

4. Computerised database management.  
Dr. J. Bolland, Wessex Water.

Synopsis:-

The presentation set out to chart the progress made by Wessex towards a comprehensive computerised database of information on its assets. In particular, the benefits of digital mapping and its integration with many aspects of operation were discussed.

Digital data relating to Wessex' complete supply network (clean water) has been captured over the past five years using a system developed in house. This includes not only locational data but also 'attribute' data such as size and material of mains. In order to capitalise on this, and to benefit from the application of digital mapping in other spheres of operation, a "state of the art" system was acquired in mid-1985. The development programme for this includes the acquisition of sewer and manhole data, and this has already begun in one District Council area on a trial basis. It is anticipated that much of the development currently taking place in respect of clean water - for example links to network analysis - will ultimately be transferable to recovery.

In parallel with this, a suite of programs has been developed using the Husky portable computer to capture 'on site' data relating to manholes and sewers. This can subsequently be dumped on to an IBM-PC and the data archived as required. This can then be transferred to the digital mapping system and stored in its correct geographical context, along with related 'attribute' data.

Discussion:-

D. A. Wall, Watson Hawksley.

There is a need for compatibility of database systems nationwide. This is particularly a problem for consulting engineers who work for many different employers.

J. Bolland.

Agreed there is no standard system although some of the commercially available systems are transferable.

T. Peacock, Thanet District Council.

Some District Councils using the Husky for data capture are unable to assess information directly because it is stored on Water Authority computers.

J. Bolland.

Admitted a logistic problem between Water Authorities and District Councils. However, future communications should improve with the development of software and microcomputer capabilities.

D. Brace, Flowtechnics Ltd.

There have been attempts in the London area to co-ordinate authorities but the lack of a national standard make the task very difficult.

I. Hingley, S.F.M.S. Ltd.

It appears that many authorities are trying to run before they can walk. The time and money involved in digital mapping would be better spent on record upgrading, ensuring that such information is recorded in a manner that is compatible for database use in the future.

Dr. Balmforth concluded the first session by summarising the proceedings so far.