

JOHANNESBURG OR GROUP

NEWS AND VIEWS

NOVEMBER 1968

(YOUR NEWS AND VIEWS WILL BE WELCOMED AND PUBLISHED)

NEXT MEETING

Chairman: Mr. G. van der Veer
Speaker: Mr. Aubrey Cohen

Mr. Cohen, who is by training an Electrical Engineer, has been involved with computers for the last nine years, mainly at I. B. M. He has received training in the United States as well as in Germany. He is currently working on consulting and general computer processing with Sigma Data Corporation.

Subject: "SIMON"

SIMON is a series of general Fortran subroutines for use in simulation. The talk will consist of an introduction to simulation, followed by an introduction to SIMON by means of a number of examples.

Date: November 20

Time: 8 p. m. - 9.30 p. m.

Venue: A smaller lecture theatre has been chosen to encourage participation.

It is: Room G101,
1st Floor,
North Wing,
Mining and Geology Block,
Witwatersrand University.

- Agenda:
1. Chairman Welcome
 2. Report from SIG leaders
 3. "SIMON"
 4. Questions
 5. Matters of Special Interest
 6. Tea and Talk

Next Meeting + 1

Speaker: Mr. Rex Border
Subject: 'An Introduction to Linear Programming and how to use it'
Date: January 15
Time: 8 p. m.

Last Meeting

Dave Masterson gave an interesting talk on introducing OR to the Tube Investments Company in the U.K. He described how a small team produced a model to overcome the production planning problems on a steel tube mill. The model considered the two main objectives of customer satisfaction and maximum production.

We were shown how the model was implemented and how the path was paved for a further and deeper study of the problem. The pitfalls that await us in an OR project were highlighted; in particular, the difficulty of collecting and analysing data and of finding a classical solution.

SIG Activities

The purpose of the Special Interest Groups is to help people to work together in depth, independently of our monthly meetings, on their special interests or problems. If you are interested in any of the activities outlined below, please contact the SIG leader. If you would like to lead a group in an activity not yet catered for, please inform any member of the committee.

Cybernetics: Mr. Mike Roberts
Telephone 838-3581

Wiener has defined Cybernetics as "the science of control and communication, in the animal and the machine". If we interpret "the animal and the machine" to include business organisations, its relevance to OR becomes clear.

The initial objectives of the Cybernetics SIG will be to learn about the tools provided by Cybernetic theory in order to apply them in the study of business enterprises, especially with reference to their computer applications.

Two references are:

"Management Cybernetics" by Stafford Beer, and "Introduction to Cybernetics" by W. Ross-Ashby.

Dynamic Programming: Mr. Tom Rozwadowski
Telephone 706-1373

Econometric Models: Mr. John Joslin
Telephone 836-8321

Forecasting: Dr. John Ryder
Telephone 838-3581

The next meeting will be at 5.30 p. m. on the 18th November at:

4 Stevens Road,
Blairgowrie

At the two meetings held to date, various topics have been discussed, with the object of choosing a suitable research project. Possible subjects are: the advantages of using a gamma distribution rather than the normal distribution, in setting safety stock; the methods by which customer forward bookings can be incorporated in the forecast (English Electric - UK, have an interesting algorithm); the forecasting of share prices on the South African market.

It was felt that, whichever topic is chosen, it would be an advantage to deal with problems that occur in practice, and with real data. To achieve this, we are looking for a company that will give the SIG access to their data, and allow us to present the research results to the OR group.

Simulation: Mr. Gert van der Veer
Telephone 713-4201

A meeting was held at I. B. M. on the 4th November. Eight people were present to hear a talk by Mr. Charles Sankey on "A Scheduling Problem". He described a case in which simulation was used to optimize machine scheduling. After detailed discussion on this subject, the topic of railway single line traffic simulation was discussed briefly.

The agenda for the next meeting is:

1. A talk by Mr. Buttery on the work he is doing for AE & CI.
2. A discussion of Mr. Aubrey Cohen's talk on SIMON.

It will be at 4 p. m. on the 9th December at Niven House, Braamfontein, in the rooms of SIGMA Data Corporation.

Statistical Quality Control: Dr. Sichel
Telephone 724-8172

OR in the Construction Industry: Mr. V. Shaw
Telephone 74-6011

Current Events

The NATO advanced study institute will be conducting the 1969 International Summer School on Integer and Non-linear Programming at:

Ile De Bendor,
Bandol,
France

on 8 - 20 June, 1969.

National Council for Quality and Reliability - 13th Annual Conference: European Organ. for Quality Control - Prague 25 - 27 August, 1969.

University of Strathclyde - A Symposium on OR in Maintenance 16 - 18 December, 1968.

General

To cover the cost of news letters and incidental expenses, a voluntary contribution of R2-00 per member would be appreciated. Please address your contributions to P. O. Box 3214, Johannesburg.

There will not be a meeting during December.

National Co-ordinating Committee

Dr. Sichel	724-8172
Mr. Pirow	836-1166
Mr. Joslin	836-8321
Dr. Mendelowitz	
Dr. Rudolf	
Professor Jacobsz	
Professor Venter	
Mr. du Plessis	

Johannesburg Operations Research Group Committee

Mr. R. T. Rozwadowski	(Chairman)	706-1373
Dr. J. A. Ryder	(Vice Chairman)	838-3581
Mr. M. C. F. King	(Honorary Secretary)	25-2124
Mr. D. Masterson	(Honorary Secretary)	23-6547
Mr. M. P. Roberts		838-3581
Mr. G. van der Veer		713-4201
Mr. D. Hawkings		724-1311

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