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REPORTS OF THE WORKING GROUPS

REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE WORKING GROUP ON TOPONYMIC
DATA FILES AND GAZETTEERS

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REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE WORKING GROUP ON
TOPONYMIC DATA FILES AND GAZETTEERS

I have not much to add to my communication included in the Newsletter of May 1995.

I have written a number of times requesting the results of the questionnaire sent to UNGEGN members seeking details of equipment and methods employed in the handling of geographical names. I have not been able to obtain a reply to my communications. However, as I stated in the above-mentioned communication and at the Seventeenth Session of the Group of Experts, the data provided by the UK is now so out-of-date as to be valueless and I assume that to be the case with most other nations who provided details for the questionnaire.

The most prominent development of recent times appears to be the Geographical Names Processing System. We, in the UK, are hoping to acquire such a system.

If we count all the letter combinations, that is to say a letter or a letter plus accent or diacritical sign, modified letters and letter combinations, the total extended Roman alphabet exceeds 400 characters which accounts for the deployment of multiple keyboards. The question exercising my mind is whether there is some way of adapting keyboards and reducing their number by switching from one set of letters to another, thereby reducing the number of separate keyboards. I have received not a single response to my communication in the Newsletter of May 1995.

I hope Experts will agree that there is scope for:-

1. Exchange of information on name changes;
2. The supply of up-to-date information of administrative data, together with the means of plotting boundaries from map source data at an appropriate scale.

Ideally, name changes should include the former name and a description of the named feature as well as the location to a high order of accuracy.