



NEW ZEALAND
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
ASSOCIATION

NEW ZEALAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



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NOTES ON USING THE COMPUTER INDEX
OF THE NEW ZEALAND HISTORIC PLACES TRUST

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N.Z. Historic Places Trust

The New Zealand Historic Places Trust now has a fully-developed and up-to-date index to the 30,000 archaeological site records held in the Central File and it makes this facility available to N.Z. Archaeological Association members. It is not normally a free service as computer charges have to be paid to an operating bureau but the Trust does currently pay the first \$20 of a request made by a member of the Association. The resultant cost can be very reasonable and may save you a considerable amount of time. So, what can it do for you and at what cost? To understand what is possible, you should know what information is held on the computer.

Information recorded

Sites are identified by their N.Z.A.A. site record numbers and their locations are indicated by map grid references. Each record has both NZMS1 and metric details, together with information about the site-type, local environment, etc., taken from code lists published in the "NZRAS User Manual" (pp.33-47).

DESCRIPTIVE CATEGORY	EXAMPLES
Site Type	pa, midden, terrace, etc.
Local environment today	sand dune, volcanic cone, etc.
Land classification	Crown Land, private farm, etc.
Present and future danger of destruction	intact, risk of severe damage etc.
Local body	Auckland City, Rodney County, etc.

Types of search possible

It may be helpful to think of the records as being held on two equivalent index systems: one for reference to NZMS1 maps and the other to the NZMS260 (Metric) series. This allows information to be presented in either NZMS1 or NZMS260 site number order. When a search is made, the required records are identified and their content printed out for the enquirer. For example:

1. sites recorded in a specified geographic area, such as:
 - (a) the whole of New Zealand
 - (b) on specified map sheets
 - (c) in a rectangle bounded by specified map grid co-ordinates

SITE TYPE	
PA WITH PITS	CD
LOCAL ENVIRONMENT	
PENINSULA/HEADLAND/PROMONTORY	AI
LAND CLASSIFICATION	
PRIVATE FARM	AC
PRESENT AND FUTURE DANGER OF DESTRUCTION	
PARTLY DAMAGED, CONTINUING MINOR DAMAGE	BB
SECURITY CODE	
UNRESTRICTED ACCESS TO INFORMATION	AA
LOCAL BODY	
COOK STRAIT COUNCIL, BOX 1234, WELLINGTON	ZF

Report type 'DETAIL': When available, this option adds to the 'SUMMARY' report a verbal precis of other information provided on the site record form. Development of this option has been suspended until the necessary resources are found to process the additional data.

Note that most of the records on the computer are of 'status C'. This denotes that the recorded data has not necessarily been verified.

Operating costs

The Trust is currently charged by a computer bureau for process time at a rate of \$600 per hour but, fortunately, the speed of processing allows the computer to complete most jobs within a minute or so. We are not yet able to provide a formula by which a potential user can anticipate the precise cost of a report but our growing experience is allowing us to develop usable guide-lines. These will be revised as our experience becomes more comprehensive but on the basis of our present experience:-

1. No single report request can cost less than \$10.
2. The cost of a job is most greatly influenced by the area of land, and thus number of records that have to be read by the computer. Listing the records on one or two map sheets is, therefore, far cheaper than listing records for the whole country.

Example: Listing, with detail provided by the 'SITE' command, records for a map with approximately 600 sites costs about \$23. Maps containing records of approximately 2000 sites result in a cost of about \$35. Experience also indicates that, for greater numbers of sites, costs increase at a rate of about 2¢ per record.

3. A request for a report of sites, identified by the computer as meeting the enquirer's criteria, usually costs less than an equivalent report of all sites in the same area.

Example:

- (a) Listing all 610 records (with detail specified by 'SITE') on sheet N34 costs \$23, whereas a report of its 50 pa costs \$15.
- (b) An equivalent request for all pa in New Zealand would cost considerably more.

4. Costs rise with the level of detail required.

Example: Cost of report of all 610 sites on sheet N34 with level of detail specified by

- (a) 'CONTENT' cost \$12
- (b) 'SITE' cost \$23
- (c) 'SUMMARY' cost \$39

5. We can often reduce of cost of individual jobs by collecting a number of requests and submitting them in a batch.

Magnetic tape copies

Provision has been made for copies of all or part of the computer index, including search reports, to be made available to an enquirer on magnetic tape rather than as a paper printout.

I hope that this information will encourage you to make use of this powerful new research tool. Please direct your requests or enquires to:

The Survey Archaeologist
 New Zealand Historic Places Trust
 Private Bag
 Wellington