

# CIRCULAR



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**To: Clearing Members  
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**80/98**

**No:**

## **SFE Information Network - Performance over the Internet**

The SFE Information Network has been developed using standard internet technology which allows Members to utilise their existing infrastructure to access and use the system - i.e. a browser and a connection to the internet. By using a connection over the internet Members can choose which PC's and how many can access SFEIN without incurring expensive communications costs. One of the issues with using the internet, however, is the inability to guarantee performance. Nevertheless our testing over the past few months has revealed that provided the Member meets the minimum requirement specified below they should be able to, for the most part, achieve performance levels on SFEIN as per the benchmark published below.

### **Performance Benchmarking**

Benchmarking of the SFE Information Network using the specified minimum requirements i.e:-

- Pentium PC with minimum 16Mb RAM for 3.1 and 32Mb RAM for 95/NT
- Adequate free hard disk space
- A connection to the internet via 28.8k modem

resulted in an average performance of:-

- Up to 1 minute to load the site
- Once loaded, moving from page to page in times of less than 1 minute (usually around 10-30secs)
- When you click on submit (for a Day 2 or EFP) it should take about 20secs to process.

SFE has a 128K Internet Link Directly to the Telstra Internet Network and regular checks of the link utilisation are carried out..

If you are consistently experiencing worse performance than these benchmark times then there could be a problem with your firm's connection over the internet i.e. there may be insufficient bandwidth for the number of people within the firm who access the internet. If you fall into this category please read the actions recommended below.

### **Action to Take if Performance is Too Slow**

Ask your IT support staff to review your connection to the internet - considering the following recommendations:-

- If you access the internet through your LAN, have your relevant IT support department evaluate your link size out to the internet. If your link is running at close to 100% utilisation during business hours you may need to acquire some additional bandwidth.
- If you access the Internet through your LAN, and your link is not over utilised, then have your IT support department evaluate your ISPs or Head Offices Internet network. It may well be that your ISPs or Head Offices Internet network is running at its peak capacity. This would include Internet Links, Proxy Servers, Firewalls, DNS etc.) If this is the case, it may be worthwhile suggesting some network improvements.
- If you access the Internet through a dial modem to an ISP, it may be that your ISPs Internet network is running at its peak capacity. If your ISPs network is not performing to a satisfactory level, then it may be worthwhile exploring your Internet service options.
- Have a look at what your firm's internet usage is at the moment - i.e. how many users share the bandwidth? when is the peak time for usage? If these peaks are known it may be possible to reduce them or work around them.
- Ensure that Day 2 Users at least (EFP's tend to experience a faster response time) have sufficient processing power - we recommend a Pentium PC with minimum 16MB and adequate free hard disk space.

If the above solutions are impractical or unable to be implemented in the near future then we recommend you by-pass the internet altogether and take advantage of the alternative means of connecting direct to SFEIN via dial in to SFE's Remote Access Server. All that is required is a pc with a modem, dial-up networking installed on the pc and a spare telephone line. A few of our Members are using this method of connectivity and report that it is very efficient in performance.

If you would like to explore this option please contact **Matt McDonnell on 9256 0471** who will be able to assist.

**Jan Bingley**  
**Project Manager**

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