

## DISCUSSION

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Authors: Swindells

Anthony Barrett: The control of quality at every stage in the production of engineering information, or data, is vital. At a guess, at least 80 per cent of the raw data which we will want to use over the next ten years already exist. So it is already too late to influence the basic quality of a significant proportion of the data that will be built into databases before the turn of the century. This is a serious problem affecting the extent to which it is possible to add value to our resources of materials property data.

Norman Swindells (author's response): I would not be so pessimistic for two reasons: 1. Materials change and so older data become obsolete and not relevant to current materials and practice. 2. There is increasing pressure to improve the quality from the eventual users and so there will be a self-filtration process resulting from improved new data which will start to exclude the older kind.

Philip Sargent: While it is perhaps true that more than 80% of the data available for use in 10 years time already exist, surely it is also true that more than 80% of the data measured by value do **not** yet exist? Furthermore, since the highest value data is more likely to be transferred as a commercial good together with copyright, this sub-set might represent most of the value of transferred data.

Norman Swindells (author's response): Yes, I agree with both these contributions.

Walter Grattidge: Information is different from other commodities in the market place. When information is transferred in a transaction it can still remain with the first party. Copyright is the mechanism by which to identify ownership rights. Should the Commission program not give larger recognition to copyright.

Norman Swindells (author's response): There is a special group within the IMPACT Programme with the responsibility for examining legal issues associated with the creation and operation of a market in information, particularly concerning cross border trade between different legal systems.

Keith Reynard: The special group is the Legal Advisory Board of DGXIII which has recently produced two substantial reports on the problems and the differing national situations within the EC.