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Memo CP-D/423

Date: 31 March 2005
To: Distribution
From: O. Schwerer
Subject: "BIB section" information in EXFOR

Recently we found two extremes in compilation practices in the so-called "BIB section" (containing the bibliography and a short description of the experiment). One extreme is to give the bare minimum required to have a formally correct entry; the other is copying complete lengthy abstracts into the entry. We strongly believe that both approaches should be avoided.

While it is true that for many new journal publications the complete text of the article is conveniently available over the Internet, there are many good reasons why we cannot solely rely on this source of information about the essentials of the experimental method.

- The electronic availability of the full text often depends on whether or not the user's institution pays for it. It can also be a function of time. At IAEA, as an example, only the last 4 calendar years of Phys.Rev.C are available electronically as full text even though we have a full hardcopy subscription; the older issues are only available as abstracts (because the "PROLA" database needs separate payment). Furthermore, the electronic publishing policies of the publishers may change any time. The basic information of EXFOR, on the other hand, should be available to all users at all times.
- From the compilation side, the information on the experiment is often collected from several papers (including reports and private communications) and the EXFOR entry is the only place where this information is kept together and is conveniently available to the users.
- Formally, at least one of these BIB keywords must be present: FACILITY, DETECTOR, ANALYSIS, METHOD. It should be stressed that this is the bare minimum to get the entry passed through the check program. In any real experimental entry, at least 2 of these 4 will be needed, and in addition several or all of other important keywords such as CORRECTION, ERR-ANALYS, MONITOR, DECAY-DATA, INC-SOURCE, SAMPLE, and others. (This is in addition to the bibliographic and bookkeeping keywords.)
- Many of these keywords have (obligatory or optional) coded information, which makes very specific retrievals possible. Use of these should be considered obligatory whenever it

is relevant. Some additional explanations and details in free text are usually necessary but should normally not be too wordy. Care should also be taken to always use the most appropriate specific keyword for a particular piece of information; general keywords such as 'COMMENT' should therefore occur only rarely.

- However, when new codes (e.g. for DETECTOR) are proposed, main criteria should be whether they represent really something new (or new to EXFOR) which is likely to be useful to the user (for retrievals) and also usable in a consistent way to the compilers.
- Copying of long abstracts or other extended text from the article should be avoided. It's the compiler's job to make a concise summary, using all relevant specific BIB keywords (rather than giving the complete abstract under 'COMMENT' or 'METHOD'), focussing on the experiment and the way the data coded under REACTION are derived. (Other topics covered in the article, such as comparing various model parameters, are usually not relevant to the EXFOR entry even if they were the authors' main interest.)

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