

7. One solution is to ignore pre-assigned numbers and to assign a unique information system number to documents destined for storage within the system. The assignment of these numbers could be done just prior to entering the system, requiring controlled entry. Three system entry points are envisioned; the Mail Room, the Comcentre and the Bureaux. An initial screening in each of these centres will be required to determine which items will enter the system and to then assign the relevant numbers.
8. In order to best control the assignment of numbers, all material to be numbered could be passed through a central location. This would probably not be the BICO since it might result in documents being misplaced between the point of entry and the ultimate designation or multiple assignments of numbers to duplicate items. In addition, a delay is introduced into the system. A better systems solution is to delegate the task to each entry point.
9. Minimal delay and immediate numbering will result. All telegraphic communications could be numbered by the Comcentre, all incoming mail would be numbered by the Mail Room and internally-generated material would be numbered by the originating Bureaux.
10. The problem of assigning unique numbers now reduces to providing these areas with numbers from a central control point. The simplest and least expensive way is to allocate blocks of numbers to the various areas as needed, possibly on a daily basis in amounts equivalent to an estimated day's requirements. Carryover or number shortages might, however, present a problem.
11. A more sophisticated way is to provide each area with automatic numbering devices which are centrally integrated and controlled. On demand the next number in an overall sequence is provided. Such a device could just as easily be polled by a computer as an individual. In fact, the central control device might even be a computer. As a precautionary measure, the block allocation principle could be reverted to in case of equipment breakdown.

Controlled Entry

12. A requirement for controlled entry into the system is obvious from the previous section. Since each item is immediately subjected to numbering, the existence of an item is known. This is insufficient control, however, as loss of an item leaves behind only the fact of its loss. It would be necessary to capture a few basic identification facts about the item to enable a request for a replacement to be made.
13. This can be accomplished by holding the original at the entry point and forwarding a copy only, or by manually recording some facts on a form for batch entry into the system. More sophisticated means, such as direct entry into a computer-controlled inventory, are, of course, the most desirable as they would provide immediate and more secure entry and would completely integrate with the proposed system.

Subject Files

14. A basic premise of the proposed system is that subject filing is useful and should be retained.