

IAPetus



Quarterly Bulletin For the Institution of Analysts & Programmers

April '92

Conference 1992

23rd October - put this date in your diary now, and book your place at our special low rate for earlybirds. The first IAP conference is set for Friday, 23rd October, and we have a mouthwatering programme lined up which really addresses the issues affecting our members.

We will start by looking at the meaning of quality in IT. Is it a technology issue or a people issue? And more importantly, how does quality affect real-life applications?

The nature of systems development is changing. There is a trend towards downsizing and package solutions. OOP is the in-word in programming. But how are they being imple-

mented in DP departments, and are modern methodologies changing the client/consultant relationship?

Modern business is critically dependent on IT, and the industry is becoming more concerned about risks from viruses, hackers and natural disasters. We ask what are the ethical and security issues which need to be addressed by today's IT practitioner.

We have an impressive array of speakers, including Marcus Richards of Borland and leading virus and security expert Jim Bates.

The venue chosen for this first conference is the City University in London. A decent lunch is included in the price of

the ticket, and this will give members the opportunity to get to know one another in comfortable and informal circumstances. The normal ticket price is £65, but in order to get things off to a good start we are offering a £10 discount for early bookings.

You should complete the enclosed application form and return it to the Institution office with your cheque for £55 by Monday, 18th May so as to qualify for the discount. A receipt will be sent as soon as your money is received, and full details of the programme when arrangements have been finalised.

Register of Consultants – Entries for 1992 Edition

The 1992 Directory of Members will be published in June and sent out to all members with the second edition of IAPetus.

This year we are planning to print the pages ourselves directly from the Institution's database. Provided we have your name and address correct in the database, it should come out right in the Directory.

Last year some 300 members took the opportunity to have a second entry in the Register of Consultants section of the Directory.

If you would like your name added to the Register, or if your details have changed since last year, please complete the enclosed form and return it to the Institution office not later than Monday, 18th May.

Inside

Editorial	2
Institution News	3
Feature	4 & 5
Guest Column	6 & 7
Institution Accounts.....	8

Welcome to IAPetus! For a long time I have been saying that the Institution should have a newsletter, so when the idea was floated in the Christmas letter my husband told me to put my money where my mouth was and.....!

To start with, it's small, and written by a few people. The only person who can change that is YOU. So if you have something to say, get out your quill pen/wordprocessor/biro and write. We want your news and views, your ideas and opinions, your comments on the state of the computing industry, the Institution or whatever.

As you will see from Michael Ryan's contributions elsewhere, plans are afoot to change and rationalise the structure of the IAP, with the aim of making the Institution recognised within the industry as the organisation which assesses the individual's professional capability. Plenty of people are ready to examine your technical knowledge – the Institution's qualifications will mark your ability to practise your computing and other skills in the real world.

More longterm aims involve the eventual creation of an elected Council to govern the Institution and the establishment – if that's what you want! – of branches based either geographically or on specialist topics within analysis and programming.

The only way that the IAP can develop is if you let it know what you want....and are ready to help achieve it. I thought a good newsletter was needed and look where it's got me! Over to you.

Megan C. Robertson

P.S. Iapetus is one of the Titans of Greek mythology. They were employed by the Gods to scurry around – Iapetus' particular job was to make sure that everyone else did what they were supposed to do, under budget and on time. Bit like an ancient Greek project manager, I guess.....the Mythological Man-Month?!!!

IAPetus is the Quarterly Bulletin of the Institution of Analysts and Programmers.

The Editor is Megan C. Robertson.

All views expressed herein are those of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect the Institution's or IAPetus' opinions or position. Correspondence about IAPetus, contributions etc. should be sent to the Editor at 12 Bude Close, Crewe, Cheshire CW1 3XG (Tel: 0270 500565). Correspondence about the Institution should be sent to Charles House, 36 Culmington Road, London W13 9NH (Tel: 081 567 2118, Fax: 081 567 4379).

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Proposed Ch

As foreshadowed in the Christmas Newsletter, the Council has been considering a number of changes to the Institution's system of grades and entry requirements. The main aims of this process are to:-

- ☐ simplify the Institution's grading system
- ☐ make the status of the different grades easier to understand
- ☐ increase public recognition of IAP qualifications
- ☐ make the Institution's entry criteria compatible with NVQ methods of assessment.

The precise details are still being finalised, with the intention of introducing the new system in the early part of 1993. Although the Council is committed to the changes as outlined below, they are still open to any suggestions which the membership may wish to suggest before the final decisions are taken.

At first sight, the proposed changes will have most impact on those applying for membership, but they will affect existing members too, though in a way that the Council believes will be beneficial to both individuals and to the Institution as a whole.

Possibly the most significant change is the proposal to roll the three existing non-corporate grades into one, with the new non-corporate grade being known as Associate Member (AMIAP). The present system, with Graduates, Licentiates and Associate Members has been causing some confusion, with nobody understanding the "pecking order" of the three grades and how they fit into any kind of logical progression.

The suggestion is that, from January 1993, all new applicants who are not yet ready for full corporate Membership will be considered for Associate Membership. For election, the applicant will have to be 20 years of age, and have formal qualifications and/or qualifying experience of systems analysis or programming judged by the Council to be of a quality to merit election to the grade:-

EITHER a recognised computer-related degree, HNC or BTEC, or the Diploma of an Accredited College or other approved qualification

OR a Computer-related ONC or approved equivalent and two years of qualifying experience

OR four years of qualifying experience.

All the existing Graduates and nearly all the Licentiates already meet these criteria, as do the vast majority of the present Associate Members. It is envisaged that from 1993 these individuals will be free to call themselves Associate Members, or to retain Graduate/Licentiate if they prefer, but

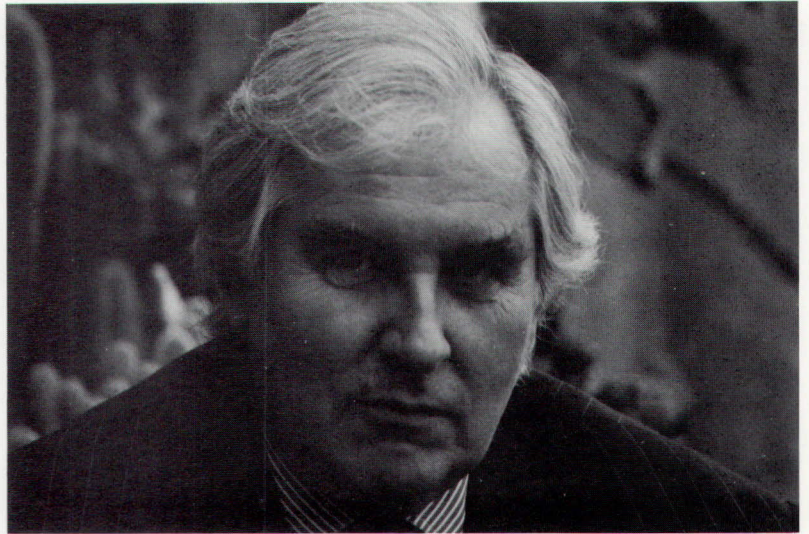
Changes to Grading Structure

there will be a single subscription rate for all non-corporate members.

Little change is proposed to the system for the election of Members, while election to Fellow is to become more difficult. The main difference here will be to insist on appropriate experience in a senior position of substantial responsibility, rather than merely the passage of time.

Finally, election to Companion will in future be by invitation of the Council only. Unlike the other proposals outlined above, this change is to take place with immediate effect. It is hoped that in the future, more colleges will become Accredited, and many more formal courses of study will be specifically approved by the Institution, so that it will be much easier for applicants to know whether or not their qualifications meet the Institution's entry criteria.

As now, the main requirement for entry to the corporate grades will remain the applicant's track record in programming or systems analysis work. The Council of the Institution will continue to assess each individual case, in order to determine whether the track record supports election as a Member or as a Fellow. This will not change, but the way will be open for the Council to make the



Michael Ryan
Director General IAP

procedure more rigorous in the future.

The overriding aim of the Institution is to be a professional body which recognises and marks the professional capability of its membership.

About the Editor

The Editor of IAPetus is Megan C. Robertson. Like many people in the computing profession, she followed a strange route, beginning with a degree in Botany from University College Cardiff (now Cardiff University), and jobs in a Citizens' Advice Bureau and as a lab technician before becoming a programmer, and eventually Head of Development in a software house, Microtech.

She is now a director of Phoenix Enterprises (Crewe) Ltd., in partnership with her husband (who is, she says, the one to blame for her interest in computing!).

When not writing programs and editing magazines, she studies military uniforms, medals, degree robes and all manner of ceremonial (and yes, her notes are all in the computer!).



The Editor at work

Subscriptions

The direct debit scheme has made a good start. Some 300 members have switched to this method of payment since January, and despite teething troubles there is every indication that direct debits will save time and money for everyone.

We would urge those members planning to change to direct debits later in the year when their subscriptions fall due not to delay, but to make the change now. From the time you send the form to your bank it may be several weeks before we can actually process the first payment. If your subscription becomes due during this period confusion can arise. Nothing is lost by sending the form in early; we never draw the money before it is due.

Due to a typographical error the 1992 subscription rate for a Member was wrongly printed in the Christmas newsletter. The current rate is £39.00, less, of course, the £5 discount for payment by direct debit.

The Ethics of Co

by Megan C. Robertson

The Federation Against Software Theft (FAST) would regard the title of this article as questionable – there's nothing ethical about copying software! Or is there?

To begin with, there are three main types of software available. There is the normal commercial sort, which you pay "megabucks" for; there is shareware and there is public domain software.

Most people don't readily distinguish between the last two – they are both available from electronic bulletin boards and various companies, and are either free or cost a few pounds.

Commercial software is easy. You buy the disks, manuals etc.; and so are licenced to use the programs thereon. Borland describe it like buying a book –

"Someone's time and money went into producing that software and he deserves to be paid for it"

you have purchased it, so you are free to read it as much as you like. But you may not make copies, and you cannot read it in more than one place simultaneously. If you sell it, the whole lot passes on to the purchaser.

Straightforward so far. However – and this is where FAST tend to get hot under the collar – given that I have a set of computer disks and I load them onto the hard disk of my machine, there is no physical reason why I can't load the same programs onto as many

machines as I like.... or pass the disks on to someone else leaving the hard disk of my machine with the copy I have just loaded still there.

That, of course, is the illegal side of copying – and the reasons why should be obvious to all of us in the computing trade. Someone's time and money went into producing that software and he deserves to be paid for it.

How about the other sorts of software floating around? Shareware is an American idea, which expects you to pay for the programs that you want, just like the commercial sort, but instead of demanding cash up front, trusts you to pay up if – and this is the exciting bit – you decide that you like it and want to use it. Every shareware program carries details of who you should pay and how much he wants.

An important fact to note is that paying a couple of pounds to someone running a shareware catalogue does not pay for the programs. That payment covers the cost of the disk and the catalogue-runner's expenses, and you still should pay the author of the program if you decide that you like it.

If you find that the program is not of use to you, don't pay... but don't use the program either!

Some people try to "fix" programs so that they'll stop working after so many days, or limit the functionality, and supply you with a fully-working version when you send them some money. This is not genuine shareware, but it does give you some idea of what you are paying for before you part with your hard-earned cash.

Using shareware without paying for it is just as dishonest as using illegal copies of a shop-bought commercial

program. Someone spent time and money writing that program, and deserves to be paid for his efforts.

In this imperfect world, some programmers fix their programs so that you need a "master disk" to make them go, or they give you some silly dongle to stick on the back of your machine, or use some other method that forces you to keep on the straight and narrow.

There's one little problem with this untrustfulness – what about backups? We are all trained to take regular backups, and to keep one off-site to guard against theft, fire etc., but the backup version won't go because you don't have the master disk or whatever to unlock it.

I once heard of a company who had invested a lot of effort in setting up programs using a particular dongle-protected system. Then their computer was stolen. Eventually the police found and returned it, but the dongle had fallen off. The organisation which produced the system had ceased to trade, and nobody knew what should be in the dongle..... so the company had to start over from scratch. Extreme, maybe, but that is the sort of problem that can be caused by over-protectiveness.

As well as the sensible use of multiple back-ups, there are other occasions when a copy can be legitimately made and used. If I go out to visit a customer site, I like to take certain useful programs along – say PC Tools, Norton Utilities and a virus checker. I bought all of them, and they normally are to be found on the computer I'm writing on now (and my streamer tapes!), but I happily take them on disk when I go out, and use them as necessary.

The rationale is that if I am

Computer Copying

out on site, my computer at home is not being used, so while several copies exist of the programs in question, I am only USING one at a time!

The point of this is think about what you are doing. Programs don't write themselves, and their authors need to pay the rent and feed the cat. They deserve their due payment for what they do, just as much as you do. Be sensible about how you make use of the programs that you buy – and do not use ones that you have no intention of paying for, it isn't fair!

Do not give away copies – if someone wants to try a program (unless it's shareware) let them play with it on your

machine.

There are some comments for software producers too. Remember to allow for backup procedures, remember that most of us are honest, and don't charge so much that we can only afford to use your product by cheating.

In 1990, the Russians found that their "official" exchange rate of one pound equals one rouble meant that everyone used the black market, where you got thirty roubles for your pound. So they changed the official rate to ten roubles to the pound, and a lot of people decided to play safe and use the banks.

Big corporates can easily pay hundreds of pounds for

programs, but the serious home user, the small computer business, the person who likes

"Using shareware without paying for it is just as dishonest"

a program he uses at work and wants to have it on his home system...he doesn't have that kind of money to throw around. And there are more of us than there are big corporates!

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Enterprise Consultancy Services Ltd.

News of Institution Staff

In complete contrast to most other organisations in Britain who have been shedding staff at high speed, the Institution has been recruiting!

Unfortunately this will do very little to improve John Major's unemployment statistics because only one actual person was involved. The person is a very nice lady called Rena Gosney. Rena will be responsible for dealing with the enquiries we receive from potential members (now running at some 10,000 per year) and processing the applications of the 10% or so who are eligible to join us.

Regular callers to the Institution may have noticed that comparatively little has been heard from our Secretary in recent weeks. That is because Virginia is on maternity leave. She already has a two year old son called Jack who is allowed to come to the office sometimes, the Institution being a very progressive (and tolerant!) employer. Jack is a great button-presser: He spends happy days making long-distance telephone calls, shouting at members who ring up, and keying gobbledegook into the database (*So that's what happened to it! - Ed*).

The new member of the family arrived on 2nd April – a sweet little girl named Rose. It is uncertain how quickly Virginia will be able to resume her duties. We are encouraging her to recruit a nanny!

Professional Indemnity Insurance

by Tim Luckett BA ACII of
Enterprise Consultancy Services Ltd.

Professional Indemnity (PI) insurance is normally associated with such professions as the Law and Accountancy. But, given the increasingly litigious nature of society, many other professions are using PI insurance to protect themselves and their businesses.

The IAP has received a number of enquiries from members concerning PI insurance, and this article is an attempt to give a thumbnail sketch of what it is all about.

A PI insurance policy is designed to meet the costs of defending claims and any

damages which may be payable when a client suffers financial loss as a result of your alleged neglect, error or omission.

A standard definition of negligence was given in *Blyth v Birmingham Waterworks Co.* (1856) as "the omission to do something which a reasonable man guided by those considerations which ordinarily regulate the conduct of human affairs would do, or doing something which a prudent and reasonable man would not do". The keyword in the definition is "reasonable"; that is the standard of care expected of a

person.

In the case of a computer professional the law does not generally demand the highest possible standard of care, but what is reasonable in the circumstances; a court decides, as a matter of fact, what is reasonable based upon the normally accepted standards of the profession.

In addition to negligence under Common Law, liabilities may arise under such legislation as the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 and the Data Protection Act 1984.

A professional person can

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also be held liable for the actions of his employees, agents and sub-contractors.

Likely sources of claims include: hardware and software design, system upgrading, programming, bureau services and any advice of a technical nature. Problems can be mitigated by the use of unambiguous written contracts with clients and by avoiding work which is beyond your professional competence.

The amount of cover supplied and the cost of the insurance can vary with such factors as: the type and value of work undertaken (i.e. a PC-

based system would in general be considered less of a risk than a mainframe system), and the amount of excess you agree to bear in the event of a claim.

This said, a seemingly innocuous risk could bring about a large claim and legal liabilities can arise from advice given free of charge! Most insurers insist on a minimum level of cover of £250,000.

In all instances, you should get a quote which confirms the amount of cover, the level of the excess and the premium payable.

Two insurers who can provide PI insurance have been

approached on behalf of the IAP.

Although both insurers offer comprehensive cover, one is more orientated to businesses which supply hardware, the other is more interested in insuring software providers. Both insurers are aware of the professional status afforded to IAP members.

If you want to find out more about PI insurance (and other types of business insurance) please contact the author via the IAP or call him on 081-758-1549 – he is an Associate of the Chartered Insurance Institute.

The Directors and Staff

along with all
past and present trainees of

**Datatech Computer Centre
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Congratulate

**The INSTITUTION of
ANALYSTS & PROGRAMMERS**

on this first Issue of
the Institution's newsletter

IAPetus

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8 INSTITUTION ACCOUNTS

The Institution, though privately-owned, is a non-profit-making organisation, and, as older members will know, it has always been our custom to publish audited accounts and circulate them to the full membership.

The last accounts prepared under Mr. Charles' direction relate to a period that ended on 31st October 1989. But Mr. Charles died a few days before that, and in the confused period that followed these accounts were never sent out. Mr. Ryan did not take over as chief executive of the Institution until July 1990.

Below is a statement prepared by our auditors, covering the 19 month period from 1st November 1989 to 31st May 1991. This is intended to provide members with a true picture of the Institution's finances, but save the expense of sending everyone a specially printed set of accounts.

We apologise that this information is nearly a year old. Turnover for the current year is considerably higher, and we hope to have the auditors' report for the period to 31st May 1992 ready for publication in the Autumn edition of IAPetus.

Income and Expenditure Account for the period 1st November 1989 to 31st May 1991.

INCOME

Subscriptions	52044
Other Income	149
Total Income	52186

EXPENSES

Salaries and Staff Costs	29225
Office Expenses	10692
Other Overheads	9610
Total Expenses	49527

Surplus of Income over Expenditure 2659
=====

To the Members of the Institution of Analysts and Programmers:

We have prepared accounts for the Institution of Analysts and Programmers for the period ended 31st May 1991 from the books and records maintained by the Institution.

The summary Income and Expenditure account shown above having been extracted from the full accounts.*

Charles Stuart, Chartered Accountants.

*Full accounts are available on request.

A Plea for Help

IAP member Mr. I.A.C. Grant - who deserves some well-earned congratulations for gaining his Open University BA degree recently - is in search of computer equipment with which to teach his local Sea Cadets computing, analysis and design methodology.

He says that he has plenty of expertise available, but that the cadets at TS Hastings would like some equipment, however old, to get some hands-on experience.

If anyone can help, please get in touch with the Editor (who used to instruct Army Cadets!) and your messages will be passed on.



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