

19th December, 1960

Professor D. F. Lawden,
University of Canterbury.

Dear Professor Lawden,

I enclose material relevant to the 1620 computer and preparations for its installation. The timetable of events assumes that installation would take place in January 1962 which is the original IBM estimate.

Just before the weekend I was informed by the IBM Christchurch Manager, Mr A. J. Henley that they may be able to get us a machine originally ordered by Australia, October next. Frank Henderson and I agree that this would be most desirable from a user point of view in that the long vacation would be available for getting the feel of the machine and trying out programs. IBM want to know our feeling on the matter as soon as possible and not later than the beginning of February. As far as I can see the only possible danger is that the card input-output unit which we want but which is not yet on the contract (which at present specifies paper tape) may not arrive in time for the main machine. I am doubtful if Dr Llewellyn will be prepared to take any action on a modification of the contract until the Council meets again in February. This may still be time enough and I don't think we have anything to lose by asking IBM to try to get us the machine by October.

Frank will be seeing Dr Llewellyn within the next day or two and will pass on this information unless you would prefer to discuss it earlier with him yourself. If the machine does come in October, most of the events included in the timetable (but not the seminar and programming courses) will have to be advanced.

Sincerely,

B. R. Penfold

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