NEW ADA SOFTWARE CONTRACTS FROM EUROPEAN COMMISSION

The Commission has approved two contracts with two consortia for the development of Ada software under the Community four year programme in the field of data processing. The two contracts amount to a total of 6.4m EUA (£3.5m) of which the French/German consortium, consisting of CII-Honeywell-Bull, Alsys and Siemens, accounts for 3.74m EUA (£2.01m) and the Danish/Italian consortium consisting of Chr. Rovsing, Danish Datamatics Center and Olivetti accounts for £2.66m EUA (£1.44m).

The projects also involve the British software industry via the company Systems Designers Ltd as an important sub-contractor in the Danish/Italian project.

The new programming language Ada is the result of a joint European/American effort to develop a new computer language especially suited for real time applications. The result was a new high order programming language suited for a wide application area such as embedded computer systems, systems programming and numerical applications. Ada was developed at CII-Honeywell-Bull by a design team lead by Dr Jean Ichbiah, now president of Alsys, through a contract with the U.S. Department of Defense. The language was named to honour the world's first programmer Ada Augusta, Lady Lovelace, the daughter of Lord Byron.

The two projects receiving a 50 per cent Community grant will be completed in 1983 and will contribute towards keeping the Community software industry in a leading position concerning high level language compilers and programming support systems. The French/German project includes the development of a 'Root' compiler for Ada which will be portable on to micro, mini and mainframe computers manufactured in Europe and elsewhere. The Danish/Italian project includes a portable back-end compiler for Ada for mini- and micro-computers, based upon the French/German root compiler, and a portable Ada programming support environment system.

By letting the two Ada projects utilise more than one third of the available budget for such projects under the Community four-year programme (1979-1983) in the field of data processing, the Commission is making a significant commitment to the successful implementation of the new Ada programming language by the software industry in the Community.

The Commission considers the implementation of the Ada programming language to be an important step forward towards obtaining standardization and improved portability for general software applications.

Besides awarding the Ada compiler and programming support systems contracts, the Commission has contributed to this development by organising and sponsoring the establishment of the Ada-Europe working group on standardization where European computer language experts meet regularly to exchange ideas and information about new developments in the Ada field.

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