

Kolsky

TO: POUGHKEEPSIE

FROM: POUGHKEEPSIE  
Dept. 539, Bldng. 702

MEMO TO: Mr. J. C. Gibson

October 1, 1957

SUBJECT: Sensing External Unit Status

Reference: Your file memo of September 30, 1957.

In the course of giving speedy consideration, the following counter-proposal has developed.

According to Mr. R. P. Fletcher, present plans are to provide external units with a plug for attaching error recording stations. Presumably, all pertinent indicators in each unit terminate on that plug.

We could provide an external Status Sensing Unit (SSU) which attaches to the same plugs and is equipped to transmit the information via the Exchange to the computer memory as if it were another input unit. The SSU contains the necessary scanning switches for one or more external units and the circuits required to attach the SSU to a spare Exchange channel, which could be one of the low-speed channels. A regular READ instruction would be used to transmit the information.

The SSU would be optional and would not replace the minimum status indications which are now part of the Exchange.

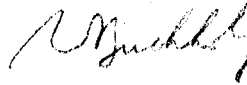
The advantages of this arrangement are:

1. Elementary systems and units are not saddled with the cost of providing for a possible sophisticated extension to unattended operation.
2. Design of the SSU can be deferred until we know more about what it takes to program real-time jobs with unattended operation.
3. The customer who is prepared to program for an elaborate unattended system can be asked to pay rental for the SSU. Alternatively, the SSU might be combined with the error recording equipment and charged to customer engineering.

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4. A separate device is essential to get status information from a unit which is inoperative.

WB/pkb



W. Buchholz

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