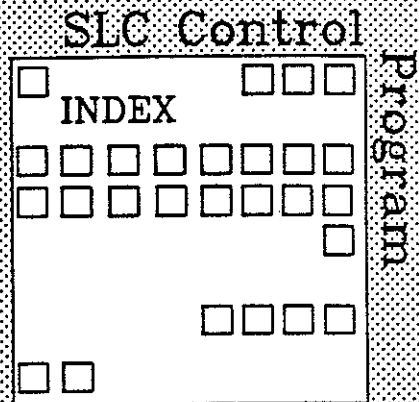


Index Panel

SLAC's Software Engineering Newsletter



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All that Fits is News to Print

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Turbo CATER

December 3, 1990

Author: R. Sass, S. Castillo

Subsystem: CATER

User Impact: Substantial

Panel Changes: None

Documents: None

Help File: No

A new version of the CATER software (V3.5) with substantial performance improvements has been released. The most important user benefit of this version is the much improved speed with which problems are searched in the Compose-it-Yourself reporting facility.

Since its initial release several years ago, the structure of the CATER database has remained essentially unchanged. Some users may have noticed that with the increase in the number of entries (currently about 17,000,) generating reports with the Compose-it-Yourself facility has slowed down considerably. To speed up retrievals and take advantage of new features in the database software (Rdb), the CATER database has been restructured, additional indexes have been added, and the way CATER formulates its queries has been optimized. This has resulted in lightning fast database searches and report generation.

Experience the difference, fasten your seat belt, put on your gloves, and take it for a spin.

ACCESS Procedures

November 30, 1990

Author: Ken Underwood

Subsystem: All

User Impact: Small

Panel Changes: None

Documents: No

Help File: No

The ACCESS procedures have undergone substantial revision to improve the user interface, decrease the startup response time, block multiple invocations of the same procedure, and redefine the overall structure. Please note that the functionality of these procedures has NOT changed, only the organization of the command procedures has changed.

The user interface has changed to address two problems associated with using the command procedures. The keyboard input buffer frequently contains leftover characters. In the past, if the first character was not a "Y" then the procedure would cancel the request with a message to that effect. Because of the rapid clearing of the terminal screen, this message was missed while the user assumed that the ACCESS procedure was running successfully.

The commands have been changed now to accept only "Y" or "N", and reprompt for any other character. In addition, a Ctrl-Y will abort the procedure. For an "N" or Ctrl-Y response, a log file will be artificially created with a message that the request was aborted. For the "Y" response the procedure will be submitted to the SLCBATCH queue which will create the usual log file. A 5 second wait has been added to the user interface to give users a chance to read any messages that have been issued.

The ACCESS procedures contained a duplicate reference to the command procedures that setup all of the logical names and symbols necessary to run a SCP. This reference has been removed and should result in a considerable decrease in startup time.

Multiple invocations of the same ACCESS procedure were a frequent source of operational problems. The ACCESS procedure will now check for the existence of another process with identical name. If one is already running then this invocation will be aborted.

Previously, all of the ACCESS procedure files contained both ACCESS program data as well as the necessary commands for setting up and running each program. In the new version of the ACCESS procedure software, the program data and the commands have been saved in separate files. The program data files retain the original documentation which has been converted from DCL comments to ACCESS comments.

The commands have been moved to a new command procedure file called ACCESS.SUBMIT which gets submitted to the batch queue from the touch panel along with the name of the ACCESS data file to be processed.

History Buffers

November 30, 1990

Author: *Ralph Johnson*

Subsystem: *All*

User Impact: *Some*

Panel Changes: *None*

Documents: *No*

Help File: *No*

The History Buffer weekly and long term data saving has been turned off for the duration of the downtime. Daily data taking will continue so that the last 24 hours of all data will always be available. Turning off the updating was done to save some disk space and to freeze the data for the "last machine week" in uncompressed format. This will provide the opportunity to study the details of beam parameters at the end of the run as well as the accelerator cool down period. If there is a need to save data over a period greater than 24 hours during the downtime, please contact Ralph Johnson (ext. 2558).

The last weekly data for all devices except analogs (asts) covers the week ending Wednesday, November 21, 23:59 pm. This provides uncompressed data for the last week preceding the shutdown.

The last weekly data for analog (asts) devices covers the week ending Sunday, November 25, 23:59 pm. This provides uncompressed data (including temperatures) for the week which includes the shutoff and the cool down of the accelerator.