

SCSC Service Assurance Working Group - Meeting 21

24th March 2020, WebEx

Minutes

Attendees

Alan Simpson (ASi) – Ebeni, Mike Parsons (MP) – CGI, Andy Whitehead (AW) – Atkins, Mike Sleath (MS) – Consultant, Kevin King (KK) – BAE Systems, Andy Scott (ASc) – NATS, Mark-Alexander Sujan (MAS) – Human Factors Everywhere Ltd, Simon Scutt (SS) – Thales, Davy Pissort (DP) – KU Leuven

Apologies

John Govey (JG) – Siemens Mobility, Ibrahim Habli (IH) – University of York, Miren Illarramendi (MI) – Mondragon University, Katrina Attwood (KA) – York University, Brian Martin (BM) – Leonardo, John Penny (JP) – CAA, Nick Durston (ND) – NATS, Stewart Field (SF) – Thales, Sandy Garrity (SG) – NHS Digital, Richard Derrett-Smith (RDS) – Helios, Nick Durston (ND) – NATS, Craig Harris (CH) - Leidos

Agenda

1. Report on 2 presentations at SSS'20:
 - a. "SAWG report" and:
 - b. "A Service Perspective on Accidents"
2. Guidance Document v1.0 feedback, downloads, etc.
3. Newsletter article on guidance document
4. Planning for Guidance Document v2.0
5. Services in the News
6. AOB
7. Next Meeting

Items are presented in the minutes in the order discussed in the meeting, rather than as per the Agenda. The order on the day was optimised to reflect attendees and action progression. The meeting slides are available here: https://scsc.uk/file/gs/Meeting_21_Slides-662.pptx

NOTE: All comments or opinions in these notes are attributed only to individual attendees of the meeting, not to their respective organisations.

*[Actions are presented in the form **N.Mx** where **N** is the meeting number, **M** a reference number for the action raised in that meeting and **x** is an optional letter that differentiates related actions arising from the same discussion point].*

1. Introduction and Retrospect on SSS'20

MP led a round of caller introductions.

MP said he'd received good feedback from SSS'20 attendees on the presentations given by members of the SAWG. MP said the bulk of this meeting ought to be on planning the next 9 or so months' work, especially with regard to updates to the Guidance document ([SCSC-156](#)).

MP asked ASi to provide attendees with an overview of the SAWG update presentation he delivered at SSS'20:

<https://scsc.uk/file/gs-main/SSS20-SAWGProgressPresentationV3.pptx>

During that overview, it was reiterated by MP that a hardcopy, updated version of the Guidance document should be the target for early 2021, issued at SSS'21.

KK delivered an overview of his presentation from SSS'20:

[https://scsc.uk/file/gs-main/06---King -
A Service Perspective on Accidents Slides v1.1-645.pptx](https://scsc.uk/file/gs-main/06---King-_A_Service_Perspective_on_Accidents_Slides_v1.1-645.pptx)

KK observed that the version shown to SAWG meeting attendees was a slightly older iteration than the one delivered in York in February. He highlighted the key differences and dedicated time to walking through the two case studies that are explored in greater detail in the presentation (with a ferry engine conflagration and a train strike on hanging cables as the notable outcomes).

During KK's overview, MAS observed the reference to 'Safety-II'¹ in the planned work and opined that 'right now' in the NHS there is a lot of focus on resilience and adaptability [owing to the on-going COVID-19 pandemic]. MAS asked if the SAWG has anything to draw from or add to that.

MP noted the news that recently retired clinical staff were being brought back to the front line. He observed that while they may not be fully up-to-speed with current standards or systems, they would still be able to offer or support a good service. MAS noted that similar could be said for the acceleration of almost-qualified students into active service.

MP mentioned a recent article he had published on LinkedIn on the NHS and COVID-19 and safety systems:

<https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:6645266900311961600>

He highlighted the current significance of the computer models that HM Government are using to inform/justify changes to guidance and restrictions (e.g. social distancing) – if the model is wrong, it could lead to thousands more deaths, making that model quite safety-critical. MP then explained that perhaps his article should have been stressing services rather than systems. [He has subsequently posted an article related to services: <https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:6648556007221927936>]

¹ For an example of the 'Safety-I' and 'Safety-II' distinction: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/signuptosafety/wp-content/uploads/sites/16/2015/10/safety-1-safety-2-white-papr.pdf>

2. Update on the Guidance document

MP stated that he hadn't had any feedback specifically on the Guidance document, but noted that it had so far been downloaded 85 times. He asked other attendees if they'd received feedback, which the group had not.

KK proposed that the cover and theme/artwork should not now be changed.

MP asked the group if they thought it best to pursue a v2 of the Guidance [as a large, step change], or a number of smaller, incremental updates. KK asked if any attendees now had more time to support this work [owing to potential changes to previous work schedules as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic], noting that he personally was actually busier than usual.

ASc recommended that the Guidance document contain a prominent 'thread' for what differentiates 'service assurance' from 'system assurance', as touched on in previous SAWG meetings. For example, an emphasis on 'what changes' when two (or more) cost centres are involved in the overall delivery of a safety-related service, as opposed to one cost centre integrating multiple components, or services from within that cost centre. MP agreed that the Guidance document needed more work on this, e.g. exploring the implications of losing visibility of the design of a consumed service vs. not having visibility of the design of a 'black box' product bought and integrated by the service provider.

MP asked what DP would like to see in the updated Guidance. DP responded that he was particularly interested in expanded case studies and examples. ASc suggested that the Deepwater Horizon case study needed to be reframed, to be presented in a similar manner to that employed in KK's SSS'20 presentation. MP agreed.

MP asked the group what they thought about including a COVID-19 example, as it will inevitably be the year's biggest topic. MAS queried how far such an example could go at this time, as [for publication] it would require a real-life example. MP agreed, that finding a published Assurance Case would be the ideal, but that COVID-19 at least would (eventually) have a lot of material in the public arena.

AW noted that the 'Government service' is really important right now, not 'just' the Health service. KK further suggested that such an example could explore the 'World Health Organisation (WHO) as a service, for the support, guidance and recommendations they deliver.

SS noted the risk from trying to include a COVID-19 in the next issue of the Guidance may distract from the currently planned, 'core' content requirements. MP agreed it was a good point, but identified the advantage of making it 'current'. SS suggested that if any COVID-19 material were available [separately from the main Guidance document] it could instead be linked from the Guidance or SAWG area, treating the total set of material as more of a 'living document' as examples were made available or could be expanded.

3. Newsletter Article

MP said that he was continuing to ‘edit down’ [in size] the Guidance document to allow it to be included in a future SCSC Newsletter. The editor, Paul Hampton, had requested that – to be considered for the Newsletter – the article had to retain technical content and not act simply as a pointer to material held elsewhere.

KK suggested that, if further reductions in size were proving challenging, consideration should be given to splitting the material across two Newsletter issues.

ACTION 21.1 - MP to discuss splitting the Service Assurance article across two Newsletter issues with Paul Hampton.

4. Service Assurance Levels

ASc suggested there were a few potential issues with the current framing, including mixed expressions of severity and likelihood in the draft definitions, assumed knowledge of outcomes / operational context, expressions of ‘safety’ vs. ‘confidence’. He suggested we first needed more work on what information and dependencies had to ‘look like’ across the contractual interface before SALs (if still required / helpful) could be defined.

AW noted [with reference to the draft SAL definition wording] that looking at COVID-19 as a topical example, it’s not ‘service failures’ leading directly to deaths, so much as the services’ attempts to minimise the number of deaths that would otherwise take place.

5. Actions Status

Ref	Owner	Description	Status
7.8	KK	Provide a write-up to the next meeting of the ‘piggy in the middle’ service stack problem.	Ongoing
8.2	ASi	Create a generic Service Assurance presentation.	Ongoing
9.9	SW	Redraw Überlingen disaster STAMP diagram and to provide an explanation from a service perspective of how the SLA Service, Service Definition and Service Assurance Case are modelled in STAMP/STPA.	Ongoing
14.3a	KK	Review defence standards for service requirements.	Ongoing
14.3b	SS	Review MAA RAs for service requirements.	New
14.3c	ASc	Review (EU) 2017/373 for service requirements.	New
15.4	MAS	Present a FRAM case study / analysis at a future working group meeting	Ongoing
17.1	All	To establish if anyone in their own organisation would be able to field a Commercial representative [to talk about contractual issues regarding SLAs].	Ongoing
17.2	All	To establish if anyone in their own organisation knows about BPML.	Ongoing
18.1	KK	Produce flyer for conference bag	Closed
18.2	MP	Contact Alex King to set up Whova app space for working groups.	Closed
18.4	ASi	Review guidance document to ensure “siloeing” of services is addressed. https://scsc.uk/file/gs/Dave_Banham__A_note_on_Terminology-613.pdf	Ongoing
20.1	KK	Update paper presentation slides as per the meeting comments	Closed

20.2	KK	Update flyer for SSS as per the meeting comments and send to Alex King	Closed
20.3	ASi	Create WG report slides and circulate to group before SSS	Closed
21.1	MP	Discuss splitting the Service Assurance article across two Newsletter issues with Paul Hampton.	New
21.2	All	Identify at least one part of the Guidance doc that they feel needs work, change, or what new content they could propose, in time for the next meeting.	New
21.3	MP	Investigate use of other remote conferencing facilities.	New

It was agreed that Action 14.3 would be split into three, covering defence standards, MAA Ras and (EU) 2017/373. A clarification was added to action 17.1.

MP asked everyone to read the current Guidance document and Service Assurance Level slide, and send in offers of help or thoughts.

6. Next meeting

MP noted that the next meeting would also need to be a WebEx and that it was not possible to currently hold face-to-face additional editorial meetings. The next meeting had been scheduled for 23rd April in Farnborough, but it was proposed (and provisionally agreed by those attending the meeting on 24 March) that this would move to 22nd April, and clearly would be online only.

ACTION 21.2 – All to identify at least one part of the Guidance doc that they feel needs work, change, or what new content they could propose.

MP stated that the next meeting would then go through everyone’s proposals.

7. AOB

ASc recommended looking at whether Microsoft Teams was a better platform for future online SAWG meetings.

ACTION 21.3 – MP to investigate use of other remote conferencing facilities.

AW asked that a voice backup (dial in) option continue to be made available regardless, in anticipation of any replacement platform giving him similar issues to WebEx (AW was unable to see the presented material during this meeting).

MAS asked MP to ensure that SAWG invites used his new email address.