

## 5.4 Hardware and Software Standards

### 5.4.1 Why We Have Them

As the Department has a large number of micro-computers, some procedures have been developed to control the acquisition of systems, particularly in terms of hardware and software standards. With only a small staff to maintain these systems, it is impossible for the Department to be expert on a wide variety of hardware and software. Therefore, a shortlist has been developed that meets most user needs and departmental requirements.

There are also a number of operational reasons to adhere to standards.

#### **FASTFACTS**

#### *Why Standards?*

- People moving from one position to another will already be familiar with the systems and software and will be able to get up to speed quickly;
- Text and data can be shared with other divisions and users, through systems such as Keyword and formats such as DCA, DIF and ASCII;
- We can provide expert understanding of a limited number of packages, drivers, and interfaces;
- We can more easily stock software, supplies, and spare parts; and
- We get discounts on volume purchases of hardware, training, and especially software.

### 5.4.2 Approved Micro Hardware

The Department has adopted IBM compatibility as its microcomputer hardware standard. Our current definition of compatibility is at the software level, therefore a machine must be able to run MS-DOS and industry-standard software (Lotus 1-2-3, dBASE III, etc.).

At missions, the primary concerns are the availability of reliable service for IBM-compatible equipment, user training, and the production of material in the local language when necessary. Wherever possible, the mission should select equipment from manufacturers with a broad international market. All microcomputer purchases must be approved by MISX.