2000 Paper 7 Question 4

Information Retrieval

You work for a large company where there are many meetings, both of internal staff and between staff and external clients. Meetings are recorded in formal minutes. The company's files of minutes are large, and the material has to be kept for many years since it may be necessary to check back on decisions taken early in large projects.

You are asked to design a retrieval system so that company staff can locate minutes on a particular topic. Because of the legal implications that past discussions and decisions may have, the company is particularly concerned that the new retrieval system will be reliable and effective.

Outline the design of your system, indicating the particular features it will have that are intended to meet the company's requirements (you can assume that minutes are always clearly dated and have explicit lists of participants).   [10 marks]

The company is willing to allow the installation of a pilot system so your approach can be evaluated under realistic conditions.

Describe, in detail, your design for the evaluation: what data, operational conditions and aspects of your system would you consider, and why? What performance measures would you apply, and why?   [10 marks]