Management Information System Task Force Note

Author: Frank Ovett

Subject: General Audit for Informatics of DR

Introduction

DR provides a management decision support facility and management advice for the Research Directors and Division Leaders. DR also manages the inter-divisional Research Projects. The Deputy to the Research Director is in charge of DR.

As far as informatics is concerned DR provides a management decision support facility for the Research Directors. Its role is to assist the Directors by using up-to-date data on budgets, personnel costs, staff figures etc. and to present the information to management in appropriate form. The basic data is gathered from various sources including ADP. It is essential that our equipment has access to mainframe data bases and is capable of downloading data for local processing. All our machines have therefore INDEX connections and the IBM/PC which is used often as a terminal has both INDEX and IRMA 3270 connections.

Work Description

Office Administration: Correspondence and memoranda
Meeting minutes
Forms
Reports
Tables

Management Information: Budget consolidations
Budget extrapolations
Budget follow-up
Financial models
Simulations
Statistics
Graphic presentations

Future Projects: Development and implementation of above.
Special Studies - i.e. Management of Unpaid Visitors

Planned improvements: Sharing of Mac resources via MacServe and local electronic mail facilities such as InBox
Use of the ADP Computer

The IBM/PC is now used primarily as a terminal, logged on to ADP either for interrogation of PAYPER (Payroll/Personnel) or FDB (Financial Data Base) using the various on-line facilities available (PAPE, INFO etc.) Easytrieve Plus is also used frequently for batch listings from both data bases. The Macs also access ADP using Versaterm Pro particularly for transferring data to Excel and MS/File (with Kermit or Copy/Paste) for local processing.

Use of Electronic Mail

Both ADP Profs and DD Mail are starting to be used for contact outside of the group. We will shortly test InBox an Appletalk electronic mail programme for use within our group.

Word Processing Systems

Other than the secretarial Philips, our Macs, which offer the ideal WYSIWYG approach, act extensively as WP devices using MacWrite together with the LaserWriter. MacLightning, an on-line spelling checker is currently being tested. Pagemaker offers excellent page composition facilities mixing both text and images.

Data Bases for Management Information

We use the ADP Data Bases. MS/File and Excel are used for local DBs although both offer only very simple structures. We will test various relational systems to find a more powerful tool i.e. Reflex 4th Dimension, dBase Mac etc. Oracle is not available on the Mac.

Use of PCs

Extensive use is made of our Macs and the PC, both locally and as terminals. The software, particularly for the Mac (MacWrite, Excel MS/File etc.) is extremely user-friendly and interesting new software is appearing all the time i.e. MORE (text outliner plus), MacLightning (spelling checker); PageMaker (text composition).