

FLC MAR Southeast Regional Meeting, Suffolk, VA, 8/10/06

The following is a summary of the discussion that took place on Thursday August 10 in Suffolk, Virginia.

Attendees:

Lorraine Flanders, Naval Surface Warfare Center Dahlgren Division
Mark Wagemann, Joint Forces Command
Vincent Montalb, Joint Forces Command
Dwight Owens, Joint Forces Command
Brian Gazino, Joint Forces Command
John Emond, NASA Headquarters
Russell Richards, Joint Forces Command
Ray Turcotte, NASA Langley Research Center
John Eichelberger, Pendulum Management
Kathleen Goedel, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health
Thomas Rieg, Clinical Research Dept. Naval Medical
Cecile DelRosario, Clinical Research Dept. Naval Medical
Janie Slade, Clinical Research Dept. Naval Medical
Roberta Newlon, National Energy Technology Laboratory

FLC Overview

The meeting began with an overview of the Federal Lab Consortium, its Congressional charter and mandate to use federal agency laboratories to foster technology transfer, as well as the FLC regions within the national network including the five states and Washington, D.C. making up the FLC Mid-Atlantic Region: Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, District of Columbia, Virginia, and West Virginia. I mentioned as part of my opening remarks the intent of the FLC Mid-Atlantic Region to expand its network and outreach efforts to areas which have not been as active in the FLC as the labs located in the Washington, D.C./southern Maryland/northern Virginia area. One of the main objectives of the meeting was to start a dialogue on how federal labs, private sector entities, local government, and economic development organizations in southern and western Virginia, and West Virginia, could benefit by involvement in the Federal Lab Consortium; conversely, how the FLC Mid-Atlantic Region can benefit by greater participation of these organizations.

FLC Mid-Atlantic Region Annual Conference Sept. 19-21

The second part of the discussion focused on the upcoming FLC Mid-Atlantic Region conference taking place September 19-21 at Rocky Gap Lodge and Resort, Cumberland, Maryland. Though conference registration is open up to the conference itself (and details on registration can be found at the FLC Mid-Atlantic Region web site: <http://www.flcmidatlantic.org/>), today is the last "formal" day for reservations to be accepted at the government rate at Rocky Gap Lodge. Rocky Gap management indicated that they would still honor reservations at the government rate of \$60/day on a space available basis after today, but other groups are also booking at the hotel that week and rooms are going fast. We plan to place on the FLC Mid-Atlantic Region web site several alternative lodging choices for attendees to contact should Rocky Gap lodging fill up. We are close to finalizing all of the panels and speakers. The agenda is an exciting and informative one spanning the environment, energy, medicine, assistive technologies, education, economic development, homeland security, and specific tech transfer topics including international tech transfer aspects, license monitoring/auditing, and information systems.

During this part of the discussion, a question was brought up regarding education credit for the training session taking place the afternoon of September 19. We are looking into this and if education credit is approved, we will add that information to the FLC Mid-Atlantic Region web site information on the conference.

Another aspect brought up during this part of the discussion was the topic of “spin-in” or the use of partnerships with external entities to advance agency mission goals. This is an important topic, one that many agencies are interested in as a means of optimizing their constrained budgets by developing mutually beneficial partnerships. As a result of this meeting, Dr. Russell Richards is now in the conference agenda to provide a presentation on this topic, and I have also agreed to take this topic forward to the FLC National program committee for consideration as a potential topic for the FLC National annual meeting next spring.

Industry Workshop

Ray Turcotte, NASA Langley Research Center, described Langley’s recent initiative to sponsor a series of focused workshops that are clearly defined by technical topic areas. These workshops seek to foster partnerships between NASA Langley, the private sector, and other federal agencies in fields such as non-destructive evaluation, electromagnetic technology development, etc. The workshops are well defined and combine presentations with individual networking opportunities involving NASA Langley research and technology staff. This approach to networking will be presented during the FLC Mid-Atlantic Region conference in September.

General Discussion

The last part of the meeting was a general discussion on ways in which federal labs, private sector firms, local government, and economic development organizations in southern and western Virginia as well as West Virginia can participate in the FLC Mid-Atlantic Region and by so doing, strengthen the FLC’s capabilities and network. There were several areas identified:

* **FLC Mid-Atlantic Region Web Site.** There can be highlights of success stories, important partnerships developed, and other topics of interest by the federal labs placed on the FLC Mid-Atlantic Region web site. John Eichelberger is a good focal point for inclusion into the FLC web site, and depending on the information it may also be highlighted on the national FLC web site. John’s e-mail address noted above and repeated here is: iclserv@aol.com. His phone number is: 407-947-6443. We are planning to modify the web site to provide a highlight section on economic development, and given the active efforts of the Hampton Roads economic development organization, there may be interesting highlights put on the FLC web site. This web site highlight activity can begin immediately by contacting John.

* **Federal Lab Database.** Several aspects were discussed here. I will contact the FLC National program coordinator, Gary Jones, to see how tech transfer data across the FLC regions is captured, updated and made available to users. There is also the FLC Mid-Atlantic Region newsletter. For specific information to be conveyed throughout this region, John Eichelberger provides a “blast e-mail” service to provide wide dissemination across federal labs in the Mid-Atlantic Region. This is another example of an action that can be done immediately by dissemination of information, upcoming activities, events, etc. of interest to your lab or organization.

* **Points of Contact.** It was brought up that often there is frustration trying to get in touch with a person at an agency regarding a tech transfer matter, only to be given a voice mail or taped directory message run-around. We will look into ways to improve direct contact with lab representatives for those seeking information about a particular topic, issue, etc. This may include identifying a point of contact per agency who is amenable to fielding questions regarding tech transfer and their agency.

* **Education Initiatives.** Lorraine Flanders, FLC Mid-Atlantic Region Deputy Coordinator, described her interest in fostering education enhancement through partnerships with federal agencies. She will be presenting this topic at the upcoming FLC Mid-Atlantic Region conference.

* **Non-traditional Mechanisms.** Lorraine also identified as a topic area for further consideration non-traditional mechanisms to network among federal labs, including personnel exchanges and other means to network and share resources.

* **Informal Seminars.** In the coming year, one of the new initiatives of the FLC Mid-Atlantic Region will be a series of informal “brown bag” morning or afternoon seminars across the FLC Mid-Atlantic Region. The meetings will be focused on a specific topic/issue/challenge/opportunity of interest to attendees. It is hoped that through such informal seminars at various locations and involving the private sector, economic development organizations, federal agencies/labs, and local/state government, participating organizations will share ideas, establish strong networks, and leverage partnerships to achieve mutual goals and objectives. Our immediate focus is now on the FLC Mid-Atlantic Region conference in September, but I welcome your comments at any time on the following:

- Topics/agenda suggestions for the seminars
- Organizations you would like to see contacted for this seminar
- Location for seminars in the months to come in southern or western Virginia and West Virginia
- Projected dates to hold a seminar, starting in late October/early November
- Desired outcome from the seminar
- Other thoughts?

John Emond
Innovative Partnership Program
NASA Headquarters

FLC Mid-Atlantic Region Coordinator
202-358-1686