

**SYNOPSIS OF CURRENT STATUS  
NSTAC CLOUD COMPUTING SUBCOMMITTEE  
NSTAC PRINCIPALS' CONFERENCE CALL**

**8 September 2011**

Mr. Mark McLaughlin, Cloud Computing Subcommittee Chair, will provide a status update to his NSTAC colleagues and government seniors on the Principals' Conference Call on 8 September. This will be a strictly informational briefing – there will be no voting, and there is no draft report to view or comment on at this time.

This subcommittee was created by vote of the NSTAC at the 2 June 2011 annual meeting. At that time, Mr. McLaughlin briefed the work of a scoping group he had chaired over the preceding two months. The central findings of that group, as distilled and briefed by Mr. McLaughlin, were:

- Cloud computing (CC) is a huge topic, encompassing as it does new technologies, working relationships and processes, all potentially over a vast expanse of scope and scale.
- The subject is very new, in terms of the large-scale adoption of CC in conjunction with critical governmental and NS/EP processes. As such, there is very little prior work to draw insight or guidance from. The subject has certainly never heretofore been examined through a lens of NS/EP interest and concern.
- The Executive Office of the President (EOP) expressed a desire for a final report in 2011. It is unlikely that all questions and issues identified by the scoping group and captured in their report can be rigorously addressed within this timeframe. That being said, a few of the questions were identified as being of the greatest immediate interest and concern.
- In order to address the specific high-priority questions, but also capture and preserve insights gained by the study of CC more broadly, it was deemed necessary and appropriate to approach the study task in two phases:
  - Map the totality of CC in some detail and in the context of NS/EP, decomposing it to permit potential NS/EP considerations to surface and be identifiable in isolation; then
  - Using those insights as a point of departure, and having thereby both raised and focused the understanding of the subcommittee as regards CC and NS/EP, proceed to answer specific questions outlined in the scoping document.

As of now, the first task is essentially complete. Taxonomy and ontology decomposing CC and NS/EP and then linking them in specific ways to form a “map” of the whole field have been developed and agreed to by the subcommittee. In the process, outside briefers and experts have been identified, engaged and brought in to add knowledge and focus to the subcommittee’s work.

As such, the team is now ready to progress to the direct examination of specific, high-priority questions related to NS/EP in CC, and the development of reports. To the extent that at the end of the initial allotted time, other issues, questions and insights may remain unaddressed, these will be memorialized for potential future study, at the initiative of NSTAC and the EOP.

Of note, the group has maintained an aggressive schedule since its inception, meeting at least weekly from the beginning. That demanding schedule is expected to continue throughout the project. In that regard, it should be noted that government experts as well as industry representatives have contributed much time, effort and energy to the work to date. Without those commitments, the progress this subcommittee has achieved to date would have been impossible; without the same in future, it will be very difficult to meet the demanding schedule of the coming months.

Mr. McLaughlin will then open the floor to any possible questions or comments.