PRENTICE COMPUTER CENTRE

UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND, ST. LUCIA, QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA. 4067.

NEWSLETTER

N-319   May 1988

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Authorized by the Director of the Computer Centre

COMPUTING SUPPORT CENTRE FOR UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND AND GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY

Phone Numbers for Enquiries

External users may dial direct by prefixing these extension numbers with 377.

Management	Extension
Director — *Mr Alan Coulter*	2189
Deputy Director — *Mr John Noad*	3017
Manager, Applications Development — *Ms Noela Meier*	4281
Manager, Distributed Computing — *Mr Anthony Bird*	3391
Manager, Engineering and Communications Services — *Mr Graham Rees*	3288
Manager, Finance and Administration — *Mr Denis Antonellie*	3963
Manager, Large Systems Software — *Mr Allan Woodland*	4017
Manager, Operations — *Mr Ian Armstrong*	3471
Manager, User Liaison — *Mr Geoffrey Dengate*	3944

	Extension
Central Services HELP Desk (0830–1630) CCHELP for electronic mail	**3025**
General Enquiries & Course Enrolments	**3018**

Principal Service Centres

	Extension
Personal Computer Support Group	4018
Contract Programming & Feasibility Studies — *Ms Noela Meier*	4281
System Status Automatic Answering	3101
Central Systems Accounts (0830–1630) — *Mrs Carol Walker*	2188
Program Librarian — *Mr David Molloy*	4075
Operations	3212
Data Entry — *Ms Ngaire Brown*	3967
Dial-up modem numbers (300, 1200/75, 2400, 1200 bps — 10 lines)	377 2977
(2400 and 1200 bps — 7 lines)	377 2922

Hardware Problem Reporting	Extension
PC Repairs and Maintenance	3938
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Terminal and PDP–11 Fault Reporting	3938

Note: After 4.45 pm and at weekends, X3938 is serviced by a message recorder. Users wishing to report PC, terminal, communications and other hardware faults can leave their name, number and fault details.

Griffith University

External users may dial direct by prefixing these extension numbers with 275.

	Extension
Director, Centre for Information Technology — *Mr Mike Steel*	7125
Computing Services Manager — *Mr Ian Robertson*	7561
General Enquiries — *Ms Annabel Tyler*	7745
Computing Services Area — Science 2	7560

1. Newsletter Summary

- The Centre monitors usage of the central systems to detect improper use. Hacker activity has been detected and users are advised to protect their data by sensible password selection and maintenance. Hackers are warned that if identified the matter will be placed in the hands of the University Legal Officer.

- A number of important staff changes are brought to your attention.

- Information regarding the system status recorded message (377-3101) and increased logout quotas on the KL-10 are provided.

- Some of the more common questions that the Help Desk receives, together with the answers, are provided for general information.

- Details of the latest release of SAS for Personal Computers are provided.

- An example is described of how one user is getting very good value for money on the IBM-3081.

- Professor K. Scott (Biochemistry) advises the availibility of the Protein and Nucleic Acid database.

- Details of PC and mainframe courses are provided. An introductory course on UNIX is now offered.

Geoffrey Dengate
ext. 3944

2. Central System Security

2.1 Unauthorized Use of User Accounts

Our security monitoring procedures have identified 'hacker' activity during the past couple of months. The hacker attempted to gain access to existing user accounts by guessing account passwords.

In a couple of instances unauthorized access to user accounts has occurred following a successful guess. In cases of unauthorized access the passwords were extremely easy to guess. This clearly allows easy access for even the novice hacker. The following article provides some basic guidelines to reduce the probability of a hacker guessing your password.

The Centre does not treat these intrusions lightly and should the person(s) be identified the matter will be placed with the University Legal Officer and pursued to the full extent of the law.

Users should advise me immediately if they suspect any 'hacker' activity.

Geoffrey Dengate
ext. 3944

2.2 Password Security

Password security is the responsibility of the user and I strongly recommend users do the following:

1. Change your password immediately after we have advised you of your new account details.

2. Change your password regularly (at least every three months) and avoid using previously used passwords.

3. Choose passwords that are difficult to guess; imbed a numeric and/or a symbol within an alphabetic character string.

    e.g.   4NIT__CAT
             HAT$MUM7

4. Do not write it down (especially on the white board beside your terminal).

Note that the different systems have different syntax restrictions for passwords.

For HELP on setting passwords type:

UQVM: DIRM ? PW
UQVAX: HELP SET PASSWORD
UQADM: HELP SET PASSWORD
UQKL10: <NO HELP AVAILABLE>

Passwords can be changed on the KL10 during the logon process. e.g.

.LOG 123,456/PASSWORD

Geoffrey Dengate
ext. 3944

3. PCC Staff Changes

A number of changes have occurred in the Centre over the past couple of months.

Ms Noela Meier (telephone extension 4281) is now the Manager of Applications Development replacing Ms Sarah Barry who resigned earlier this year to take up a position with CiTR. The Applications Development Group can undertake projects on a wide variety of machine and software systems. The group has expertise ranging from simple data base systems on PCs to very large applications on the IBM-3081. The Applications Development Group will provide up to one person week of time, at no charge, to assist with feasibility studies of the use of computers for research projects.

Mr Mark Williams (Wilber) has been transferred from the PC Support Group to the Engineering & Communications Group. Wilber will be working on interfacing the IBM3081 (UQVM) to the backbone Ethernet network using the TCP/IP protocols.

Mr John Currie has also been transferred from the PC Support Group to work with the User Liaison Group. John will be specifically addressing the packaging of a number of existing and new PCC services to more effectively meet the needs of our users.

Mr Alec Waskiw and Mr Mark Noonan have both been transferred to the PC Support Group to replace Wilber & John. They join Mr Matt Vandenberg to complete the group.

Mr Peter Casson leaves the HELP DESK to replace Mark Noonan as Supervising Computer Operator on Shifts and Ms Anne Sceresini is attending to the HELP DESK.

Mrs Carol Walker has returned from maternity leave and is back on the Accounts Desk. You should contact the Carol (ext. 2188) for questions regarding the setting up of accounts on all systems, or for questions about account balances and charges (for special service ask her about her wonderful new daughter!).

Mr Bill Whitehead has been assigned the responsibility of maintaining the Tape Library (we have over 5000 registered magnetic tapes) and perform related tasks such as tape conversions. Magnetic tape related enquiries should be directed to Bill on ext. 3024.

Geoffrey Dengate
ext. 3944

4. Operations

4.1 Recorded System Status Message

All users should be aware of the recorded system status message on 377-3101. The Operators now update the message regularly during system failures and down times so please use this service in preference to ringing the Operators.

Please be aware that we can't update the message while the system is unattended, so at these times the message can only reflect the situation when the Operators go home.

Naturally, this service is only of value to our users if it is kept up to date so, if you feel this is not the case, I would be most grateful for your feedback.

Ian Armstrong
ext. 3471

4.2 Increased Logout Quotas on KL10

The default logout quota on the KL10 system has been increased from 1500 blocks to 2000 blocks. If you require any further increases in logout quotas, please contact the Accounts Desk on ext. 2188 or the Operations Manager on ext. 3471.

Ian Armstrong
ext. 3471

4.3 Questions and Answers

Some of the more common questions that the Help Desk receives, together with the answers, are provided for general information.

Q: How do I transfer files from my personal computer to one of the mainframes?

A: The Centre supports the package *KERMIT*; this software may be obtained from the PC Support Group on level four of the Hawken Building. Any requests for help on its use should also be directed to the PC Support Group on ext. 4018.

Q: I get an 'illegal memory reference' on the KL-10, when running my Fortran program?

A: The usual cause of an 'illegal memory reference' is the program exceeding the bound of some array. The simplest way of finding the problem is:

```
COMPILE/DEBUG:BOUNDS myprog,---,etc.
LOAD
SAVE
RUN myprog
```

Q: How do I send mail to Fred Nurk at the University of Brewing?

A: With this scant information it is impossible to help. Users must ring Fred, ask him for his user name, host (system his user name is on) and the network his host is on. From this information we should be able to build an address for you to send mail to Fred.

Q: What is the best way to send the Help desk a problem?

A: Electronic Mail; using this method it is in writing and easy to forward to a specialist, in the field of your problem, without having to drop bits of information over the phone network.

On the KL or VAX type: **MAIL**
SEND
To: **CCHELP**
Subject: **HELP WITH BREWING**
Text of message
Control Z

On the IBM type: **NOTE CCHELP**

Q: I wish to bring some files from another computer site. What would be the best format?

A: 9 track tape
1600 or 6250 BPI
8 BIT ASCII
NO HEADER
FIXED LENGTH RECORDS

Q: I can't login on my IBM account. I was using it yesterday. What's wrong? The message I get is - 'userid' NOT IN CP DIRECTORY?

A: This message will be typed if you are merely entering an invalid or misspelt USERID.

However the more dramatic reason for this 'error' is that you have been using a RESTRICTED KIT and have exceeded the usage limits on one of the resources, CPU or I/O. This means that for the remainder of this month you will not be able to get access via this userid. The system has disabled you from logging on. At the beginning of the next month the system generates a random numeric PASSWORD for you and resets your usage limits back to zero. You should phone 377-2188 to be issued with the new password. The alternative to temporary disuse of your kit is to upgrade to an UNRESTRICTED kit immediately but you will be charged at the greater cost for this month.

Sharon Oberhardt/Peter Casson
ext. 3025

5. Large Systems Software

5.1 Are our IBM Users Getting Value for Money?

On recent perusal of the monthly accounting statistics I noticed the high rate of utilization of CPU time by some of our unrestricted kit users. The numbers were in fact so high that I momentarily wondered if one user had broken the 'time' barrier and used more hours of CPU than there were in the month to date. Back of the envelope calculations, (actually my friendly CASIO) assured me that this was not the case.

Here, however, are some interesting statistics:

On the 16th of April, one user had used 180 HOURS of CPU time so far that month, which is an average of 11.25 hours/day. The cost of that kit is $140, so if we assume that no more work is done by that user in April (very unlikely for this workaholic), then the user is paying 77c/hour of CPU time.

This is surely incredible value for money. Just have a look at other Super Systems at other Universities and see how much they charge. Compare this to the cost of a holiday in Europe (not much change out of $100 a day) and you can see that it is obviously much more economic to stay at home and work on the IBM.

In fact the only thing that I can think of which is cheaper and more worthwhile, is a trekking holiday in the Nepal Himalaya. A Sherpa guide can be hired for 100 Rupees/day plus food, chang (like XXXX) and tea-house accommodation on the trail. This is 175 Rupees/day in total which is 47c/hour. Fantastic value, considering how cheerful, helpful, honest, hardworking and competent the Sherpas are. User friendly VM/CMS has still a lot to learn.

So forget the Crays and Convexes at other sites, the European jaunts and package tour rip-offs. Stick with the IBM and the Nepal Himalaya and you will get value for money. This hard working Systems Programmer has done an intensive study in both areas, and can recommend them both with the utmost confidence.

Helen Bergen
ext. 3022

6. Distributed Computing

6.1 SAS for Personal Computers

The Prentice Computer Centre has just received the latest release of SAS for Personal Computers, namely Release 6.03. For those people who already have a copy of the software please arrange with Alec or Matt (PC Support Group) to receive your updated version.

For those people interested, the PCC holds a Site Licence for the SAS products BASE SAS and SAS/STAT. For a $50.00 annual fee, a person can have a legitimate copy of both of the products.

The PCC has also obtained a trial of the full range of SAS SYSTEM Products for Personal Computers. The range includes SAS/GRAPH, SAS/FSP, SAS/AF and SAS/IML, as well as the two products mentioned above.

Please note that the trial is for a limited time only. The Prentice Computer Centre PC Support Group will have the Software loaded on a PC for the duration of the trial, so please take advantage of this demonstration. The purpose of the trial is to see if there is sufficient interest to expand the existing Site Licence to include any of the newly released products. So we need your participation.

David Molloy
ext. 4075

7. User Liaison

7.1 Protein and Nucleic Acid Sequence Database

The protein and nucleic acid sequence database of the Protein Identification Resource (PIR) of the National Biomedical Research Foundation, U.S.A., is now available on the VAX/VMS (UQVAX) system of the Prentice Computer Centre. This database includes both the EMBL and Genbank databases for both protein and nucleic acid sequences. The major uses of the database will be:

a)   Retrieve all display sequences from the database,

b)   Search the databank for sequences (protein or nucleic acids) with homology to a user's sequence.

The present database is current to December 1987, and regular updates are to be arranged. Documentation concerning the use of this database is available from Dr. G. Mackinnon, Department of Biochemistry and the Prentice Computer Centre Program Librarian.

Professor K.J. Scott
Biochemistry Dept.
ext. 3725

8. Courses

8.1 New Course – Introduction to UNIX

Your attention is drawn to the introduction of a new course, 'INTRODUCTION TO UNIX', that is scheduled for both July and August. The Large Systems Software Group is currently in the process of installing the 4.3BSD version of UNIX on the VAX-11/780 and this system will be made available for general use as soon as all the necessary tasks are complete.

The course is intended as an introduction and will cover topics such as basic operating system commands, management of files, common utilities and the editor.

Geoffrey Dengate
ext. 3944

8.2 Course Timetable

Enrolments for all courses may be made by phoning ext. 3018.

June

‡	Introduction to PC/MSDOS	June 8-June 10	9-12am
‡	Desk Top Publishing Seminar	June 14	9-12am
•	Introduction to SAS	June 20-June 24	9-12am
‡	Introduction to DBASE III	June 28-June 30	1-4pm

July

‡	Introduction to WORDPERFECT	July 4-July 7	1-4pm
†	Introduction to VAX8550 (VAX/VMS)	July 5-July 7	9-12am
‡	Desk Top Publishing Seminar	July 11	9-12am
#	Introduction to UNIX	July 13-July 15	9-12am
‡	Introduction to PC/MSDOS	July 19-July 21	1-4pm
‡	Introduction to WORDPERFECT	July 25-July 28	1-4pm
†•	General Plotting	July 26-July 29	9-12am

August/September

†•	Introduction to SPSS-X	August 1-August 5	9-12am
‡	Introduction to DBASE III	August 2-August 4	1-4pm
•	Introduction to IBM3081 (CP/CMS)	August 8-August 10	1-4pm

‡	Introduction to BASIC Programming	August 8-August 12	1-4pm
#	Introduction to UNIX	August 15,16,18	1-4pm
‡	Introduction to PC/MSDOS	August 16,18,19	9-12am
†	Introduction to DATATRIEVE/RDB	August 22-26	9-12am
•	Introduction to SAS	August 22-26	1-4pm
‡	Introduction to WORDPERFECT	August 23-26	9-12am
†•	Introduction to FORTRAN Programming	August 29-Sept 2	9-12am 1-4pm
‡	Introduction to DBASE III	August 30-Sept 1	9-12am

Key:

- • denotes IBM3081 course
- † denotes VAX8550 course
- †• denotes availability on both VAX and IBM - specify on enrolment
- ‡ denotes PC course
- # denotes VAX 11/780 course

General Notes:

1. It is expected that users attending courses on specific packages (SQL, SAS, SPSS–X, DBASE III, etc) will be familiar with keyboard-usage, file-management and editing on the relevant machine (IBM, VAX or PC). Attendance at such short courses without this background provides many problems, as all courses are hands-on. Introductory courses are given frequently to allow familiarity with the fundamentals before attending courses on particular application packages.

2. All courses will be held in the Centre's teaching rooms near the Physics Annexe – the mainframe courses in Course Room 1 and the micro-computer courses in Course Room 2.

3. Staff, post-graduate students and kit-owners are admitted free to courses. The charge is $10.00 per half-day session for other internal users; $25.00 per half-day session for affiliated users; and $50.00 per half-day session for external users.

4. Enrolments for all courses may be made by phoning ext. 3018.

Barry Maher/Nick Evans
ext. 3021