

EDINBURGH REGIONAL COMPUTING CENTRE

Minutes of meeting of the Program Library
Sub-Committee hold on Tuesday 1st October
1968 at 3.30p.m. in the William Robertson
Building.

PRESENT

Prof. D.J. Finney (in the chair)
Prof. P. Vandome
Mr. D.N. Allum
Mr. R.E. Day
Dr. F.R. Himsworth
Mr. D. Kershaw
Mr. D.T. Muxworthy

1. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

There were no comments on the minutes of the previous meeting, held on the 14th June 1968.

Matters arising from the minutes:

1. Mr. Day reported that I.C.I. were prepared to sell the Fortran version of their procedure library for £30,000, which sum would procure the library on behalf of all U.K. universities. A list of those programs which have been converted to Fortran was distributed to members of the committee. It was suggested that all but 10 of the routines were duplicated by programs already available to ERCC users and that therefore the Centre should prepare a report on this overlap for the next meeting of this committee. The committee must be satisfied that the I.C.I. programs were needed before it recommended their purchase.
2. Mr. Day said that the English Electric Programming Subgroup had accepted the Controls Program Abstract form as an information exchange standard. The same Sub-group had been sent copies of "Documentation of Programs and Routines" but there had been no response as yet.
3. Dr. Robertson of I.C.I. has sent a copy of the SHARD validation documents to the Centre
4. Miss Stokoe of Chilton has indicated that details of library routines would be sent as soon as they are in a presentable form.

2. REPORT ON PROGRESS

User specifications have been issued for 33 routines and programmer's information for 15; for 14 of those both documents are available. Abstracts 1-74 will be re-issued in the correct colour code. It was suggested that a list of changes in status of programs should be circulated monthly. It confirmed that any change in the permanent mathematical routines on the KDF9 would be accompanied by System Change notice.

The Centre are obtaining a number of programs from the U.S.A., including Simulate II, the Goddard Space Center Stat-Pack and the Carnegie management game.

The library catalogue program is well under way.

3. ERCC ANNUAL REPORT

The committee examined a draft contribution to the ERCC annual report 1967-8 had sections entitled "Program Library Sub-committee" and "Program Library". The committee recommended some alterations.

(The second draft was approved by the Chairman before being submitted to the Secretary of the Executive Committee).

4. VALIDATION OF PROGRAMS

The Share documents mentioned above define satisfactory standards for reporting tests but not for deciding exactly which tests should be made. The only way to choose between methods of validation may be to keep records and compare their success.

It was decided to ask I.C.I. for a program with a detailed account of its validation.

5. PROGRAMS FROM UNIVERSITY DEPTS.

The committee considered the University of Wisconsin Exchange Catalog but decided that the ideas in it could not be used to enhance either the acquisition of programs or the information system at the Centre.

The Centre has received abstracts of Algol programs from the University of Warwick and a taxonomy program in Fortran from St. Andrews.

Mr. Nicholas from the Centre is visiting university departments asking about their problems and in what areas they would like help. The committee thought that the departments, particularly the heavy users, should also be asked what they are doing. Mr. Day said that inter-departmental meetings on special topics in computing, e.g. graphics, had been held and could be publicized in the newsletter.

6. COSTING

Mr. Day said that the Centre keeps a costing check and that the intention is to put the Applications Group on a commercial basis although the charging details have not been decided yet. The committee approved the principle of a financially self-supporting Centre.

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed to hold the next meeting on Monday, 2nd December, 1968 at 3.30 p.m..

(signed D.J. Finney 2 December 1968)