UK comments and suggestions on TPM work

- The mail rate is **at the moment** just about manageable as long as mails are dealt with quickly
- Sometimes tickets already assigned by GGUS staff – is this a good or bad thing!? For handover count the total number of mails received
- TPM needs to be aware that interim comments/questions have to be explicitly mailed to the submitter, otherwise it relies on them looking at GGUS themselves (slow)
- Several tickets were related to sites in scheduled downtime. No easy way for users to check. Some sites though seem to take themselves down without regarding the consequences for core services hosted by them. Sometimes the ROCs not even aware of site status.
- Some tickets solved quickly. Others stuck with assignee asking for more information but the submitter does not provide it, know how to get it or simply does not respond.
- How many tickets really get solved!? How many are resolved when the problem fixes itself or becomes irrelevant (and the user gives up)?
- What should happen to answers provided that could be added to an FAQ list? What exactly does the "add to wiki" button do and when should it be used?
- Tickets get marked "solved" when someone thinks that it is OK. Often it is not. If the submitter then replies there is still a problem it relies on the TPM spotting this reply and then re-opening the ticket. Example: the ticket relates to several sites but is resolved only for one of the sites.
- One TPM estimate of the work: 11% of mails relate to new tickets. The rest are updates.
- The assignment of tickets to third-level support may happen directly if a ticket relates to middleware and not a site. Some in third-level support want ROCs to always be involved first. Should there be a generic first-level support unit for middleware questions?
- The purpose of tpm-grid-support@cern.ch is unclear. The documentation suggests it is for TPM specific queries relating to tickets. If it is also to be used to raise issues and topics for discussion this should be made clear
- Tips/tools for filtering emails would be useful. Even if mail is filtered all ticket mails need to be read to check if anything needs to be done! The mail volume can not grow much more with the current process.
- There is a lot of useful information for TPM support but the feeling is that it is spread across too many documents making it difficult to find things previously noted as useful. The documentation is not uniformly formatted and its nature may reflect the fact that the system is too complicated – making it difficult to pick up again for the next shift which occurs after a long gap.
- The TPM FAQ document is useful. One area missing is guidance on where different kinds of problems should be allocated, especially if not site specific.

- Future training events may provide lots of material but many of those allocated in the ROC do not have sufficient time to go through it all! The options are to have dedicated people who are properly trained or the process be made simple enough that people can do it with little training.
-

Specific observations

- System is not intuitive and is difficult to use
- System sends out email without the same subject URLs which tend to be irritating (inversion of the GGUS ID and user subject)
- Format of email body changes significantly between mails and changes are not highlighted.
- It is difficult to track responsibility – agreement within teams but then GGUS members also assigning tickets
- It was thought that the TPM only needs to assign tickets with responsibility then passing to the support units. Why then are TPM members copied on all updates?
- The organisation of the Support Unit structure should not be hierarchical with middleware last. A better approach is middleware, VOs and ROC/sites.
- Support units should simply reassign tickets if they believe the assignment is wrong and not respond with complaints about the assignment.
- Use of Savannah like menus (of categories) allows the user to take more decisions and if the support unit is unhappy it can reassign. Does there really need to be a TPM! The current process will not scale so more user selection for selecting responsible unit needs to be introduced – including a "I have no clue" option.
- There is too much complication with various internal and external note selections.
- Allocation in a round-robin fashion may reduce the load vs having to mark a ticket so that another TPM does not pick it up (and to ensure updates are directed correctly).
- It is not always easy to decide which ticket to deal with first. Perhaps a time flag could be used for sorting.
- A mechanism to prioritise tickets at the time the TPM acts may be useful. Currently the priority is only seen after opening the ticket. It would be useful if they appeared in a list and were sortable.
- A global view (by for example ROC) of assigned tickets would enable more to be learnt about what is (not) happening.
- If a ticket can not be assigned in a certain way (for example directly to LFC support without going via a ROC) then the option should not be available!
- The TPM task requires people to dedicate themselves to it. This will not be sustainable when those same people have other non-negotiable responsibilities. Hire dedicated people!
- The notion of assigning to "units" and not "individuals" should be reviewed. It creates extra communication outside of the ticket to decide who is actually

going to handle it. A round-robin allocation to an individual on-shift would be better (but people would need to be dedicated).

- TPM staff getting email on every ticket status change creates too much email and is not useful when changes are not made obvious. Need better formatted emails with clearer indication of what has changed.
- The "NO HTML EMAILS!!1" banner should be replaced by a proper MIME email parser at GGUS.
- There are TPMs and VO-speicific TPMS but no mechanism to prevent both dealing with the same ticket at the same time. It seems though that only ATLAS supporters are notified at the same time as the generic TPM.
- Some basic things were not clear from the start – take a ticket, change the status and save immediately to avoid other people overwriting changes.
- Support units need to take more responsibility for chasing progress with their assigned tickets.
- Process inefficient – notify new tickets or those needing attention?
- URL of ticket is useless in subject line if can not be clicked or cut& pasted.

Further remarks:

- Should users do the ticket classification themselves
  - o No – in many cases they will not get it right
  - o No – Technically hard for submission via email
  - o TPM should not have to do much – 1 min/ticket.
  - o Most current problems come from the follow up mails

- Should tickets be assigned to individuals or groups?
  - o If tickets go only to one person then each person needs to always be on shift