14 Continuous processing

Until now, we have been thinking in terms of composing text, putting it onto disc, and retrieving it one file at a time, using SAVE and LOAD, or perhaps READ if we want to add material to a file we are already editing.

This is quite satisfactory for short items, but suppose you are processing a long report and want to go through it from beginning to end, correcting and editing. You will find yourself constantly interrupting your editing to LOAD and SAVE files.

A convenient way round this problem is offered by the EDIT facility, and when you have become accustomed to using VIEW you may find yourself using this as much as the separate SAVE and LOAD commands.

What happens in principle is that the computer reads in material from one file, holds it in memory while you edit it, and saves it in another file, bringing in more material from the first file automatically. The process continues until you have edited all the material and passed it on to the second file.

Obviously if you are going to use the EDIT system, you have to make sure that you have plenty of memory left on your disc before you start, or you will get a Can't Extend message and you will be left with a computer full of edited material and nowhere to put it. With care, however, it can be an effective way of processing files which contain much more material than will fit into the computer's memory.

14.1 The EDIT method

If you have material in the computer's memory which you wish to preserve, save it now. We are about to compact the disc so as to use disc memory more efficiently, but compacting normally destroys any text in the computer's memory.

Check the files on your disc. Type *. **RETURN** or *CAT **RETURN**. Are there any files you want to delete? If so type *DELETE (filename) **RETURN**.

Compact your disc. Compacting rearranges the files in the most efficient manner. Type

`*COMPACT` **RETURN**

These first three instructions are intended to leave your disc with its programs arranged so as to leave the maximum space available for the `EDIT` process. Remember that your editing may result in a much larger file than you started with.

You are now ready to start the `EDIT` procedure, by reading in your file and giving a name to the file to which the text you are processing will go. Type

`EDIT (file-in) (file-out)` **RETURN**

(' File-in' is the original file, ' file-out' the destination file.)

VIEW reads in text from ' file-in'. You process it. When you are ready to go on to the next batch type

`MORE` **RETURN**

The text you have processed is written into your ' file-out' and new text is read in from your ' file-in' .

When you wish to stop editing, even if you have not finished the document, type

`FINISH` **RETURN**

and the text in memory is put into your ' file-out'. Any unread text left in ' file-in' is read and transferred to ' file-out' .

You are now left with two files: the original file (' file-in') and the destination file (' file-out'). If you no longer need ' file-in' type

`*DELETE (file-in)` **RETURN**

The command QUIT is an alternative to `FINISH`, which simply abandons editing, leaving ' file-in' intact but ' file-out' incomplete. You should delete ' file-out' .

You should be particularly careful about naming your files if you are to use `EDIT`. It is easy enough to get confused with normal saving and loading, but using two files at the same time can be tricky if you are careless about naming them.

14.2 Finishing

Note the procedure for finishing in the instructions. The point is that you can end your editing session in three ways. You can keep on asking for `MORE` until you finish the job. You can type

`FINISH` **RETURN**

if you have done a good deal of the job and want to preserve your text in a half-edited condition, to continue editing it later. `FINISH` leaves you with all the edited text in ' file-out' along with the rest of the text which you have not yet edited. In your next session you have only to keep on asking for `MORE` until you come to where you left off.

If on the other hand you have been interrupted when you have just started to edit, and what you have done so far is not worth saving, you do not want to wait while the computer goes through all the process of transferring unedited text from ' file-in' to ' file-out' as it would have to do if you used `FINISH`. Instead you can use the command `QUIT`, which simply abandons the operation, so that you can start again in your next session with the same ' file-in' .

One final refinement in continuous processing. When you are in the middle of editing, you may wish to transfer part of the text you are working on to ' file-out' in order to get some more out of ' file-in', perhaps to compare or transfer parts of it.

You can do this by setting marker 1 at the point up to which text should be transferred to ' file-out' Then type `MORE` `1` **RETURN** . The first part of the text will then go into ' file-out' , and more material will arrive from ' file-in' .