

Short Term Visit Report

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On The 4th March 2004, Dr. Timmis (JT) and Dr. Tucon (AT) made a visit to Production Modelling Limited (PML). Present from PML was Mike Birtwistle (MB) and Mike S (MS). This meeting came about after PML posted a request on the ais-forum email list expressing interest in the use of AIS in dynamic scheduling environments. Given that both JT and AT had an interest in this area, a meeting was arranged to discuss possibilities.

JT opened the meeting with an overview of AIS and their potential use in dynamic environments and AT provided an overview of scheduling work and representation issues. These talks were then followed by MS on an overview of PML products and their application areas.

Through discussions it became clear that PML were interested in improving performance of their system. However, it became very clear that the first stage to tackle was one of improved representation of their problem space and improving the general capabilities of their GA engine, which unpins their product, as this was far from state of the art. AT would provide some consultancy on this issue. The role of AIS was not as clear at the present time, and PML decided that they would first invest time improving their current product with a view to examining AIS technology once this had been done. It was hoped that in the future and comparative study could be undertaken of an AIS approach with the GA approach on this problem, but for now, this was a more longer term plan.

The meeting concluded with actions on AT to follow up potential consultancy and for JT to stay in the loop with potential involvement at a later stage.