

# CONCEPT-u-ualising

**DEDICATION, late nights, and unsung heroes have been responsible for the relatively smooth transition to a new integrated personnel and payroll software package called CONCEPT.**

Actually, it was more a case of 'smooth on the outside and frenzied on the inside,' with staff being paid each fortnight as usual, unaware of the intense activity going on elsewhere.

But it was the total commitment and determination on the part of Wanneroo District officer Kate Didlock, Finance Branch payroll officer Heidi Moss and Human Resources personnel and training officer Steve Grasso who, with a supporting network of dedicated administrative staff at all levels throughout the State, were responsible for the success of the operation.

It meant working into the wee hours of the morning, plus a fair bit of fin-

by Tammie Reid

ger-crossing when transferring salaries and wages into staff members' accounts before Reserve Bank deadlines ... but the dollars were there for us ... just.

Heidi says the new package has combined four systems into one:

The Personnel Information Management Systems (PIMS), salaries system, the wages system, and salary allocations system.

"This means that *all* information relevant to a staff member is keyed in to the one system and, with just a few key strokes, any or all pieces of information for that person can be called up on screen," she says.

"It's user-friendly and provides a wider range of detailed information more quickly than the old system; it's a boon for those involved in program costing and financial reporting."

Accountant Ian Frame says that while there are still some complexities to unravel, the new system is already providing substantial cost savings for CALM.

"For example, salaries were processed by Lend Lease Bureau, a private organisation that gave us excellent service, and cost us just over \$50 000 a year.

"Now, this will be processed on CONCEPT along with PIMS, formerly processed by Government Bureau Services also at a cost of just over \$50 000 per year.

CONCURRENT, the former computer on which wages and salary allocations were run was about seven years-old and, like other outdated technology, was much slower to operate and expensive to maintain.

"Eventually, when all the 'wrinkles' in the system have been ironed out, any staff member will be able to call up on his or her personal computer any in-



*Kate Didlock (seated) on the 'hotline' to outlying district administration staff and Heidi Moss on line with the new CONCEPT package. Photo by Tammie Reid*

formation to which they are entitled, such as up to date leave entitlements, or whether or not salary allocations have been made on time, and so on.

The switch-over took slightly more than three

months with a great deal of co-operation and support from Information Systems, Finance, Human Resources, and supplier representatives Rob Fox and Eileen Aitken.

Principal personnel of-

ficer Erica Scott was full of praise for Heidi and Kate and all administration staff involved in getting the system up and running.

"Without their commitment to making the system work and their determina-

tion to get the pays through, people just wouldn't have received their cheques on time.

"The resulting uproar if that had happened doesn't bear thinking about," Erica said.





