



**Formal Methods Europe
Minutes of the 44th meeting
Held at Åbo Akademi University, Turku, Finland
30 May 2007**

Present at the meeting were:

- Jorge Cuéllar [Siemens]
- John Fitzgerald (Chairman) [Newcastle University]
- Stefania Gnesi (Symposium Chair) [ISTI]
- Nina Hållfast [Åbo Akademi University], present up until agenda item 7
- Niklas Holsti [Tidorum Ltd.]
- Dino Mandrioli [Politecnico di Milano]
- Nico Plat (Secretary) [West Consulting]
- Kaisa Sere [Åbo Akademi University]
- Marcel Verhoef (Treasurer) [CHESS]
- Maria Waldén [Åbo Akademi University]

Apologies had been received from: Bernhard Aichernig (Publications Chair), John Cooke, David Crocker, Alessandro Fantechi, Cliff Jones, Peter Gorm Larsen, José Nuno Oliveira, Jan Storbank Pedersen, Kees Pronk and Bruce Watson.

1 Welcome

John Fitzgerald welcomed all those present at the meeting. He thanked Kaisa Sere, Maria Waldén and Nina Hållfast for hosting and organising this business meeting, including a visit prior to the meeting to the venue for FM 2008. He also noted that this was the first meeting in a long time without Kees Pronk, who had stepped down as FME's Treasurer at the AGM in February of this year.

2 Agree upon agenda

The agenda was agreed. Item 5 on the agenda was renamed into "General Financial Status".

3 Minutes of the 43rd meeting held in London, UK, on 7 February 2007

The minutes of the 43rd meeting were approved without modification.

4 Action list

Action 39/8: José Oliveira to provide a plan for further activities of the FME Education Subgroup
Done, see agenda item 9. Action closed.

Action 40/2: Bernhard Aichernig to further promote and provide structure for FME's Wiki
No progress, action continues.

Action 40/3: Bernhard Aichernig to coordinate discussion on on-line publications by FME
No progress, action continues.

Action 41/1: Juan Bicarregui to write a text on the motivation to use formal methods for software development
This action is now considered obsolete. Action closed.

Action 43/1: Kees Pronk and Marcel Verhoef to change Board Member details for FME at the Dutch Chamber of Commerce

Ongoing, see also agenda item 5.

Action 43/2: Kees Pronk and Marcel Verhoef to setup a new bank account for FME
Ongoing, see also agenda item 5.

Action 43/3: Stefania Gnesi to issue a Call for proposals to host and organise FM'09
Done, see also agenda item 7. Action closed.

Action 43/4: José Oliveira to provide information on the status of the Education Database including the quality of the information it contains

José Oliveira reported that maintenance of the database might be managed in one of two different ways:

- have all courses in a database with restricted access;
- have all courses on the FME Wiki.

The second solution does not work well because it is difficult to search for the information and there is little control on the updating process (anyone can change anyone else's courses, for example). Concerning the second solution, the current prototype (webservice, server in VDM++) is stable but (not surprisingly) very slow. José was hoping to recruit some students to refine the VDM++ model to SQL, but no one had chosen the project. This may be done in September of this year. Action can be closed.

Action 43/5: Bernhard Aichernig to make links from Wikipedia to the FME website and FME Wiki
No progress, action continues.

Action 43/6: John Fitzgerald to prepare a proposal for an annual report on the status of formal methods
No progress, Action continues.

Action 43/7: Peter Gorm Larsen and Juan Bicarrequi to coordinate follow-up to the FP7 report
Peter and Juan have discussed this issue but could not decide on a suitable follow-up activity given the proximity of FP7 deadlines. This action is therefore considered obsolete. Action closed.

Action 43/8 John Fitzgerald to send the FP7 report to FME's EU contacts and to Jean-Raymond Abrial
Partly Done, action continues.

Action 43/9: Stefania Gnesi to ask the OC of FM'08 to host the next meeting in Turku
Done, action closed.

Action 43/10: John Fitzgerald to scan the Technical report reflecting the ISO VDM-SL standard and make it available in electronic form
No progress. Nico Plat volunteered to take this action instead of John.

5 General Financial Situation

There have been no major changes in FME's financial situation since the last meeting.

Income

The surplus made at FM 2006 had not yet been received but it was expected imminently.

A generous gift of € 2.500,- had been received by Ada-Netherlands, an association which is currently closing down its activities. The members and board recorded their thanks for the generosity of this gift and determined that it should be spent in line with the aims of Ada-Netherlands. Various suggestions were considered, including that the gift could provide funding for an appropriate "Small Project", or alternatively to support for I-Day at FM 2008 or FM 2009 (since the latter will be held in the Netherlands).

Expenditure

Marcel Verhoef proposed that FME should repeat the funding scheme for “Small Projects” that had been piloted in 2006, since it had been felt to be successful. The proposal was accepted and the total budget allocation set to € 15.000,- with a maximum of € 5.000,- for each project. Marcel will issue a call for proposals with a closing date of 7 September 2007. It was agreed that board would review proposals and announce decisions by 21 September 2007.

Action 44/1: Marcel Verhoef to issue a Call for Proposals for Small Projects 2007

The situation with respect to FME sponsorships was discussed. Three requests have been received so far in 2007: one was recalled (SFM'07), one was accepted but no details have been received so far (SEFM'07), and one was only an informal request (Summer School on Testing in Pernambuco). Marcel Verhoef was asked to clarify the current status with the requesters.

Action 44/2: Marcel Verhoef to contact Jonathan Bowen for more details on the sponsorship request for SEFM'07)

Action 44/3: Marcel Verhoef to contact Jim Woodcock for more details on the yet informal sponsorship request for a Summerschool on Testing in Pernambuco

Paul Boca had asked John Fitzgerald if FME would support the traditional BCS FACS Christmas Workshop in 2007. The theme this year will be the industrial application of formal methods. It is unclear however if Paul also asked for financial support. John will enquire.

Action 44/4: John Fitzgerald to ask Paul Boca if financial support is requested for the BCS FACS Christmas Workshop 2007

Paul Boca had also asked if FME would be interested in sponsoring an annual BCS FACS Evening Seminar. John will ask Paul to provide a more concrete proposal.

Action 44/5: John Fitzgerald to ask Paul Boca to provide a concrete proposal for organising a yearly seminar jointly organised by BCS FACS and FME

Financial Administration

Following the election of a new Treasurer, the decision to expand the Board, and the decision to move FME's assets to a new bank, some administrative actions are necessary. The following observations and actions were reported:

- FME currently has a Belgian bank account. Belgian taxes erroneously charged to the account have now been reimbursed. The Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer have been identified and registered as official account owners in accordance with new European rules. This took a considerable amount of time and effort to arrange.
- The next step will be to register Marcel Verhoef, Stefania Gnesi and Bernhard Aichernig as officers of the association with the Dutch Chamber of Commerce (CoC) at which FME is formally registered as a “vereniging” (association). Kees Pronk will remain registered as “First Treasurer”, Marcel Verhoef as “Second Treasurer”. Marcel will collect the required information from Stefania and Bernhard such that the proper forms can be filled-in and submitted to the CoC by Kees Pronk.
- As previously agreed, the Association will move its account to a Netherlands bank, subject to receiving a suitable proposal from Marcel Verhoef.
- FME's assets will be transferred from the Belgian bank account to the Dutch bank account.
- The Belgian bank account will be closed.
- Finally, Kees Pronk will be removed as First Treasurer from the register at the CoC, and Marcel Verhoef will become (First) Treasurer.

6 Status report on FM 2008

Kaisa Sere, Maria Waldén and Nina Hållfast gave an extensive presentation on the current status of FM 2008. The presentation is attached to these minutes.

A concept for the Call for Papers is ready. The final version will be distributed soon.

The contract for between FME and Åbo Akademi has been drawn up. It is currently studied by the university's legal department.

No specific choices for invited speakers had been made yet. Stefania will ask the Symposium Steering Committee for suggestions.

Action 44/6: Stefania Gnesi to ask the FME Symposium Steering Committee to suggest invited speakers

There is no budget specification available for FM 2008 yet. Marina Waldén and Nina Hållfast were asked to prepare a draft budget before 15 June 2007.

Action 44/7: Marina Waldén and Nina Hållfast to prepare a draft budget for FM 2008 (deadline 15 June 2007).

Stefania Gnesi thanked the Åbo team for the tour of the FM 2008 venue which had taken place prior to the meeting. Photos taken during the tour are attached to these minutes.

7 Status report on FM 2009

Stefania Gnesi reported that the selection process for FM 2009 had been completed: TU Eindhoven in The Netherlands had been selected because of their well motivated and mature proposal and the fact that they had opted for the organisation of a World Congress on Formal Methods.

No representatives of the FM 2009 Organisation Committee were present at the meeting but a written status report had been received from Jos Baeten prior to the meeting. Since the designation of Eindhoven as venue for FM'09, its OC had been focusing on fixing the time frame for the Symposium and finding other events that are interested in co-location. Suggested date for the Symposium is October 2009. A work plan will be written in the coming period. Discussion on the budget and contract are initiated.

8 ForTIA

Marcel Verhoef reported that the situation with respect to ForTia had not changed much from that reported on at the previous meeting in London. Peter Gorm Larsen (IHA) has been asked to become co-chair of I-Day at FM 2008 together with Sari Leppanen (Nokia). Both have accepted. ForTIA meetings had to be rescheduled because ForTIA Secretary David von Oheimb broke his ankle. The meeting sent him good wishes.

ForTIA was asked to formulate plans for FM 2009 before the next FME meeting (see agenda item 11).

Action 44/8: ForTIA to formulate their plans for FM 2009 (deadline: next FME meeting)

9 FME Education Subgroup

No representatives of the FME Education Subgroup were present at the meeting but a written status report by José Oliveira had been sent in prior to it.

The FM-Ed'06 workshop was quite successful but not enough for a journal publication of re-submissions. To remedy this, it was decided to merge with TFM'06 and go for joint publication by FAC, which is currently under way (reviewing is taking place).

It seems worthwhile to propose another "Formal Methods Education" workshop co-located with FM 2008. The Education Subgroup has approached the organizers of the TFM series (David Duce, and others) to prepare a joint proposal.

One of the presentations at FM-Ed'06 (by Bernhard Schätz) had addressed the application of formal techniques to middle school teaching. This seems relevant and perhaps the Education

Subgroup should think about initiatives in this area. Teaching modelling and formal reasoning at high school is perhaps too late: for many students the battle is already lost on the first day, given their very weak background in mathematics.

The Education Subgroup was asked to formulate their plans for FM 2009 before the next FME meeting (see agenda item 11).

Action 44/9: The Education Subgroup to formulate their plans for FM 2009 (deadline: next FME meeting)

Dino Mandrioli is chairing a student contest on “engineering” (emphasis on design instead of programming) at ICSE’09. Currently he is seeking industrial support, both financially as well as suggesting themes. He would like to know if FME could provide orthogonal support, e.g. by awarding products that come out of the contest and that exploit formal techniques. This idea was positively received. The FME board will take it up and discuss it further with Dino.

Action 44/10: FME board to discuss the idea of awarding a prize or other support for FM-based products arising from the student contest at ICSE’09

10 FME web site/Wiki/Electronic Publications

No report had been received. The agenda item was therefore not discussed.

11 Date and place of next meeting

It was suggested that the next meeting should be held in October 2007 at TU Eindhoven in The Netherlands, to enable the dialogue with the FM 2009 local organisers. Nico Plat will enquire if this is possible.

Action 44/11: Nico Plat to arrange the next FME meeting, if possible at TU Eindhoven.

12 Other business

John Fitzgerald remarked that established organisations (e.g. ACM, IEEE) have a tradition of giving awards and/or honours. He wondered if FME can do the same for the formal methods community, e.g. people who have made significant contributions to FME itself or to the formal methods field of expertise. The meeting suggested asking a senior FME member to explore the pros and cons of such an award scheme and to formulate an advice to the board. Jim Woodcock was suggested as a potential candidate.

Action 44/12: John Fitzgerald to discuss with Jim Woodcock the pros and cons of having an FME awards/honours scheme.

Peter Gorm Larsen had e-mailed the Board to inform them that the “Tools” page on FME’s web site is outdated and incomplete. In general there seems to be very little up-to-date information on formal methods tools on the internet. Perhaps this could make a good “Small Project”.

Action 44/13: Marcel Verhoef to ask Peter Gorm Larsen if he wants to submit a “Small Project”-proposal on information on formal methods tools

Summary of actions

- Action 40/2: Bernhard Aichernig to further promote and provide structure for FME's Wiki
- Action 40/3: Bernhard Aichernig to coordinate discussion on on-line publications by FME
- Action 43/1: Kees Pronk and Marcel Verhoef to change Board Member details for FME at the Dutch Chamber of Commerce
- Action 43/2: Kees Pronk and Marcel Verhoef to setup a new bank account for FME
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- Action 44/4: John Fitzgerald to ask Paul Boca if financial support is requested for the BCS FACS Christmas Workshop 2007
- Action 44/5: John Fitzgerald to ask Paul Boca to provide a concrete proposal for organising a yearly seminar jointly organised by BCS FACS and FME
- Action 44/6: Stefania Gnesi to ask the FME Symposium Steering Committee to suggest invited speakers
- Action 44/7: Marina Waldén to prepare a draft budget for FM 2008 (deadline 15 June 2007).
- Action 44/8: ForTIA to formulate their plans for FM 2009 (deadline: next FME meeting)
- Action 44/9: The Education Subgroup to formulate their plans for FM 2009 (deadline: next FME meeting)
- Action 44/10: FME board to discuss the idea of awarding a prize or other support for FM-based products arising from the student contest at ICSE'09
- Action 44/11: Nico Plat to arrange the next FME meeting, if possible at TU Eindhoven.
- Action 44/12: John Fitzgerald to discuss with Jim Woodcock the pros and cons of having an FME award
- Action 44/13: Marcel Verhoef to ask Peter Gorm Larsen if he wants to submit a "Small Project"-proposal on information on formal methods tools

Attachments to the minutes

- Presentation on the status of FM 2008
- Photos of:
 - An informal dinner with FME members on 29 May 2007 at restaurant Samppalinna in Turku
 - The tour of FM 2008's venue (The Caribia Hotel, Turku) on 30 May 2007
 - The FME meeting on 30 May 2007