

SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING RESEARCH COUNCIL
RUTHERFORD APPLETON LABORATORY

COMPUTING DIVISION

DISTRIBUTED INTERACTIVE COMPUTING NOTE 669

COMMON BASE PROGRAMME NOTE 2

issued by
K Robinson

Notes on a meeting to discuss short term
support problems

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Distribution: Those present
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1. Introduction.

Currently PERQs are being supplied with POS, Pascal and Fortran 77. No support is offered. By the end of the year UNIX should be available. This raises several points which are discussed in the following sections.

2. Communications.

Users require communications facilities for transferring their own software to the PERQ as well as for systems software updates.

Options seem to be:

- a. Cambridge ring sites. PERQ/Ring interfaces should be generally available soon, with a Basic Block Protocol (at least) under POS. LAN/SERCnet connections will not be available for several months, although indirect connection (via, say, some other computer) may be available.
- b. PDP/11 or VAX (with magnetic tape decks). A 'wet-string' ftp written in Pascal is available and software can be sent via TAR format tapes.
- c. ICF MUM sites. An asynchronous ftp should be available shortly and this could be used for both system software updates and user software transfer.
- d. Floppies. PERQs can read RT 11 format floppies which can presumably be written on any PDP 11 or VAX. Floppies are much less suitable for UNIX updates due to the large number required.

e. 'PERQ in a van' to give a DMA/DMA link. This is fast in terms of transfer for speed but labour-intensive.

f. Others - eg tape streamers. This would require software development and is still labour intensive.

a, b and c seem the best options.

3. Support.

Initially at least only passive support can be given. This will require: a special phone number; at least two people to provide the support; logging and follow-up mechanisms. There will be a training requirement for those staff in all likelihood. The UNIX manuals provide reasonable documentation, but at least a User Note will be necessary. Support training should begin soon.

4. Comments.

Comments please by 30 September.