CONGRESSIONAL AND GSA STAFF VISIT — Sam Brown, NCC Director

Mr. Jim Lewin, Senior ADP staff member for the House Government Operations Committee (HGOC), chaired by Representative Jack Brooks, visited the National ADP Service Center (NADPSC) at Research Triangle Park, North Carolina on June 29, 1979. Accompanying Mr. Lewin were George W. Dodson, Jr., Assistant Commissioner for Automated Data Management Services, GSA, and two of his staff, G.W. Parks and Irene Bayol. Representative Brooks is the author/sponsor of the "Brooks Bill" which governs ADP procurement in the federal government. The purpose of the visit was to review the status of EPA's Major ADP System Acquisition and Implementation Program (SAIP) and to discuss the Delegation of Procurement Authority to EPA for that acquisition and EPA's transitional requirements until that program is completed.

Mr. Samuel C. Brown, NADPSC Director, and Mike Steinacher, Deputy Program Manager for the Major Acquisition, met with the HGOC and GSA representatives. Mr. Brown briefed them on the ADP management structure of NADPSC including the staffing and grade structure of the various branches, use of consultants, legal council availability, procurement and contract support availability, analytic capability in the program, and physical location with emphasis on security and privacy. The briefing also included the management initiatives begun in 1978 with a two- to three-year plan for completion. The general plan is to centralize ADP services in RTP, N.C. and strengthen the programmatic issue analysis/policy and budget coordination capability in Washington, D.C. The briefing provided additional detail on the management initiatives accomplished thus far in the centralization of ADP services. These included:

- Data Center Management centralization under the Data Center Branch, NADPSC

- Establishment of the Major Acquisition Branch, NADPSC

- Establishment of the National ADP Institute

- NADPSC Building Expansion for ADP equipment and personnel

- Pilot Projects concerning application development under a Software Development Center concept. The pilots included:

  - Personnel Management Information System

  - Design of Hazardous Waste System

  - Test/Acceptance of the Federal Reporting Data System for Drinking Water

  - Several systems costing under $100K for total development

The briefing covered the general points from the "Dr. Richard Nolan Study," and FY80-FY82 staffing and management initiatives to address improved management of ADP.

Mr. Steinacher presented a status review of the Major Systems Acquisition and Implementation Program including efforts on the competitive concept development cycle, total life-cycle cost, reliability/availability objectives, current contracted resources and expiration dates, workload growth projections, the acquisition timetable, budgetary plans, and ADP requirements during the transition to the resources provided by the Program.

An extensive discussion preceded general agreement on a revised acquisition plan. The revised plan was submitted to GSA on July 3, 1979. A formal Delegation of Procurement Authority (DPA) was issued to EPA/NADPSC on July 6, 1979 for SAIP and the associated transitional requirements. The SAIP revised acquisition plan and DPA contain pre-procurement information not available to the public. Thus, further detail cannot be provided in this article. The material has been declared unavailable under the Freedom of Information Act.

However, EPA now has a formally approved acquisition program and will aggressively pursue execution of the plan.

MIDSD ANNOUNCES PLANS FOR FOURTH ANNUAL ADP CONFERENCE

Vic Cohen

MIDSD is now making plans for its fourth annual ADP Conference. The Conference week has been tentatively scheduled to begin on November 5 at the Sheraton Inn at Southern Pines, North Carolina. A major departure from previous years is the inclusion of user group meetings during the ADP Conference week. In addition to the casual regional caucus, Financial and Personnel representatives from around the Agency will hold their respective meetings.

The Conference topics identified to date are: results of the ADP Management Study, ADP Security, Training, the new DM&O approach, administrative systems, and the working relationships between the State and National data base systems. Representative Jack Brooks, author of the "Brooks Bill," has been invited as keynote speaker.

Even though the plans for the Conference have yet to gel completely, we are making this preliminary announcement in the hope that you will leave the first part of November open. Look for further announcements and details in upcoming issues of EPA Data Talk and SIGNON.

MULTIPEN GRAPHICS WITH INTEGRATED PLOTTING PACKAGE

George Nossa, Planning and Management Division, New York

The Planning and Management Division has implemented an enhanced version of the Integrated Plotting Package (IPP) which allows users to produce CALCOMP plots using three pens. This version of IPP was made available courtesy of Dr. Douglas Ashbrook of the National Institute of Health in Bethesda, Maryland, who also provided valuable advice during the implementation. The software is operational and is being used to develop maps locating various types of facilities (such as industries, landfills, impoundments, etc.) which affect environmental quality.

Our implementation is specific for users of the WCC facility via a DATA 100 Remote Job Entry Terminal and a CALCOMP plotter connected to a 906 On-line Controller. The software is resident on the System Procedure Library at WCC so that users can simply link, through FORTRAN applications, to this new version of IPP. The graphics can be produced "online" or can be written to a magnetic tape unit on the DATA 100 for later processing in local mode.

We have documentation on the use of these capabilities as well as the steps necessary for initial installation (required for a different type of CALCOMP plotter controller than the one mentioned above).

Those interested are invited to request these documents in writing. Our address is: U.S. EPA Region II, Data Systems Branch, Room 404, 26 Federal Plaza, New York, New York 10007.

NCC HIGHLIGHTS

Tom Rogers

√ Stability on the NCC Univac 1100 system during June was as good as any previous month of operation. Only eight system failures occurred during the entire month. This level of stability is even more extraordinary when considering the continuing installation of hardware modifications to existing equipment and implementation of another 8433 disk subsystem.

√ Implementation of the new 8433 disks was accomplished with no negative system stability impact. The three 8440 disk subsystems have been removed and replaced by 8433 disks. All fixed disks (16 spindles) are now on the 8433 systems.

√ Visually this has been the most progressive period in the entire NCC construction phase. The outside walls are finished except for some pre-poured concrete trim pieces to be placed at the top of the building. The entire first floor and adjacent halls have been poured, thus completing the floors for the entire building. The only major exterior work will be the bricking of two "knock-out" panels in the front wall.

NADPI SPONSORS APPLIED MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP

Vic Cohen

A New York-based consulting firm, Planning & Control, Inc., recently conducted the first of a series of Applied Project Management Workshops for EPA Project Managers.

The three-day workshops incorporate computer simulation of actual EPA data processing projects including such information as personnel policies and procedures and timesharing priorities. There are no prerequisites for these workshops, which use a four-step educational process. The process includes:

● A "knowledge" session in which participants are presented information on the latest planning, scheduling, budgeting, and management resource development techniques.

● Participation in a simulated project using parameters of input from a computer which specifies scheduling, budgeting, and planning requirements.

● Use of computer feedback to modify or alter the simulated project.

● A presentation upon completion of the project by the teams involved, outlining project objectives, strategies, and results. Colleagues act as project review boards, evaluating strengths and weaknesses of the project.

The Workshops are planned throughout fiscal 1980 in Washington, DC; Research Triangle Park; Cincinnati and Atlanta. A mini-session of APM will be featured at the ADP Conference scheduled for this fall.

NETWORK UPDATE

Fred Kastner

New modems have recently been installed in RTP, N.C. which not only support the Bell 212 (1200 bps, full-duplex) protocol but also the VADIC 3400 (1200 bps, full-duplex) protocol. This means that all 1200 bps users in the RTP area may now access either NCC or WCC by dialing a local number (919-541-2071) instead of dialing WATS lines. Plans are already being made to expand this rotor facility due to the continued increase in 1200 bps usage.

Special CODEX diagnostic modems are being used on the Dallas-Denver dedicated circuits to investigate sporadic transmissions problems.

The local telephone company in New York City has recently completed a major redesign of the local rotor facility. It is expected that this reconfiguration will eliminate the problems that have characterized access from that city for many months. The new access number for 300 bps in New York is (212) 962-7943.

Using WATS and network city utilization statistics, COMNET is presently studying traffic patterns in an attempt to identify under-utilized network components and cities which may qualify for local dial and dedicated equipment. Some network reconfigurations will probably result from these studies.

All network users are reminded and urged to report communication problems to the technicians at COMNET. Persistent problems and/or unsatisfactory resolutions should be reported to Fred Kastner at (919) 541-2932 or FTS 629-2932.

WCC HIGHLIGHTS

Curt Lackey

√ Three million bytes (3 Megs) of additional memory have been installed on the two WCC systems. One Meg was installed on the 168 and the 3032 received the other two. This memory is needed to fully utilize the MVS operating system and to provide additional capacity for the ever-increasing WCC workload.

√ The MVS Conversion Schedule has been definitized and is summarized below. Every effort is being made to meet this schedule. Further delays are not anticipated.

7/14/79	RJE testing available on Saturdays from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. until 8/11/79
9/1/79	MVS Production System available on the 3032, ALPHA limited to 50 users
9/1/79	WYLBUR LOAD-GO available
10/1/79	MVS on 3032 and 168, ALPHA not available during prime time

√ Users should make every effort to convert during the five weeks allotted. No charges for MVS processing will be made until October 1, 1979.

√ A Xerox 1200 Printing System has been purchased by EPA and provided to COMNET as Government-Furnished Equipment. This offers EPA users a very cost-effective method of producing multiple copies of large volume reports. Users desiring this service are requested to call the WCC Production Management Department at (202) 537-2727.

The deadline for contributions to the September/October issue of _EPA Data Talk_ is September 14, 1979.

MVS CONVERSION AT WCC
Maureen Johnson

The conversion from IBM's MVT operating system with the ALPHA Timesharing Language to IBM's MVS operating system with the TSO and WYLBUR timesharing languages has been a major task over the past seven months at WCC and is approaching development completion and installation. A review session was held in mid-June which resulted in a revised plan and schedule, after which major system managers at EPA headquarters and regional ADP branch chiefs were contacted to assess the impacts of the proposed plan and schedule. MIDSD, COMNET, and the User Conversion Team are working closely with several user groups to assist in resolving various problem areas. Lee Manning of Monitoring and Data Support, (OHWM) and Bill Gillam of Technical Services, (OTS) are providing valuable assistance in checking out TSO and WYLBUR from the user's perspective.

After carefully reviewing the status of the many sub-tasks involved in achieving the conversion to MVS, EPA again revised the schedule in July to allow time for implementation of IBM's security system (RACF) and to assure the availability of full-function, tested TSO and WYLBUR capabilities. RJE testing is available on Saturdays. Starting August 18, TSO and WYLBUR testing will also be available each Saturday. However, access to the MVS test system will not be available to users on a daily basis until September 1. At that time, a full production MVS system with TSO and WYLBUR will be implemented on the IBM 370/3032/CPU. Production MVT and ALPHA will be restricted to the IBM 370/168. The target for completing all user conversion has been set for October 1.

The MVS User Conversion Team at (202) 484-0903 is available now and throughout the conversion period to answer questions and assist users in resolving conversion-related problems. While most offsite conversion training has been completed, conversion training will continue at EPA Headquarters. Detailed schedule information is available on-line and in the SIGNON newsletter.

ADP TRAINING FOR FY 1980
Ernie Watson, Computer Specialist

The Environmental Protection Agency's National ADP Service Center (NADPSC) provides ADP training for the Agency through the Washington Computer Center (WCC), the National Computer Center (NCC), and the National ADP Institute (NADPI). The computer centers each offer courses that are primarily oriented toward the users of equipment at that center. NADPI offers management and conceptual courses independent of the centers. All courses offered are tuition free.

Recently these three groups agreed to jointly sponsor an ADP training survey. The survey results will help them plan and coordinate their course offerings for FY80, and help eliminate duplications, avoid schedule conflicts, and offer the widest possible range of ADP training.

The EPA Training Survey lists courses that are currently available or are under development, and allows respondents to suggest courses not listed. The intent is to collect data directly from users and managers that will enable us to develop and schedule courses according to interest and need. On June 28, 1979, MIDSD Director, R.C. Stringer, sent the survey to all directors of divisions and equivalent staff offices. We have asked for responses by July 24 so that the results may be tabulated and summarized, and course schedules developed and published, in time for the next fiscal year.

Mr. Samuel Brown, NADPSC Director, distributed an advanced copy of the survey to all Agency ADP Coordinators. In his cover memo, he asked the Coordinators to assist their respective divisions in completing the survey. This involvement between the division, ADP Coordinators, and NADPSC personnel should make for a full, rewarding ADP training program in FY80.