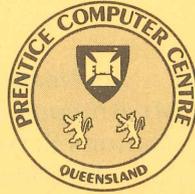# PRENTICE COMPUTER CENTRE

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

NEWSLETTER

N-321   September 1988

CONTENTS

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

Central Services HELP Desk (0830–1630) CCHELP for electronic mail   **3025**

General Enquiries & Course Enrolments   **3018**

Principal Service Centres

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 Vern Bawden*	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
Communications Fault Reporting	3938
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.

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

Acknowledgements

1. Newsletter Summary

- Users are advised of scheduled upgrades to the VAX/VMS operating system on UQVAX and UQADM.

- Details about a program to read PDP-10 Backup tapes on the VAX are provided.

- Background information on the periods of UQVM unavailability during July is provided.

- Users are advised of the VAX PSI software now available to access public data networks world-wide. A guide describing the facilities is available from the HELP DESK.

- Prentice Computer Centre users can now access other Queensland Tertiary Institutions' computer systems through QTINET (Queensland Tertiary Institutions Network). Some preliminary information is provided.

- The Centre has been evaluating some 2400 bps modems.

- Departments are advised of the need to be allocated a INTERNET address for any system using TCP/IP to connect into the University network (UQNET). Additionally, addresses for existing departmental TCP/IP systems need to be changed.

- The Distributed Computing Group can install a protection system, approved by the Chief Security Officer of the University, for securing PC systems against theft.

- The PC Support Group have a number of items of interest. These include a Guide for Departments purchasing software, a SAS-PC Users group, the PC-SIG Library, and some hardware evaluations.

- Some advice is offered to Commodore Amiga users regarding VIRUS attacks.

- Details of Mainframe and PC courses for the remainder of 1988 are provided.

Geoffrey Dengate
ext. 3944

2. Large Systems Software

2.1 New Versions of VAX/VMS for UQVAX and UQADM

The current version of the Vax operating system will be upgraded from 4.5 to 4.7 on Saturday 27th August. Both systems will be unavailable on that day. This upgrade, which includes version 4.6, is a maintenance update and will not require changes to existing command procedures or interactive commands. Any new features will be described in **HELP NewFeatures.**

The next major release of VMS, Version 5.0, has arrived, but requires new versions of some of the layered products. It is expected that version 5.0 will be installed in the December–January period.

Some command files may need to be changed for VMS version 5.0. For that release, all commands, full-line comments and labels in command procedures must be preceded by a dollar sign ($). This has always been the rule, but it has not been strictly enforced in earlier versions. This warning gives a few months to ensure compliance.

Ian Burgess
ext. 4074

2.2 10BACKUP – A Program to Read PDP-10 Backup Tapes on the VAX

A program to read DECSYSTEM-10 (e.g. UQKL10) BACKUP tapes has been obtained from La Trobe University and installed on the Vax cluster.

This program reads files from a magnetic tape created by the DECsystem-10 BACKUP utility. Its purpose is to enable file transfer from a DECsystem-10 to a VAX, or to read existing DECsystem-10 BACKUP format tapes.

The program runs in 'interchange' mode while processing the tape, as DECSYSTEM-10 disk and UFD information is meaningless on a VAX. Normally the program would be used to transfer ASCII text files only.

The program cannot write tapes.

For details see SYS$DOC:10BACKUP.MEM, or **RUN SYS$UTI:10BACKUP** and type **HELP** to the 'l' prompt.

> Ian Burgess
> ext. 7074

3. Operations

3.1 Expiry Date for Computer Accounts

On 24 December each year all PPNs on the DEC-10 and UICs on the VAX 8550 expire, unless the Centre has been notified in writing that a PPN/UIC is required for another year. The term 'expire' means that all files owned by that PPN/UIC, both on-line and off-line, are deleted, and the corresponding charge code is deleted from the system.

We do this not to make life difficult for you, but merely to keep disk space clear and overheads down. Each year many people leave the University, go away on the Special Studies programme or finish post graduate research and omit to notify us that they have finished with their account. Expiring accounts is our way, then, of keeping the systems operating efficiently for the user's continued benefit.

Userids on the IBM are currently set up with an expiry date nominated by the client. The date specified remains in force unless altered using the normal AUTH-UQVM form.

It is imperative that if you intend to keep using your account for the following year you must complete the 'change of expiry date' form. These forms will be available from ACCOUNTS from 1st November 1988.

> Carol Walker
> ext. 2188

3.2 System News

An important method of communication between the operators and the users is the use of login messages. We use these to let you know if one of the systems is going to be unavailable for scheduled work or if a disk will be out of use for some time etc.

Generally, these notices appear the first time you log in after we have created them, so you see them once only. If you share an account or have a bad memory you can see them deliberately by using the following commands –

On UQVM	**NEWS URGENT**
On UQVAX	**NOTICE**
On UQADM	**NOTICE**
On UQKL10	**I NOTICE**

Those of you who really wish to stay informed, may wish to include the commands in your LOGIN.COM file or your UPROFILE EXEC.

The HELP DESK (ext. 3025 or MAIL to CCHELP) can provide more information on this service.

Ian Armstrong
ext. 3471

3.3 UQVM Unavailability During July

The uncharacteristic periods of unavailability of the IBM 3081 (UQVM) during July require some explanations, so here goes.

The system was scheduled to be unavailable all day Saturday 2nd July to enable some hardware configurations to be altered. These changes are to give us a better chance of enabling most of the system to continue in the event of a hardware failure in selected components.

These changes went well and the system was available by Saturday evening.

Tuesday 5th July heralded a summer type evening thunder storm which knocked out all our systems for some time but caused most lasting effects on two of the disk drives on the IBM system. We were able to make the system available by 4:30 on the Wednesday afternoon but were required to do more work on it the next day. Consequently, UQVM was unavailable again from 7am until 9:30am on Thursday 7th July for further testing, which still couldn't pinpoint the cause of the problem.

After advice from the manufacturing plant in Japan, IBM performed more tests on the morning of Thursday 14th July making the system unavailable from 7am until 10:30am. The results of these tests confirmed that the disk drives in question required to have replacement HDAs (entire assembly of heads and disk platters).

In order to change an HDA, we had to do a backup (or in fact two to be really safe), have the engineers change the hardware, then restore all the data so that the users are unaware of the change.

This process for the four disks (two HDAs) took a few hours on Friday night (29th July) and then Saturday 30th July until the system was made available at 2:30 pm.

The problem is now rectified and we are looking forward to a return to the usually high availability figures of the UQVM system.

Ian Armstrong
ext. 3471

4. Engineering & Communications

4.1 VAX PSI Service Now Available on UQVAX

The VAX PSI software is now available for use on UQVAX. This software provides remote access to other systems connected to the public data networks (such as AUSTPAC, TELENET, PSS, MIDAS etc) world-wide, and an electronic mail service between UQVAX and other VAX PSI systems connected to the world-wide public data networks.

Current users of the AUSPAC node are requested to acquaint themselves with the VAX PSI service long before the scheduled termination of the AUSPAC service in December 1989.

Details on how to use the VAX PSI facilities and the costs are given in a guide which may be collected from the HELP DESK. Alternatively, copies of the guide will be sent to those sending a request to

> The HELP DESK
> Prentice Computer Centre
> University of Queensland
> St. Lucia, QLD 4067

or requesting by electronic mail to CCHELP on any of the hosts UQKL10, UQVAX or UQVM. If you mail a request for a copy of the guide don't forget to include your postal mail address in the request.

Arthur Hartwig
ext. 4079

4.2 QTINET (Queensland Tertiary Institutions Network)

A number of the Queensland Tertiary institutions have connected (or are planning to connect) dedicated leased lines to the Prentice Computer Centre to improve communications between the institutions. Currently there are leased lines linking QIT (Queensland Institute of Technology) and DDIAE (Darling Downs Institute of Advanced Education) to the Prentice Computer Centre. Unlike the public data networks, there is no charge for use of the lines beyond a fixed rental cost. Therefore electronic mail, remote login and file transfer facilities are available to Prentice Computer Centre users with no additional charge for communications.

Not all of these facilities are available on all computers in all the institutions, so it is best to consult with Computer Centre staff at all of the institutions involved in any proposed communication activity before trying to make use of their facilities.

Arthur Hartwig
ext. 4079

4.3 CHEAP 2400 bps Modems

A number of companies have recently begun to retail modems supporting the V.22 bis (2400 bps) standard for prices below $500. This type of modem should operate with the dial-in modems in the Prentice Computer Centre as well as those used by a number of other 'dial-up' service providers (such as bulletin boards, data bases, AUSTPAC etc). Modems supporting V.22 bis were typically retailing for around $1000 before the start of the year. By the time this newsletter is published I hope to have completed reviews of a couple of the cheaper modems. Copies of the reviews will be available from the HELP DESK.

Arthur Hartwig
ext. 4079

4.4 Connection of Computers to the University Network

Users are reminded that before connecting a computer which uses some form of networking software (for example DECnet or TCP/IP) to the University network a 'network address' must be allocated to that computer. This rule is to ensure that network operation is not jeopardised by conflicting address assignments.

In particular, the University has recently been allocated a new block of Internet addresses (for use with TCP/IP) and all currently used addresses will need to be changed. The new assignment gives a lot more room for expansion so a little inconvenience now will probably help avoid lots of inconvenience later.

Users with TCP/IP equipment not currently connected to the network should also request address assignments for their equipment to avoid problems in the future if they subsequently decide to connect the equipment to the network. To be assigned an address, simply call me or Mark Williams on 377 4079 (or extension 4079) or send electronic mail to CCARTHUR or MIW on node UQVAX giving details about your configuration.

Arthur Hartwig
ext. 4079

5. Distributed Computing

5.1 PC Security

The Distributed Computing Group, in association with the Chief Security Officer, has developed a protection system that physically secures the elements of personal computers and kindred equipment together and then to substantial items such as benches, desks or tables. It has the following features:

- plastic covered swaged high tensile steel wire
- riveted attachment plates
- special locking device for attachment to benches, desks or tables
- special screwheads to protect internal boards and disc drives
- all elements are secured: processor, monitor, keyboard and printer
- can be adapted to other high cost items.

This system can be supplied and installed by Distributed Computing at a cost from $80 per micro-computer; this cost will vary depending on the number of units to be installed and their location and the type of micro-computer to be secured.

The system may be viewed at the PC Support Group by contacting me or Mr. Chris McCorley ext. 3019, who can also give cost estimates for installation.

A.J. Bird
ext. 3391

5.2 Are you Buying Software??

The PC Support Group has an advisory guide on prices and suppliers that are offering good deals for most of the popular PC based packages. This guide does not necessarily give the cheapest price available for the product, but is based on reliability of the supplier and delivery time and costs. The suppliers have been persuaded to deal directly with the purchasers and a representative of the company has been nominated to deal with University customers. When contacting these representatives inform them that you are a University purchaser and quote the product and price .

The guide is available from the PC Support Group and we would appreciate any feedback on good or bad dealings with these suppliers. Also if you know of a better price etc then let us know, as there is no way this guide can be comprehensive. We do have more complete price lists from various suppliers available for perusal.

Alec Waskiw
ext. 4018

5.3 SAS Users

There are almost 50 registered users of the SAS package on PCs now and many main frame users of this package. What about forming a user group ????. A couple of people have suggested a campus based user group, so if you are interested let us know. Call me on ext. 4018.

Matt Vandenberg
ext. 4018

5.4 PC-SIG Library

The PC Support Group has a CD Rom system with the entire PC-SIG (Public Domain) library along with editions of the SHAREWARE magazine. These disks are available at a cost of $2.00 each. Just bring along a formatted floppy disk, tell us the number of the disk you want and we will copy it for you.

Mark Noonan
ext. 4018

5.5 Programs Donated

Peter Jacobs from Mechanical Engineering has kindly made available three program suites for MS DOS based machines. These are CMATH (Numerical Routines in C), C Routines For Complex Numbers and NELMIN (A robust minimizer for continuous functions). These are available from the PC Support Group. Manuals are also available.

Mark Noonan
ext. 4018

5.6 Hardware We've Seen

Can you imagine having your printer printing a 100 page document beside you whilst you are talking on the phone. How much was the printer hood? Well the new Hewlett-Packard Deskjet printer is so quiet you don't need one. The loudest thing it does is loading paper (single sheets only).

The printer uses plain paper drop-on-demand thermal inkjet technology and prints letter quality at 120 cps (240cps in draft mode). The text resolution in letter quality mode of 300 x 300 dpi and 2 pages a minute is reasonable. The printer uses plug-in font cartridges. The price is $1375 excluding tax and Applied Micro Systems supplied us with the evaluation model. Word Perfect 5.0 has a printer driver and the graphics were handled easily by this printer.

During August we were also busy evaluating other hardware. Sanyo Office Machines at Milton left us a SANYO MBC-16 PLUS 3 model with OMT monochrome monitor.

An EPSON GQ-3500 Laser printer was supplied by Performance Micro Systems. This is priced around $2100 ex tax for University purchasers, so is a reasonably priced 6 page per minute, 300 dpi cut sheet feeding printer.

We currently have available for evaluation an AMSTRAD PC1640 HD20 PCECD. For the uninitiated that's an 8Mhz XT with a 20Meg hard disk and EGA colour monitor. The machine has been supplied by Wise Microcomputer Systems.

If you want some more information then ring or call in at the PC Support Group, Room 418 of the Hawken Building.

Alec Waskiw
ext. 4018

5.7 Amiga Virus News

Commodore Amiga users around the Campus, beware the VIRUS! There are 3 separate viruses that can infect Amiga disks and they are rather nasty pieces of work. Fortunately there are public domain programs available to help out the beleaguered user. But how to identify a virus??? Any unprotected disk is vulnerable, so keep them write protected.

The SCA virus will give a nice little message about 'Your Amiga is alive etc' after it has infected your disks.

The Byte Bandit virus, after having infected your system, blanks your screen at some random time therefore forcing you to reboot your system.

The latest virus (I don't know its name) tells you that the disk you have just inserted is 'Not a DOS disk'. Before you curse and reach for your backup disk remember the virus is in your system; Don't spread it, eliminate it. Also it probably hasn't destroyed your disk completely.

If any of the above three things have occurred then be careful because re-infection is possible. Have you got a copy of a virus detector program and a disk sector editor? If not then curtail all other work and proceed to obtain them. Give me a ring if you have no other source.

In all cases the boot sector of your disk has been infected and if you have a sector editor you can look at the nice messages these viruses have left. The **INSTALL** command will get rid of the virus only if it is not already active in your memory. Power down the system and leave it off for at least 30 seconds. Boot the system as normal and don't warm boot at any time until you are sure the virus is gone. The virus detector is called Virusx and is on the public domain FISH disks as well as quite a few magazine disks e.g. Megadisk 6. Start this virus detector (it will run as a background task) and start checking your disks (write protect them first). This program will happily detect the first two viruses and tell you about what to do next. It will also tell you about any non standard boot sectors it encounters on your disks. Mark these disks for checking later with the sector editor. If you don't know how to sector edit then give me a call.

If you need anti-viral help then give me a call.

Mark Noonan
ext. 4018

6. Courses

6.1 Course Timetable

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

September

‡	Desk Top Publishing Seminar	Sept 12	1-4pm
‡	PC to Mainframe Communications	Sept 13	9-12am
‡	Introduction to WORDPERFECT V4.2	Sept 19 - 22	9-12am
‡	Introduction to PC/MSDOS	Sept 27 - 29	9-12am
†	Introduction to VAX8550 (VAX/VMS)	Sept 27 - 30	1-4pm

October

‡	Introduction to WORDPERFECT V4.2	Oct 3 - 6	9-12am
•	Introduction to SAS	Oct 3 - 7	1-4pm
‡	Desk Top Publishing Seminar	Oct 10	1-4pm
•	Introduction to SQL	Oct 10 - 14	1-4pm
‡	Introduction to DBASE III	Oct 12 - 14	9-12am
•	Introduction to IBM3081 (CP/CMS)	Oct 17 - 20	1-4pm
†•	Introduction to SPSS-X	Oct 24 - 28	1-4pm
‡	Introduction to WORDPERFECT V5	Oct 25 - 28	9-12am

November

‡	Introduction to PC/MSDOS	Nov 1 - 3	9-12am
#	Introduction to UNIX	Nov 1 - 3	1-4pm
•	Introduction to SAS	Nov 7 - 11	9-12am
‡	Introduction to WORDPERFECT V5	Nov 7 - 10	9-12am
‡	Introduction to WORDPERFECT V4.2	Nov 14 - 17	1-4pm
‡	Desk Top Publishing Seminar	Nov 16	9-12am
†	Conversion to VAX8550 (VAX/VMS)	Nov 16 - 18	9-12am
•	Conversion to IBM3081 (CP/CMS)	Nov 22 - 24	1-4pm
‡	Advanced PC/MSDOS	Nov 23 - 24	9-12am
•	Introduction to SQL	Nov 28 - Dec 2	1-4pm
‡	Introduction to PC/MSDOS	Nov 30 - Dec 2	9-12am

December

•	Introduction to SAS	Dec 5 - 9	9-12am
‡	Introduction to WORDPERFECT V5	Dec 6 - 9	9-12am
‡	Desk Top Publishing Seminar	Dec 13	1-4pm
#	Introduction to UNIX	Dec 13 - 15	1-4pm
‡	Introduction to DBASE III	Dec 14 - 16	9-12am
‡	Introduction to WORDPERFECT V4.2	Dec 19 - 22	9-12am
†•	Introduction to SPSS-X	Dec 19 - 23	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

Notes:

1. Two different WORDPERFECT courses are being offered, to cover the new version (V5) and the older version (V4.2) which is still widely used. The V5-course is designed both for users beginning with V5, and for those wishing to upgrade from V4.2. Check which is appropriate to your Department/Section before enrolling.

2. The SAS course is conducted on the IBM3081, but also covers use on PCs.

3. 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.

4. 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.

5. 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.

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

Barry Maher/Nick Evans
ext. 3021