

Minute of Meeting of the Program  
Library Sub-Committee held on  
Tuesday 12th December, 1967,  
at 4 p.m. in the William Robertson  
Building.

PRESENT

Professor D. J. Finney (in the Chair)  
Professor P. Vandome  
Mr R. E. Day  
Dr. J. Fulton  
Dr. P. R. Himsworth  
Mr. D. Kershaw  
Mr. D. T. Muxworthy  
Mr. R. Seaton.

1. Secretaryship.

It was agreed that after the initial meeting Mr. Muxworthy should assume the Secretaryship of the Sub-Committee.

2. Membership.

It was noted that the Regional Centre's new Program Librarian., Mr. D. N. Allum, would be taking up his appointment on 1st January 1968, and would thereafter attend meetings of the Sub-Committee.

3. Terms of reference.

In the absence of specific terms of reference from the Executive Committee, it was felt undesirable to attempt in the early stages a close definition of the Sub-Committee's areas of interest and responsibility. It was clear however that in addition to advising on the development of the program library the Sub-Committee was expected to act as a co-ordinating body, especially in connection with the deployment of programming resources in user departments as well as in the Regional Centre. In the longer term, Professor Finney suggested the aim might be to publish a policy statement and invite comment from users. Dr. Fulton expressed the hope that it would be within the competence of the Sub-Committee to recommend the employment of vacation students for specific programming projects. This appeared to be possible.

4. Program Abstracts.

The meeting gave a general welcome to the system of program abstracts proposed by the Regional Centre. There was some difference of opinion about how wide a routine circulation was desirable. The balance of feeling was that initially the program abstracts should be sent to user Departments and not to individuals except on request.

5. Programming and documentation.

Mr. Day presented a document setting out the standards to be followed in future by Regional Centre staff in documenting programs and routines. The Sub-Committee welcomed the setting of such high standards for Regional Centre staff, but had reservations about how realistic it was to expect departmental users to conform to these standards. It was agreed however that the standards should be published, but that a careful watch should be kept on any undesirable consequences such as a reluctance on the part of users to submit programs. It was accepted that the Sub-Committee would have to consider how far Departments might be asked to validate programs in certain specialised fields.

There was also a general feeling that more education and guidance in the techniques of programming and documentation should be attempted - for example the issue of a comparative instruction time sheet. The association of individual Regional Centre programmers with specific fields of programming (as implied by the concept of 'duty programmer') should be encouraged, even to the extent of seconding programmers for substantial periods to work within user departments.

6. Date of next meeting.

It was agreed to hold the next meeting on Thursday 4th January, 1968, at 4 p.m.