

USMS President and Committee Chair Jim Miller called the meeting to order at 8:37 PM EDT. Present were Lynn Hazlewood, Hugh Moore, Leo Letendre, Pieter Cath, Carl House, Patty Powis, and Jim McCleery. Anna Lea Roof joined the meeting at in progress.

I. Definition of Data Base Project

Jim Miller opened the discussion by stating that this was a meeting of general principles, rather than specifics, and that the Executive Committee hoped the result would be to take all databases in the organization and put them under one umbrella. His remarks were a summary of the introductory letter sent to committee members on March 19, 2002, excerpts of which follow:

"You have been selected to participate in an exciting concept for USMS. It is called the Database Project. For years, each committee got their work done with whatever skills they had. The result has been a divergent database that is incapable of cross-linking. Each committee and project is an island unto itself. This makes communication difficult and time consuming. Yes, each committee is recreating the wheel!

The Executive, History and Archives, and Communications Committees have been hard at work developing the RFP for the History & Archives data base, as directed by the last HOD. During the process of tackling this project, the H&A Committee Chair, Carl House, suggested that USMS was embarking on a very expensive program that would still not meet our long-term needs. It is this broader database project that we are now facing.

It is my contention that USMS will serve its members much more efficiently if we are all speaking the same language and freely sharing data. All of USMS should be interconnected. This saves a world of work on the national and local levels. It is easy to see how the linking of the databases and communications between the History and Archives, Registration, Records and Tabulation, Championship, Communications, and Recognition and Awards Committees would better serve our corporation. I am sure there are other links that you can foresee, as well.

Some of the links will be easy. As an example, we are long overdue in establishing an athlete identification number which would be used throughout our data. This will be the only way that we can easily solve the quandary that J. Miller, J. W. Miller, Jim Miller, James W. Miller, Jim W. Miller, etc. are all the same person wherever he swims. Other concepts, such as establishing the best format and language, will not be so simple.

A subcommittee of the RFP Project has set out to broaden its scope and consider who would be most interested in the overall Database Project for USMS. It is for this broader project that you have been invited to participate. We will start by asking ourselves, "Is this project worth the effort in the short and the long term?"

Communication is the life's blood of any corporation. A corporation such as ours that is spread all over the country and run by a volunteer force, must embrace every opportunity to make the jobs that we ask of our members easier. We have that capability within our grasp conceptually. Is this a realistic dream? Let's find out!"

II. Introduction of Committee Members

Members of the committee were introduced as well as the reasons for their presence on the committee:

- 1) Jim Miller (President of USMS and Committee Chair)
- 2) Lynn Hazlewood (Executive Committee liaison to Communications & Planning, Calendar of Events editor)
- 3) Hugh Moore (Communications Chair, former registrar, Professional Management Guidelines author)
- 4) Pieter Cath (Records & Tabulations Chair, computer knowledgeable)
- 5) Carl House (History & Archives Chair and creator of the H & A data base)
- 6) Anna Lea Roof (Registration Chair)
- 7) Betsy Durrant (Planning Chair and former registrar)
- 8) Leo Letendre (Part of the creation of and the sole maintenance person for the Registration software)
- 9) Patty Powis (In-house Legal Consultant - Member of Legal Counselors Committee)

10) Jim McCleery (In-house Technical Consultant - College Professor teaching Data Base Management Systems, PNA Webmaster)

III. Do we want this to work?

The committee discussed whether we should go forward with the project and the consensus was that we should. There was a wide-ranging discussion including: a) benefits to be gained from an integration of our major database systems, b) areas of concern that needed to be attended to during the project, c) potential problems we might encounter, d) why the previous attempt at a project like this failed, e) the need to upgrade our individual committee data bases regardless of how we structure them and what the difference in cost for creation and maintenance of individual vs. a more global corporate approach would be – at first glance, this project should result in an overall cost savings to USMS , f) how this will affect the meet management systems people are using, g) how this will affect the end-users, and h) impact upon the USMS volunteer network simplifying the data availability.

IV. Project Goals

The committee formulated the goals of the project and agreed that the purpose of the task force shall be to define an approach to developing, maintaining, and updating all major USMS data bases. These data bases should be designed so that:

- 1) USMS can move into the future with a technology infrastructure that supports our needs as we grow.
- 2) The software is maintainable with reasonable costs to the corporation and we are free of dependence on particular individuals.
- 3) The software allows multiple people to enter data and update the information held in the data base.
- 4) The data bases can be presented for search and display on the USMS web site and the information appears in a timely manner.
- 5) All swimmers are identified in the database by a permanent swimmer id that will be common throughout the corporation.

V. Defining the Initial Steps

The committee then determined that we would first need a road map which defines the scope and structure of the project. Between now and the next conference call, Jim McCleery will head a discussion to develop a document that speaks to the process required to build the data structure that would accommodate the overall database project that we are contemplating. Once this is in place we can proceed to a) define the overall data structure, b) set up an implementation schedule, and c) generate budget requests. The committee also agreed that we should design the data structure ourselves. We know what data we want to store better than anyone else. We need to define the data we want to keep and how we want to interact with it. The vendors we hire are the technicians who will implement our goals from our road map.

VI. Next meeting date

The next conference call will be Thursday, May 30, 8:30 PM EDT.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:52 PM EDT.

Respectfully submitted by:
Lynn Hazlewood, Zone Chair