

British Urban and
Regional Information
Systems Association

BURISA

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Newsletter



FIRST ISSUE

Editorial

The aims of the BURISA newsletter can be summarised as "making public relevant information about information systems". The establishment of this newsletter comes at a time when information system activity is accelerating in every local authority, when urban research is more and more influenced by data availability and public decision making is changing to take advantage of twentieth century technology. Developments are taking place so rapidly that workers in this field are forced to make decisions and commitments with only a fraction of the information they need. For too long the hot news has been the monopoly of those in the know and the time has come to establish a platform whereby everybody can be well informed about what's going on. BURISA could develop in a number of ways but it does intend to be an organisation working for that "invisible college of experts" whose job it is to develop information systems. It will fill the large gap between the professional journals and the personal contact networks which till the present have disseminated information. Its character will be informal and topical and its watchword "responsive". It will seek to open up the debate about Information Systems and report activity 'as it happens' without the normal delays. If it succeeds it will raise the level of debate by identifying major trends of thought, allowing users to understand each others problems, comparing solutions, helping to exploit the resources available in this country to the full and providing short cuts to important sources of information. In each issue we hope to profile the activity of a major British agency in a concise standard format so that the salient features of any one approach readily emerge. An independent appraisal by our resident experts will provide some food for thought. Links have already been established with US and European agencies and a substantial piece on a national approach will eventually be incorporated. This together with a piece on another big issue, such as the 1976 Census, map updating, personal referencing, etc. will form the bulk of each issue. In addition the newsletter will be packed with valuable information on meetings, addresses, events, announcements, publications reviews, and relevant gossip.

BURISA is self-supporting and non-profit making and has been launched with the aid of a loan from CES. Costs are being paved to a minimum. We aim to produce an issue every two months and we offer the first 12 months output for £1.00. Where an agency needs more than one copy, for £4.00 we offer corporate membership and 8 copies of each issue (it really is cheaper than photocopying!). Membership can be obtained by completing the green form enclosed with this edition.

In order to make a start we have co-opted an Editorial Board and have the benefit of an Editorial Advisory Panel which together cover a wide range of user experience. Each member serves in a personal capacity and any views expressed here do not represent those of their employers.

Eventually we will finalise a set of rules and hold elections and the offices will circulate amongst our members. We intend to have a trial period of 12 months during which time our policy will be modified by your response. We invite comments, suggestions, criticisms and encouragement and of course subscriptions.

Editorial board

J. Willis (editor) University of Liverpool
 G.J. Handley (secretary) Berkshire CC
 R.S. Oades (treasurer) Liverpool CB
 R. Baxter Land Use & Built Form Studies Centre
 D.W. Rhind Experimental Cartography Unit PCA
 D.L. Smith Centre for Environmental Studies
 K. Tomlinson Bradford CB

Advisory panel

S. Barrett DoE
 S. Cowie DoE
 C. Denham OPCS

Call for material

We invite contributions from anybody in possession of relevant information. Please make any item brief, typed, doubled spaced, on plain white A4 paper. Charts, graphs tables, non glossy photographs should be on a separate sheet with at least 1 inch margin all round.

Correspondence should be addressed to:	
Membership and subscriptions	R.S. Oades (BURISA) City Planning Department Wilberforce House 25 The Strand Liverpool L2 7QA
Material for newsletter	J. Willis Department of Civic Design Liverpool University P. O. Box 147 Liverpool L69 3BX
All other correspondence	G.J. Handley (BURISA) County Planning Department Berkshire County Council Alpha House 120 King's Road Reading RG1 3DN

PROFILE:Coventry

PROJECT TITLE: THE COVENTRY MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM

Introduction

In January 1970 Policy Committee approved a phased programme of new hardware acquisition and the development of a management information system to serve all levels of management within the Corporation. Existing computing facilities to users were to be maintained but improved facilities were to be made available as soon as possible following the installation (Autumn 1971) of phase 1 of the new configuration.

The development of the Management Information System is controlled by a Steering Group of selected Chief Officers under the chairmanship of the Chief Executive. The Steering Board meets quarterly and in addition to reviewing progress, has responsibility for determining the direction of development, phasing and priorities.

Operational control is vested in the City Treasurer's Department primarily with the Assistant City Treasurer (Management Information System) who co-ordinates the contributions of all the elements directly or indirectly involved and has ongoing responsibility for Management Information System's developments. A Management Information Officer, responsible to the Assistant City Treasurer, co-ordinates information use and the application of computer analysis techniques.

Machine

ICL 4/72

PHASE I)265K store, 1 Paper Tape Reader,

PHASE II)1 Card Reader, 1 Line Printer,
)4 Tape Decks, 7 EDS30 Disc Drives.

PHASE III Additional 68K store, 1 Paper
Tape Reader, 1 Line Printer,
2 Tape Decks & control, 7 EDS30
Disc Drives replaced by 9 EDS60
Disc Drives(to be installed Summer

1973).

Management system

The development of the corporate Management Information System is the corollary of developments in the Authority's management system. The present management structure of Coventry Corporation, under the direction of a Chief Executive, is one based on programme budgeting, though subject to continuous evolution.

All plans produced since 1970 or in the process of being produced are the practical responsibility of one or all nine Programme Area Teams - teams relating to common areas of the Authority's activities. Implementation is carried out by Departments or, where one Department does not have sole responsibility, by Control Groups on which there are representatives of all relevant Departments.

The Treasurer's Department and the Architecture and Planning Department provide central co-ordination and support to the Programme Area Teams. Additional support is also provided by Forward Planning Units in each of the large Departments.

From Autumn 1972 there is to be a gradual amalgamation of Departments partially on lines of the groupings of activities found in the Programme Areas.

The corporate management structure of the Local Authority places heavy demands for corporate data and corporate analysis (for example, output measurement in reviewing annual programmes) which cannot be met without equivalent corporate information systems development. Secondly, officers involved in the development of the management information system are encouraged and obliged to represent a corporate view in terms of an information system development schedule.

Developments so far

Preliminary analysis of data within the Corporation indicated the data's potential organisational similarity to be grouped into four data bases:

Land/Property
Persons
Personnel
Resources

Development so far has proceeded on all four at two levels and to varying degrees.

- (i) Building directory systems to achieve the integration of the individual application files.
- (ii) Converting systems from the Leo III to 4/72 and integrating these systems or newly developed systems with the relevant controlling directory.

The land and property subject area is being developed to the greatest degree first due to the importance and size of the potential application systems for the Authority's working (for example, rating for financial purposes, properties for planning).

LAND/PROPERTY

Within this subject area the directory system has been developed, based so far on a new standard file coding system. This flexible coding system, to which the majority of application files can be linked is based on a numeric code (XXXXX YYY) reflecting the alphabetical street order (X) and the property number (Y). All units of land and property are coded on this basis and the code has additional digits enabling rating and planning incompatibilities to be related.

Although this is the primary directory code any application file coding system can be used with the necessary inter-relating being achieved within the directory.

Data previously common to several files is held only once within this system in association with the directory.

Street related application files will be related to a street directory system. Although this is a sub-system of the land/property index it is a

highly related but independent directory in its own right.

One application file already integrated to the land/property directory is rating. Applications to be assessed for priority in integration include:

housing rents	
property development	LAND/PROPERTY
highway maintenance	
street lighting	STREET

All existing land and property files have been converted.

PERSONS

The outline structure for a person directory has been considered and implementation is to begin immediately. Without a readily available national individual person numeric identifier the basis will probably be locally derived codes developed for the individual based application files, the basis for the code being data of birth, sex and unique number within the application system.

Of the files (direct and indirect) necessary to build up this directory those marked (*) are under conversion or development.

Direct:

Child health records*	age group	0-5
Education records		5-15
College records*		16+
Electoral roll*		18+

Indirect:

Rating and rebates*
Housing waiting list*
Housing loans*
Library borrowers index
Housing rents*

In addition to file reference numbers it will be possible to link population records by location, and access could be provided on the basis of name and address only.

All existing person files have been converted.

PERSONNEL

The structure for a directory to include all the authority's employees is presently being derived and implementation is anticipated to be underway by 1974.

Converted applications, for example wages and salaries, will be integrated as is determined by priority allocation.

RESOURCES

A report has been prepared setting down the general guidelines for development including the applications to be considered for implementation.

Through the creation of a Program Journal and Budgeting system with both a program journal and control journal for revenue, a capital schemes record and a number of other major features, the financial information requirements of the Management System can be provided. The basic coding system will relate to the

coding structure of activities in the Programme Structure produced by the Management System. Implementation of the resource directory has commenced following the conversion of all the essential financial systems.

The current phase of development runs to the time of local government re-organisation. By that time a wide range of applications integrated to the appropriate directory area will be operational. Several on-line terminals will be operating. Post 1974 the Management Information System will be expanded by integrating additional systems and developing additional enquiry facilities and analytical capability. By 1976 enhancement of the hardware will probably be necessary to develop and use the system to its fullest extent.

Contributing developments

Developed on the authority's first computer, an English Electric Leo III were a wide variety of traditional municipal systems including rating, vaccination/immunisation, council housing applications, integrated accounting etc.

More particularly there was developed from 1969 onwards the Point Data System - an individual property/parcel of land based system, containing a full National Grid 1m referenced address gazetteer, monthly up-dating and annually reviewed topic files relating to all industrial premises, offices and business services and retail establishments in the city.

Contacts

Management	S.Hassett	Assistant City Treasurer
Systems	J.Britton	Systems & Programming Manager
Information Use	P.Thorpe	Management Information Officer

Reports

City of Coventry Management Handbook (internal).
City of Coventry Summary of Management Handbook (internal).

Management by Involvement - Coventry, available in Corporate Management in the 70's published by Municipal Journal 1971.

The Management Information System Interim Report (internal).

Street and Property Referencing (internal).

Individual directory outline reports (internal).

Privacy report

THE YOUNGER REPORT ON PRIVACY*

The 350 page report of the Younger Committee on Privacy is a very thorough presentation on a loosely defined concept - one however which seems to be generally recognised as representing 'a basic need, essential to the development and maintenance both of a free society and of a mature and stable individual personality'. Privacy has a lot to do with the safeguarding of personal information, so that in a report which has been obliged to concentrate on the private, rather than the public sector, it is not surprising that its most substantial chapters are concerned with unwanted publicity through the press and broadcasting, the misuse of personal information by credit rating agencies and banks, and the use of technical surveillance devices (particularly by private detectives) and computers. The report also deals with intrusions on home and business life by prying, espionage, etc. The Committee failed to find serious unchecked breaches of privacy in many of these sectors and does not call for legislation to establish a general 'right of privacy' as many have advocated. The Committee does however propose some new laws and other safeguards: it recommends the licensing of private detectives and for the statutory control of surveillance devices it has this brain teasing formula:

"It should be unlawful to use an electronic or optical device for the purpose of rendering ineffective, as protection against being overheard or observed, circumstances in which, were it not for the use of the device, another person would be justified in believing that he had protected himself or his possessions from surveillance whether by overhearing or observation".

On computers, Younger is concerned more with future threats to privacy than those already apparent. The report proposed 10 clear principles for the handling of private information.

1. Information should be regarded as held for a specific purpose and not be used, without appropriate authorisation, for other purposes.
2. Access to information should be confined to those authorised to have it for the purpose for which it was supplied.
3. The amount of information collected and held should be the minimum necessary for the achievement of the specified purpose.
4. In computerised systems handling

information for statistical purposes, adequate provision should be made in their design and programs for separating identities from the rest of the data.

5. There should be arrangements whereby the subject could be told about the information held concerning him.
6. The level of security to be achieved by a system should be specified in advance by the user and should include precautions against the deliberate abuse or misuse of information.
7. A monitoring system should be provided to facilitate the detection of any violation of the security system.
8. In the design of information systems, periods should be specified beyond which the information should not be retained.
9. Data held should be accurate. There should be machinery for the correction of inaccuracy and the updating of information.
10. Care should be taken in coding value judgments.

It suggests that these principles should be enforced through professional codes of conduct and recommends that the Government should legislate to provide itself with the means of reviewing 'the growth in and techniques of gathering personal information and processing it with the help of computers'. The Committee envisages the establishment of a 'standing commission' which would report annually to Parliament for this purpose.

comment

Despite the limitation of the Committee's terms of reference it is suggested that the standing commission might also be authorised to keep a watch on developments within the public sector. This could clearly be an important development which could have real advantages for responsible information men who need advice and support for the proper handling of personal data. The statutory basis suggested for this commission may only be a sop to those activists who have been seeking Parliamentary action for several years. This standing commission could surely be set up without awaiting further legislation.

DLS

CCLR

THE DOE CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE ON LOCATION REFERENCING

The Department of the Environment has accepted overall responsibility for the overall co-ordination of the development of location referencing systems, both in central and local government. Many local authorities are implementing such systems as an integral part of the data handling facilities in their developing information systems.

*Home Office: Report of the Committee on Privacy (Chairman: The Rt.Hon. Kenneth Younger), HMSO, July 1972, price £2.00.

The DoE Co-ordinating Committee on Location Referencing was set up in 1971 with the overall aim of reviewing and examining current location referencing activities in central and local government, nationalised industries and the private sector in order to advise central government departments on policy and work programmes needed to implement policy in this field. Members of the Committee are drawn from a number of Government departments and Agencies, Statutory Undertakers and L.A.M. S.A.C.

The terms of reference cover all types of location referencing including network systems, digital maps, etc. and its responsibilities include consideration of a common practice among local authorities developing point referenced systems. It is clear that no one method will be universally applicable to all agencies because of variations in their range of functions, internal organisation, computer configuration and data base structures. However there is a need to co-ordinate development in this field both to avoid unnecessary duplication of effort where common techniques can be used, and to establish common practice to ensure the compatibility of data handling between different authorities and agencies (particularly important in view of the impending changes in boundaries and functions). In its first year the Committee has initiated work in three main areas.

- (i) A market research study was commissioned from Peter Ward Associates (Interplan) Limited, to consider the potential uses of co-ordinate referencing for spatial data handling in both the public and private sector, aimed at highlighting priorities for the future work of the CCLR. The consultants' report is awaiting consideration by the CCLR at its next meeting in November.
- (ii) A Working Party has been set up to consider the feasibility, costs, benefits of establishing a National Gazetteer of properties and land parcels linking postal addresses and co-ordinate references. As a part of its work this group is currently investigating the possibility of undertaking a pilot exercise to create a gazetteer covering the new Tyne-Wear Metropolitan County to ascertain costs and benefits and potential methods for national application. John Spicer has been seconded from Coventry Corporation to undertake a preliminary study into the feasibility of such a pilot exercise.
- (iii) A Working Party on Digital Mapping has set up as the steering group for a pilot study in South Hampshire to test the application of digital mapping techniques developed at Ordnance Survey. Local authorities and statutory undertakers in the area have been invited to participate.

In addition to this the CCLR endorsed the DoE point referencing conventions published in 1971 as a booklet entitled "Point Referencing

Properties and Parcels of Land: Some Initial Advice upon the Conventions", and will be consulted before publication of the forthcoming Manual on Point Referencing which incorporates and supersedes these conventions.

Anyone wishing to know more about the CCLR or to contribute information or comment should contact the Secretary to the CCLR, Mr. E.H. Tooley, DoE, Room 655, Lambeth Bridge House, London SE1 7SB.

ICL/Leeds/LAMSAC

LAMSAC is involved in an important new project to develop a management information system which is being undertaken by Leeds Corporation and International Computers Limited. LAMSAC's main role will be to ensure that the system will be relevant and valuable to other local authorities.

The Leeds data bank is to be based on a system called LAMIS - Local Authority Management Information System. Under its initial phase, which will take some two years and cost about £200,000, the bank will contain only land and property data. Eventually other types of local authority information will be added so that LAMIS will contain all the county borough's data in a series of inter-related data banks.

LAMSAC's involvement aims to ensure that the needs of other local authorities are taken into account. The LAMIS project committee includes members of LAMSAC and the Department of the Environment, and LAMSAC staff will be responsible for reviewing the progress of the project on behalf of the Department of Trade and Industry, which is funding half of ICL's costs.

The first phase of the project, intended to be completed by April 1974, is to set up a Land and Property Data Base to meet the management and operational requirements of Leeds Corporation. In this respect this phase will therefore include the use of ICL Data Base Management Software, the preparation of updating and maintenance programs and certain application programs. It is an intention of the LAMIS project that so far as is possible systems and programs are prepared so that they can be used by any local authority using the larger ICL 1900 systems and that other ICL users can benefit from the work of the team.

The programs will become ICL standard software and will be available to users under such terms as ICL prescribe.

The first stage, completed on 31 May, has been concerned with -

- (a) Establishing what information exists in each department of the Corporation and for what purposes the information is used.
- (b) Conducting field trials on various methods of digitising with a view to establishing the method of location referencing.

- (c) Conversion of selected existing program suites in preparation for the use of 1900 DBMS.

It was not expected that this stage of the project would result in positive plans for file structures, referencing, etc., as it is necessary to leave options open until the potential application areas have been examined. However, there is some indication that the preferred data base structure may be:

Record	Data concerning a Basic Spatial Unit.
Prime Record Key	Unique Property Reference Number based on Street, Building/O.S. Parcel, Sub-Division of Building.
Files	Discrete files with a key relevant to the file.
Data Bank	Discrete files most often linked by the unique property reference number with access through an index or dictionary.

It is considered that some aspects of the work already carried out will be of interest and use to other local authorities; these are:

(a) Project Management

The project is described by a network showing each activity to be covered, together with time scales, sequence and resource requirements. The network is run on the Leeds 1904A using the PERT package.

(b) Information Sources

Lists of all information and its use for each department.

The project will shortly reach a stage where information of value to other authorities will become available. The Steering Committee is currently considering the means by which information of this type may best be disseminated.

There are other important developments taking place in relation to computer based information and management systems, e.g. the London On-Line Authorities and the Teeside/IBM Peterlee project. It is expected that LAMSAC will be able to disseminate comprehensive selected reports on all such developments.

(LAMSAC news sheet)

GISP

GENERAL INFORMATION SYSTEM FOR PLANNING
HMSO Price £1.60

The GISP report, which was published in September, contains the long awaited advice to local authorities on organising the collection and use of information for planning purposes. It aims to help planning authorities assemble the information necessary for their decisions with the minimum of manual effort, special surveys and duplication of previous work.

The report was prepared by a study team set up in 1969, staffed and guided jointly by local authorities, the Department of the Environment and the Scottish Development Department. Representatives of the Local Authorities Management Services and the Computer Development Committee, the National Computing Centre and the Countryside Commission were also represented on the Steering Group.

In a circular about the report (DoE Circular 53/72, Welsh Office Circular 107/72), the Departments urge authorities in England and Wales to consider what steps they can take now towards implementing the recommended system of data-handling - General Information System for Planning (GISP) - and not to introduce any new incompatible system. Further research and development studies listed in the report are needed to test the outline GISP and amplify it into a fully operational system. The programme of work will be promoted and co-ordinated by a new organisation, with members from central and local government, which the Departments are now setting up.

The circular stresses two aspects which should be kept in mind in applying the recommendations. The first is that an authority should introduce the system step by step, assessing the benefits of each in terms of efficiency and economy. Further study may well show that GISP can be extended from the planning field to the management of information for most of the functions of local government.

At a technical level the report recommends that, within a framework of procedures for collecting and disseminating information, GISP should be a computer based system consisting of a series of basic data files and a number of derived secondary or summary subject and zone files. The development of index files including a gazetteer of the basic spatial units of records is also recommended to serve as the means of cross-referencing between files. The report further suggests that cross-referencing will be facilitated if data are held in disaggregate form, with each record being referenced to its location in geographic space and to its currency in time.

comment

The GISP report draft was circulated amongst the members of the Working Party and selected County Councils at least 12 months ago and the delay in publication has been unfortunate. But even if it had been published earlier it would still have come under critical attack by many experts.

The emphasis on land use planning information is probably a result of the terms of reference of the study team which was set up to consider the information requirements of the 1968 Planning Act. Since 1969 there has been a major shift towards corporate planning to which the GISP report makes scant reference. While spatial referencing is a vital part of any urban information system GISP can be accused of emphasizing the locational aspect

of data even though it goes to some length to explain that co-ordinate references are unsuitable as file integration keys. Perhaps the first priority in the development of a MIS should be facilities for integrating files from many departments. Finally even those aspects of information systems it does treat adequately are confined to recommendations suitable only for urban areas. County authorities are still left with their problems unanswered.

In the December issue of the newsletter we shall be devoting more space to GISP including reactions from a County Borough and County Council.

JW

DoE manual

DoE is currently putting together a manual on point referencing. It will act as a guide for local authorities who are considering the development of computer-based data systems incorporating a point co-ordinate referencing system for the spatial handling and analysis of land and property based data.

The manual will cover alternative approaches to implementing point referencing, advice on conventions to be followed in assigning point references to land parcels and properties, the uses of point referencing and an assessment of the development costs of alternative approaches. Guidance will be practical rather than theoretical and rely as far as possible on operational experience.

It has been developed from two main streams of work initiated by DoE (then MHLG). Firstly an "Information Needs Study" by a joint study team from central and local government considered the information needs of the new planning system under the 1968 Town and Country Planning Act, and the formulation of an information system framework in the context of local authority functions. The report of their findings is shortly to be published (1) but a summary is available in a paper by Mr. G.M. Gaits (2).

Secondly two feasibility studies were undertaken. The DoE co-operated with OPCS in assessing the possibility of using land point referencing on individual census returns as a basis for flexible spatial aggregate retrieval.

Another project with the City of Coventry (3) examined the use of point referencing as the starting point of a land and property based information system.

The manual is being prepared with the assistance of a working party, comprising DoE, the Local Authorities Management Services and Computer Committee (LAMSAC) and four local authorities: the City of Bradford, City and County of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, County Borough of Warrington and the County Council of West Sussex. Its function has been to devise a conceptual framework and strategy for the preparation of the manual, to assist in the

examination of material and to advise on the final content.

The actual material on which the manual will be based is drawn from two main sources.

Firstly the work being carried out by selected local authorities to develop point referenced data systems has been documented. Contributions have been invited and received from twelve representative authorities, including the four represented on the working party. Each authority has submitted a report containing the following information:

- (i) a general description of the authority itself and its computer processing capability,
- (ii) an outline of the overall data system either under development or proposed,
- (iii) a description of the approach and methods being adopted for implementing point referencing, including both the setting up of point referenced data files and their use, together with estimates of the resources involved.

Secondly, the working party itself set up a sub-group which has examined the priority uses for point referencing and has drawn up the conceptual outline of a software system for the computer handling of point referenced data.

A first draft of the manual is now substantially complete and will be sent for consultation purposes to each of the authorities who contributed material to the manual. Subsequently the working party will agree a final draft which it is hoped will be submitted to DoE for publication by the end of the year.

1. Department of the Environment "A General Information System for Planning" Report of a Joint Local Authority, Scottish Development Department and Ministry of Housing, and Local Government Study Team, (to be published Summer 1972).
2. Gaits, G.M. "Information Needs of Planning" Planning and Transport Research and Computation Company Limited/DATUM, Data Management. First European Symposium, April 1971 Bonn.
3. Coventry City Corporation "The Point Data System Report" Coventry City Corporation, March 1971.

Contact: S. Barrett, DoE, Marsham Street, London, SW1P 3EB.

US association

The Urban and Regional Information Systems Association of the United States of America was established at the Fourth Annual Conference of Urban Planning Information Systems and Programmes, held at Berkeley in August 1966. It is an international organisation dedicated to the advancement of information system capabilities related to urban areas. It held its first annual conference in 1967 and in December 1968 produced its first newsletter aimed at "making useful information public". During the last few years while the US 1970 census was being researched, planned and implemented, and while the important federal sponsored USAC study was undertaken, URISA news has been provided invaluable insights for British workers. The papers from five URISA's annual conferences have been published and the set forms a vital reference to the development of US thinking.

In 1972 the Annual Conference was held in San Francisco from August 29 - September 2 with the theme "Information Research for an Urban Society". The conference programme lists an impressive assembly of papers and panel discussions and is available, together with papers and proceedings from some previous years from the Secretary of URISA, Glenn O. Johnson, City Planning Department, 316 E 2nd Street, 8th Floor, Los Angeles, California 90012. Membership of URISA is open to any private individual for an annual subscription of \$13 payable by international money order to the secretary. For this you receive their bi-monthly newsletter, the papers from the conference, and other useful publications from time to time as a result of being included on other mailing lists. The conference papers are usually available a few months after the conference date.

URISA has already established firm links with British workers and some of the material appearing in their newsletter will be summarised for British consumption. Nevertheless members of URISA get very good value for their membership fee and many British experts may want to join personally.

Map updating

MAP UPDATING FOR A POINT REFERENCED GAZETTEER

Liverpool Corporation is producing a point referenced gazetteer as the first stage in establishing an integrated planning information system. In maintaining an up to date gazetteer a major problem will be to update 1:1250 scale maps on a regular and frequent basis. A six month pilot study of a centralised mapping service is soon to begin which will facilitate the assignment of point references to new properties and also furnish the wider need of many Corporation Departments for up to date large scale maps. The aim is to maintain a

bank of plans in which none is more than three months out of date at any time.

At present all maps have been updated to Census date, April 1971. Two further stages are necessary to bring the service into full operation; firstly the detection and plotting of changes from the base date to the present; and secondly the maintenance of plans in a relatively up-to-date condition. Although up to 95% of total change could be detected from three or four sources some fifteen routine local authority tasks will be monitored in order to achieve a higher level of accuracy. This information will be collated in the Planning Department and will be plotted on the original 1971 1:1250 transparencies by a group of surveyors in the Chief Engineer's Office. Prints of the up to date maps will be available to all Corporation Departments using copy transparencies.

Further enquiries may be made to R.S. Oades, City Planning Department, Wilberforce House, 25 The Strand, Liverpool L2 7QA, Tel: 051-227-3911, Ext.673.

Geographers meet

22ND INTERNATIONAL GEOGRAPHICAL CONGRESS

Montreal was the venue for 2,500 geographers at the largest International Geographical Congress ever in August this year. The work of a number of sections, especially those on Geographic Theory and Model Building, Remote Sensing, Data Processing and Cartographic Data Presentation and Urban Geography has a general relevance to Information System design and implementation. These papers will be available in the Conference Proceedings.

Of more specific interest is the work of an International Geographical Union Commission which has produced what is probably the most comprehensive and clear current survey of geographical information systems. The 1350 page, 2-volume set, entitled "Geographical Data Handling" is divided into 19 main categories covering such topics as Data Base Development, Geometrical Image Transformations, Spatial Data Manipulation Techniques, File Structure Considerations, System Design, Data Display and System Economics, together with descriptions of many existing systems. The publication costs \$17.50 (including postage) and may be obtained from The International Geographical Union, Commission on Geographical Data Sensing and Processing, 226 O'Connor Street, Ottawa 4, Ontario, Canada.

CENSUS NEWS

UK:

Grid square statistics

The Census Office's Info Paper 5, 'Statistics for Grid Squares' is in the final stages of preparation and will be available shortly from them. The Census Office will supply Ward Library tabulations for 100m, 200m, 500m, 1 km, 10 km, squares, and for irregular areas built up from these blocks, wherever populations are above the confidentiality threshold of 8 households or 25 persons. A count of households and of persons by sex will be supplied for all 100m, 1 km and 10 km squares, as a preliminary guide to customers if necessary. Charges and other details of the service to customers are given in full in IPS but as a guide, in the 1969 Census test town of Huddersfield, 1971 statistics for the 2,700 (approx) grid square units, which are above the threshold, at all resolutions will cost in total some three times the total cost of the 200 E.Ds (approx)

Small area statistics

Info Paper 4. Small Area Statistics (Ward Library) and Workplace Movement Analyses. OPCS/GRO (Scotland) was published in August and is available free from:

Customer Services
OPCS (Census)
Titchfield
Fareham Hants
Titchfield 2511

or in Scotland from

Customer Services
GRO(S) Census Office
Ladywell House
Ladywell Road
Edinburgh
EH12 7ZF
031-334-6854

The paper describes the method adopted for 'rounding', for confidentiality, the 100% Ward Library Tabulations; clarifies some points on costing and copyright, the latter of particular interest to local authorities who expect to be working jointly, modifies the timetable for output; and gives more information on the analytical details which can be made available for workplace movement, origins and destinations.

Canada:

A new approach

STATISTICAL INFORMATION BY USER
SPECIFIED AREAS

GRDSR : Facts by small areas. The Geographically Referenced Data Storage and Retrieval System. An Introduction. June 1972, 21 pp. from Statistics Canada (no price). For information of a specialised or technical nature contact General Survey Systems, Methodology and Systems Branch, Statistics Canada, Ottawa, K1A0T6.

This general purpose system provides information by user-specified areas in 14 of Canada's larger urban centres. Urban areas are divided into blocks small enough to be assembled to approximate most retrieval areas required by users. Users may request tabulations using an English-like language and create cross tabulations, for example, of any combination of 1971 Census variables. GRDSR also includes a facility for data mapping, MAPPK, which incorporates the mapping package SYMAP.

It is hoped to include a full review of the novel approach adopted by the Canadian Census in the December issue of the BURISA newsletter.

US:

Study group

In 1966 the Census Use Study was established in New Haven Conn. to see how the US 1970 Census could be designed to best meet the needs of small area data users. Amongst its formidable terms of reference the Study Group was asked to examine how Census data could be combined with local administrative data to meet specific needs, to develop software for processing census data into information useful for local needs, and to publicize the results of its findings.

A special census was carried out in New Haven in 1967 to test proposed 1970 procedures and this, together with data supplied by the local authority provided a test bed. The research topics covered included geographic base systems, record matching, computer mapping, special data tabulations, special sample surveys of family health and area travel patterns and local data user interests and needs.

The results of the study have been presented as a series of reports published during 1970/71. These are listed below and can be obtained, at various prices, from the Publications Distribution Section, Bureau of the Census, Washington DC 20233.

- Reports 1. General Description
2. Computer Mapping
3. Data Tabulation Activities

4. The DIME Geocoding System
5. Data Interests of Local Agencies
6. Family Health Survey
7. Health Information System
8. Data Uses in Health Planning
9. Data Uses in Urban Planning
10. Data Uses in School Administrative
11. Area Travel Survey
12. Health Information System II
13. Computer Resource Allocation Model
14. Geocoding with ADMATCH.

As a follow up the Southern California Regional Information Study (SCRIS) was set up in Los Angeles California in 1969. It was jointly sponsored by central and local government and its aim was to transfer experience gained in New Haven to a larger urban area, with a view to assisting census data users in all large urban areas in preparing for and using 1970 census data as it became available.

Various reports have been produced by SCRIS including some of those listed above. In particular they have tackled the question of updating geographic base files. Lists of reports are available from the Bureau of the Census as shown above.

Bains Report

THE NEW LOCAL AUTHORITIES - MANAGEMENT AND STRUCTURE

Published last month by HMSO was the report of a study group appointed jointly by the Secretary of State for the Environment and local authority associations to examine management principles and structure in local government at both elected member and officer level.

comment

The Bains Report justifying a new approach to management in the re-organised local government set up is without doubt one of the most progressive documents supported by DoE to be made generally available. Furthermore, in spite of its inevitable brevity, when it is circulated to every member of the new Councils, it will provide them with a reasonably balanced and accurate interpretation of the technical state of the art: with, however, one gross exception. Surely the corollary of corporate management is corporate management information. For those who are prepared to search, references to computers can be found (para.7.10) and whilst one would not disagree with the statement(s) made, it really is pitiful to find information used only in the context of public relations.

All in all how did such a progressive report miss something so obvious? Surely providing evidence to such working parties should become one of the future activities of BURISA?

GJH

Next issue

In the December issue of the BURISA newsletter we hope to include, amongst others, the following items:

- An appraisal of the Coventry MIS
- A review of the Canadian Census Approach
- An introduction to opportunities for automatic cartography by local authorities
- Details of costings of Grid Square data from the 1971 Census

LAMSAC news sheet

LAMSAC distributes free to all local authorities, on a quarterly basis, a news sheet. Copies are obtainable from them at 35 Belgrave Square, London SW1X 8QB. The latest issue to hand, dated July 1972 covers the full range of LAMSAC activity. Items of particular interest to BURISA members cover the Leeds CB/ICL Management Information System Project, a joint IMTA/LAMSAC research project to ascertain what positive plans exist to establish computer based information systems for management and operational use in local authorities, news of recent LAMSAC publications and recent developments in the LAMSAC Application Groups and Working Parties.

Research guidelines

GUIDELINES FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF PLANNING RESEARCH

The CES has published, with the help of a Working Group, a report entitled "The Management of Urban and Regional Research: Some Guidelines for Participants"*. The report is intended for all those who take part in research on urban and regional planning and development, and it should also be of interest to many others engaged in studies within the social sciences generally. It endeavours to provide some elementary advice and guidelines about the best means of obtaining co-operation between research workers, sponsors, facilitators and other interested parties. The report sets out some definitions of research and describes the different types of participants and their various motives. It goes on to discuss the stages through which planning and consultation should proceed and sets out guidelines on the problems of communication, consultancy, development work, and confidentiality.

*Available from the Centre for Environmental Studies, 5 Cambridge Terrace, Regent's Park, London NW1 4JL, price 50p.

Recent publications

- BARRAS, R.
Designing computer programs for operational planning models
Centre for Environmental Studies, Working Papers, WP78, April 1972, 65p.
- BASTER, Nancy, editor.
Measuring development: special issue on development indicators
Journal of Development Studies, 1972, Vol.8, April, pp.1-182.
- BAXTER, R.S.
Computers in local authorities
Royal Town Planning Institute, Journal, 1972, Vol.58, June, pp.257-258.
- BAXTER, Richard
Computer topics in planning 3: computers in local authorities
Cambridge University, Land Use and Built Form Studies, Technical Notes, series A, no.3, December 1971, 5p.
- BAXTER, Richard and LLOYD, Nigel
Computer topics in planning 4: computers in land area measurement
Cambridge University, Land Use and Built Form Studies, Technical Notes, Series A, no.4, April 1972, 11p.
- BRITISH COMPUTER SOCIETY
Privacy and the Computer - Steps to Practicality
BCS, September 1972.
- COUNCIL OF PLANNING LIBRARIANS
Exchange Bibliography no.239, November 1971.
Geographic Aspects of Information Systems : Introduction and Selected Bibliography - from The Council of Planning Librarians, P O Box 229, Monticello, Illinois 61856, USA.
- DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT
General Information System for Planning
HMSO 1972, £1.60.
Linmap and Colmap. an automated thematic cartographic technique by Gillian A Hackman and E Christie Willatts.
ii + 11pp, DoE 1972.
- DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY
A Survey of Information Projects
3rd Edition, January, 1972.
EDWARDS, Bernard
Sources of economic and business statistics
xii + 272pp, Heinemann, 1972, £3.75.
- GILLESPIE, J.M.
Uses of statistics of travel-to-work
Paper given to the International Association of Municipal Statisticians Eighth General Meeting, Helsinki, June 1972, 22p.
- HARAN, E. and SEDGWICK, Paul
Cluster
Greater London Council intelligence Unit, Quarterly Bulletin, 1972, no.19, June, pp.16-24.
- KASHYAP, R.N.
Management information systems for corporate planning and control
Long Range Planning, 1972, Vol.5, June, pp.25-31.
- KEAST, Horace
LAMSAC: a three-tier service
County Councils Gazette, 1972, Vol.65, July, pp.202-204.
- KRIEGER, Martin H.
Social indicators and the life cycle
Socio-Economic Planning Science, 1972, Vol.6, June, pp.305-317.
- MICROFORUM
Local Government Chronicle, 1972, Vol.117, June 16, pp.1019-1024.
- MILLMAN, Roger
A central data-bank for land
Royal Town Planning Institute Journal, 1972, Vol.58, June, pp.261-263.
- REDFERN, J.T.
A Population Register for Under-5's - an Experiment
Research & Intelligence Unit, Cheshire County Council, September 1972.
- ROBERTSON, Isobel M.L.
Population distribution and location problems: an approach by grid squares in central Scotland
Regional Studies, 1972, Vol.6, June, pp.237-245.
- SEDLIUS, Gosta
Statistics for intra-urban resource allocation
International Association of Municipal Statisticians Eighth General Meeting, Helsinki, June, 1972, 27p.
- SHONFIELD, Andrew and SHAW, Stella, eds.
Social indicators and social policy xii + 151 pp, Heinemann, 1972, £2.50.
- TAYLOR, Edward
Statistical packages for urban research 2: one-way analysis of variance
Cambridge University, Land Use and Built Form Studies, Technical Notes, Series B, no.2, December 1971, 18p.
- WILLIS, Jeffrey
Design issues for urban and regional information systems
Centre for Environmental Studies, London, CES.WP71, 75p.

Miscellany

- *A World Conference on Informatics in Government. Florence Italy 16-20 October 1972 is being organised by IBI-ICC - the intergovernmental Bureau for Informatics, 23 Viale della Civiltà de Lavoro, 00144 Roma. UK participants are giving six papers in a total programme of over 100 presentations. UK topics include "the Dangers of Informatics without Standards" and "Computer Based Personnel Information Systems".
- *PTRC's Third European Symposium on Urban Data Management takes the theme "Experience of successful operational systems" and will be held in Paris 10-13 April 1973.
- *ICL has recently formed a Non-Financial User Group to cater for the needs of Local Government, Road Construction Units, Water Undertakers and Development Corporations. Five meetings a year will cover developments in applications, hardware and software and it is hoped that the User Group will be a platform for the distribution of ideas on applications in the public sector. At the first meeting on 4 October four papers on Property Information Systems and spatial retrieval of geocoded data were presented. Further enquiries to R.J. Knight, ICL, Grange House, 17-27 Dalton Street, Manchester, M2 6ER.

Please enrol me/this organisation as a private/corporate member of the British Urban and Regional Information Systems Association. I enclose the first 12 months' subscription of £1.00 (private)/£4.00 (corporate).

(Delete inapplicable)

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