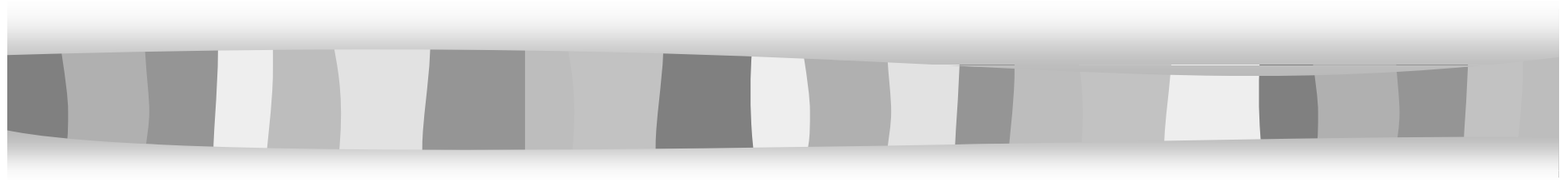


# Doing more for less



Mike Johnson  
Director CHEST & NISS  
IATUL  
June 1998



# Covering

- Background
- CHEST& NISS
- Datacentres (BIDS, MIDAS, EDINA)
- CHEST
  - Products
  - Agreements
  - Selection Process
  - Pricing and Licencing
- Recommendations

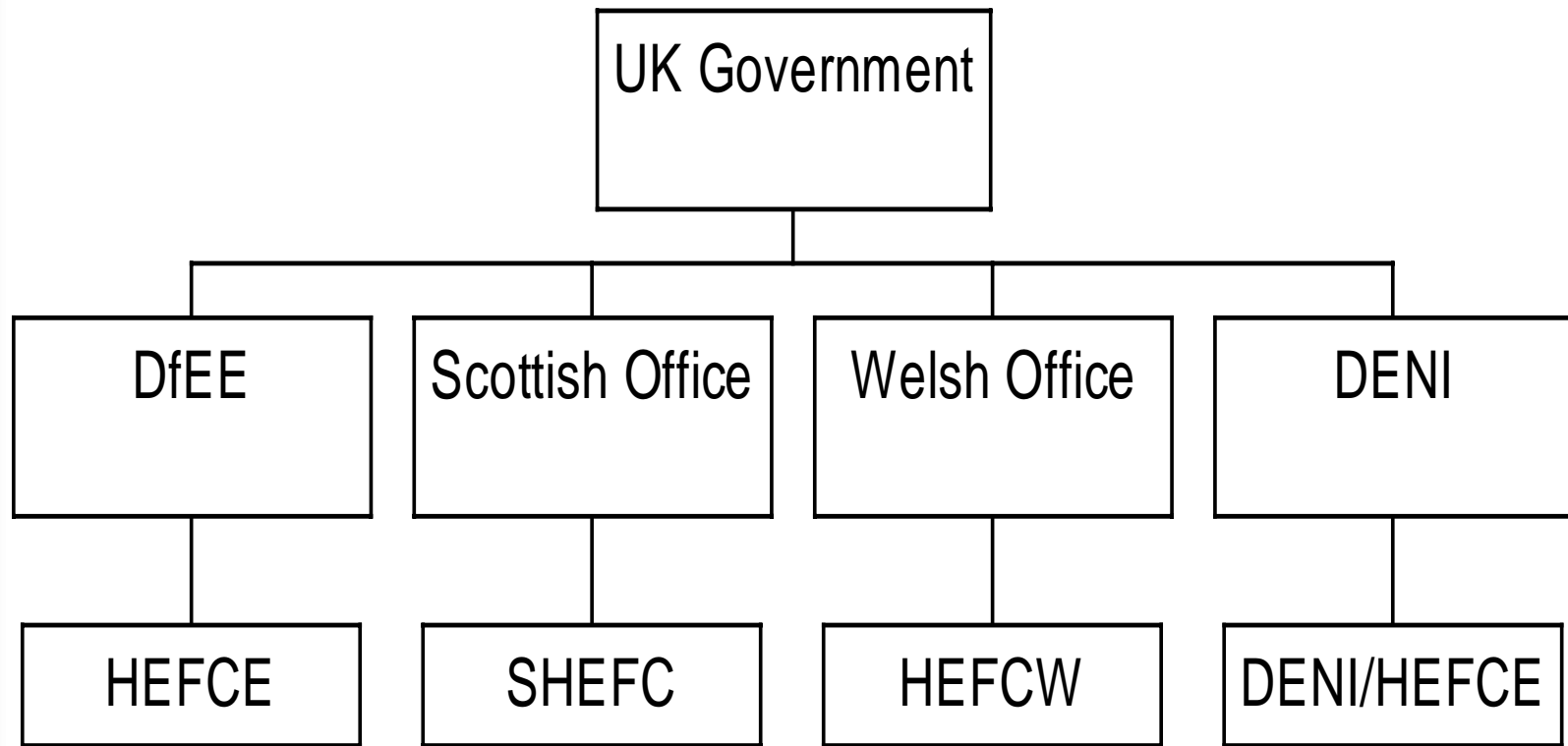


# Background - History

- CHEST & NISS set up by Computer Board (predecessor of the JISC) on 1 Jan 1988
- CHEST - negotiate for quality commercial software, data and training materials for the use by the UK education community
- NISS - provide information services to the UK education community

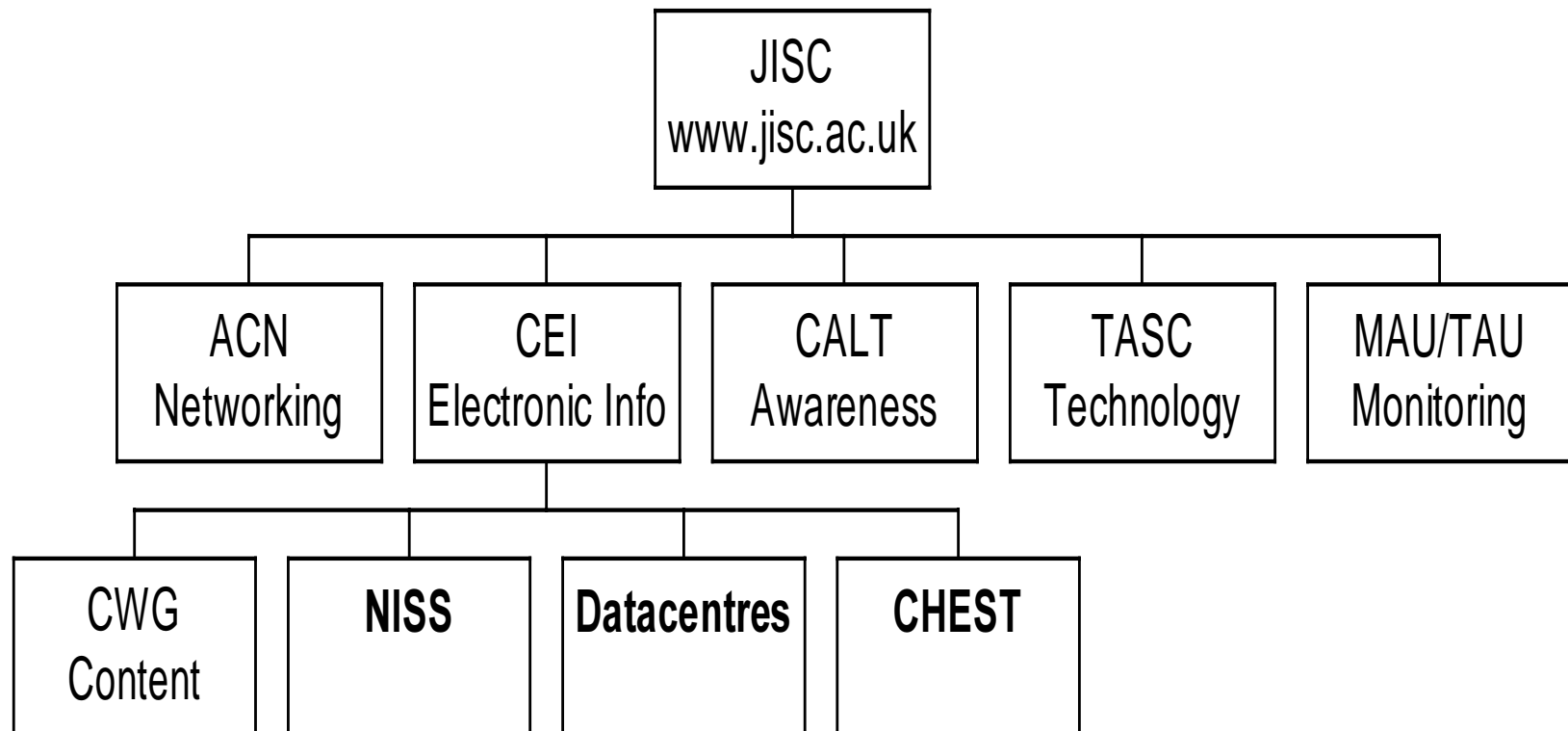
# Background - UK higher education

UK HE



# Background - JISC

JISC





# CHEST & NISS

- Based at Universities of Bath & Southampton
- Part funded by JISC, part by earnings
- Approx 23 staff in total
  - ( CHEST has 9 staff )
- NISS is part information service, part datacentre, part technology provider



# Datacentres

- Created by JISC
- BIDS EDINA MIDAS ( NISS)
- Resulted from 3 invitations to tender
- Specialisation expected to evolve
- Datacentres run data
  - negotiated by CHEST
  - negotiated by themselves
  - negotiated by others



# CHEST Products

## ■ Agreements

- Software ( 55 agreements )
- Data (30 agreements )
- Courseware ( 5 agreements )

## ■ Special Offers

## ■ Directory entries ( approx 1000 )



# Agreements

- Institution licences
  - “free at the point of use”
  - common licence conditions
  - all non commercial use
- Most are 5 years
  - fixed price
  - committed till end of agreement
- CHEST collects fees, pays supplier
- CHEST manages & administers



# Selection Process

- Product selected as a result of
  - comparative evaluation
  - feedback from the community
    - formal
    - informal
  - request from JISC (CWG)
  - offer from supplier



# Pricing

- Price the institution pays comprises
  - cost of data
  - cost of service
  - cost of management
- less
  - any central subsidy by
    - datacentre funding
    - contribution to data cost



# Pricing

- Take-up estimated on anticipated level of subscription
- Total cost / take-up / years of agreement = price to institutions
- JISC may underwrite
- Experimenting with move to tiered pricing
  - banding institutions by subject size
  - banding institutions by specific characteristics



# Licencing

- All staff and students
- All non commercial use
- Licence based on CHEST Code of Conduct which most institutions incorporate into regulations
- Access control by Athens
  - single sign on, national usage
  - multiple databases and datacentres
  - control devolved to institution



# Athens Access Management

- protects resources
  - on geographically distributed servers,
  - under the control of different organisations.
  - on external, commercially operated, internet services.
- distributed user management
  - authorisation properties are hierarchically inherited by default.
  - facilities for self registration and bulk loading.
- Single sign on.



# Athens

- any type of resource from database down to individual documents and multimedia objects.
- Supports access using web, telnet and telnet based windows clients.
- Scalable and resilient.
- More information:

**<http://www.athens.ac.uk>**



# More for less

## ■ Win - win agreements

- good for users
- good for vendors
- more institutions at a lower price = more vendor revenue

## ■ Collaboration

- shared support and training costs
- shared voice to vendor



# More for less

## ■ Critical mass

- more institutions, lower service costs
- add functionality
- expand the user base
- safety in the herd

## ■ Competition

- between databases
- between service providers



# More for less

- **Consistency/conformity**
  - standard license agreement
  - long term agreements
  - standard access methods
  - standard user interfaces



# More for less

## ■ Problems

- “rogue” institution purchases
- getting decisions from institutions
- estimating the likely take up
- getting the timing right
- herding cats
- dealing with low volume products
- committees
- money



# More for less

## ■ Is it worth it?

- Cost reduction for institutions
- subscriptions
- service
- negotiation

## ■ Added value to community

- £ 750 m ?

## ■ Adds to sense of community



# Advice for any consortium

- Enthusiasm and Dedication better than committees
  - pick your people well
  - give them room to manoeuvre
  - give them your support
  - don't let your organisation get in the way
- You can't do it on a part time basis
- You can't do deals to a timetable
- Agreeing the price is about 1% of the work



# Further Info

- Current CHEST list at  
<http://www.chest.ac.uk/datasets>
- The CHEST brochure  
<http://www.chest.ac.uk/about-chest/about-chest.html>
- Code of Conduct  
<http://www.chest.ac.uk/conduct.html>
- General licence conditions  
<http://www.chest.ac.uk/appendix-a-data.html>
- [mike@chest.ac.uk](mailto:mike@chest.ac.uk)