BBC Disk Commands

In all cases where it is necessary to state the file to which a command relates the full specification is:

COMMAND:DV.DR.FILENAME

where: COMMAND is the required file-handling command; DV is the drive number (0-3); DR is the directory identifier (A-X or $); and FILENAME is up to seven characters that identify the file (these must not include '#', '*', '.' or ':'). If no drive number and directory identifier are specified, the default drive is 0 and the default directory is $. The default identifiers can be changed using the *DRIVE, *DIR & *LIB commands. DFS also allows the use of these 'wildcard' characters: '#' and '*'. In some commands these can be used to specify all drives, all directories or all file names starting with the same letter. In the following explanations the above file specification is abbreviated to <FSP>.

In addition to the standard cassette commands available for disk from power up and the random access commands, DFS provides the following disk-handling commands:

*FORM40, *FORM80 And *VERIFY

These commands are stored as utilities on a disk supplied with the disk drive or drives; they format a 40- or 80-track disk, and report on the success of the operation.

ACCESS

*ACCESS <FSP> L protects the file from deletion or overwriting. *ACCESS <FSP> removes this protection.

*BACKUP, *DESTROY And *ENABLE

*BACKUP SourceDV DestinationDV copies the entire contents of the disk in the source drive to the disk in the destination drive, thus overwriting the destination disk. *DESTROY <FSP> deletes a file. If wildcards are included in <FSP>, then several files may be deleted by the one command. Because BACKUP and DESTROY are so drastic in their effects, you must issue an *ENABLE command before the DFS will obey them.

*BUILD <FSP>

This creates an ASCII file with the file specification from all subsequent keyboard entries until terminated by the ESCAPE key.

*CAT DV

This displays the catalogue of the specified drive.

*COMPACT DV

This moves all spare space on a disk in the specified drive to the end of the last file in a continuous block.

*COPY

Copies a specified file or files (using a wildcard file name) from one disk to another.

*DELETE <FSP>

This deletes the single specified file from the catalogue of a disk. The file can then be overwritten.

*DIR DR

This sets the current default directory to that specified. All subsequent files stored using *SAVE or SAVE will be assigned to the set directory.

*DRIVE DV

This sets the current default drive.

*DUMP <FSP>

This displays a listing in hexadecimal of a specified file.

*EXEC <FSP>

This reads all data from a file as if it were input from the keyboard. It is useful for executing an often-used sequence of commands. Files read by *EXEC are created using *BUILD.

*HELP

With reference to disk drive operation *HELP DFS displays a partial list of standard DFS commands and their construction; and *HELP UTILS displays a list of the remaining standard DFS commands.

*INFO <FSP>

This displays extra information concerning the specified file or files (using wildcards) not displayed by *CAT such as: memory location; execution address; length in bytes; and sector location.

*LIB:DV.DR

This sets the specified directory as the 'library'. It allows the use of a short form of command — * FILENAME — that searches the current library directory for the named machine code program, loads it into memory and executes it immediately as if the full *RUN command had been used.

*LIST <FSP>

This displays the specified ASCII file, including line numbers.

*LOAD <FSP>

This reads the specified file into memory at the locations from which it was originally taken.

*OPT 1

This enables a message system where the information given by *INFO is displayed every time a file is accessed. This facility is enabled by *OPT 1 1. To disable this feature use *OPT 1 0.

*OPT 4

This changes the auto-start option on power up or (SHIFT) BREAK for the current selected drive where: *OPT 4 0 disables auto-start; *OPT 4 1 LOADs the file !BOOT; *OPT 4 2 RUNs !BOOT; and *OPT 4 4 EXECutes !BOOT.

*RENAME <old FSP> <new FSP>

This command changes a file name and moves it to a different directory. It cannot move files from drive to drive.

*RUN <FSP>

This reads a machine code file into memory and executes it immediately. It is used on files not contained in the current library.

*SAVE

This copies a specified block of computer memory and writes it to disk in the current drive and directory. Constructed as:

   *SAVE "NAME" SSSS FFFF EEEE RRRR

or

   *SAVE "NAME" SSSS+LLLL EEEE RRRR

where SSSS is the start address of memory block; FFFF the finish address of memory block; EEEE the execution address of stored program; RRRR the address where the program will be read to; and LLLL the length of file in bytes (option to FFFF). All numbers are given in hexadecimal. RRRR and EEEE may be left out, in which case the reload and execute addresses default to SSSS.

*SPOOL <FSP>

This opens the specified file to receive all information displayed as a text file. It allows a BASIC program to be stored as an ASCII file instead of being tokenised.

*TITLE "DISK NAME"

Changes the name of the disk in the current drive to the specified name.

*TYPE <FSP>

This displays an ASCII file excluding line numbers.

*WIPE <FSP>

Identical to *DESTROY except that *ENABLE is not necessary.