



Internet2
1000 Oakbrook Drive, Suite 300
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
(734) 913-4250
(734) 913-4255 (fax)
www.internet2.edu

November 2, 2007

Members of the Internet2 Community,

As you all know, in March of this year the Boards of Internet2 and National LambdaRail approved a Memorandum of Agreement outlining a framework whereby our two organizations might merge. Working within that framework, a Merger Planning Team led by the Chairs of both boards developed a plan of merger and a proposed definitive agreement to merge. The plan was approved by the Internet2 Board in August, but was rejected by the NLR Board two weeks later.

Over the past six weeks, many people did their best to rescue the merger, but I must now report that those efforts have proved unavailing. In early October, the CEO of NLR notified Internet2 that NLR was exercising its right to cancel the Memorandum of Agreement that had provided the framework for merger discussions. And yesterday I received an email from Erv Blythe, the new chair of the NLR Board, reporting that a last-ditch effort to approve the merger had failed, due to concerns about possible litigation by NLR members over their "equity interests" in NLR.

I regret this result. I believe that this merger would have been in the best interests of our community. But Erv and I agree that under the circumstances we have no choice but to move forward independently.

Before doing so, I would like to express publicly my personal gratitude to the leaders within the NLR community -- especially Tracy Futhey and Dan Updegrave -- who worked tirelessly over the past 9 months to bring the merger to fruition. Their dedication to the interests of the advanced research and networking community is extraordinary, and we are all fortunate that such talented individuals work within our midst. Similarly, I would like to thank the broader circle of community members who contributed hours and hours of work both to the development of the merger proposal and to the sustained effort to secure its ratification.

As we look to the future, Internet2 will focus its attention on continuing the progress it has made over the past year. That progress has been evident both at the level of governance, most visible in the new Council structure that began its work at the Member Meeting two weeks ago, and at the level of operations, being experienced on the now-fully-deployed new optical network infrastructure. In the coming year we will build on that progress through a comprehensive and inclusive process of strategic planning as we chart our organization's future in support of the advanced networking community.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey S. Lehman
Chair
Internet2 Board of Trustees