

MINISIS



IDRC



CANADA

NEWSLETTER

IN THIS ISSUE

Introducing...The Computer Systems Group
MINISIS Version H
Kathie DeLoria 1

Announcements
WandaJane Phillips 2

The News About the New View
WandaJane Phillips 3

Transferring data between MINISIS and Mini-Micro CDS/ISIS -- Using ISO 2709 --
Ed Brandon 7

From our users: 8

Version H Conceptual Diagram 9

MINISIS BIBLIOGRAPHY 15



**Introducing...The Computer Systems Group
MINISIS Version H****Kathie DeLoria**

The Computer Systems Group (CSG) of the Information Sciences Division has been given the responsibility of developing Version H of MINISIS. To meet the demands of this task, the CSG has increased its numbers and assigned new responsibilities to existing staff members.

Terry Gavin is the Associate Director of the Computer Systems Group. Terry has been with IDRC for 13 years and was a member of the original MINISIS design team.

Ed Brandon is a Computer Systems Officer in charge of MINISIS Resource Centre projects. Ed, formerly a Program Officer for Information Tools and Methods, has been with IDRC for five years.

MINISIS Systems Management

André Roberge, formerly a MINISIS Applications Analyst, assumes new responsibilities as Head of the MINISIS Systems Management Group. Previously, André worked for seven years as general management consultant for the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

May Ko is a new member of the group replacing André as MINISIS Applications Analyst. May became an experienced MINISIS user at the Hong Kong Productivity Council where she worked as a Systems Analyst for two years.

Lorraine Vinette has worked in many capacities within IDRC for 11 years - Terminal Operator, Secretary, Computer Operator, and now as Computer Systems Management Coordinator.

Valrose Ogle joins CSG as Computer Operator/Secretary. Valrose is currently completing the two year diploma program in Computer Programming at Algonquin College, Ottawa.

MINISIS Future Systems

Richard Lee, Head of Future Systems, has been with IDRC for 13 years. Richard worked as

Programmer-Analyst on the original MINISIS design team.

Ellen Ruygrok is Senior Programmer-Analyst with nine years of experience with IDRC.

Bill Swift has been with IDRC for five years. Bill worked in MINISIS Systems Management as Computer Systems Coordinator for two years before joining Future Systems as Programmer-Analyst.

Allan McDonald, Senior Programmer-Analyst, comes to IDRC from the Ontario Municipal Employees Retirement Board (OMERS). Allan received his Honours BSC in Computer Science and Mathematics from the University of Western Ontario, London.

John Pilgrim recently completed the three year Computer Science program at Algonquin College and joins the group as Programmer-Analyst.

Ruth Richmond is also a new Programmer-Analyst. Ruth was formerly a Production Officer with Statistics Canada and has a background in Computer Engineering.

MINISIS Outreach

Mary Campbell is Database Specialist and IDRIS Project Coordinator. Mary has worked for IDRC for 12 years providing MINISIS training and user support.

Nick Cop, Senior Information Systems Officer, has worked for IDRC for seven years. Nick is the representative for Latin America, providing MINISIS training and user support.

Bob McKercher is a MINISIS Outreach Officer for Southeast Asia who has recently returned to Ottawa from India. Bob formerly worked as Computer Documentation Specialist and has been with IDRC for three years.

Richard Palmer is based in Cameroon as a MINISIS Outreach Officer for Africa. Richard was formerly Head of MINISIS Systems Management Group and has been with IDRC for six years.

Kathie DeLoria has recently joined MINISIS Outreach in the position of Senior Technical

Writer. Kathie received her BA in Psychology from the University of New York and Technical Writer Diploma from Algonquin College.

WandaJane Phillips, a recent graduate of Algonquin College's Technical Writer program, joins the CSG as Computer Documentation Specialist.

Support Staff

Francoise Massin has been with IDRC for five years as Administrative Secretary.

Virginia Medina has been a Secretary in the MINISIS Outreach group for three years.

Louise Paveley has recently joined the CSG as Secretary. Louise has worked for several federal government departments as well as three years as Administrative Assistant at Mitel Corporation in Public and Investor Relations.

For the MINISIS Version H project, the Computer Systems Group has been organized into Core Groups, each group having a Core Group Leader.

- Project Leader - Terry Gavin
- Secondary Project Leader - Richard Lee
- Application Specification Group - Bob McKercher
- Documentation/Training Group - Nick Cop
- System Group - Richard Lee
- Testing Group- André Roberge
- User Interface Group - Allan McDonald

In addition to the CSG, two programmers from Hong Kong Productivity Council will be participating in the project.

Announcements

WandaJane Phillips

1 MUG Proceedings
The MUG Proceedings from 1988 are being published. They will be available soon and will be distributed as usual. The proceedings were held up by several internal problems including a change in staff and budget cutbacks. The proceedings from

this year's MUG in China will be published in April and distributed before summer.

2 Newsletter topics and publication schedule
Over the next year, and in subsequent years, we plan to publish the bulletin MINISIS newsletter quarterly. With that in mind we plan the issues to follow themes or topics, for the next four issues the topics are:

JANUARY 1990

- reflections on the MUG in China
- MINISIS Version H...the User Interface and Application Specification Development

APRIL 1990

- the IDRIS Application
- MINISIS Version H...The Standard MINISIS Application and Migrating MINISIS Version H to alternate platforms and the Documentation and Training Plan

JULY 1990

- MUG 1990
- MINISIS Version H...Beta Site Tests and Usability Studies

OCTOBER 1990

- MUG 1990
- MINISIS Version H...group by group progress reports

Users can contribute articles to the newsletter; contrary to previous policy, we reserve the right to edit the submissions. Please limit the length of submissions to 1500 words (6 double spaced pages of printed text using 12 point/10 pitch type). Articles for any of these issues must be received 2 months prior to publication. Articles written for the newsletter can be sent on diskette (3½ or 5¼ double or single sided/double or high density) or printed. We are using WordPerfect 5 to develop the newsletter, so if articles and letters are sent on diskette please leave out the formatting codes and deliver the document in one of the following formats:

- WordPerfect (4.2 or 5)
- DOS text (ASCII)
- WordStar
- MultiMate

3 User survey

The Documentation and Training group have developed a questionnaire for MINISIS users. The answers received to this questionnaire will be used to develop the strategies for the documentation of MINISIS Version H. A summary of the responses

will be published along with the Documentation and Training Plan in the July 1990 issue.

4 Articles in alternate character sets

In the future, short articles in alternate character sets can be included in the bulletin MINISIS newsletter. If a brief synopsis or abstract is available, please send it along with the article (follow the instructions for article submission outlined above). To be included in an issue, a hard copy (printed version) of these articles should be mailed to

WandaJane Phillips

Editor, bulletin MINISIS newsletter

Information Sciences Division

IDRC

P.O. Box 8500, Ottawa, Canada K1G 3H9

Fax: (613) 238-7230

5 User profiles

We are interested in publishing profiles of the institutions using MINISIS. We will be soliciting profiles from users for publication; if you are using MINISIS in an unusual way (very large databases included) and are interested in describing your applications, write down the pertinent information. The profiles submitted may be edited before publication.

6 User problems/solutions and ideas

We are developing a users' corner where questions or solutions can be presented. If you have encountered a difficulty, whether you have solved it or not, write in the problem (and the solution if you have one) and we will attempt to answer it and publish selected problems and answers from this file. If you have a tip or trick you've discovered, write that in and we will publish selections from this file.

7 Version G.01 of MINISIS

Version G.01 of MINISIS is set to be released in January, 1990. This release consists mainly of bug fixes.

After benchmarking the G.01 software, IDRC sent pre-release tapes to users, with sophisticated applications, who had kindly offered to test specific functions of MINISIS. Test results are coming in and appropriate fixes will be made to the software.

Documentation for G.01 will be distributed in paper form with the release tapes. It will consist of updates and corrections only, using the G.00

documentation as the reference. These updates should be incorporated into your G.00 documentation. The tape will still carry the G.00 documentation.

The News About the New View

WandaJane Phillips

MINISIS has developed through a great deal of interaction and association with its constituency (community of users). This relationship has allowed MINISIS to reach a plateau of maturity. From that plateau a bold step is being taken to bring MINISIS, and hence the members of its constituency, into the future of library management and data processing.

Serving up Software

Four questions about MINISIS come to mind before others: what is a computerized textual database management system; why are we developing one; what are our long range plans; and how does our progress compare to those plans?

The Development of a Database Management System: MINISIS

MINISIS is a computerized textual database management system that can be used to create formats (database definitions) for the organization and maintenance of textual information. The strengths of MINISIS are in the organization of text and relationships between different texts rather than the manipulation of numbers for statistical purposes, although MINISIS is capable of some statistical operations.

Researchers in developed countries can barely stay abreast of developments in information; researchers in developing countries need a system which allows them to gain a controlled access to a flood of potentially valuable information. Documentation centres using MINISIS are able to search their own catalogues and catalogues shared by other documentation centres; copies of the catalogue, or search results, (sorted on any number of attributes) can quickly be distributed to interested parties. As MINISIS develops, these facilities improve.

Forecast and Follow-up

MINISIS Version H is following a bold plan to incorporate contemporary computer and documentation design methods in the recreation of

MINISIS. The first recommendation is to change the computer language used to code MINISIS from SPL to C language. This furnishes an opportunity to renovate the internal structure and the users' view of MINISIS and opens the way to other computer hardware platforms and operating systems. The Computer Systems Group is also following up on another recommendation: improve the documentation of MINISIS and the User Contributed Library and make MINISIS and its accompanying documentation fully functional in other languages. Development of MINISIS as a management tool responds to other suggestions from MINISIS users which include: incorporate the more useful contributions in the User Contributed Library into the main body of MINISIS, open the system for easier development of library and documentation centre management tools, institute easier paths for navigation between processes, and include more menu-driven functions. The development of MINISIS in response to the abundant input from users in the form of software in the User Contributed Library and requests for enhancements has brought MINISIS to a plateau. From here it is possible to envision a mature product; from here we can design a system based on MINISIS, related to MINISIS, and upwardly compatible with MINISIS.

In the past couple of years, the Computer Systems Group has been reviewing advances in mini and micro-computer design and the users' requests. Version H has been selected to be the 'jumping off point' for MINISIS; a fundamental change in MINISIS is due. The next version of MINISIS will incorporate a more 'user-friendly', pliable interface; new documentation developed after serious examination of the requirements of the current users and an analysis of Version H will be integrated with the training materials. Version H will introduce an integrated processor, allowing users to perform several processes on information without having to persistently save and retrieve the information. Another advantage of MINISIS Version H is the integration of the software hooks needed to open the MINISIS system of the future to developments in storage medium (video, CD-ROM, and others) and searching techniques, as they evolve. The advances in hardware and software design allow us to create a version of MINISIS with more flexible configuration requirements; a package which can potentially be used on a variety of computers.

User Views and the MINISIS Interface

Progress in the development process continues with the user interface (the presentation of the software). We anticipate with the introduction of the micro version of MINISIS we will acquire a wider constituency at a rate requiring a more easily acquired understanding of the software and its uses. To this end, an advanced user interface is being developed. The interface will be flexible; a development toolbox will be included with MINISIS Version H to allow distributors and end users to create an individualized interface application or to modify the generalized application developed by the Computer Systems Group and distributed with MINISIS.

Although the design is not complete, the general concept for the interface involves a user view which can be menu or command mode. This allows novice or intermediate level users to follow step by step prompts, and more confident or practised users can move into command mode and deliver instructions and parameters directly. This general principle will form the basis for the interface and will be implemented in stages.

Several interface applications will be included with the MINISIS package: the Generalized Application, the Integrated Library System (ILS), and IDRIS. These interface applications can be used immediately, as they stand, or they can be modified using the Application Specification Toolbox. The Generalized Application will suit the users and sites where the library management tools are not a priority; the Integrated Library System will fulfill the library specific tasks; and IDRIS will be available for users. The design of MINISIS Version H is of a package which can easily be implemented and customized when necessary.

The Standard MINISIS Application Specification

The complete set of processors available in MINISIS Version G will be implemented within the Generalized Application Specification. Users will have the same functionality with improved operation; the process of manipulating information will be simplified.

The IDRIS Application Specification

The inclusion of the IDRIS application module will allow users to participate in the IDRIS project and share in the wealth of information available

through the IDRIS database. This particular application specification will facilitate easy searching, sorting, and printing functions.

The Integrated Library System

Many members of the MINISIS constituency are libraries and documentation centres. These types of operations require a distinct set of processors. Some of the operations particular to the Integrated Library System application are: acquisitions, circulation (including activities such as loans and reserve), and serials control (including activities such as inventory, receiving, billing, and ordering).

Product Documentation... [Guides, Manuals, References]

Five areas of concern related to the design of the documentation distributed with MINISIS are being examined: the relationship between support and documentation; the diversity of the MINISIS users; the integration of training and documentation; revisions and corrections to the documentation after distribution; and the methods of handling transitions between users at installations and versions of MINISIS. Analysis of these factors and design techniques for documentation can build a slick product, but that product may miss the mark entirely and Usability Testing will highlight the areas where corrections are needed. The users will receive the best of direction from the manuals distributed with the MINISIS software, whether it is for an HP 3000 series computer, an IBM compatible micro-computer, or a hardware platform we have not identified for development.

Support Costs and Users' Knowledge Base

The expansion of the MINISIS constituency poses a new challenge to the Computer Systems Group; three issues arise: expanded training needs; expanded troubleshooting calls and responses; and expanded skill sets required by the users and the Outreach officers (micro and mini expertise). The best defense is an offense. In this case carefully crafted documentation will alleviate or circumvent these potential problems.

The User's Face

The next hurdle for the documentation of the MINISIS system is the issue of addressing the audience. In keeping with IDRC's focus, installations in developing regions house the primary constituency for MINISIS, but the software

is used widely in the developed regions of the world.

Primary Users

Interviews with Outreach officers have uncovered a sketch of the face of the primary MINISIS user: these people are not computer literate, nor skilled in the use of English, but are working in an environment where the level of technical expertise is minimal and unsupported.

Secondary Users

A test run of a questionnaire distributed in the Ottawa area has begun the process of identifying the profile of MINISIS users in developed countries; the abilities of these people have a much broader range.

When the questionnaire development is completed, it will help us identify the audience for the MINISIS documentation. We are looking for the generalized profile of users in various positions and situations.

Training Materials and Classroom Presentation

The training materials and classroom presentation used by Outreach officers will be developed alongside the new documentation. The idea here is to develop a systematic approach to MINISIS which can be incorporated into and work in tandem with the documentation. It is important that the presentation of MINISIS be consistent in both the classroom and the user manuals.

The training materials developed for distribution with MINISIS Version H will improve the self-training possibilities. This action on the part of Outreach is in acknowledgement of three facts: first, computer expertise is valuable to our constituency and it is essential for a level of skill to be available not only to the first user but to subsequent users of the MINISIS system; second, learning MINISIS does not end when the training course is completed; and finally, the exponential expansion of the MINISIS constituency with the introduction of a micro-based version and the possibility of other hardware platforms being implemented means that Outreach can no longer operate in the same manner, the responsibility for training falls more heavily onto the MINISIS Resource Centres and the MINISIS Resource People, as well as the independent users.

Standardized classroom materials and procedures for MINISIS presentation and instruction will make the task of the MINISIS Resource Centres and People much easier. The users can be assured of a consistent and reliable presentation. The instruction will work with the documentation and the workbooks distributed with the MINISIS software. This concept builds on the capacity of the users to develop through training and through self-instruction; the documentation will be a set, it will present a whole picture for the users, allowing them to expand their expertise.

Maintenance of the Documents

The design of the manuals appraises methods of maintaining and revising the manuals after they have been distributed. The present method results in two problems: paper is expensive and few installations have printers capable of producing usable documents. Many installations do not print the updated manuals because the cost would be excessive. Many installations print the documentation on-site using accordion-fold computer paper which makes it very difficult to use. The new documentation has to be easily updated to improve on the level of support needed: the better the documentation the lower the support needed in troubleshooting calls and retraining.

Documentation as a Teaching Tool

MINISIS installations have a high turnover because in developing regions, people who have developed any level of expertise with a computer are in high demand. This presents a training problem. The expansion of MINISIS to include the micro-computer opens a sizable market which will strain the Computer Systems Group's ability to train all new users. The aspiration attached to the development of the MINISIS documentation for Version H is to cultivate documentation which will enable users to learn to use MINISIS with minimal training.

Testing

The documents developed to accompany the MINISIS Version H release will be tested in tandem with and independent of the software. The two sets of tests will prolong the life and ensure the achievement of the goals set for the documentation.

Distribution

The plans for distribution of MINISIS Version H will incorporate many of the methods used in previous versions of MINISIS. MRCs and commercial distributors will be used for the main part of the process. The potential for the expanded constituency and the implications of alternate hardware platforms not supported by IDRC raise many issues. The direct and commercial licensing process may be simplified or streamlined. The outcome of the new developments could lead to further decentralization of the distribution methods for MINISIS.

Hardware Platforms, Operating Systems and MINISIS

The initial choice of hardware platform for the MINISIS software remains valid but incomplete given the choices available today. MINISIS Version H will sustain the existing mini-computer market, open up the micro-computer market and enable sophisticated users to migrate the software to other hardware platforms and operating systems by revising several key functions.

Supporting HP 3000 Installations

For many years now, MINISIS has been developing a constituency using the HP 3000 series mini-computer. This computer series was chosen above others because it was reasonably priced with a good customer support system in place internationally. Version H will continue to support this constituency and new installations on this series of computers.

Incorporating the Micro

Advances in technology allow us to expand the hardware base for MINISIS to include the IBM micro-computer. This develops the range of uses for MINISIS to include smaller organizations. Future Systems has set the minimum requirements for the micro-computer platform as:

- IBM PC/AT or higher or 100% compatible
- at least 640K RAM
- free space required to store data files at the ratio of 2:1
- 5 meg hard disk space
- monochrome display terminal (colour monitor is optional)
- 1 or more 3 1/2 or 5 1/4 disk drives

- line printer - if alternate character set processing is used, it should support alternate character sets
- operating system - MS or PC DOS 3.3 or higher - if expanded memory is supported then it should support the LIM specification

Software

The release of MINISIS Version H will continue to allow users to perform all the processes available in Version G. It is intended that the improvements will result in faster operation and simpler processing. The design for Version H leaves openings for new development and the inclusion of individual applications. The restructure of MINISIS internally will, for the most part, be invisible to the user; a faster, cleaner program will allow us to develop in a more systematic way.

The End Result

MINISIS has a long history with IDRC and has reached maturity with Version G. The development process to date has allowed for the creation of a complete redesign which not only encompasses the development to date, but migrates that development to new systems. MINISIS Version H will be better suited to serving the developing regions in the cultivation of information and documentation centres of varying sizes.

Transferring data between MINISIS and Mini-Micro CDS/ISIS -- Using ISO 2709 --

Ed Brandon

Problems associated with the transfer of data between Mini-Micro CDS/ISIS and MINISIS were discussed in two previous issues of the MINISIS Newsletter (*MINISIS/Mini-Micro CDS/ISIS Data Transfer Using ISO-2709, Vol. 5, No. 2*; and *Handling Diacritics and Extended Characters When Transferring Data Between MINISIS and CDS/ISIS Using ISO 2709, Vol. 6, No. 1*). Since the publication of these two related articles, IDRC released version G.00 of MINISIS, which addressed some of the issues dealt with in the first article. In particular, one no longer needs to use a special program to reformat the ISO 2709 data on a microcomputer before it can be input to Mini-

Micro CDS/ISIS (subsequently referred to as simply 'MICRO-ISIS').

The purpose of this article is just to summarize the changes and the points that one should continue to watch out for, and specifically address some of the concerns raised by MINISIS users at the 1988 MUG about problems encountered when data was transferred between the two systems using communication software.

Describing the CD in DATADICT in MINISIS

Header Information

One of the major enhancements to MINISIS made with the G.00 release was the new DATADICT processor, which replaced DATADEF. Aside from providing a new approach to how database definitions are kept in MINISIS, and how the user interfaces with MINISIS to describe these tables, DATADICT also provides a means to define a Correspondence Definition (CD) specifically for exchanging information between MINISIS and MICRO-ISIS databases. One does this by requesting CDS/ISIS at the ISO TYPE field in the CD header screen. This ISO type supports the breaking up of logical ISO-2709 records into physical records of 80 bytes, and the use of the "#" character for both the field separator and the record separator, as required by MICRO-ISIS.

Be sure that you do not change the following two fields in the header:

UNBLOCKED TAPE (Y/N) Y

LENGTH OF BLOCK LENGTH FIELD 0

Field Correspondence Rules

The experience of users has indicated two areas in which problems can arise. The first has to do with the MAXIMUM LENGTH OF ISO FIELD. This entry must be at least 4.

The second problem is the mapping of subfields when non-contiguous field numbers are used for the subfields in MINISIS. For example, field B210 consists of three subfields: B211, B214 and B216. In MICRO-ISIS these three subfields are to be identified with ^a, ^b and ^c, respectively. Fillers need to be provided for the unused subfield identifiers (B212, B213 and B215) under SUBFIELD IDENTIFIERS. Therefore this part of

the CD must be filled in something like: ^a----
^b--^c. Each pair of -- replaces one of the
unused subfield identifiers.

File Equation

When using ISOCONV with a properly-defined
CD, the correct file parameters are provided by
MINISIS. If, however, you provide your own FILE
command to MPE, be sure that the REC attribute
is kept as shown:

REC=,,V,ASCII

Handling Diacritics

Care must be taken when using diacritics, especially
when the circumflex accent (^) is used. For a
complete reference on how best to handle
diacritics, refer to the article in the MINISIS
Newsletter Vol. 6, No. 1.

Transferring the Data

Inevitably, one will need to use communication
software to transfer data between the two
computers. The most common softwares to use are
Reflection and AdvanceLink, both of which run on
IBM PCs and compatibles, and support the transfer
of data files to and from the HP 3000. These two
softwares are particularly well suited for the task
because of their direct support of the HP 3000
environment.

But care must be taken with the settings to ensure
that:

- tab characters will not be inserted in the data in
place of one or more spaces; and
- records with space characters at the end (i.e. in
the 80th column position) do not get shortened.

Should the communication software make either of
the above changes to the data, the ISO 2709 record
will no longer be valid, since the physical length of
the record will have changed. This could impact
MICRO-ISIS's ability to read any of the records
presented to it.

MARC Records

IDRC has no experience in trying to transfer
MARC records from MINISIS to MICRO-ISIS, or
vice versa. However, questions raised by MINISIS
users indicate there is some interest in doing just
that. Unfortunately, there is no direct support for

MARC in MICRO-ISIS. For example, the user has
no access to the ISO 2507 record header.
Therefore, it is best to consider that MARC
records cannot be exchanged between the two
systems, unless one has access to a computer
programmer, or uses imaginative means to pass
information that does not actually conform to
MARC standards.

From our users:

ALDOC and the AMUG

The fourth Annual Arab Minisis Users' Meeting
was held in Amman (Jordan) at Abdelhameed
Shoman Foundation from 6 to 8 June 1989.
31 participants representing the following
institutions using Minisis in the Arab region took
part to this meeting:

- Ministry of industry - Iraq
- APTI Iraq
- Beirzeit University - West Bank
- Qatar University - Qatar
- AGSFC - Qatar
- KFIIRS - Saudi Arabia
- King Fahd Library - Saudi Arabia
- Islamic Development Bank - Saudi-Arabia
- ONAREP - Morocco
- AL FARABI Centre - Iraq
- CND - Morocco
- Royal Scientific Association - Jordan

The following main agenda items were debated by
participants:

- Discussion of ALDOC activities report
covering the MINISIS version G; training
activities; technical assistance; Minisis manuals
in arabic, site visits undertaken etc ...
- Statement of the implementation of third
meeting recommendations
- Minisis distribution and support policy
- Presentation of the participating institutions
papers
- Workshops to discuss specific technical
problems facing participants

- Discussion of Minisis manuals in Arabic being prepared by ALDOC.

Following recommendations were adopted by participants:

- * call upon IDRC and ALDOC to multiply efforts to promote Minisis system in the Arab region
- * Call upon ALDOC to continue its negotiations with IDRC to find appropriate solutions to the problem of Minisis distribution in the Arab Gulf region without resorting to commercial agents.
- * Call upon ALDOC to provide /supply a unified data-base structure and urge Minisis users to use while designing Dbs to facilitate data exchange.
- * Urge ALDOC to distribute manuals and system related documentation in Arabic in their draft form to users
- * Call upon IDRC to make available /supply utilities within Minisis to enable users data transfer between Minisis and microcomputers IBM compatible, such as advance link.
- * Call upon IDRC to intergrate the loan fonction to Minisis processors
- * Urge IDRC to find appropriate solutions to the problems of Minisis distribution in the Arab Gulf countries without resorting to commercial agents and within the scope of existing cooperation with ALDOC
- * Call upon users to contribute to the newsletter published by ALDOC
- * Call Minisis users in each Arab country to find a Minisis users association.

Version H Conceptual Diagram

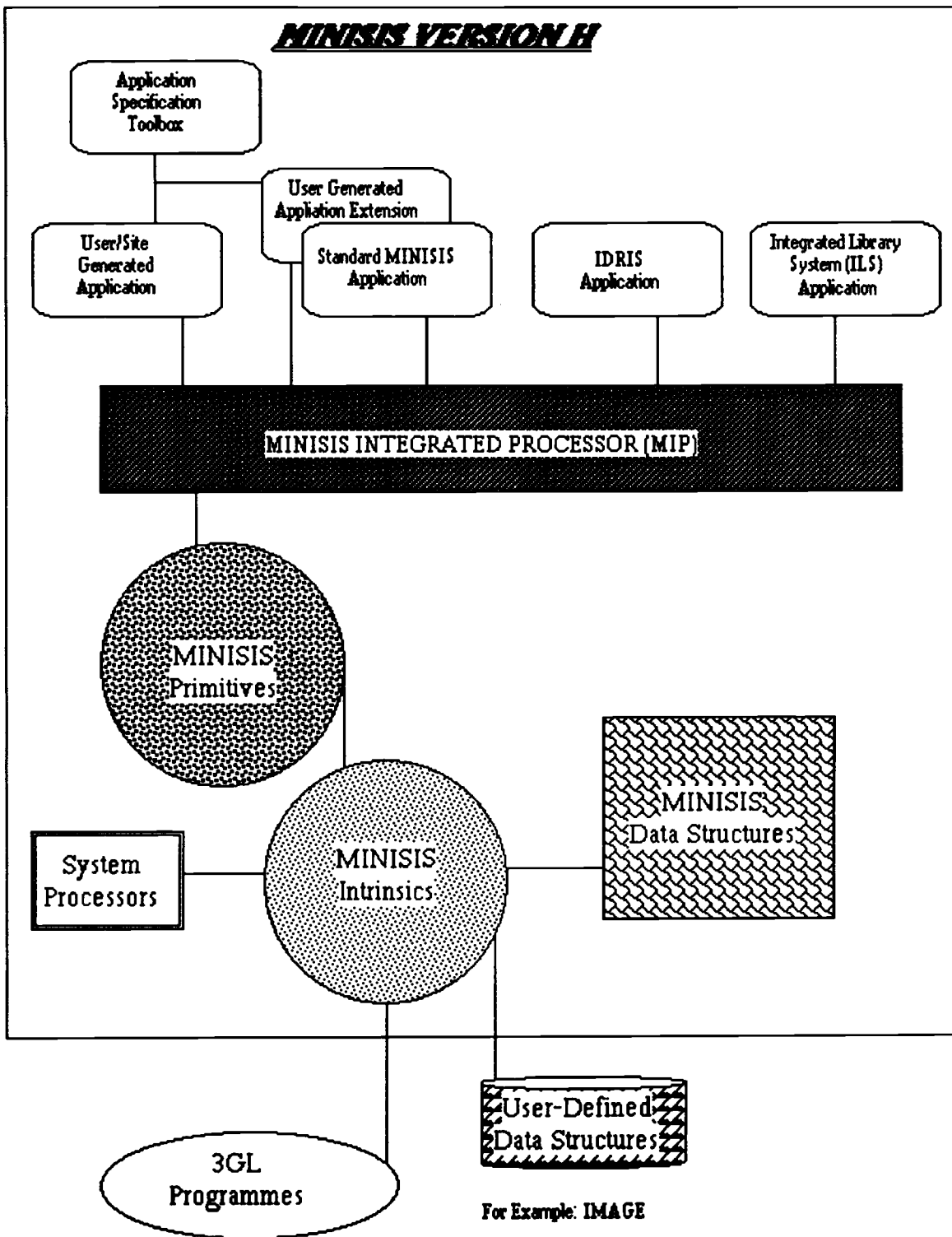
The diagram included in this newsletter is a conceptual representation of MINISIS Version H. Everything inside the largest box labelled *MINISIS (VERSION H)* is what users receive on the release tape.

The first level of MINISIS is the *user interface* which is represented by a series of *application specifications*. MINISIS Version H will come with the *Standard MINISIS Application* and the *Application Specification Toolbox*; there is the option of the *IDRIS Application Specification* as well. Later releases of MINISIS will include an *Integrated Library System Application Specification*. All of these are discussed briefly in *The News About the New View*, included in this newsletter. This upper level is what the user interacts with.

Below this level are the MINISIS INTEGRATED PROCESSORS or MIP. These are the collection of functions which, in previous versions of MINISIS, were isolated into the various processors. They are activated by the application specifications and, in turn, interact with the MINISIS primitives.

The primitives lead to the intrinsics, which are also accessible from external programs through the MINISIS High Level Intrinsics documented in the third volume of the MINISIS manuals. The intrinsics actually access and manipulate the data structures (either MINISIS data structures or user-defined data structures).

The more technical aspects of MINISIS necessary for satisfactory use of the software will be discussed, along with the applications and the user view. We look forward to questions which arise and hope to be able to communicate our work and ideas to the MINISIS constituency.



MINISIS USERS SURVEY

Name: _____

Company/Department: _____

A. Types of Applications

1. Why do you use MINISIS?

- a. How many databases do you use?
- b. Which processors do you use?
- c. How often do you use each processor?
- d. Which combinations of processors do you use most often?

2. How long have you used MINISIS?

B. Physical Environment

1. Do you have your own copy of the MINISIS documentation?

2. If you share a copy, is it readily available to you?

3. Where do you keep the documentation?

C. Documentation and Training

1. a. Have you received formal training?

b. If yes, from whom?

c. How long was the training?

d. Did you receive training documentation?

2. Did you receive MINISIS documentation?

3. How often did you use the documentation at first?

-
4. How often do you use it now?
5. a. In general, what type of documentation do you prefer?
- detailed documentation (users guides)
 - brief instructions (reference guides)
 - tutorial
- b. Why?
6. Where or to whom do you go when you have a problem using MINISIS?
7. Do you use the documentation to solve a problem or to learn a new task?
8. a. Is the language easy to understand?
- b. If not, what do you find difficult?
9. a. Is information easy to find?
- b. If not, what problems do you have?
- too much detail?
 - too technical?
 - information missing?
 - poorly organized?
10. Would you find any of the following useful?
- glossary of terms
 - index
 - step-by-step procedures
 - quick reference guide
 - question and answer section
 - example sessions
 - tutorial
 - diagrams/pictures
11. Which, if any, sections of the documents have you or any of your co-workers re-written for internal distribution?/ for your own use?

12. Please prioritize the following according to which you would consider the most helpful in documentation (D) and training (T) materials:

D T

- pictorial representations
- general concepts (an overview)
- concrete examples / exercises

D. General Information

1. What version of MINISIS do you use?

2. Do you have updated documentation for that version?

3. How familiar are you with computers?

4. a. What other software packages have you used?

b. With other packages, have you used documentation that you found well-written and easy to use?

c. What did you like about it?

5. What is your job title?

6. What is your age group?

 under 30
 30 to 45
 over 45

7. a. How many years of education have you completed?

b. What was your area(s) of study?

8. a. What is your primary working language?

b. If the documentation is not written in your primary working language, is it a problem?

9. Please indicate which of the following tasks you perform when using MINISIS:

- selecting / creating records
- searching the database / selected records (using HITFILES)
- modifying and adding data within the selected records
- creating and editing specifications for PRINT, SORT, and COMPUTE
- listing and managing specifications for databases using PRINT, SORT, and COMPUTE
- formatting / printing reports
- sorting data
- computing data
- using RENUM
- importing and exporting data and database definitions
- creating and editing database definitions
- managing inverted files
- managing the database
- defining user profiles (including security levels)
- specifying user profiles
- performing diagnostics on corrupted files using a utility
- recovering lost data / files
- defining system parameters
- generating system statistics
- establishing system profiles for security
- other (please specify)

9. Do you or any of your co-workers perform programming functions using MINISIS?

E. Suggestions/Comments

MINISIS BIBLIOGRAPHY

Copies of a maximum of five of the following publications can be obtained free of charge by writing to MINISIS Outreach, Information Sciences Division, IDRC, P.O. Box 8500, Ottawa, Canada K1G 3H9

A.I.D. development information program
1984 MINISIS Users' Group Meeting, Addis Ababa, Oct. 1984
ISN: 103

Agricultural information bank for Asia in MINISIS
Clauna, Lucina 1983 MINISIS Users' Group Meeting,
Wageningen, Oct. 1983
ISN: 112

BAS, an automated library system based on MINISIS for
Dutch agricultural libraries *
Godfrey, Dr. C.A. 1980 IAALD World Congress,
Manila, 3-7 March 1980
ISN: 1

BAS-CARDEX
May 1983 MINISIS Users' Group Meeting, Wageningen,
October 1983
ISN: 55

Coaching association uses MINISIS for sports data base
English ISN: 75

Computer applications in libraries - the IDRC experience
in the development of library automation
Daneliuk, F.A. 1981 Prepared for Singapore Professional
Centre Convention, April 1981
ISN: 3

Computer applications in some libraries and information
institutes in China
Jiang, Xiang-Dong Liu, Xiao-Quing
ISN: 70

Computer processing of non-Roman scripts
Daneliuk, F.A. Lee, R.C. 1981
ISN: 4

Computerisation at the NUS library
Hochstadt, Peggy Wai Chee
ISN: 58

Current research in library & information science
September 1983
ISN: 57

Design and implementation of a data base system for
bibliographic applications on a minicomputer
Daneliuk, Faye 1979
English ISN: 92

Design of an SDI module for the MINISIS data base
system
Page, W.S. 1983 International Conference on the
Application of Mini- and
Micro-Computers in Information, Documentation and
Libraries
ISN: 22

Development data bases : use in Canada via MINISIS
Audet, M. Henry, S.E. 1982 ASIS Western Canada
Chapter 14th Annual Meeting, Vancouver, 1982
ISN: 19

Directory of information management software for
libraries, information centers, record centers
Cibbarelli, P. Tenopir, C.
Kazlauskas, E.J. 1983
ISN: 46

Electronic Net
McNicoll, A.
Arabic (with English translation) ISN: 54

Establishing A Public Domain Data Base: The
CARISPLAN Experience
Chambers, Audrey 1987 Seminar on Packet-Switching,
Kingston Jamaica
English ISN: 141

Generalised profile of an internationally-oriented
information management system for libraries and
information centres with MINISIS as a case study
Godfrey, C.A.
ISN: 35

Guidelines for the Building of Authority Files in
Development-Information Systems
Di Lauro, A. Sly, M. October 1985
English ISN: 136

IDRC Library's use of MINISIS
Sly, Maureen 1983 MINISIS Users' Group Meeting,
Wageningen, Oct. 1983
ISN: 96

Information CB
Anon
French ISN: 74

Information retrieval and library management : an
interactive minicomputer system
Daneliuk, F.A. 1978
Un système interactif sur min-ordinateur pour la recherche
documentaire et la gestion de bibliothèques
ISN: 25

International information system on conditions of work
Stoddart, Linda
ISN: 45

International inventory of software packages in the
information field
Keren, C. Sered, I. July 1983
ISN: 47

Introducción al MINISIS
Baumol, W.J. Batey Blackman, S.A. 1984
Spanish. ISN: 134

Introduction to MINISIS
Campbell, M. Thompson, D. 1981
Introduction à MINISIS
ISN: 9

Le système MINISIS à l'institut du monde arabe
Peccatte, Rabia Francais
ISN: 140

Library automation at the National University of Singapore
Tan, Chee Kiow Quah, Jill 1983 Proceedings of the Sixth
Congress of Southeast Asian Librarians
ISN: 48

Library information at the National University of
Singapore
Kiow, Tan Chee Quah, Jill
ISN: 68

Library technology reports
White, Howard S.
ISN: 64

LOANS
Kuperus, Age Jan Schuurs, Bert 1983 MINISIS Users'
Group Meeting, Wageningen, Oct. 1983
ISN: 83

Logiciel pour mini-ordinateur dédié : MINISIS
Chaumier, J.
French ISN: 65

Manual for the preparation of records in
development-information systems *
Morin-Labatut, G. Sly, M. 1983
ISN: 26

Minicomputers in libraries, 1981-82 : the era of distributed
systems
Grosch, Audrey
ISN: 16

MINISIS/UNIMARC Project Final Report
Woods, Elaine W. 1988
ISN: 142

MINISIS / UNIMARC interface: its impact on libraries
Godfrey, C. A. Sherwood, M. Graham, G. [1984] IFLA
General Conference, August 1984.
English. ISN: 131

MINISIS : a minicomputer based bibliographic system *
Edwards, A. Wild, K. 1979 Spring meeting of the
Association of Information and Dissemination Centers,
Ottawa, 3-5 June 1979
ISN: 33

MINISIS : un progiciel pour l'exploitation multilingue des
bases de données documentaires *
Ndiaye, G. 1981 Colloque international - l'avenir du
français dans les publications et les communications
scientifiques et techniques
French ISN: 31

MINISIS and recent advances in the theory of data base
systems
Daneliuk, F.A. Page, W.S. 1981
ISN: 18

MINISIS Users' Group meet for sixth time
ISN: 76

MINISIS: a minicomputer based bibliographic system *
Daneliuk, F.A. Edwards, A. 1978 10th Annual Meeting of
American Society of Information Science, Western Canada
Chapter, Winnipeg, Canada, Sept. 1978
ISN: 6

PHOCUS
Hendriks, Klaus Hopkins, Diane 1985
English and French ISN: 73

Planning for library automation using MINISIS *
Sly, M. 1981
Planification de l'automatisation des bibliothèques à l'aide
de MINISIS
Planificacion de Bibliotecas Automatizadas Empleando el
Sistema MINISIS
ISN: 10

Proceedings of the eighth annual MINISIS Users' Group
Meeting
McKercher, R. March, 1987 Eighth Annual MINISIS
Users' Group Meeting
English/French ISN: 139

Proceedings of the fifth annual meeting of the MINISIS
Users' Group 1984
ISN: 53

Proceedings of the fourth annual meeting of the MINISIS
Users' Group
Campbell, M. 1982 Fourth meeting of the MINISIS Users'
Group, 21-23 Sept. 1983, Rabat
ISN: 23

Proceedings of the Seventh Annual Meeting of the MINISIS Users' Group IDRC April, 1986 MINISIS Users' Group Meeting, Washington, 1985
English ISN: 138

Proceedings of the sixth annual meeting of the MINISIS Users' Group. March, 1986 MINISIS Users' Group Meeting 1984, Addis Ababa, Oct 1-4 1984
ISN: 137

Proceedings of the third annual meeting of the MINISIS Users' Group 1981 MINISIS Users' Group Meeting, Geneva, Oct. 1981
ISN: 130

Processing Chinese characters within MINISIS *
Koach, D. 1984
ISN: 52

PUDOC's current awareness service (SDI)
van der Burg, Jan Leemreize, Frans 1983 MINISIS Users' Group meeting, Wageningen, Oct. 1983
English ISN: 79

Que recìe ce nom?
Demandez-le à MINISIS
Anon
French ISN: 28

Report on MINISIS / UNIMARC study *
Woods, Elaine Nov 1983
English ISN: 81

RIDAQ : le réseau d'information documentaire automatisé d'Hydro-Québec
Lalande, Louise
French ISN: 71

Role of the IDRC Library in the design of MINISIS
Sly, M. 1983
ISN: 21

Role played by MINISIS in STIC-CMP's information retrieval
Jiang, Xiang-Dong 1984 MINISIS Users' Group Meeting, Addis Ababa, Oct. 1984
English ISN: 78

Setting up a term bank using minicomputers
Alvey, John
ISN: 63

Sistema MINISIS en Colombia
Ramirez de Diaz, M.T. 1982
MINISIS system in Colombia
ISN: 30

Sourcebook : small systems software and services sourcebook
Koolish, Ruth K. 1982
ISN: 69

Sports, Computers and Books
Chiasson, G.
ISN: 32

Systemhouse software gives HP 3000 link to Tèlidon Anon
ISN: 93

Système ESAR : modalités d'application et traitement documentaire informatisé de jeux et jouets à la Centrale des bibliothèques du Québec
Denise Garon
French ISN: 59

Technical workshop on the MINISIS alternate character set facility
Lee, Richard 1982 MINISIS Users' Group Meeting, Rabat, Sept. 1982
ISN: 107

The impact of new information technology in the developing
Thorpe, P. 1984 Database '83, Budapest, 6-8 June 1983
English ISN: 133

Towards an online integrated system at the National University of Singapore Library
Hochstadt, Peggy Wai Chee Quah, Jill Ong, Gim Hong
41st Congress Hong Kong
ISN: 62

UNIMARC version of MINISIS
Avram, H. D. [1984] IFLA General Conference, 21 August 1984
English ISN: 132

* available in microfiche