The Console Room

This is the area in which all the computers and computer systems are "driven" by the computer operators. Also sharing the area is the **Service Line** which is a Help Desk facility, providing a human interface to the user community.

Operations

As the name implies, the Console Room contains the **main** consoles for all the various computers and computer systems within our jurisdiction.

From here, changes can be made to the physical aspects of the system such as stopping, changing or starting various components within the computer system. Computer storage can also be manipulated, various computer devices can have their status changed and many other similar functions can be carried out.

The various software systems that we offer are also started, stopped or changed in accordance with daily needs. These systems are all different in their own right and provide different facilities

for the programmers and physicists who use them. Just as a car needs to be started, steered and have its gears changed, in order to meet varying road conditions, so do these systems need to be started, stopped, and have their various parameters changed to meet the varying demand of work they do.

The Cray has its own software system (UNICOS) and this, although linked, is completely independent from the system (VM/XA) that runs within the 3090. Also within the 3090 are other systems (MVS and SLAC) which are completely independent from each other. All these systems need stopping and starting from time to time in order to allow

physical servicing and alterations to take place on the computer itself.

In addition, all these systems are themselves subject to updates and fine tuning which cannot be carried out while in *production,* i.e. while people are actually using them.

It can be seen therefore, that much "driving" is necessary in order to keep the system up to date and available as much as possible.

All this is carried out using *command language.* These are commands typed in by operators or systems programmers, each command having its own particular function.

The Console Room could be described as the "Nerve Centre" for the whole system and copies of all documentation and manuals are kept in this area for use when problems arise.

Service Line

Service Line is a Help Desk facility and deals with all incoming calls about the central computers. These calls range from programming queries from users, to questions regarding availability of equipment, individual requests and any other questions which relate to the general computing environment.

There are usually one or two people at the desk during the normal working day. They receive all calls, and if they cannot resolve a problem immediately, pass it on to the relevant expert.

They are also responsible for input to various statistical databases and produce associated documentation used for planning and organisation.

Operators and Service Line work closely together, as many of the calls require a quick response, such as restarting a link from the computer to an external device such as a printer in another part of the Laboratory, or another computer somewhere on the continent! In this way, we try to offer the best possible service to the user.