Report on the Ninth Plenary Meeting of SC5, Ottawa, Canada, September 26 to 30, 1983

The significance of the SC5 meeting in 1983 is that it was at this meeting that the Fortran Experts' Group was formally established as a Working Group. Also it was the meeting at which Jeanne Martin, convener from 1983 to 1995, was first appointed.

The full title of the Subcommittee then was ISO/TC97/SC5. It covered a wider remit than programming languages, including also graphics, OSCRL and DBMS. It had become so unwieldy that reconstruction was under consideration, but not yet decided upon, at the time of this meeting. SC5 and SC16 (OSI) were eventually split and reorganized over the period May 1984 to February 1985; there was also some movement of working groups to and from other subcommittees in TC97. After much infighting as to what should go where, programming languages came under ISO/IEC JTC1/SC22 from 1985.

In 1983, at a lower level in the hierarchy, there was a move to promote some of the language Experts' Groups to formal Working Groups (see Appendix to this note). The latter have a higher status in standards bodies and in some countries it is easier to obtain permission to participate in them.

Appointment of New Convener
The minutes of the meeting (97/5 N824 section 9.2) record, pertaining to Fortran:

Appointment of Convener
The Secretariat noted that document 97/5 N784 contained the summary of voting on the proposed appointment of Ms. Jeanne Martin (ANSI) as the Convener of the FORTRAN Experts Group (97/5 N752). SC5 confirmed this appointment, and thanked Ms. Jeanne Adams for her work as the previous Convener. Resolution 30 refers.

In reference to document 97/5 N748, a notice on the revision of ISO 1539, it was noted that FORTRAN 8X will be upwardly compatible with FORTRAN 7X [sic].

In discussion with the representatives of WG2 [Computer Graphics], it was agreed that document 97/5 N762 (the proposed FORTRAN interface to GKS) would be circulated to the FORTRAN group for review and comment.

Ad hoc Fortran Experts' Meeting
There was a short ad hoc meeting of the Fortran Experts Group from 4.00pm to 6.00pm on Wednesday September 28 attended by 14 people from 9 different countries. There is no formal WG5 record of this meeting. Brian Meek wrote the following as part of an informal report on the whole SC5 meeting:

Last part of the afternoon devoted to language groups: that means Fortran for David Muxworthy and myself. Jeanne Martin of X3J3, the ISO convenor, describes plans for the Geneva meeting in April 1984 of the ISO experts group (or working group , if the change goes through); we agree that the scheduled three days would be crowding it, could it be four? Kees Ampt of the Netherlands jokingly protests that he is down again as a speaker, without his being consulted; general merriment since Kees will undoubtedly have things to say anyway, and others have been pencilled in without any firm programme as yet having been determined. David and I get a chance to talk about the U.K. development of a standard method of specifying requirements for Fortran processors. Reactions are cautious, but most of those present would like copies of the most recent working draft, including the Chinese chief delegate - nice to see them here.

David Muxworthy adds:

As well as Brian's points, the group was asked to comment on GKS and there was a discussion on

Kulisch and Miranker's recent book on computer arithmetic and its relevance to new IBM hardware. The convener was keen to build up mailing lists in order to distribute Fortran information and to receive back international comments on developments. A Fortran Information Bulletin was being prepared. This would describe the technical work of X3J3 since the adoption of Fortran 77, would be a 38-page summary of the draft proposed standard (which was "expected no earlier than 1985"), and would be distributed to all on the list in November 1983.

Establishment of Working Group
The relevant resolution (Resolution 1) was:

ISO/TC97/SC5 agrees that the current groups whose primary task is to liaise with a sponsoring body (as defined in ISO/TC97/SC5 N 469) of each of its work items which is producing a new or revised standards document are to be Working Groups within the purview of clause 1.6 of ISO Directives, 1982. These groups currently function, and will continue to function, according to the procedures of document ISO/TC97/SC5 N 469, as:

OLD	NEW
EG - COBOL	WG8 - COBOL
EG - FORTRAN	WG9 - FORTRAN
EG - ALGOL	WG10- ALGOL
EG - PL/I	WG11- PL/I
EG - Computer Language for the Processing of Text	WG12- Text
EG - BASIC	WG13- BASIC
EG - Ada	WG14- Ada
EG - DBMS/DDL	WG15- DBMS/DDL

[Working Groups 1 to 7 existed before the meeting and were: PLIP (Programming Languages for Industrial Processes), Computer Graphics, Conceptual Schema, Pascal, DBMS Coordination, APL, OSCRL.]

This report was compiled by Jeanne Martin and David Muxworthy from archive material in April 2010.

Appendix

**Report of ad-hoc group 3 concerning clarification
of working groups and experts groups**

FIRST MEETING

The group met the first time on Tuesday 27 September 1983 for two hours with an attendance of 20 delegates from 8 different member bodies. The convener was Mr. C.G.F. Ampt (Netherlands).

1. Identify all documents relating to the topic of the group
2. Establish the relevant documents
3. Consider this relevant document
4. Conclusions

The following documents were identified and considered relevant: ISO/TC97/SC5 N758, N770, N778, N779.
The documents N758 & N778 were considered much too detailed, whereas N770 addressed an old question raised in 1979. Some of the problems within N779 could be solved by N758 & N778 but others may not.

An expression of opinion by member body showed that 3 member bodies present prefer/insist on a solution within the directives, which should mean only working groups. Two member bodies preferred the current situation of an informal, open experts group, whereas the others were undecided.

The conclusion was that there are two types of (working) groups. Type I produces standards and Type II performs the work as intended in resolution 6 of the SC5 meeting in 1977. A drafting committee with Ms Vickers as chair and Messrs Hill, Dahlstrand and Ampt as members drafted a resolution to this intent. The resolution was discussed in plenary session on 28 September.

SECOND MEETING

The ad-hoc group reconvened 28 September afternoon in order to process the points raised by the delegations of Austria, Germany and Japan and by the convener of the Algol Experts Group.

It was agreed that there is a whole range of groups with varying proportions of liaison talks and standards producing tasks. There may also be groups primarily charged with producing rules (staff groups). The function of each group must follow from its terms of reference. The present concern is only to rename the experts groups and carry on work as before.

The ad-hoc group agreed to a new resolution drafted by Ms Vickers.

The meeting was closed at 4 p.m.

I. Dahlstrand