

UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND

COMPUTER CENTRE

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

DATE : WEEK ENDED 20 JANUARY 1972  
AUTHORIZATION : DIRECTOR OF THE COMPUTER CENTRE

1. OPERATIONS

1.1 PDP-10 SYSTEM

MONDAY 17 JANUARY SETUP OF NEW SYMBIONT FILE, 0935-0950.  
TUESDAY 18 JANUARY SYSTEM FAILURE, OFFLINE 2040-2100  
SYSTEM FAILURE, MAINTENANCE 2125-2145,  
2150-2400.  
WEDNESDAY 19 JANUARY SYSTEM FAILURE, OFFLINE 1006-1010,  
1055-1102, 1500-1543.  
THURSDAY 20 JANUARY SYSTEM FAILURE, OFFLINE 1353-1406.  
SCHEDULE FOR FORTHCOMING WEEK: MAINTENANCE 0700-0900  
OPERATIONS 0945-2330.

1.2 GE-225 SYSTEM

SCHEDULE FOR FORTHCOMING WEEK: MAINTENANCE 1130-1300  
OPERATIONS 0900-1130, 1300-2400.

2. PASSWORD SECURITY

THE SECURITY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND SYSTEM IS BASED ON THE USE OF PASSWORDS, WHICH A USER MUST QUOTE TO BE ABLE TO LOGIN AND TO GAIN FULL ACCESS TO HIS FILES. IF A USER'S PASSWORD WAS DISCOVERED BY ANOTHER PERSON, THAT PERSON COULD USE THE OWNER'S COMPUTER TIME AND READ AND TAMPER WITH HIS FILES.

PREVIOUSLY, PASSWORDS WERE HELD IN THEIR ORIGINAL FORM IN A PROTECTED DISK FILE. ALTHOUGH ACCESS TO THIS FILE WAS RESTRICTED TO SOME COMPUTER CENTRE PERSONNEL, THE POSSIBILITY OF THE FILE BEING ILLEGALLY ACCESSED EXISTED.

TO PROVIDE INCREASED SECURITY FOR USERS, PASSWORDS ARE NOW KEPT ON ONE OF THE ACCOUNTING FILES, BUT IN CODE. THE CODE IS A ONE WAY CYPHER, (WHICH ALTERS THE ORIGINAL PASSWORD) DESIGNED SO THAT ALTHOUGH IT IS POSSIBLE TO CODE THE PASSWORD, IT CANNOT BE DECODED.

A NUMBER OF CHANGES HAVE BEEN MADE TO VARIOUS SYSTEMS PROGRAMS TO FIT IN WITH THE NEW SYSTEM. THE PASSWORD AND LOGIN PROGRAMS ENCYIPHER THE PASSWORDS BEFORE COMPARING THEM WITH THE MASTER FILE.

THE CHANGES INCORPORATED INTO THE SYSTEMS PROGRAMS ARE INVISIBLE TO THE USER, BUT SHOULD RESULT IN VASTLY IMPROVED SECURITY FOR FILES. ONE ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGE IS NECESSARY WITH THE INTRODUCTION OF THIS SYSTEM. THE CENTRE CAN NO LONGER TELL A USER HIS CURRENT PASSWORD SHOULD HE FORGET IT. INSTEAD, A USER WHO FORGETS HIS PASSWORD WILL HAVE TO MAKE APPLICATION FOR A NEW INITIAL PASSWORD TO BE ENTERED ON HIS PROJECT.