The upgrading last year of the centrally provide Staffmail service and the consequent improvement in the performance of the service means that it is now practicable to move the commodity staff mail service provided by the School of Informatics to the central Staffmail service. This document outlines the issues involved in making such a move.

Moving Informatics staff mail services to Staffmail would have two main advantages:

• Release of Informatics' resources currently used in supporting the mail service.
• Compliance with the University's policy on avoiding unnecessary duplication of commodity computing services

In the past the main reason for not moving to Staffmail has been its poor response time when compared with the Informatics service. Recent experience of Staffmail since its upgrade suggests that this issue has been resolved and that the performance of Staffmail is no longer a barrier to its adoption.

One of the aims of the Informatics mail service has been to provide a service as similar to Staffmail (performance issues aside!) as possible. This aim has largely been achieved and should mean that for the majority of Informatics users, moving to Staffmail should be a pain-free process. There are, however, some differences which users will need to be aware of:

• Unlike the Informatics' service, Staffmail imposes quotas on disk usage. The default Staffmail quota is set to 2GB so this should only affect a small number (less than 10) of Informatics users. IS have agreed that they will not make additional charges for those of our users who are over the 2GB limit though they may revisit this decision if our level of usage changes dramatically.
• Staffmail and the Informatics mail server use different filtering packages (SIEVE and Procmail respectively). This means that users' filtering rules will have to be translated to SIEVE format as part of the move to Staffmail. IS have tools which allow rules created using the IMP interface's drop down interface to be converted automatically but more advanced rules will need to be converted by hand.
• It is possible that the response time for some mail support requests may increase since Informatics support staff may need to pass on some requests to IS support.
• Staffmail is an authenticated service. There are mechanism in place which will allow Informatics' users to access Staffmail from DICE machines using the standard DICE Kerberos mechanism. To access Staffmail from non-DICE machines, users will need to know their EASE password.

Staffmail has several features which Informatics' users may find useful:

• The Staffmail web interface has a facility to allow users to grant access to mail folders to other users providing a quick and easy way of setting up shared mail folders.
• There is a text based interface for mobile devices
• Mail folders can contain subfolders.

Note that moving to Staffmail does not mean that *<username>*@inf.ed.ac.uk mail addresses would stop working or indeed that Informatics would no longer run a mail service. Informatics' mailing lists would still be managed from within Informatics and we would con-

tinue to operate the existing outgoing mail servers including the authenticated server for users outside the ed domain. Mail sent to an Informatics mail address will continue to pass through the Informatics mail server before being delivered to a staffmail inbox. For this reason, Informatics users may wish to begin publicising their @ed addresses since this will bypass the Informatics mail server completely eliminating one possible point of failure.

Moving to Staffmail would mean that we would have much less control over the day to day management of our commodity mail service. This was demonstrated recently when a network failure rendered the Staffmail service unavailable for most of a weekend. Though School computing staff were aware of this issue, there was nothing they could do to rectify the issue other than notifying IS of the problem. This loss of control should be balanced against the considerable benefits of making the move to Staffmail.

In view of the improved performance of Staffmail and in the absence of any compelling reasons for not making the move, we intend delegating the Informatics staff mail services to the central Staffmail service. Further documentation will be produced shortly containing a timetable and procedures for making the move.