PRENTICE COMPUTER CENTRE

DSA:LAK

26th May, 1986

FUTURE PLANNING

A. **SHORT TERM**

1. **New Developments** on the KL should be stopped immediately. Further development to existing systems on the KL should also be stopped. As software licences on the KL fall due they should be reviewed and a decision made on transferring them to another mainframe.

2. **External Clients**

   Every programming assistance should be extended to our larger external clients (i.e. Queensland Water Resources, Aboriginal Health) to allow them to change mainframes. Revenue from QWR in 1985 was approximately $176,000 and we cannot afford to lose this department as a client. The Centre should offer programming assistance, if necessary at internal rates, to help convert QWR's 1022 programs and relocate them on the new Administration machine. The same circumstances apply to Aboriginal Health. To help achieve these objectives, Sarah Barry should remain in her present role for approximately two months after Tony Bird returns to duty. This will enable Tony to call on our external clients and arrange a conversion programme through his section.

3. **Organisation**

   In many respects the current organisational set up of sections in the Centre confuses clients and causes them undue hardship in personal contact, in the pursuit of advice and in contracting a job from the Centre.

   The Finance and Administration section needs to control the financial and administrative functions of the whole Centre. To achieve this it is necessary that the section be located where all its members can physically be seated together. The two clerk typists, one presently in Distributed Computing and one situated at the Eastern end of the second floor, must be located with this group to provide extra support and for them to receive "back up" in their positions. Accounting functions (plus the staff to operate them) which are presently located in Operations need to be located in

this group. Before this can be achieved satisfactorily, a Commander phone system (or similar) needs to be installed. A review of future staffing requirements and procedures is proceeding in this section.

The Central Computing Facilities section should be expanded by including Central Engineering Maintenance under the control of the Manager of this section. It is ludicrous for CCF to pay the total expenses of this Central Engineering group and yet have no control at all over their functions, shift allowances, overtime, etc. This move would mean that the Manager CCF would be involved more with the Manager, Engineering and Communications over any technical problems which arise.

Some thought should be given to the future of Data Entry. Possibly the Centre should only retain one person for input of Centre data which arises from contract jobs on which Centre staff are working. The other person could be, for example, transferred to Data Processing and all paying data entry jobs, including departmental exam results, could be undertaken by Data Processing.

One of the most confusing aspects of our current organisation is the programmer distribution. All programmers excluding systems software maintenance and communications programmers should be under the control of one section leader. This would mean less "crossing" of section boundaries in performing client job requests, easier communication for clients, better interaction among the programmers themselves, better back up for programmers involved on contract jobs, and an allowance for pursuit of development work.

The "PC Shop" should be open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. if we expect to sell and support PC's on campus. To achieve this an extra staff member having some expertise in PC sales, PC systems, PC repairs, clerical procedures, and store keeping (in other words another Superman) should be hired.

B.   LONG TERM

1.   Paramount in our long term planning must be the placement of members of Central Engineering maintenance. It would seem that future mainframes will be serviced by the manufacturer and this will mean phasing out the Centre's "in-house" service group. Other positions within the Centre or the University must be made available to these staff members.

2. As PDP 11's are phased out by departments and replaced by more powerful micros, the duties of technicians in Distributed Computing will alter from fault finding to board replacement. This change in duties to mundane activities will possibly cause a change in attitude of the staff affected. We will need to monitor this area closely during this period and "buoy up" morale where needed.

3. Some programming staff should be constantly monitoring and investigating new developments. These people should gauge, from their knowledge of the University and its systems, which developments are of most value to the University and we should attempt to "help" departments which take this direction.

4. A major area that needs development within the Centre is Communication. (Not to be confused with network communication). What is needed is better communication between management and staff, and between sections. Better communication will lead to better morale.

    If our communication in the above area seems to be lacking then our communication with clients is appalling. We need to reinforce the fact that the Centre is a service department and train staff to deal with clients with patience and humility with the overriding criteria that (initially) the client is right. The PR approach will lift the Centre's "stocks" in many parts of the University.

5. Planning needs to be well in progress to select a replacement for the KL before 1990. This replacement needs to be a very large mainframe to cater for the expanding computer needs of the University over its ten year? life. For example, Veterinary Science in the USA has used artificial intelligence for the past 5-6 years in teaching students diagnostic procedures. Veterinary Science at UQ have not touched this area yet but must get "into step" soon.

6. PCC needs to investigate, once again, the economies of scale offered by a very large laser printer.

7. The purchase of new accounting software by Business Services will fulfill most needs of the Centre. But we still need to consider rewriting our machine/time sheet accounting etc, urgently.

Denis Antonellie
Manager, Finance and Administration

File

JDN:SJH

28th May, 1986

Memorandum to: Denis Antonellie

Subject: <u>Future Planning</u>

    Read your "Future Planning" document with interest;   agree
with many of the points you make.

    One in particular is B4 — the need for a good Public
Relations approach.   I know I have made the same point in other
forums. The question is <u>HOW</u> do we go about training staff for
this?

    I would like your ideas because the sooner we can tackle
this one, the better off we shall all be.

                        Thank you,

                        J.D. Noad
                        <u>Deputy Director</u>