Dear Colleagues,

This email describes a new Acceptable Use Policy and a user-certification scheme that will streamline new account procedures and help ensure efficient use of our systems. As always, please direct any questions that you may have to couchman@sharcnet.ca.

Acceptable use policy

A new "Acceptable Use Policy, Guidelines and Principles" document was approved by the SHARCNET Board on June 27 2008. The new document replaces the somewhat ad hoc previous arrangement that referenced the Acceptable Use Policies (AUPs) of all partner institutions with a more streamlined common policy that will hold across all SHARCNET facilities. It is important that all users read and accept the new policy. Please read it carefully as it contains a number of provisions that affect your rights and responsibilities when using SHARCNET.

If you applied for your SHARCNET account after July 21 2008 then you have already accepted the new policy. If not, starting September 1 2008, accessing the Portal will prompt you to read and accept the new AUP. You may temporarily postpone acceptance by clicking "Ask me later". If you continue to postpone, all personalized sections of the Portal will be blocked after October 1st until you accept the AUP. The accounts of any users who have not accepted the AUP by November 1st will be disabled. Note: if a PI account is disabled, so are all of the PI's sponsored accounts.

I encourage you to read and accept the policy as soon as possible. You may view and accept the policy immediately at https://www.sharcnet.ca/my/security/accept_aup

User Certification

As many of you will be aware, SHARCNET has developed a simple certification procedure to ensure that users acquire a degree of expertise that is appropriate for the level of resources to which they have access. This helps us demonstrate to our funding agencies that their investments are used effectively and is one mechanism that helps ensure that our heavily used, shared systems remain useful for the community as a whole.

There are three certification levels, zero (the entry level), one (the default level), and two (the highest level). Starting in September 2008, every user will be assigned to one of these levels based on their demonstrated HPC competence. All existing users will be grandfathered to level one; all new users will be assigned to level zero. New users will be required to attend our introductory seminar and complete a brief quiz in order to graduate to level one. Level one users must request promotion to level two by sending email to help@sharcnet.ca. Level two will be restricted to experienced users and users who can demonstrate both a need and an ability to efficiently use SHARCNET's high performance computing resources.

The following usage limits apply to the three certification levels. "Ncpus" refers to the number of CPUs used simultaneously across all SHARCNET systems.

Level	Ncpus	Job Length (wallclock)
0	8	25 hours
1	256	168 hours
2	unlimited	unlimited (except by scheduling policy)

New users can register for a new user seminar by logging onto the SHARCNET web portal and navigating to My Account > Details. After attending the seminar, users can access the online quiz by navigating to My Account > Certification Quiz.

Thank you,
Hugh Couchman
Scientific Director