1. Staff

The primary purpose of the EECS computer facilities is to provide computer access to students taking courses offered by the department. A secondary objective is to support administrative and faculty non-research work for the EECS Department. Although use of the EECS systems is not exclusively for the purposes just mentioned, policy is based on these main objectives.

The EECS ECF computing facilities currently consist of more than a dozen different systems of different models and capabilities, linked by various networks. Our three major machines run three different operating systems [1].

We also have 9 VAXstation II's based on the DEC MicroVAX II computer. The majority of these machines run 4.3bsd, DEC Ultrix or some other variant of Berkeley Unix. One of the µVAXen, called Micro-Heart-of-Gold (µHoG) runs MicroVMS (µVMS), a variant of the VAX/VMS opsys. The µVAX called Heinlein runs Unix, is located in the Computer Room, and is the database server for the RTI Ingres relational database system, used by the Admin-Cluster machines on the 4th floor.

Another µVAX, Eddie (formerly called Wonko, then New-Eddie) runs Unix. Fenchurch is the primary staff machine since Deep-Thought has been decommissioned. All staffers must have an account on Fenchurch. The primary difference between Heinlein and Fenchurch is that the latter machine is connected to networks outside of the EECS Department.

Traditionally, the namespace used for EECS ECF machines has been the *Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* series of science-fiction parodies. With the arrival of the µVAX machines, we were starting to run out of names. Since we have several dozen more µVAXen, with a possibility of more machines in the future, we decided to stake out a new namespace with better possibilities for expansion. After some discussion, the domain of ''science fiction authors'' was chosen.

TBD: mailer domain names, hierarchical addresses, foo.mit.edu.arpa, whois, bboard

1.1. Staff

The EECS ECF Staff attends to the day to day operations of the EECS computers. This includes installing system programs, fixing broken equipment, keeping the computers running, approving non-course-related accounts, overseeing User Consultants and policing the systems. We tend to be somewhat busy and for this reason questions should not be directed to us unless they cannot be answered in any other way. Inquiries about policy on the use of the EECS computing facilities should be directed to one of the staff members.

The best way to get in touch with EECS staff members is through computer electronic mail (email), although in an emergency they should be called by telephone.

1.2. Staff Information Using Finger

The finger command under Unix gives a user's full name, nickname, office and office phone number, and home phone number. It's used by typing `%f` *username*. A user can modify this information using the `chfn` command or the `passwd -f` command, both of which will prompt the user for any necessary data.

It is very important that all EECS ECF staffers keep their finger entries on Fenchurch up-to-date, since other staffers will rely on it for phone numbers in case somebody needs to be contacted immediately. Please remember to check and update your entry from time to time, especially at the

---

[1] An operating system is a collection of programs that helps users and programmers to use the computer hardware. An operating system is also sometimes called an ''opsys'', ''O/S'' or ''OS''

beginning of each term, IAP, and the beginning of summer vacation. Even if you are planning on being out of town for a week during Spring Break, you should at least send an email message to `Admin-Vacation` indicating where you can be reached. By Murphy's Law, if we have the information to contact you, we probably won't need to use it, but this is better than the reverse situation. It is also a good idea to maintain a `.plan` file. If this file exists in your home directory (and is appropriately world-readable), it will be displayed when someone fingers you.

1.3. Electronic Mail (Email)

Because of the varied hours kept by different staff members it is very important to use electronic mail to keep everybody up-to-date. At this time, the primary machine used for staff mail is Fenchurch. Staff members are normally expected to log in daily, or least every other day, to read email and reply to any messages or questions left for them. Quick questions and comments should generally be handled by email, so that staff meetings can be reserved for discussions that require more direct dialogue among several people.

1.3.0.1. Email Under Unix

There are a number of programs available for reading mail, and most staffers will defend their favorite religiously. The default Unix mail handler is `mh`. `Mh` commands can be executed directly from the command shell. The most useful commands are `inc` (to **inc**orporate your mail, that is, to get it from the post office), `show` (to display the current message), `next` (to display the following message), `prev` (to display the previous message), `comp` (to **comp**ose a message), `repl` (to **repl**y to a message) and `scan` (to list the messages and their headers.) More information can be found from Athena, and by typing `man mh`.

There is also an xwindows interface to mh. It can be invoked by typing `xmh` on an xterminal. This interface calls on the standard `mh` package for any mail processes you do. Type `%xmh` to call it up. The window that appears is easy to use if you already know `mh`. The buttons on the screen are activated with the left mouse button and they correspond to normal typed-in mail commands. Depending on your proficiency with the mouse, it is easier to manipulate messages and folders. The editor for sending mail uses an Emacs-like environment. To find out more about `xmh`, use the man pages by invoking `%man xmh`.

Another option is rmail, which allows mail to be read directly in the emacs window. Mail can be scanned very easily using one key commands. To begin, type `M-x rmail` in an emacs window. Typing `?` will give a list of available commands. Rmail keeps all the messages in one file (you can devide this as you choose) which has advantages for some and disadvantages for others.

Yet another option is `mm`. Type `mm` fromt the command shell, and `help` for general information. TBD - more info; take relevent/still true bits from TOPS-20 section.

1.3.1. Email Conventions, Etiquette and Techniques

Because electronic mail (email) is heavily used by the ECF staff for internal communications, and because the volume of email sent and received by some staffers can be quite large, it is important to adopt some conventions for composing and sending email messages. By following these guidelines, email messages are more likely to go only to those staffers who can really use them, and it becomes easier to archive and retrieve messages about a given topic.

This is obsolete. This section assumes that you are familiar with the basics of using MM, the TOPS-20 mail program, and/or other equivalent mail programs. If you are not familiar with basic mailer operation, it is suggested that you read the appropriate manual (in DOC: MM.DOC) at this time. You can also get on-line help by typing `help mm` to the prompt.

The most frequently-used MM commands are Read, Send, Reply, Forward, and Remail. The Get

command is very useful for accessing messages in archive files or in board files.

When first reading your email, get in the habit of issuing the Headers Unseen command and scanning the messages in your queue. Sometimes you will see followup to earlier messages, and this will save you wasted effort replying to a message that is already obsolete.

Once you have composed a draft message, you should be in the habit of using the Display command, which shows the final message as it will be sent.

Review the content of the draft message. If the content no longer matches the originally-specified `Subject:` field, use the Subject command for revisions. If several unrelated topics are discussed, use the Save command to place the message into a text draft file. Then edit the file and split up the different topics into separate draft messages. Finally, Restore each separate message in turn, review it once again, and then Send it out.

When viewing your proposed message with the Display command, be sure to take a moment to think about the distribution list (i.e. the `To:` and `cc:` fields). Should the distribution be widened to include more people? Use the generic email addresses for any and all messages that may be of interest to several people, or that should be archived. If you're not sure who is on a given mailing list, Save the draft message, exit MM, and run MMAILBOX to check. Then Restore your draft message, review it a final time, and send it off.

On the other hand, you should consider whether the distribution list is too wide. Don't send every message to `Staff` if there are other more-selective mailing lists that can be used. Use the Remove command to cancel any recipients you have second thoughts about.

Make sure the `Subject:` field is not left blank and is not a case of false advertising. Give thought to using unique and specific keywords in this field that would make it easier to retrieve the message using the Headers Subject command at a later time. If the message is a reply to an earlier message but the topic has changed, consider retitling the message with a different `Subject:` field.

On the other hand, if your message is a reply to an earlier message, always use the Reply command to make sure it can be searched for easily. Don't disguise a reply to an earlier message by gratuitously changing or omitting the `Subject:` field. The Reply command can be issued after issuing a Read command for the message being replied to. It automatically generates the letters "Re: " and appends the contents of the `Subject:` field of the message being replied to, and then uses this as the new `Subject:` field. You may want to use the Reply All command to send your reply message to the entire distribution list of the original message, or you may want to restrict your reply to a smaller subset of people.

If you receive a message that you think should be redistributed to a wider audience, you can use the Forward command to add your comments to the original message. If the original message was misdirected to the wrong recipients, you can use the Remail command to redistribute the message without comments. You should also send a quick message to the original sender telling them the correct email address to send any such messages in the future.

It is possible to ask MM to queue an email message for delivery after a specific date and time in the future, by using the After command. This technique is very useful for automatically sending yourself and/or others a reminder message (e.g. about a meeting or other upcoming event). Since the delayed-delivery messages remain queued until they are delivered and this induces some extra overhead on the system mailer program, don't abuse this feature by queuing reminder messages for the next 6 months worth of reminders.

The MM program has an internal restriction that prevents it from being able to handle a message file longer than 214 blocks. MM will automatically give a warning message as the size of the mail file approaches that limit. If a mail file has become too large for MM to handle, you should use the SPLITMAIL program to split up the file into 2 or more smaller pieces. **This is the end of the**

obsolete section.

1.3.2. Generic Addresses

There are numerous mailing lists which are used to simplify the process of routing messages to the appropriate people. The theory is that it is easier for users and the staff to remember a generic address to which messages of a given type should be sent, rather than trying to remember the names of individual people on a potentially lengthy list. Besides insuring that someone isn't left out accidentally, the use of generic addresses greatly simplifies the updating of mail distribution as turnover and changes in duties occur.

There are at least two categories of generic mailing addresses. Those beginning with `Bug-` are advertised to users as the destinations of email messages about various problems with ECF computers and facilities. They are also used by ECF staffers to report the same types of problems. The generic mailing addresses beginning with `Admin-` are *not* generally made known to the users at large, and are reserved for internal ECF staff announcements and discussions, as well as communications from course instructors and TA's.

By convention, the singular form is used for almost all mailing list names, with the plural form existing as an alias to that list. There are a few mailing lists which, for traditional reasons, are named in the plural. These will have singular aliases for the sake of compatibility with the ECF standard. Aliases for existing mailing lists can be found in a special section after the main entries in the file `fenchurch: /site/usr/lib/aliases`.

The file `/site/usr/lib/aliases` contains the mailing list information on Fenchurch and **wheel** privileges are required to edit the file. Various mailing lists referred to by this file are located in the file `/usr/eecs/mailing-lists`. Mailings lists are archived in the directory `/usr/eecs/mail-archive`.

For information on how to determine the recipients of a given mailing list, look in the ''Verifying Mailing Lists'' section in the Networks Manual. There are programs being developed that will display the recipients of a given list and display which lists a given user is on.

1.3.3. Generic Mail Address Conventions

By convention, each EECS ECF computer should have the master generic addresses `Bug-System`, `Bug-Hardware`, `Bug-Terminal` and `Bug-Doc` defined, so that users do not have to remember a large number of machine-specific addresses. The generic address `System` is often used on different opsyses for email to whoever is responsible for maintaining the software and hardware. The generic address `Accounts` or (`User-Accounts` or `USER-A`) is used for inquiries about obtaining accounts or privileges. In most cases, email sent to these addresses on a particular machine is automatically forwarded to other generic addresses on a different machine, where they are actually received and read.

Many of the mailing lists are archived, so that any message sent to them is also saved in a file. Archiving is done so that everyone on a given mailing list will be able to refer to old messages without having to keep duplicate private copies of those messages.

All of the following generic mailing addresses exist on Fenchurch and are received and archived there, unless otherwise noted. (The archives are currently found in `/usr/eecs/mail-archive`.)

1.3.4. Generic Addresses for Internal Staff Use

This listing starts with the more frequently-used addresses for internal ECF Staff mail. These addresses are used by ECF Staffers and certain other users, such as TA's working closely with the ECF Staff, but are not given out to the users at large. The name of the archive file is the same as the name of the mailing list.

- `Staff` -- Full-time Staff members plus the Student Staff members. Only those people who are currently active on staff should be in this list.
- `Bug-Hardware` -- The ECF staffers currently assigned (at least part of the time) to work on hardware tasks. This list does not include staffers who may very occasionally do hardware work.
- `Admin-ECF` -- For internal staff messages related to the EECS Educational Computer Facility as a whole. Examples of topics that might be discussed here are staff telephone usage, office heating and cooling, computer room floor space, etc.
- `Bug-Fenchurch` -- For internal staff messages relating specifically to Fenchurch, the VAX Unix system for ECF Staff work.
- `Bug-Eddie` -- Similar to `Bug-Fenchurch`, but for Eddie, the VAX Unix system.
- `Bug-Apollo` -- For the Apollo graphics workstation cluster used to support VLSI courses.
- `Bug-VMS` -- For messages relating to uHoG, the MicroVAX II running MicroVMS and supporting various VLSI and circuit simulation applications.
- `Bug-Unix` -- For messages relating to Unix systems in general, running on machines such as the VAX-11/750, the MicroVAX, the Apollos, or the HP Bobcat computers.
- `Admin-Wreq` -- For messages relating to anything that needs to be requisitioned. Background information and explanations of why an item is needed should be sent to this address. If the information is sufficiently complete that a req can be issued, then a proposed requisition should be prepared using the WREQ program. If the req should go out soon, a brief message pointing the proposed req should be sent to `Admin-Wreq`. In addition to being archived, messages sent here go directly to Alan so that he sees them immediately. See the section on WREQ elsewhere in the Admin Manual for an extensive description of the requisition and ordering process.
- `Bug-Mailing-List` -- Suggestions or ideas about setting up new mailing lists or reorganizing existing lists should be sent to this generic address. Announcements of the creation or deletion of mailing lists should be sent here for archiving, as well as being distributed to any potentially interested parties. `Bug-Mailing-List` should be used for requests from new ECF Staffers and others not having access to the mailing list control file. A request to be added or removed from a given mailing list will be implemented by a senior ECF Staffer.
- `Bug-Cluster` -- For messages relating to the fourth floor EECS Deparmental administration computer cluster.
- `ECF-Manual` -- For messages relating to writing style, formatting, and content of the ECF Manual (including this document). Email messages are often `cc`'ed to this address so that the information contained in them can be later incorporated into the ECF Manual.
- `Bug-ECF-Subnet` -- For messages relating to the administration of 18.62, the EECS Department subnet attached to the Campus Spine Network and the Internet.
- `Admin-Vacation` -- For messages announcing staff vacation plans.
- `Admin-Borrowed` -- Staffers should send mail to this list when they borrow books (or anything else) from the staff office and when they return them. Note that copies of mail

to this list should *not* be sent to `Staff`. In addition to sending mail to this list, the borrower must leave a paper note on the bookshelf or location where the borrowed item was taken from. See the section on Borrowing in the Admin Manual for more information.

1.3.5. Generic Addresses for Inbound Mail From Users at Large

The following generic addresses should be used by ordinary users for reporting various problems. ECF Staffers should also use these same addresses for brief reports of any problems they discover.

- `Accounts` or `USER-A` -- For questions and requests about accounts, quotas, file access, privileges, etc.
- `Dumpers` or `File-Retrievers` -- For questions and requests related to file backups and restoring files which are off-line.
- `Bug-CADR` -- For messages relating to the CADR Lisp Machines, as distinguished from Symbolics or other types of Lisp machines.
- `Bug-Eddie` -- For messages relating to bugs on Eddie that do not fall under any of the specific `Bug-`*program* lists.
- `Bug-Micro-Heart-Of-Gold` or `Bug-uHoG` -- Same as `Bug-Eddie` but for Micro-Heart-of-Gold.
- `Bug-Doc` or `Bug-Documentation` -- A master generic address for reports on documentation errors and omissions related to anything that is not directly connected with a specific program or command. This mailing list is also used for problems with on-line documentation.
- `Bug-Hardware` -- For hardware-related bug reports from normal users of a computer system. A reference copy of all messages sent to this address is archived.
- `Bug-`*program* -- In general, reports of bugs in program FOO should be sent to `Bug-Foo`, so that they will be forwarded to whoever is responsible for maintaining that particular program. Note: Currently not implemented under Unix, but it may be done in the future.

1.3.6. Generic Addresses for Outbound Mail To Courses

TBD -- outbound mail to users at large, pointer to Sys Messages chapter, etc.

- `Teach-`*course_id* -- This address will reach all the TA's, instructors, professors, etc. of the course specified by *course_id*. The Course Id conforms to the standards set forth in the chapter on file systems, directories, and nomenclature in the ECF Manual. For example, `Teach-SIC001` would reach all the 6.001 TA's, recitation instructors, Scheme lab maintenance people, and professors.
- `Student-`*course_id* -- Similar to `Teach-`*course_id*, except that it goes to all students taking the course. This is very rarely used and may not even be implemented for some courses, but should follow this standard if it is implemented.

1.4. Getting On and Off Mailing Lists

If a staffer is interested in receiving mail directed to a given mail list, he should add himself to the list; conversely, if he does not want to receive mail from a given list, he should delete himself from it. New ECF staffers initially should *not* attempt to edit the mailing list files directly, because of the danger of accidentally breaking the system-wide mail lists. Instead, they should send email to `Bug-Mailing-List` and ask to be added or deleted from the desired mailing list. **It is every staffer's responsibility to periodically check that he is on the appropriate generic mailing**

lists needed for his work at ECF.

TBD -- Athena `mailmaint` command, Information Services `listserv` command, *foo*`-request` convention,

1.5. Further Information About Email

See the chapters on Network Documents and on Mailing Lists in the Network Manual.

1.6. News Archiving and Retrieval

TBD -- how to archive, how to retrieve, where media are stored, labels

Index

Account policy 1

Courses 6

Email 1, 2

Finger 1

Generic address 4
Generic addresses 6

Hardware 6

Mail 2
Mailing list addition/deletion 6
Mailing lists 2, 4
Master generic address 4
MM 2

Splitmail 3
Staff 1, 5

Table of Contents

1. Staff **1**

1.1. Staff **1**
1.2. Staff Information Using Finger **1**
1.3. Electronic Mail (Email) **2**
1.3.0.1. Email Under Unix **2**
1.3.1. Email Conventions, Etiquette and Techniques **2**
1.3.2. Generic Addresses **4**
1.3.3. Generic Mail Address Conventions **4**
1.3.4. Generic Addresses for Internal Staff Use **5**
1.3.5. Generic Addresses for Inbound Mail From Users at Large **6**
1.3.6. Generic Addresses for Outbound Mail To Courses **6**
1.4. Getting On and Off Mailing Lists **6**
1.5. Further Information About Email **7**
1.6. News Archiving and Retrieval **7**

Index **9**