

Repair Centre Focus

Issue

27

September
1997



In this issue
we take a look at the TSD repair centre and see how it operates as an important arm to ROCC's hardware maintenance business.

Once depicted as living like sardines in a tin, the repair centre's new home at Maxwell Way is somewhat small to their previous abode.

The centre and its staff play a vital role in ensuring that PCs, monitors, laser printers and other peripherals which cannot be fixed by customer engineers whilst on site are repaired quickly and efficiently.

However, the life of the centre's supervisor **Paul Bentley** and his staff is not an easy one, compounded by the continual advance of PC technology.

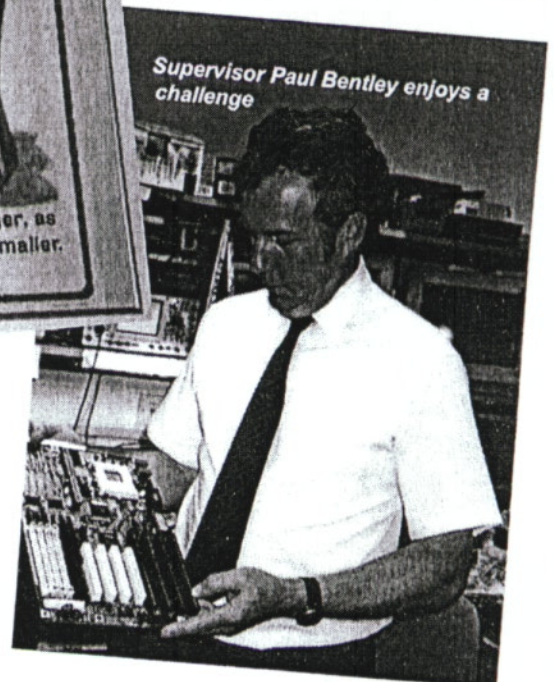
Paul's day starts at 08.30am. His first task is to allocate every repair engineer with a complete day's workload. This is carried out on the real-time Service Management system. Each job is prioritised and, as the system relies upon serial number tracking, the engineer knows exactly the part to work on.

The next job is to sign off the previous afternoon's repairs. As an engineer completes a repair, as well as keying the repair information, components replaced and time taken to carry out the work, the repair status is changed to indicate a completed job. Paul prints out this list and confirms that the details on the system match those of the actual item repaired.

"Our aim," said Paul, "is to repair all the items that are returned to us ourselves. However, we realise that this is not always possible. In the main we only send items to another specialist company, in many cases the manufacturer, when it has been impossible to source the components necessary to effect a repair."

*The repair team,
l to r: Paul, Andrew, Dave, Dawn, Ian, Philippa,
Reg, Arthur, Alan, Frank & Ian.
On holiday at the time, Frank Dargan.*

Another reason for contracting out would be where a batch of monitors comes in and it is cheaper to send them out to a specialist company that has the software necessary for testing and setting up. This involves reprogramming electronically programmable chips (EPROMS and EEPROMS) and is more cost effective than ROCC investing in expensive software to do the job.



Supervisor Paul Bentley enjoys a challenge

The repair group will also repair items that are still under warranty. As the customer has taken out an on-site maintenance contract, ROCC is committed to returning the user to full working status within the contracted fix time. "If a customer does not have, or is not able to supply, proof of purchase," Paul told Newsline,

"this means that we, as a company cannot benefit from any warranty. It is a great way of becoming familiar with new and up-to-date equipment. We do, however, have to continually purchase new technical manuals and information to stay on top of things."

Frank on lasers



As Newline was interviewing Paul, repair engineer Dawn Judd came into the office stating that HP's technical support desk could not assist

and the printer in question would have to be sent to them direct as no service manuals were available. Frustrating but the best option available to effect the quickest repair.

Before an item is declared

Beyond Economical Repair (BER) by Paul there are stringent criteria to be met. This includes a complex equation that takes into account the value of a replacement item, the cost of components required to effect a repair, the availability of these components and the estimated time to make the repairs.

Monitor supremos: Arthur, Reg & Andy.



For low value items an engineer must assess whether the fault can be rectified within an hour. Based upon this assessment, Paul will make a decision, within the limits described above, whether or not to proceed with the repair.

If the repair is not viable, the item is scrapped if it is owned by ROCC, or declared BER. If it is owned by the customer then all customers who have a BER item are offered a replacement at cost.

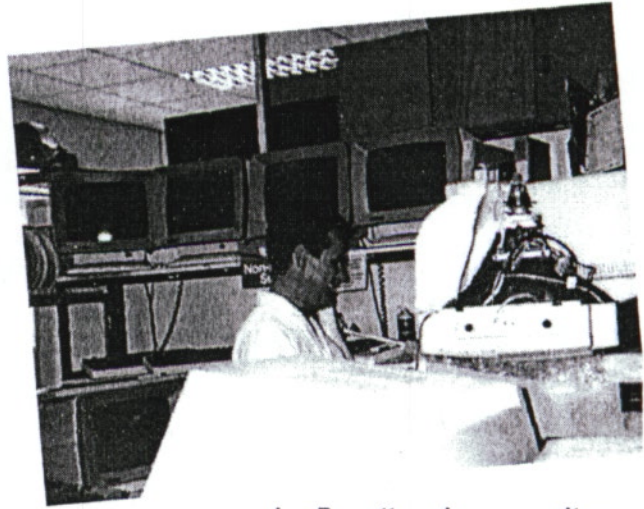
But now let us look at how our repair engineers work and their particular responsibilities in the department.

Details of all items being returned for repair are keyed into the Service Management system and used by Paul for job allocation. Work is allocated with specific priorities. The engineers access the system via three PCs located in the repair centre to obtain their workload for the day. This allocation is checked each time that the engineer begins his next job in case there are any changes in priority. They open up a worksheet for the job and log all the parts used and time taken to finish the repair.

the team at work...

The laser printer whizz kid is senior repair engineer **Frank Pullen**.

Monitor supremos **Reg Wood** (moving onto printers soon), **Arthur Rayner**, **Andrew Owen** and **Ian Barrett**, who also looks after ROCC CLASSIC systems and goods inward testing of monitors repaired outside.



Ian Barrett works on monitors and Classic systems

Queen of the ESSNET lottery scanning machines and Photo-Me passport machines, **Philippa Wassell** also repairs tape streamers, disk drives, PC boards and plinths.

Philippa at her bench



Maestro **Ian Willmott** works on the latter two, as does **Frank Dargan** who has the added responsibility of repairing laptops.

Dawn Judd's skills are concentrated upon inkjet, dot matrix and other impact printers. Whilst these are soak testing, she will also work on PC hard drives, video cards and PC simms.

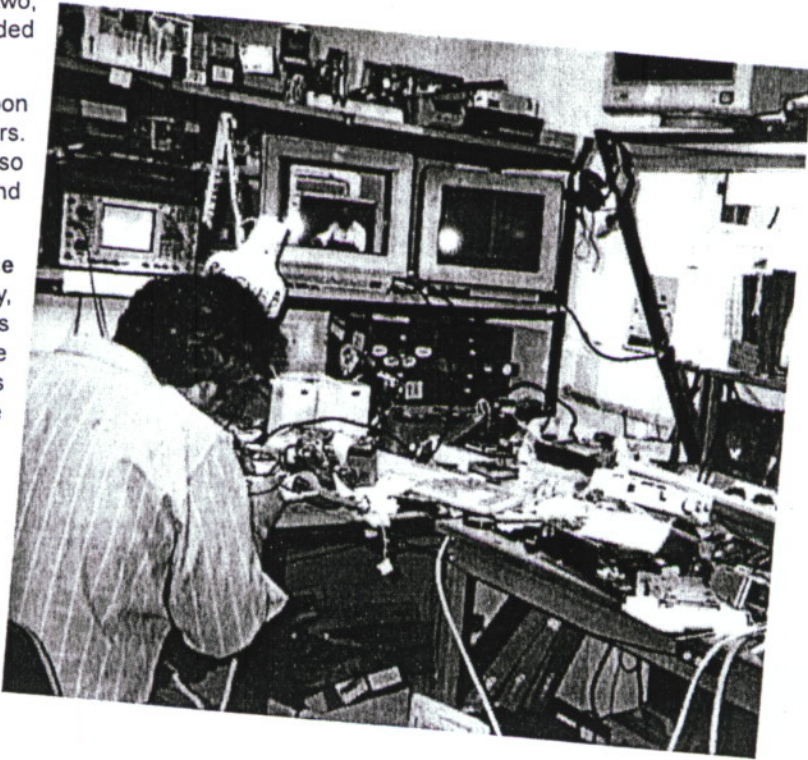
King of power supplies is **Alan Prentice** who also works on CLASSIC and, finally, **Bryan Driffill**, the latest recruit, who is currently seconded in a PC support role at Horsham-based Novartis. On his return he will work on printers alongside Dawn.

speedy repairs...

The centre's technical support engineer is **Dave Imray**. He is primarily responsible for assisting the engineers with technical matters to provide a speedy repair. Other duties are sourcing components or their equivalents, and ensuring that the management system is kept updated.

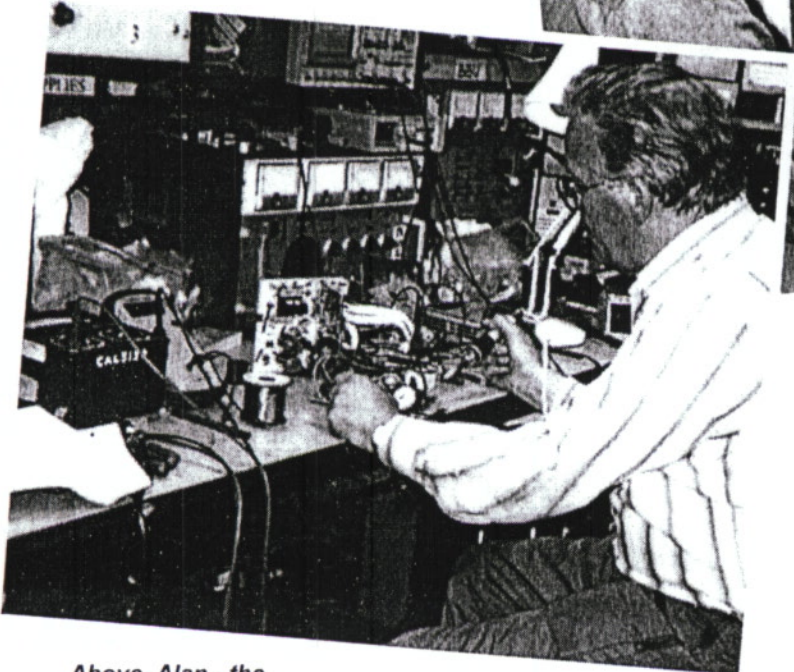
no time to get bored...

At the end of the day, Paul enjoys his work. He told us he likes to be busy all the time, there is, he says, no time to get bored in his job. It involves him in a great variety of challenging situations, the adrenaline certainly flows well and he does like being involved in all aspects of the repair centre's operation from start to finish.



Maestro Ian Willmott, who works on PC boards and plinths

On the right is Dave - responsible for assisting the engineers on technical matters



Above, Alan - the King of the power supplies

New repair man Bryan Driffill



Appointment

TECHNICAL SERVICES DIVISION

Surbiton Service Centre

At last I have caught up with Marc Roberts who joined us some months ago.



He comes to us from St Louis, US- based Airgo where he was a flight instructor from 1995-97 and, prior to this appointment, he was an air traffic controller at Plymouth Airport for three years.

Academic qualifications: City and Guilds 7261 Level 4 in computer maintenance. He also holds a full pilot's licence.

Leisure time is spent flying, socialising, playing tennis, squash and football, watching rugby and travelling.

Seminar

The first autumn seminar for ROCC UNICLASS is on October 8 at Stanford Gate, Brighton.

Staff News

The staff Christmas lunch is scheduled for December 23 and is being held at the Posthouse Hotel, Horley, Surrey.



Sport



November 17 - ROCC's Fun Evening. A 10-pin bowling tournament will be held at the Crawley Bowl, Crawley starting at 4.45pm. Details of this have already been circulated and entry forms should be returned to tournament organiser Alan Gould.

Next Time...

In the next issue of Newsline - new employees Alan Lovatt, Peter Scoffham, Brian Monger and Cheung Yee Noon, and in the baby column, latest addition to the Barry and Jane Whittall household.

Health & Safety



Portable Electrical Appliances

The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 require ROCC Computers Ltd as an employer to maintain electrical equipment used on ROCC premises so as to prevent danger. Equipment includes anything which is mains powered or is powered from a voltage source greater than 50 volts. For example - kettles, dishwashers, fridges, vacuum cleaners, coffee makers, radios etc; (even if they are an employee's property ROCC is responsible once the equipment is on the premises)

ROCC has a preventative maintenance programme whereby all electrical equipment is inspected and/or tested to ensure that it is safe for use and records are kept for monitoring in the Health and Safety office. With the recent department moves to new premises much of the equipment has been redistributed and new equipment purchased so that the records no longer reliably reflect the correct whereabouts of equipment. I am therefore recompiling these records as retesting takes place.

Until our appliance testing is safely back on course, and at any other time for that matter, it is good practice to carry out a visual inspection of the electrical equipment you use, particularly items which get moved about a lot such as kettles and vacuum cleaners.

Proceed with your visual inspection as follows:

SWITCH OFF AT THE WALL SOCKET AND REMOVE THE EQUIPMENT PLUG.

- Look at the power lead/cable - is it damaged or frayed?
- Look at the mains/13 amp plug - is the body moulding damaged or cracked?
- is the cable out of the clamp in the plug?
- are the wires loose so that the brown, blue and yellow/green wires can be seen hanging out where the cable enters the plug?

- Look at the point where the cable enters the equipment or the connector if fitted at this junction
- is the cable loose or the connector damaged?

- Look at the case or body of the equipment
- is the cover damaged in any way?
- are any of the cover fixings missing?

IF ANY OF THE ABOVE CONDITIONS EXIST, OR YOU HAVE ANY DOUBTS ABOUT THE CONDITION OF THE EQUIPMENT, STOP USING IT AND ARRANGE WITH YOUR MANAGER OR SUPERVISOR TO HAVE IT CHECKED AND TESTED BY A COMPETENT ELECTRICIAN.

Keep working safely.
Phil Carr occupational health and safety consultant

Newsline is published by the Press Office for the staff in all the branch offices of ROCC Computers Limited.

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Design: JT Designs... 01293-88482

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