

Notes from TOW Teachers dinner, May 3, 2023
Notes by D. Behrend

Notes are in order of teacher remarks, as we went around the table. Relevant comments are indicated by rectangular brackets.

Individual Remarks
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Mike Poirier, Pre-checks and operations, Failure recovery:
This was a great TOW with great interactions, a huge improvement to previous TOWs. There were numerous requests to have the meeting hotel in an area with activities.

Heidi Johnson, local coordinator:
This is a great group of people from a diversity of countries. There was a good mix of new and old people. I heard the grumbings about the hotel. We need to communicate that there is wine available at the front desk.

Frédéric Jaron, PolConvert:
This was my second in-person TOW. The workshop cannot be replaced by a virtual event. I will stay on for the Correlator Workshop. Keep it going.

Dirk Behrend, Program coordination and general organization:
I now have ten TOWs. Many folks are happy to be back in person. This is a smaller TOW. We are missing station operators from Asian stations, but also from other countries. There are many more discussions going on this time. The mix of station and correlator personnel is really beneficial.

Bob Campbell, Pointing and Amplitude Calibration:
Being at Haystack is like going back to my youth. I'm from a non-geodetic work environment; there are opportunities to learn from each other. The TOW notebook is very valuable. To meet in person is very important, remote does not get the same done. You are invited to come to EVN symposia.

Pedro Elosegui, VLBI Basics:
TOW is a very important event. Many thanks to Heidi, Dirk, Chet, Mike and others for their work. Also, many thanks to the TOW teachers.

John Swoboda, RFI:
This is my first TOW. I have a geospace background. There is an overlap of knowledge and use of new techniques for RFI determination.

Rick Hambly, Time and frequency:
This is my tenth TOW or so. I'm a little bit of an outsider, but the

technology connects us. The pleasure is the people. I'm glad for the travel support. I was able to repair equipment at Westford.

Frank Lemoine, Science Overview:

Thank you for the invite. This is my second in-person meeting after the pandemic. I enjoyed the encounter. I appreciate getting feedback, as learning how to communicate science is important.

Mario Berube, VLBI Communications Center:

I made a presentation about a non-operational task at an operations workshop. But I received a lot of feedback.

Michael Lindqvist, Antenna Gain Calibration, RFI:

I attended many TOWs. This time, I came directly from Chile (without going home first). A big thank-you to Heidi. I was involved in two classes. The gain calibration is a companion class to Bob's class. I was lacking access to a telescope. I teamed up with John Swoboda for the RFI class; that worked well.

Chet Ruzsczyk, Mark 6, R2DBE, VGOS signal chain:

It is great to have everyone back. Nothing replaces direct interaction with the operators.

Arthur Niell, VGOS signal chain:

I have been to all TOWs. This one was VGOS oriented; not all classes had the VGOS focus though. It would be good to fathom what the students have learned and what should be changed at the next TOW.

Alexander Neidhardt, FS operations, FS station code, SADA, Discussion:

I had a lot to prepare for this TOW: 200 pages in nine days. There are a lot of new people present. Classes were good with many interactions and discussions. The General Discussion worked very well. For the next TOW, I suggest to consider the following: (1) General class to summarize formulas, calculations and the like, (2) Have the teachers' dinner in a more quiet place. Many thanks to Heidi.

Katie Pazamickas, Time and frequency:

The TOW shows the need for in-person interactions. I like the hotel; however, we should stay with the government rate. There were good discussions in several classes.

Phillip Haftings, Correlator feedback:

I have no complaints. The energy at the the TOW is relentlessly optimistic. It's a phantastic community. The General Discussion was great; maybe we can have more of these discussions.

Sara Hardin, Correlator feedback, Operations impact on analysis:

This is my first TOW teaching. It is very enjoyable. The conversations are really good for learning.

Marjolein Verkouter, VLBI Data Acquisition:

The TOW cannot be done online. I felt that the class schedule was too tight; we should leave more room for discussions. Astronomy and geodesy people can learn from each other.

Ganesh Rajagopalan, Phase Cal Basics, Advanced Pre-checks and Operations:

Many thanks to Heidi. There were many interactions. Also thanks to Jason, Alex, and Mike for the support.

Christian Ploetz, Cryogenics:

It is great to be here in person. The cryogenics class has a need for practical interactions. In terms of going to other classes, I lacked a bit of time for that. Thinking of onboarding new colleagues, I think there is an overload by acronyms and abbreviations.

Simone Bernhart, Data Transport:

I don't have much to add. This is my first TOW as a teacher. Socializing is a very important aspect.

Gino Tuccari, DBBC3 Operations, BRAND and DBBC4:

I cannot think of anything to criticize. Compared to previous TOWs, this time Sven was brought in remotely; it worked perfectly. Many thanks to Heidi and Dirk for helping to resolve any problems.

Alex Burns, Pre-checks and operations, Failure recovery:

The TOW doesn't work on Zoom. It was great to have station operators and correlator folks. Would it make sense to have a break mid-week?