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NCAR Science Advisor

Performance Evaluation Period: November 2005—December 2006

Summary of Activities and Accomplishments

(1) Contributions to the NCAR Executive Committee

I have represented the NCAR scientific community for over a year by actively participating in regular management meetings. These included: all but two Executive Committee meetings, a number of NCAR Directors' meetings, and a few UCAR Management Committee meetings. It was impossible to attend all meetings, due to scheduling conflicts and other commitments. I prepared for these meetings by studying the majority of documents provided beforehand and soliciting additional input as needed. Furthermore, I participated in a series of extended special meetings, including the Annual Budget Review, the NSF Panel Review of NCAR Management, the NCAR Executive Committee Retreat, and the Geosciences High Performance Computing Research Consortium Workshop.

I have reviewed thoroughly the NCAR Strategic Plan, UCAR Strategic Plan, Management Review, and NCAR Annual Report documents, to verify that the views and interests of the NCAR scientific community are reflected adequately. I provided detailed revisions to all these documents, the great majority of which were adequately accommodated. For example, the Management Review and Strategic Plan documents now recognize that NCAR scientists have made contributions in several research areas that the original documents failed to mention; that NCAR scientists serve on the editorial boards of over 70 professional journals; and that the official visitors program augments funding by individual scientists from their personal grants. I also prepared an in-depth response to the NSF Panel's Recommendation 4.1, which called for identifying programmatic overlap between the Laboratories after the reorganization of NCAR. After discussions with the NCAR Executive Committee and my own research, I argued that: (i) the 2006 Annual Budget Review identified no unnecessary or inappropriate programmatic overlaps; and (ii) to the contrary, the expertise and interests of the Laboratories is complementary and helps different groups contribute coherently to the strategic goals, priorities and mission of NCAR. This response will be incorporated in the official reply to NSF.

In light of the ongoing discussions on supercomputing at NCAR, I conducted a number of interviews with prominent NCAR scientists, regarding their vision of the future of scientific computing in the organization as well as in the community. Each interviewee represented a different area of large-scale scientific computing. Independently, I conducted a few interviews with SCD

representatives to learn more about the issues. Afterwards, I organized a focused NSA meeting, advertised NCAR-wide and broadly attended by interested parties. The outcome contributes towards optimizing the future of NCAR supercomputing over the range of computational science conducted at NCAR and the university community.

(2) Contributions to NCAR goals

Insofar as the NSA position is concerned, the activities summarized under item (1) contribute indirectly to several NCAR goals as defined in “Goals and Priorities”, on page 5 of the on-line NCAR Strategic Plan (<http://www.ncar.ucar.edu/stratplan/2006/stratplan06.pdf>)

(3) Interactions with NCAR Scientists’ Assembly

During the period of evaluation I interacted with NSA primarily via exchanges with the NSA Executive Committee. The principal purpose of these exchanges was a periodic reporting of my activities, and communicating to the NSA issues discussed at the NCAR Executive Committee of importance to the broad scientific community in the organization. Through my interactions with the NSA Executive Committee, I encouraged a wider involvement of NCAR scientists in reviewing major documents such as the NCAR Strategic Plan. In addition, in response to a request from the NCAR Director, I organized the meeting of the NSA Executive Committee with the NCAR Director, devoted to the issue of work-related stress. Also, whenever asked, I communicated directly to the NCAR Executive Committee concerns expressed to me directly by individual scientists.

(4) Remark

Based on my personal experience, I believe the Science Advisor position offers valuable means of communication between the NCAR management and the NSA. I believe that as more scientists serve as Science Advisor, the position will become increasingly influential in providing the NSA input to managing NCAR. Therefore I would encourage all colleagues who are able to do so to consider serving as Science Advisor at some stage of their career at NCAR.