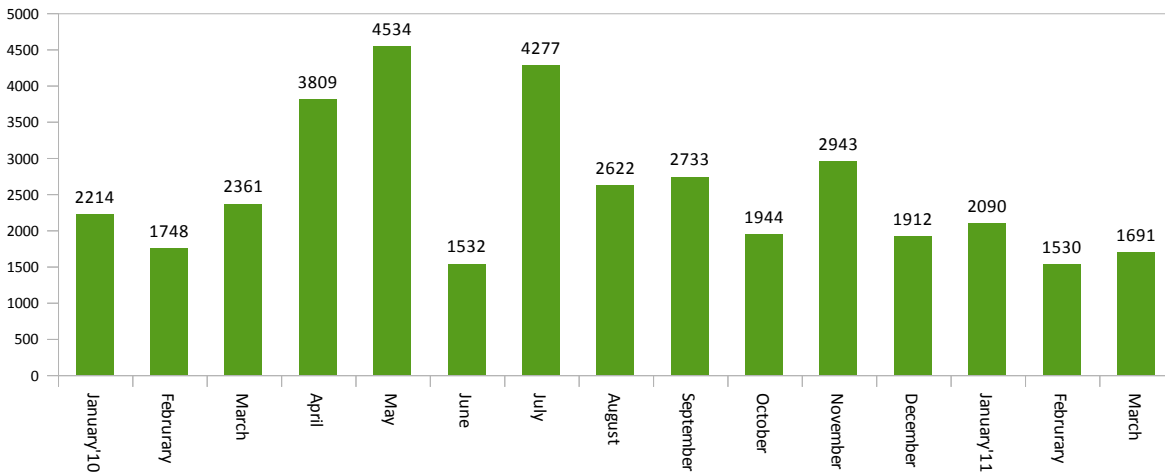


Figure 1: Aggregated ROD workload (Jan'10-March'11)

Introducing NGI_FI ROD team

The NGI_FI is an "old" newcomer to the world of EGI. Previously, the Finnish EGI grid resource centers had fallen under the jurisdiction of the pan-Nordic NDGF NGI. However, with new resources soon to be spread across Finland, the NGI_FI is soon emerging complete with a team which already has a lot of experience.

The Finnish ROD team is run by CSC - IT Center for Science, which is responsible for the national infrastructure for computational research and research networks in Finland. Collaboration with the resource centers already began in 2004 with these centers involved in Finland's first big grid infrastructure deployment. This has resulted in a community with an excellent ongoing collaboration and which is easy to extend.

The NGI_FI Operations team consists of the following people:

Michael Gindonis
 Kalle Happonen
 Ulf Tigerstedt
 Vera Hansper (Deputy Operations Manager)

In addition to the NGI_FI duties, some of the team also has ROD responsibilities toward NDGF_NGI. Other duties will involve technical support for the Finnish NGI.



Most of the team has been working with the Finnish grid infrastructure since 2004, or even earlier. There is extensive technical experience including ARC and gLite middleware expertise in the team.

Daily work

The shifts in the team are on a weekly rotation basis. For the case where team members also have NDGF responsibilities, we strive to have both shifts concurrently to reduce the time a person is to be on call. Since the official NGI_FI is still very young, the routine has not had time to settle itself, but we expect the good collaboration with resource center administrations to continue. This includes face-to-face meetings 4-6 times a year in addition to weekly chat meetings. Close relationships with the resource centers ensures that information flows freely, and problems are handled in a timely manner.

Operational Documentation

Odds & Sods:

Mailing list to contact the Documentation team:

operational-documentation@mailman.egi.eu

Best Practices contributions:

operational-documentation-best-practices@mailman.egi.eu

There has been a lot of behind the scenes progress with the Operational documentation and also with the GOCWIKI transfer. The Dashboard HowTo is going to be release shortly (we will announce it through the mailing lists) and the Best Practices wiki is reasonably functional.

Latest news:

We had two very interesting sessions at the EGI User Forum. Thank you to all those who were able to attend and who provided new and interesting input to both the Documentation task and to Training.

There were 11 of us at the face to face meeting, and you can upload the presentation from the session.



<https://www.egi.eu/indico/contributionDisplay.py?contribId=29&confId=207>

One very important result that came out of this session was a hole in the security of the wiki pages. These have now been tightened.

The training session was an interesting media juggle. Andres Aeschlimann and I were running 2 video projectors and an EVO session! (Unfortunately, the web cam didn't work as we thought it would, so streaming of the video wasn't successful.) There were 25 of us at the training session locally and 5 people joined in remotely through EVO. Thanks to everyone for joining in, and especially those who were able to join in remotely. Sitting through 1 1/2 hours on EVO is certainly a challenge!



The new Training Guide (introductory level) which was used for this session and the new and improved Dashboard HowTo are both now available at:

<https://documents.egi.eu/document/301>

Announcement:

There will be a Documentation Workshop in Zurich from the 14th to the 16th of June. Those wishing to attend should fill in the doodle poll at:

<http://www.doodle.com/6g7vhfcqdsx722mg>

An announcement has already been sent out to the ROD team's mailing list.

Phone meetings:

- Site Certification Manual
 - Still under review, in conjunction with the new NGI/SITE OLA
- Operations Manuals
 - We will hold a preparatory phone conference in May. Main work will be done at the workshop.
 - New form of documentation for these manuals will be a comprehensive group of HOWTOs.
- Training Guides



European Grid Infrastructure

- There will be a phone conference in May.
 - Next challenge is to create advanced training guides.
- Best Practices
 - Next phone conference end April/early May. This will also be a focus of the workshop.
- Moving GOCWIKI to EGI WIKI
 - Next phone conference will be in May, and a focus of the workshop