

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH IN NUCLEAR SCIENCE

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Approval Powers for the ATLAS Computer Laboratory

Note by the Secretary

1. With a nucleus of staff already in post and the buildings under construction, the Atlas Computer Laboratory has now reached a stage where it is necessary to define the delegation of specific powers in financial and administrative matters. The Atlas Computer Committee is responsible to the Board for supervising and controlling the work of the Laboratory and has general authority over the allocation of money and effort and the provision of buildings, equipment and staff, as well as over the scientific policy. In all these matters the head of the Laboratory reports directly to the Atlas Computer Committee. However, it is also necessary to adhere to Institute policy of a different kind; i.e. to maintain the Institute's standards and practice in a wide variety of matters may be summarised as the control of expenditure and the conditions of appointment and service of staff. Responsibility for maintaining standards of this kind has been placed upon the Director of the Rutherford High Energy Laboratory and the Director of the Electron Laboratory, and they need for the purpose substantial administrative support and also direct access to the Chairman, the General Purposes Committee and the Personnel Committee, as well as frequent consultation with each other. Unless it were decided to set up another fully independent Director, the obvious arrangement is for the Director of the Rutherford Laboratory to carry responsibility of this kind for the Atlas Computer Laboratory also.
2. It is therefore proposed that the delegated powers of approval of expenditure and for the appointment of staff, which have already been given to the Director of the Rutherford Laboratory should be recognised as extending to the work of the Atlas Computer Laboratory.

The Director of the Rutherford Laboratory would of course delegate certain powers to the Head of the Atlas Computer Laboratory, within the terms of his authority to do so. At present, he would propose the following delegations:

(a) Capital purchases

Up to £1,000, or up to £2,000 if the item is part of an approved project.

(b) Non-Capital Expenditure (e.g. Services, Demands on Workshops)

Up to £2,000.

(c) E.M.R. and University Agreements

For any single contract, up to £1,000 for three years, or up to a total value of £5,000. (The Head of the Atlas Computer Laboratory proposes to set up a separate panel to discuss research contracts for the ATLAS Laboratory, similar to the one

already in existence for the Rutherford Laboratory. This will consist of one representative each from the Rutherford Laboratory and the A.E.R.E., and one of the ATLAS Laboratory's Consultants).

(d) Expenditure in Foreign Currency

Up to £1,000.

(e) Travel and Subsistence

(i) Within the United Kingdom - all ATLAS staff

(ii) Overseas - all ATLAS staff within a budget approved by the G.P.C.

On the personnel side, he would propose to delegate to the Head of the Atlas Computer Laboratory responsibility for the selection of all staff for appointment within the Atlas Computer Laboratory complement below banded level. He should, however, retain the formal responsibility for maintaining Institute standards. Banded and senior posts would need to be approved by both the Atlas Computer Committee and the Personnel Committee.

3. The above proposals do not interfere with the responsibilities of the Atlas Computer Committee, who could call for such reports of the use of delegated powers as they required, and could require prior references to themselves in such circumstances as they wished. For instance, they might like all cases which were to be referred to the General Purposes Committee to go to them first. In addition, the Head of the Atlas Computer Laboratory would no doubt refer to them any other particular cases which he considered they would like to see.
4. The proposals now made were not included in the outline put forward in May, 1961 in paper NI/61/11, but are the result of a later and closer examination of this aspect of the Atlas Computer Laboratory.
5. In most university computing laboratories the head of the laboratory has the title of Director. When the responsibilities referred to in this paper had been settled, the title of Director of the Atlas Computer Laboratory could be introduced without causing any misunderstanding, and it is recommended that this should be done.