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PLANNING OFFICE AUTOMATION –

Electronic Message Systems

J A T Pritchard
P A Wilson

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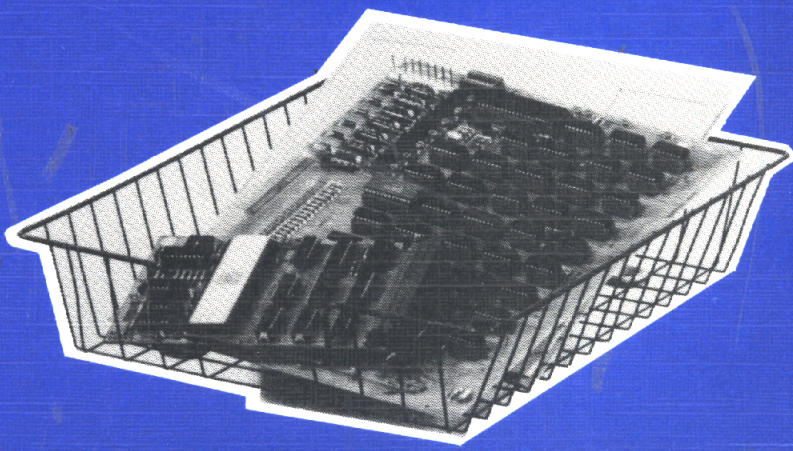

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J A T Pritchard
and P A Wilson

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Preface

'The electronic office as a total integrated information system is very much a concept of the future, but evolution towards it is clearly evident today. This book deals with current developments . . . It is the intention that future work . . . will look at the design, implementation and operation of the electronic office' (extract from the Preface to *Introducing the Electronic Office*, see bibliography – item 1.1).

The work from which that book derived set the scene for a follow-up programme and in April 1980 NCC commenced a programme of work supported by the Department of Industry through the Computers, Systems and Electronics Requirements Board (CSERB). The aim of this programme is to establish the present and future needs of user organisations in the UK and their degree of satisfaction with existing products and services in the office automation (OA) area, and to produce books and guidance to assist users.

Initally a user survey was carried out to identify what progress was being made in the areas of electronic message systems (EMS) and information management systems (IMS). In-depth structured interviews were held with twelve organisations, each of which received a copy of the resulting 96-page report *Office Automation – The Report of a Survey of UK Users* (1980) by the authors of this book (see bibliography – item 1.2). The organisations who were invited and agreed to participate in this survey were selected because they were known to have experience in – or plans at an advanced stage to become involved in – relevant OA systems.

Subsequently work began upon the second project in the CSERB-supported programme, from which this book derives. Its aim is to provide readers with advice which will assist them to develop an OA strategy, with

particular reference to electronic message systems. Mindful that EMS can be but a part of an organisation's complete OA activity, a third project will investigate strategic issues and design considerations for IMS – as the second project has for EMS – and form the basis for a companion volume *Planning Office Automation— Information Management Systems* (see bibliography – item 1.3)

Subsequent projects will investigate the evaluation and selection of EMS and IMS products and services, and their implementation and operation.

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