



Understanding Correlator Feedback

Sara Hardin & Phillip Haftings
United States Naval Observatory (USNO)
Washington Correlator (WASH)

With thanks to:

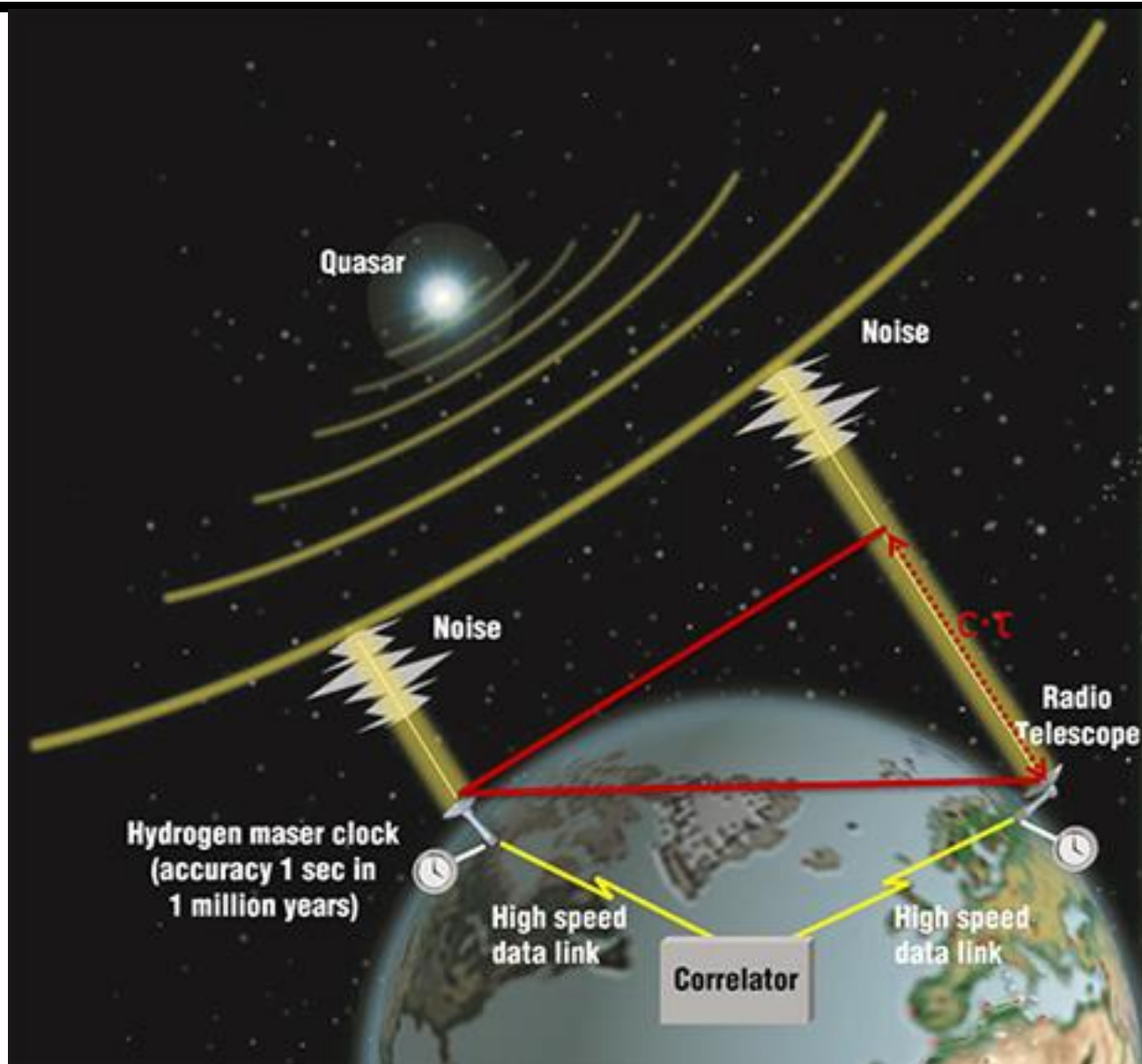
Alessandra Bertarini – Bonn Correlator (BONN)
David Hall – Washington Correlator (WASH)
Mike Titus – Haystack Correlator (HAYS)

IVS Technical Operations Workshop



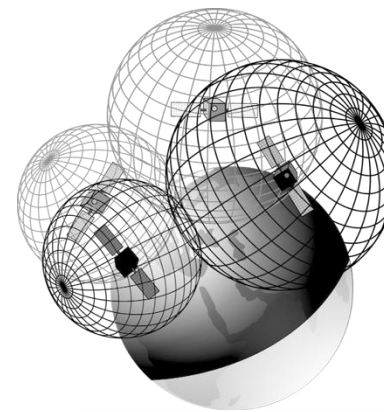
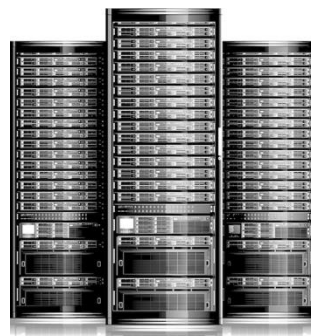
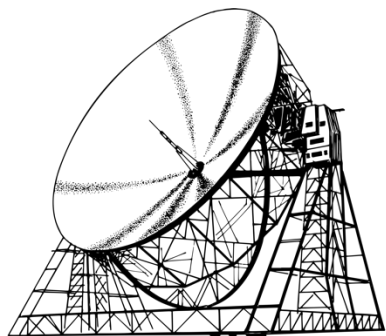
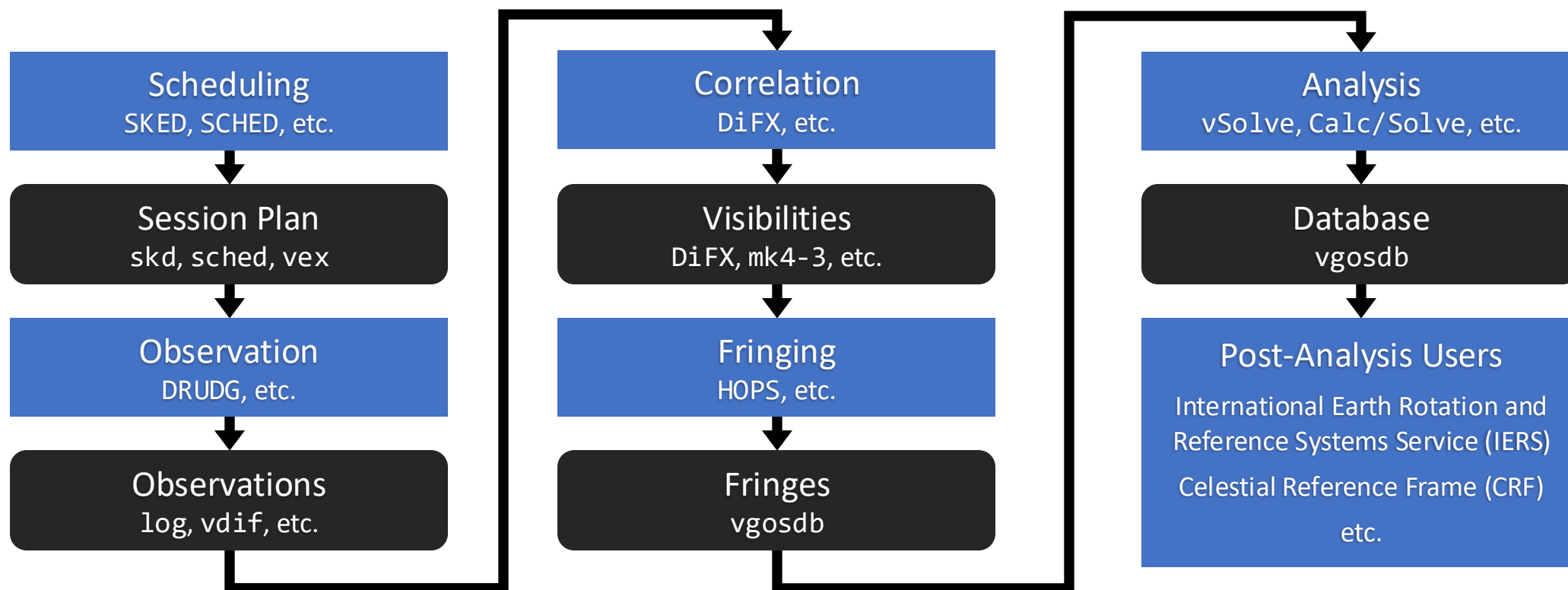


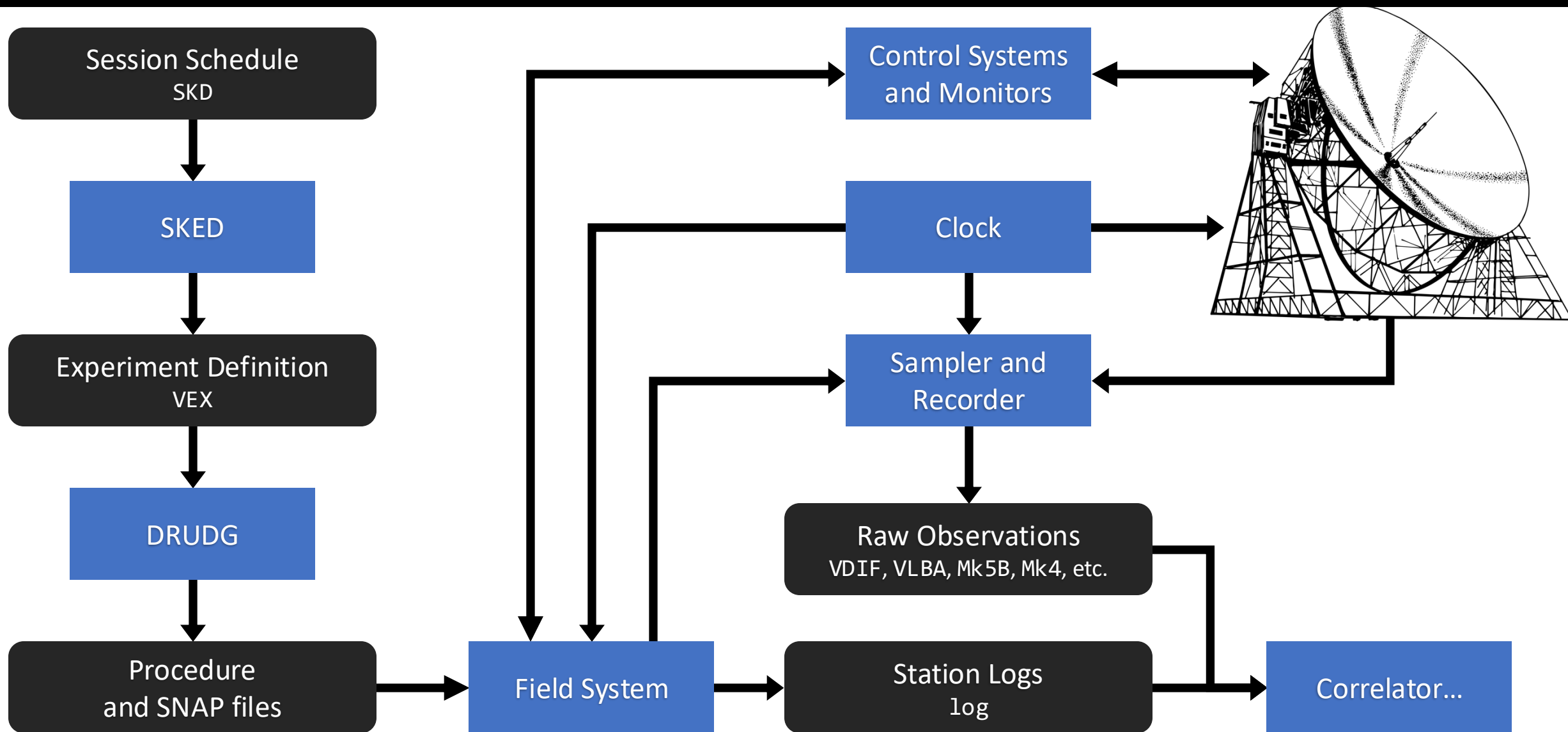
Quick Review: Bird's Eye View

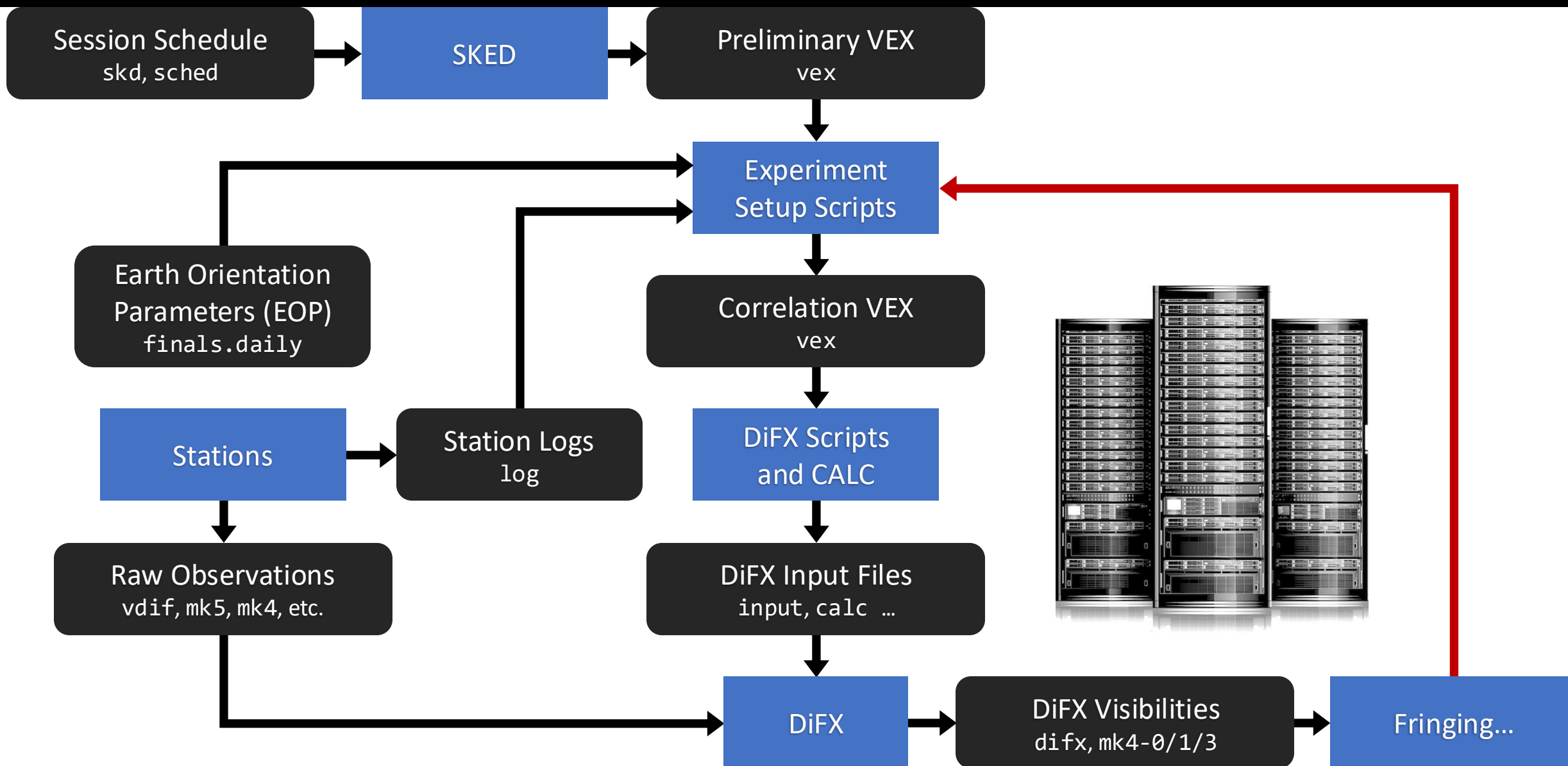


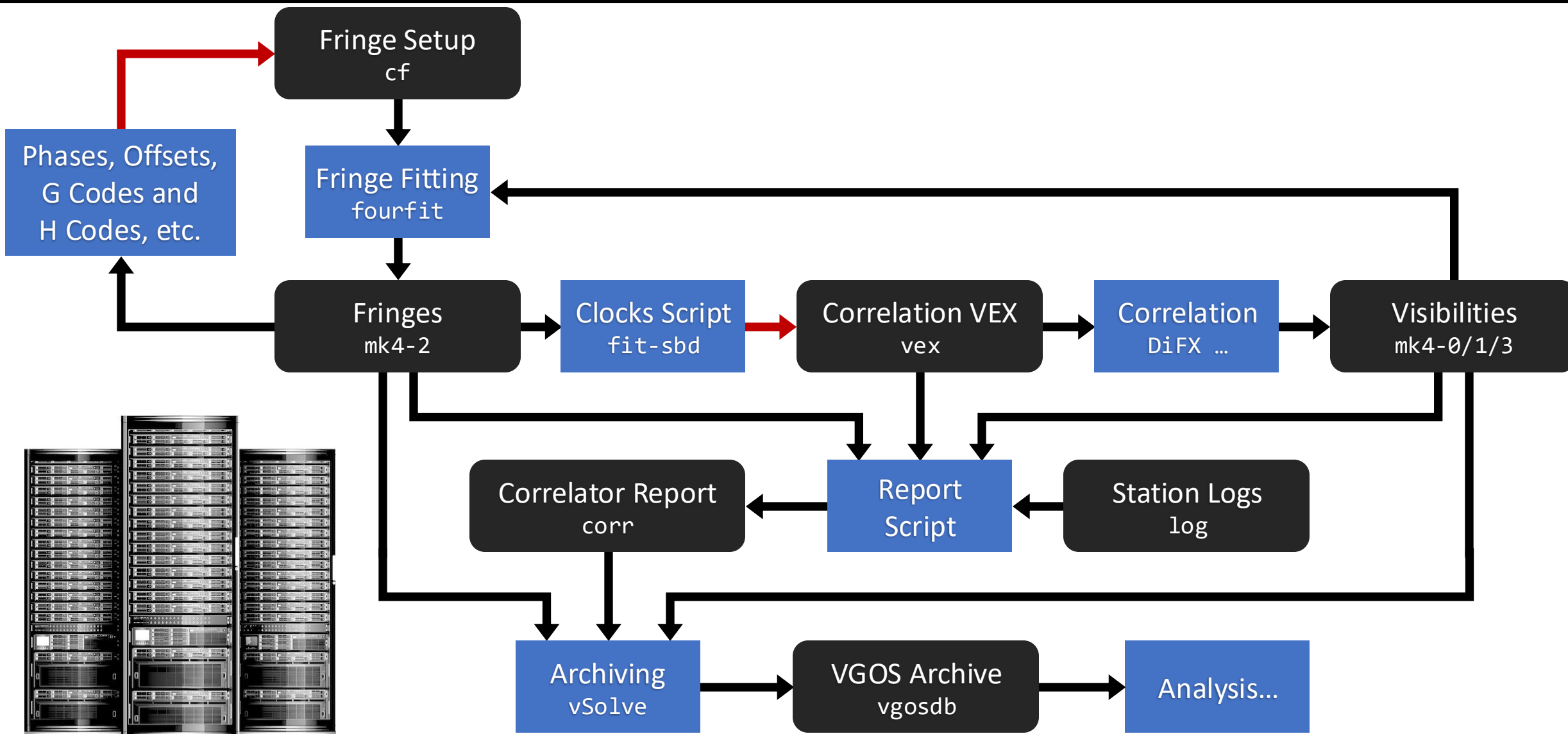


Quick Review: Bird's Eye View









What is correlation?

- Need the **time lag** between signals at different sites:
 - **Cross correlate** signals together to overlay them
 - **Fourier transform** from time to frequency domain
 - It's a **virtual interferometer**
 - Inspect **frequency spectra** to estimate time lag
 - Correct for instrumental effects at each antenna
- Order of operations is flexible:
 - **XF = (X) Cross correlate**, then (F) **Fourier transform**
 - **FX = (F) Fourier transform**, then (X) **cross correlate** (multiply)



What is fringing?



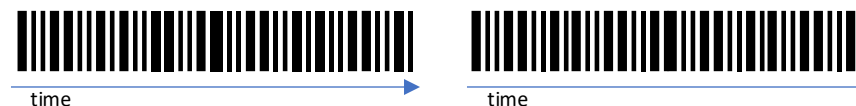
Basic steps:

- Correlator outputs visibilities
- Switch to frequency domain
- Combine channels with **group delay**
- Combine baselines with **closure**

HOPS Software does this fringing

- Haystack Observatory Postprocessing System (HOPS) has a program for **Four**ier transform **fit**ting (fringe fitting) VLBI baseline data called **Fourfit**.

Raw Data Streams



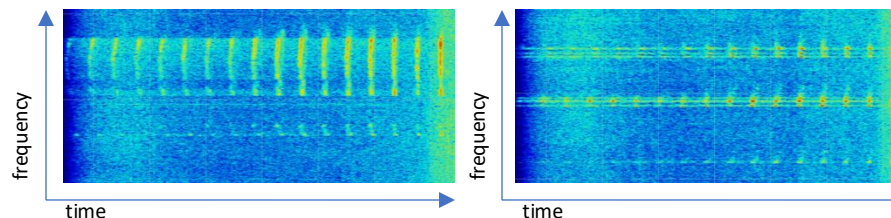
1- or 2-bit voltage readings directly from radio telescope receivers

FFT



Fast Fourier transform (FFT) converts from time to frequency domain

RF Spectrographs



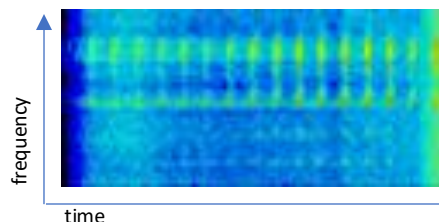
Radio frequency (RF) amplitudes over time

Cross Multiplication



Frequency signals are combined with a simple cross multiplication

RF² Spectrograph



Combined signals (still extremely noisy)

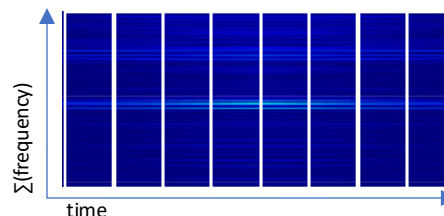


Integration

Sum over time in chunks to cancel noise with destructive interference

Visibilities

Measure of the contrast of the interference pattern

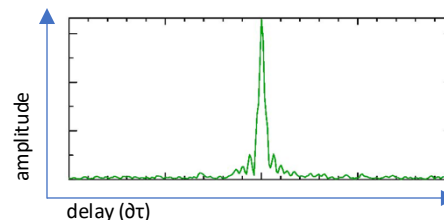


Fringe Finding

Find slope of frequency vs phase (fringe rate) and correct

Single Band Delay

Peaks at the time delay with the greatest common visibility between both telescopes

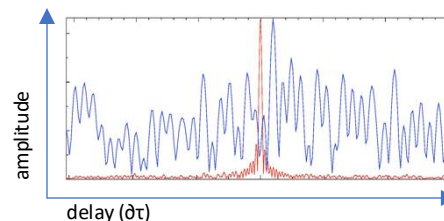


Inverse FFT

Perform inverse fast Fourier transform from frequency to time domain

Multiband Delay

Sum of sine waves returned from inverse FFT for each channel (used for closure)

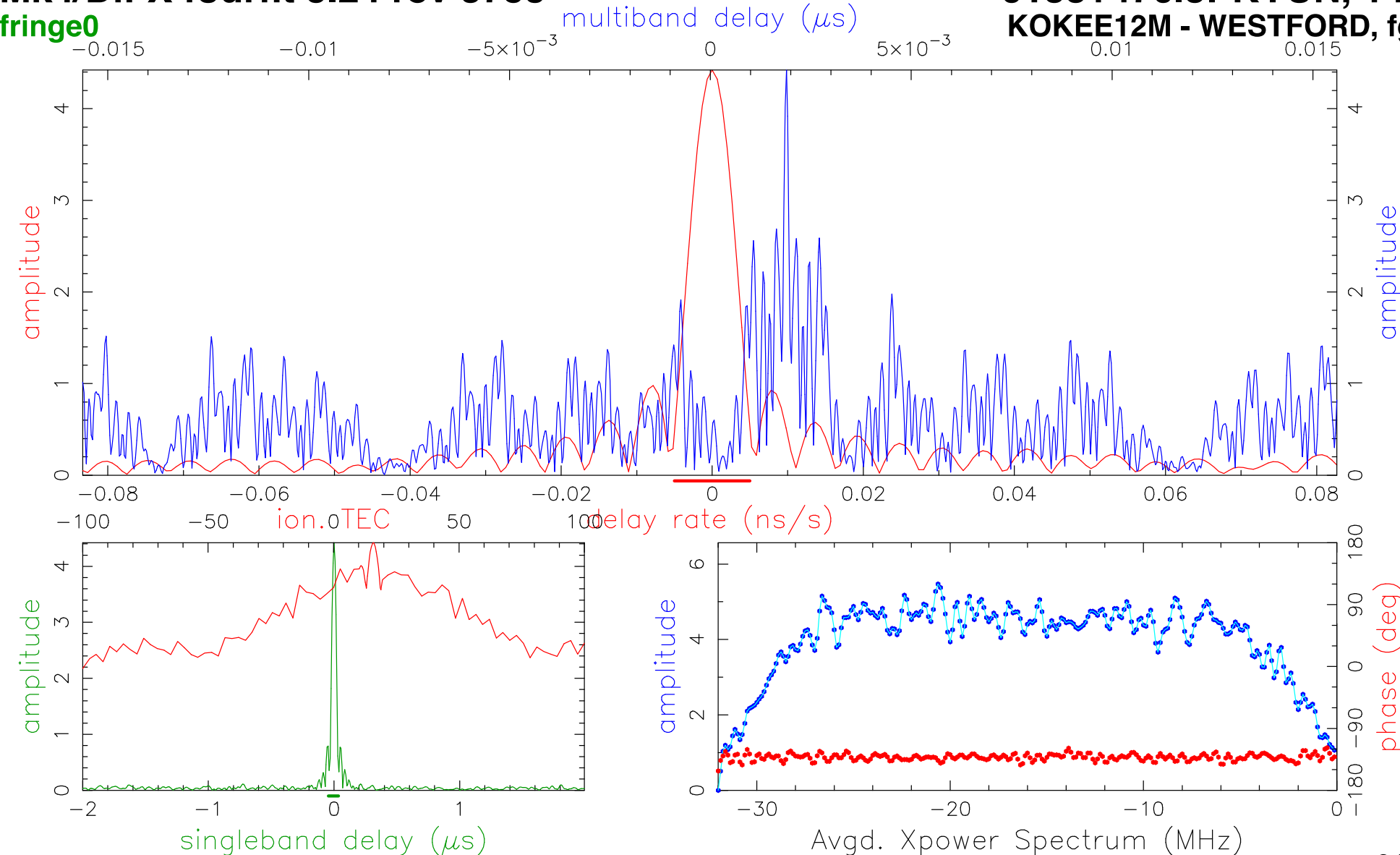


Mk4/DiFX fourfit 3.24 rev 3753

fringe0

0133+476.3PKYUN, 143-1850a, HE

KOKEE12M - WESTFORD, fgroup X, pol lxy



Fringe quality 8

SNR 132.4

Int time 29.982

Amp 4.422

Phase -131.9

PFD 0.0e+00

Delays (us)

SBD 0.000148

MBD 0.001890

Fringe rate (Hz)

0.000207

Ion TEC 15.865

Ref freq (MHz)

6000.0000

AP (sec) 1.000

Exp. VO4143

Exper # 1234

Yr:day 2024:143

Start 185045.00

Stop 185115.00

FRT 185100.00

Corr/FF/build

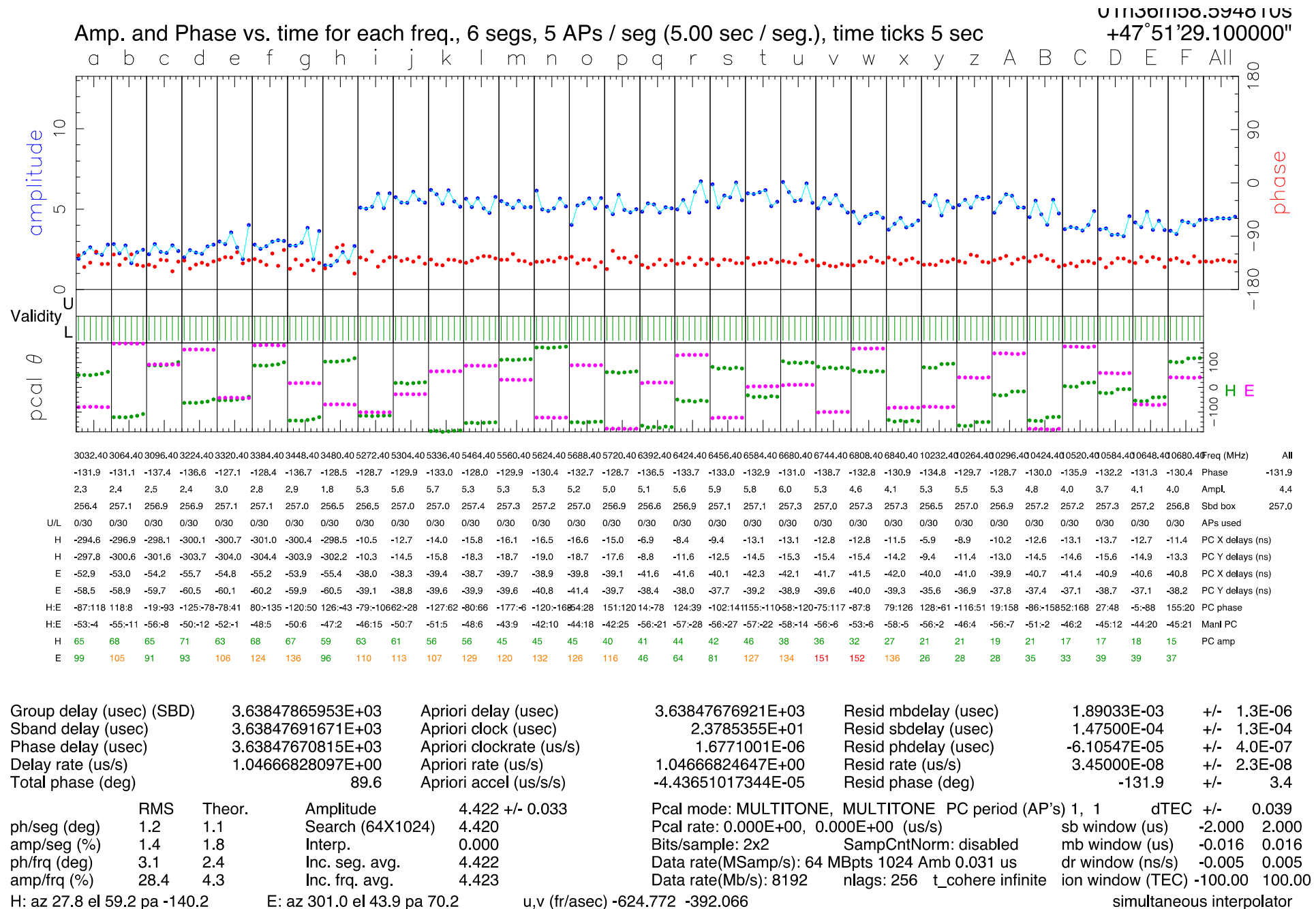
2025:093:014228

2025:115:165746

2022:353:141034

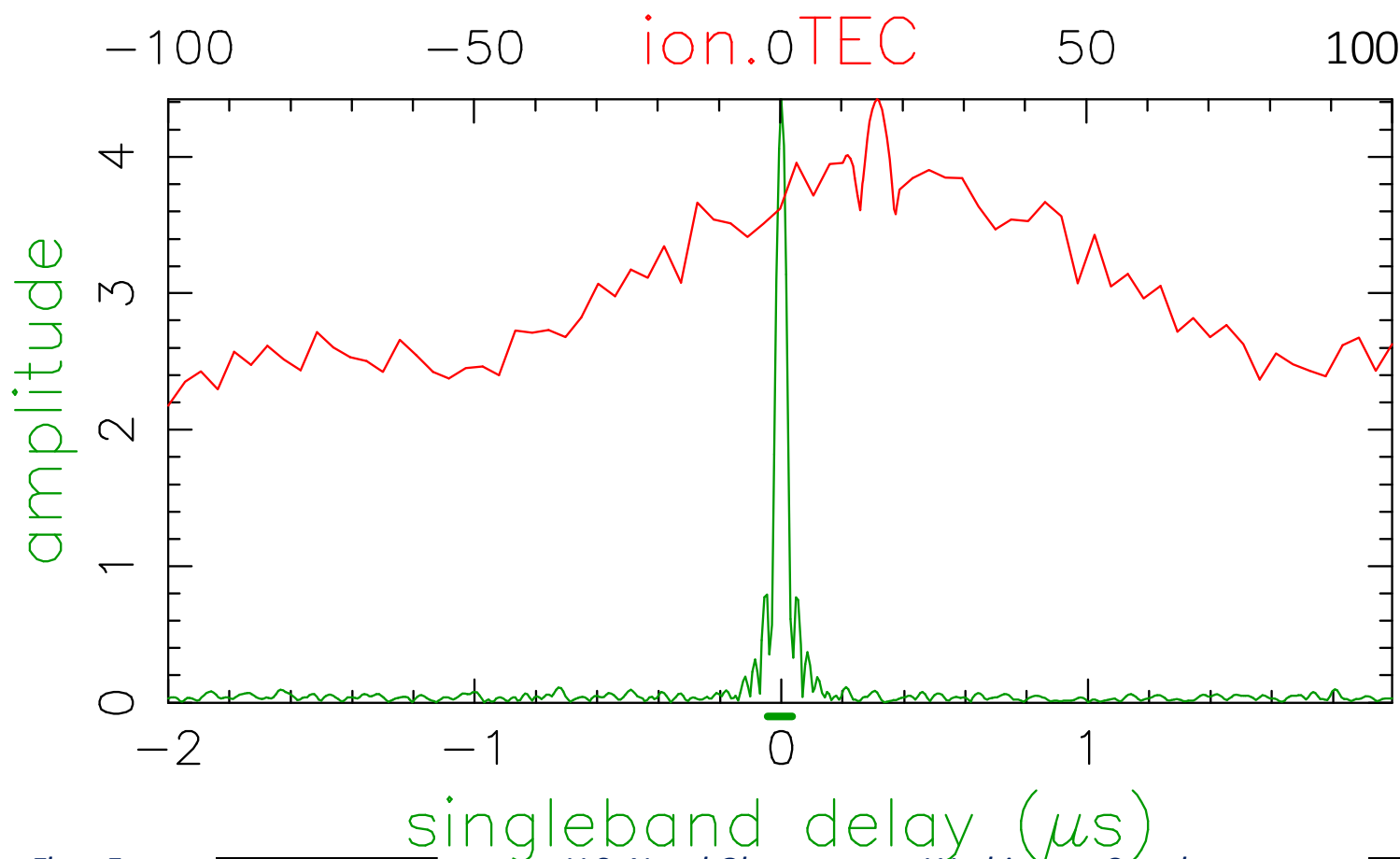
RA & Dec (J2000)

01h36m58.594810s



- **Clock pass:**
 - relatively few observations
 - measure SBD and SBD rate
 - add SBD correction to **clock offset(s)** and **clock rate(s)**
- Update a priori clock offsets
- **Production Pass:**
 - all observations
 - apparent SBD $\cong 0$ (due to clock pass corrections)

- Clock pass makes apparent **SBD** ≤ 20 ns, and ideally ≤ 10 ns
- Amplitude is typically a few hundred parts per million



Fringe quality 8

SNR 132.4

Int time 29.982

Amp 4.422 × 100ppm

Phase -131.9

PFD 0.0e+00

Delays (us)

SBD 0.000148 μs

MBD 0.001890

Fringe rate (Hz)

0.000207

Ion TEC 15.865

Ref freq (MHz)

6000.0000

AP (sec) 1.000

Exp. VO4143

Exper # 1234

Yr:day 2024:143

Start 185045.00

Stop 185115.00

FRT 185100.00

Corr/FF/build

2025:093:014228

2025:115:165746

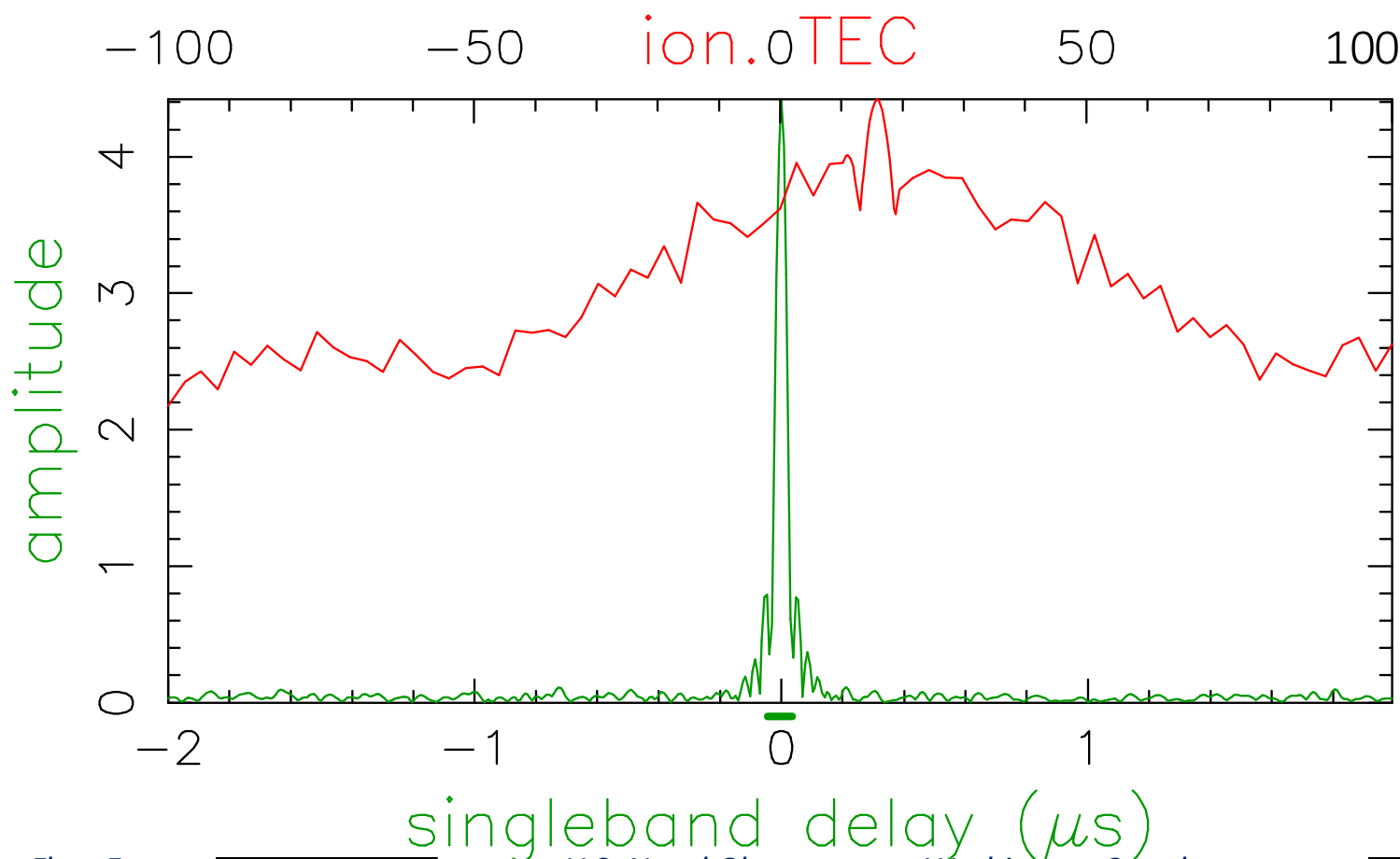
2022:353:141034

RA & Dec (J2000)

h36m58.594810s

47°51'29.100000"

- Ionospheric fit in red
- Should be a single peak (solution)



Fringe quality 8

SNR 132.4

Int time 29.982

Amp 4.422

Phase -131.9

PFD 0.0e+00

Delays (μs)

SBD 0.000148

MBD 0.001890

Fringe rate (Hz)

0.000207

Ion TEC 15.865 TECU

Ref freq (MHz)

6000.0000

AP (sec) 1.000

Exp. VO4143

Exper # 1234

Yr:day 2024:143

Start 185045.00

Stop 185115.00

FRT 185100.00

Corr/FF/build

2025:093:014228

2025:115:165746

2022:353:141034

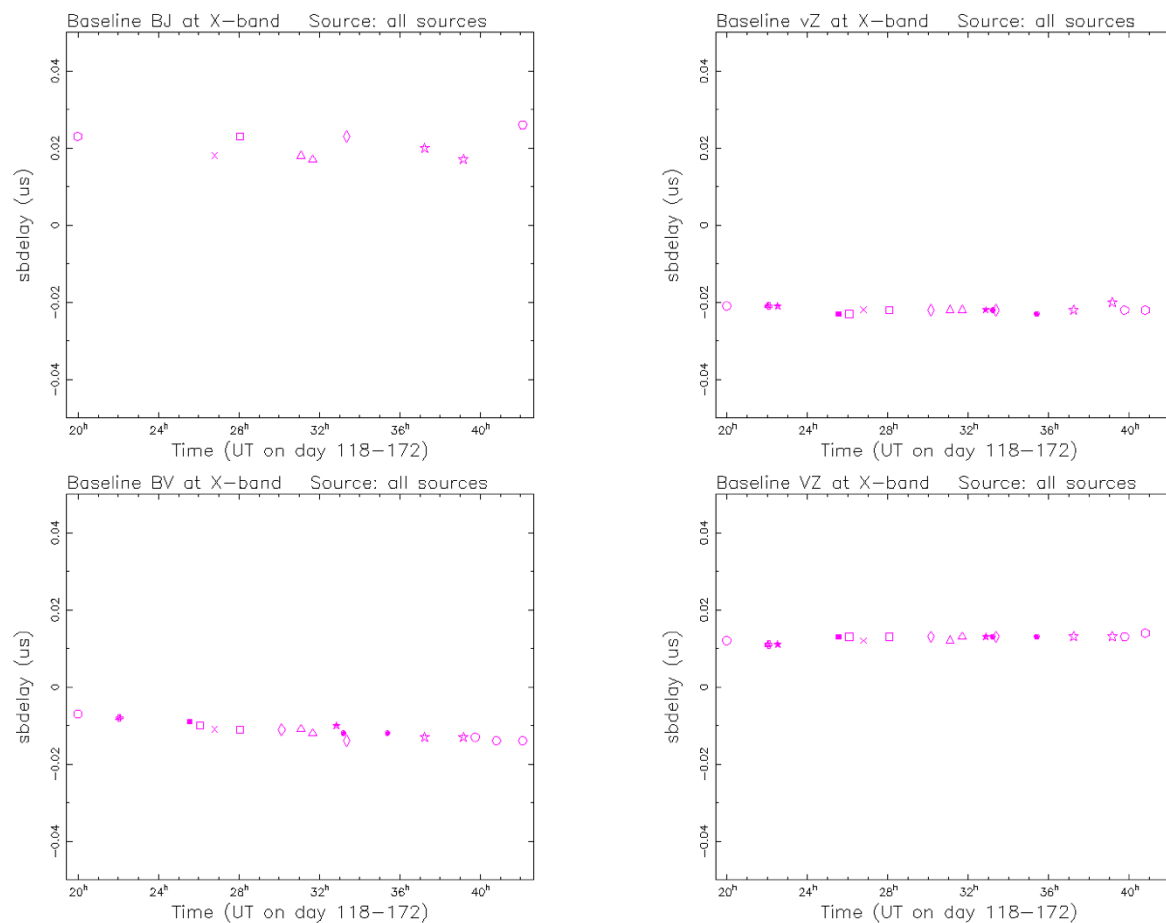
RA & Dec (J2000)

h36m58.594810s

47°51'29.100000"

Clock pass, before offset and rate corrections

AEDIT plot – Expt 4847, Freq X



Symbol key: $\circ$ = 1751+288, $\times$ = 0003-066, $\square$ = 0322+222, $\triangle$ = 0458-020, $\diamond$ = 0821+394, $\star$ = 1040+244
 $\blacktriangle$ = 0716+714, $\blacklozenge$ = 0016+731, $\blacksquare$ = 0529+483, $\bullet$ = 1418+546, $\star$ = the rest

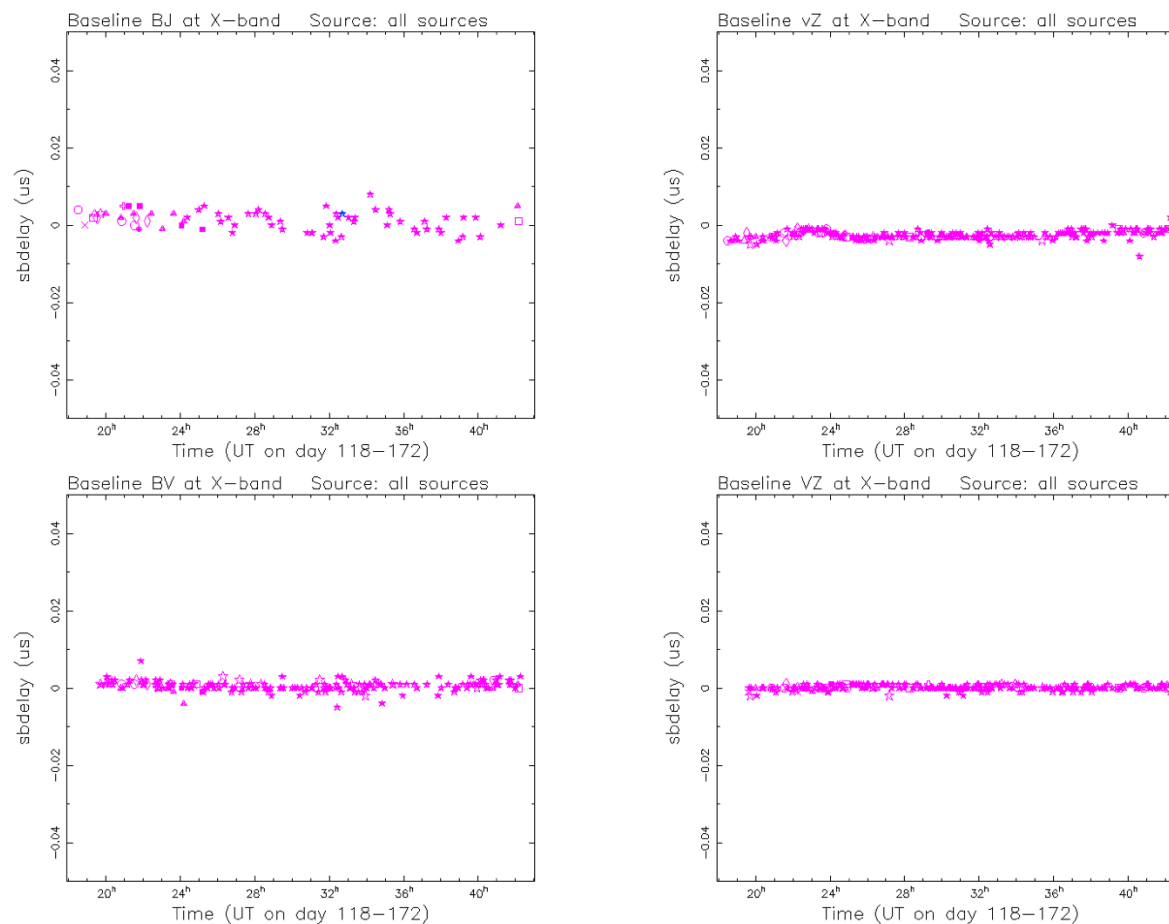


HOPS aedit: Plot View



Production pass, after offset and rate corrections

AEDIT plot – Expt 4847, Freq X



Symbol key: $\circ$ = 1749+096, $\times$ = 1502+036, $\square$ = 1636+473, $\triangle$ = 1409+218, $\diamond$ = 1504+377, $\star$ = 1418+546
 $\blacktriangle$ = 1751+288, $\blacklozenge$ = 2059+034, $\blacksquare$ = 2227-088, $\blacklozenge$ = 2008-159, $\star$ = the rest, $\circ$ = 0149+218



HOPS Fourfit: First Look



Before Configuration:

- Lots of G Codes
(low amp. chan.)
- No H Codes
(low amp. pcal)
 - But there could
have been!
- Some 0 Codes
(no fringe detected)
- Other quality codes
are spread out.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	*
A:X	-	-	-	-	-	-	24	-	5	-	-	5	31	76	156	548	127	158	1130
E:X	-	-	-	-	-	-	87	-	33	-	1	2	17	67	176	273	185	256	1097
H:X	-	-	-	-	-	-	47	-	32	-	-	2	3	20	50	138	237	741	1270
I:X	-	-	-	-	-	-	19	-	50	-	-	2	6	21	60	134	199	440	931
K:X	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	-	14	-	-	-	3	28	44	98	47	224	470
M:X	-	-	-	-	-	-	25	-	46	-	-	2	10	22	68	259	279	449	1160
N:X	-	-	-	-	-	-	35	-	34	-	4	39	137	306	310	76	44	110	1095
O:X	-	-	-	-	-	-	34	-	39	-	-	-	3	16	25	88	50	229	484
S:X	-	-	-	-	-	-	252	-	14	1	1	8	33	82	141	316	81	175	1104
T:X	-	-	-	-	-	-	253	-	13	1	2	12	20	84	111	328	153	176	1153
V:X	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	-	10	-	-	6	19	72	181	472	106	96	970

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	*
*:X	-	-	-	-	-	-	398	-	145	1	4	39	141	397	661	1365	754	1527	5432
:	-	-	-	-	-	-	398	-	145	1	4	39	141	397	661	1365	754	1527	5432

20

[illegible]

21

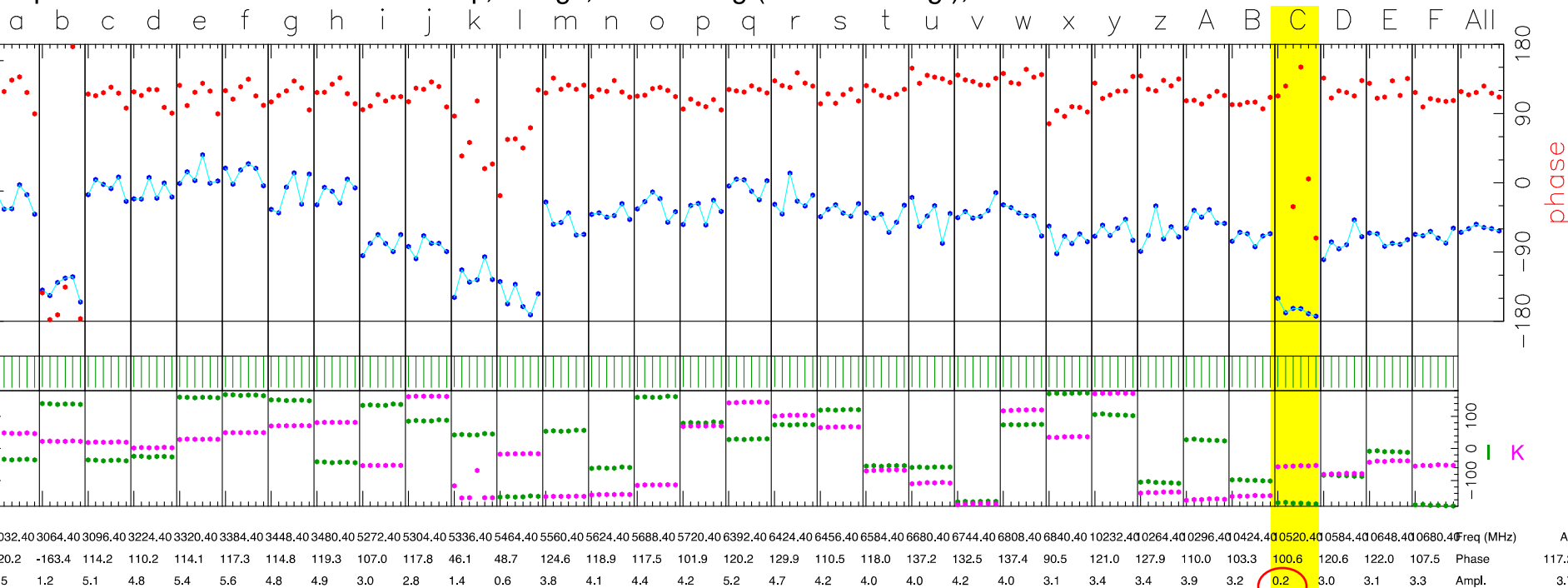


HOPS Fourfit: Weak Channels



- Radio frequency interference (RFI), and/or signal chain problems can cause low signal to noise (SNR) in one or more channel(s).
- **G Code** error (weak channel) happens when: $SNR_{chan} < \frac{SNR_{avg}}{10}$
- Correlator drops channels with excessive G Codes.

Amp. and Phase vs. time for each freq., 6 segs, 5 APs / seg (5.00 sec / seg.), time ticks 5 sec



Fringe quality 6

Error code G

SNR 106.0

Int time 29.908

Amp 3.544

Phase 117.2

PFD 0.0e+00

Delays (us)

SBD -0.007682

MBD -0.006917

Fringe rate (Hz)

-0.001625

Ion TEC 47.401

Ref freq (MHz)

6000.0000

AP (sec) 1.000

Exp. VO4143

Exper # 1234

Yr:day 2024:144

Start 021558.00

Stop 021628.00

FRT 021613.00

Corr/FF/build

2025:094:085103

2025:115:170534

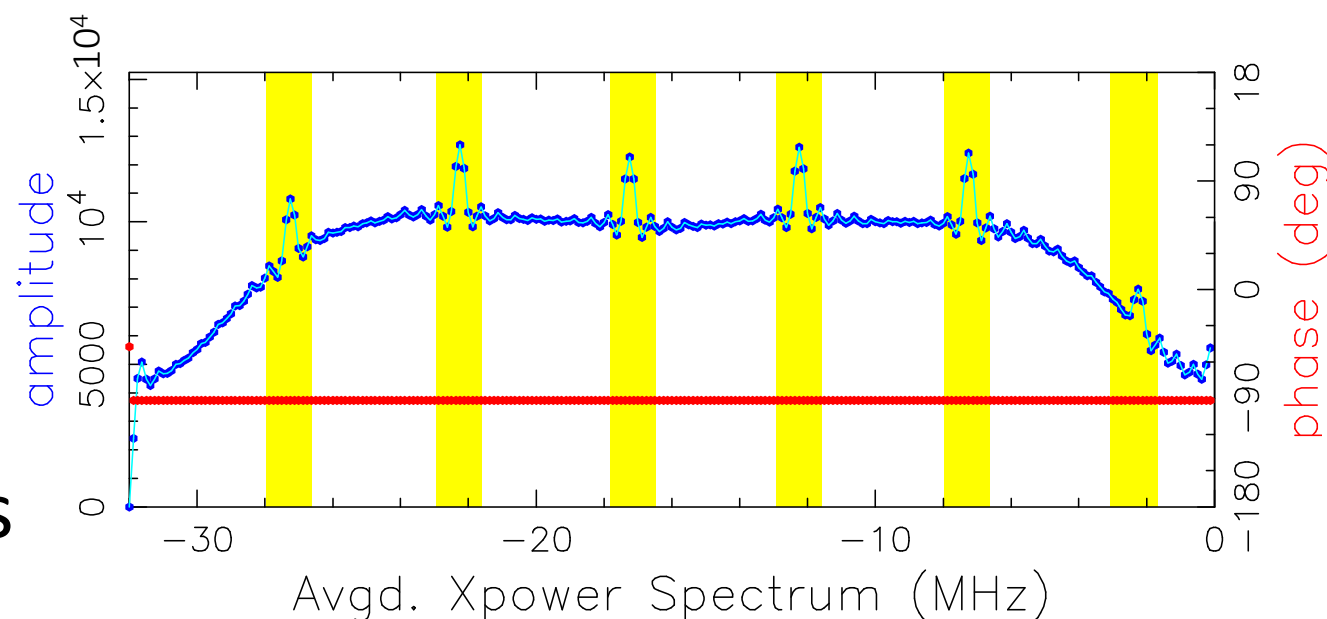
2022:353:141034

RA & Dec (J2000)

1h57m03.179230s

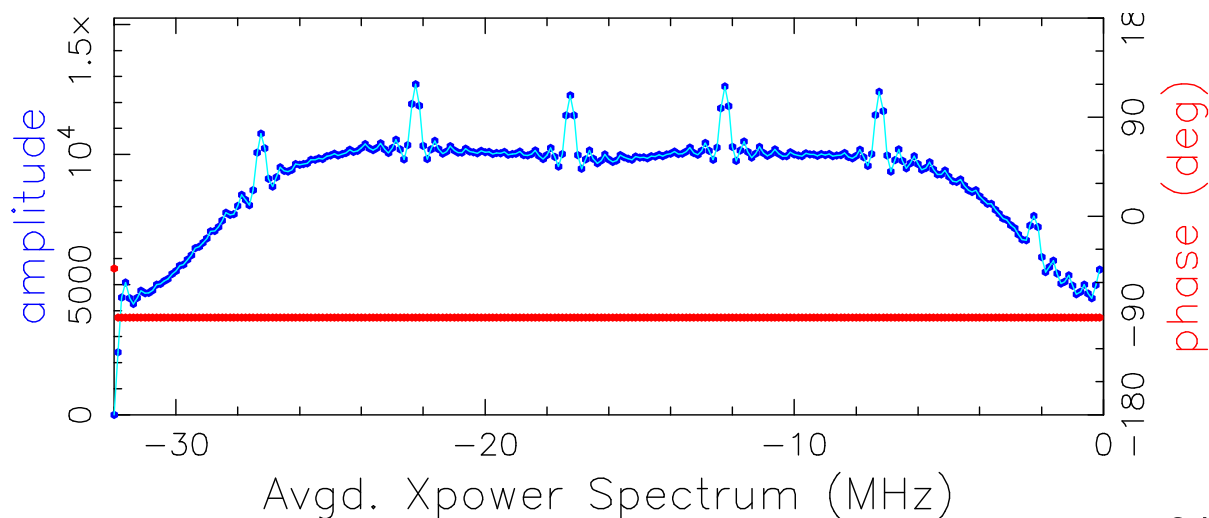
22°24'52.020100"

- Injected phase calibration (pcal) tones cause regularly spaced spikes in the apparent power spectrum of autocorrelations.
- Spacing is either 5 or 10 MHz for VGOS observations.
- Weak tones can be missed.
- Narrow RFI at pcal frequencies may cause spurious detection.
- DiFX extracts all pcal tones, so a few missing tones can be ignored, (e.g. due to RFI).

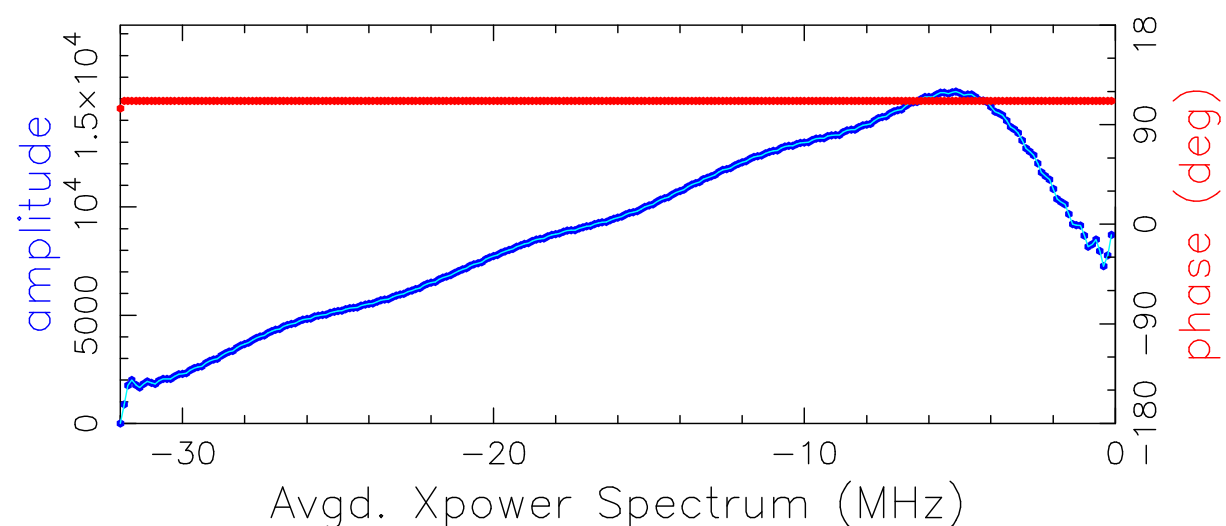


- Here are two example power spectra from autocorrelations with and without good phase calibration tone injection.

sufficient
phase calibration tones



no detectable
phase calibration tones



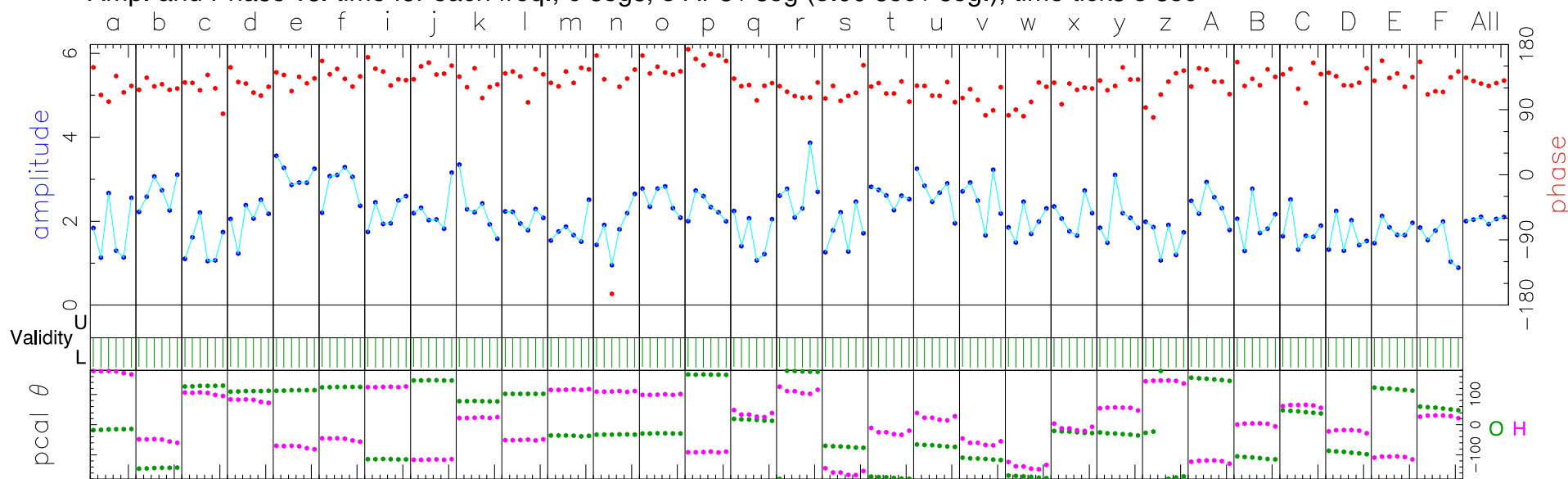


HOPS Fourfit: Phase Calibration (pcal) Cont.



- Phase calibration (PC) amplitude corresponds to pcal SNR.
- H Code error (no pcal) happens when: $Amp_{pcal} < 100ppm$**

Amp. and Phase vs. time for each freq., 6 segs, 5 APs / seg (5.00 sec / seg.), time ticks 5 sec



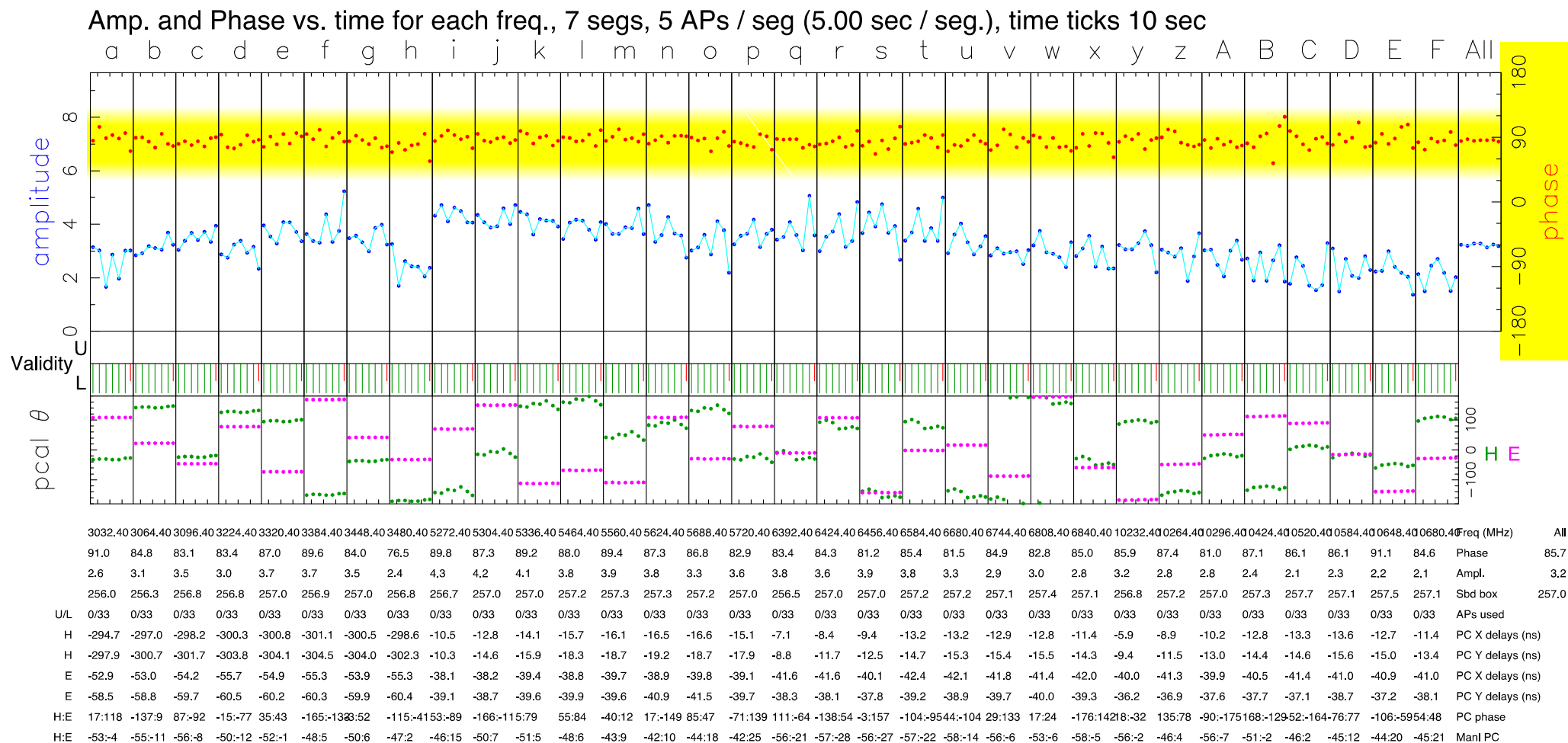
	3032.40	3064.40	3096.40	3224.40	3320.40	3384.40	5272.40	5304.40	5336.40	5464.40	5560.40	5624.40	5688.40	5720.40	6392.40	6424.40	6456.40	6584.40	6680.40	6744.40	6808.40	6840.40	10232.40	10264.40	10296.40	104024.40	10520.40	10584.40	1040648.40	10680.40	Freq (MHz)	All
	120.9	122.6	116.6	123.3	132.0	137.8	138.5	144.8	126.3	135.2	136.0	142.9	146.4	161.6	123.8	114.2	116.9	117.5	116.7	103.8	100.7	118.0	130.2	114.4	131.6	136.5	134.6	132.8	137.1	127.1	Phase	128.2
	1.7	2.6	1.4	2.0	3.1	2.8	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.0	1.8	1.7	2.5	2.3	1.7	2.7	1.7	2.6	2.6	2.5	1.9	2.1	2.1	1.5	2.3	1.9	1.7	1.6	1.8	1.4	Ampl.	2.1
	256.5	255.6	255.3	255.8	255.8	255.4	256.1	255.9	255.3	255.5	255.6	255.6	255.2	255.3	257.0	255.2	256.1	254.9	254.9	255.2	255.7	255.5	255.9	255.8	255.0	255.2	255.4	254.9	258.1	254.9	Sbd box	255.5
U/L	0/30	0/30	0/30	0/30	0/30	0/30	0/30	0/30	0/30	0/30	0/30	0/30	0/30	0/30	0/30	0/30	0/30	0/30	0/30	0/30	0/30	0/30	0/30	0/30	0/30	0/30	0/30	0/30	0/30	0/30	ADPs used	
O	77.7	71.5	72.2	72.3	70.2	73.7	72.4	69.7	71.5	71.5	69.8	69.8	70.5	70.3	43.7	54.0	44.7	49.1	51.4	50.8	46.3	51.9	28.2	28.9	28.9	29.8	30.0	27.1	27.1	30.3	PC X delays (ns)	
O	72.3	74.9	77.3	69.9	71.3	73.1	70.8	70.5	72.3	70.0	72.3	69.9	70.9	69.7	42.2	49.4	46.2	49.3	47.9	48.6	41.3	50.4	29.5	23.3	30.1	30.2	31.6	29.4	28.2	29.7	PC Y delays (ns)	
H	-294.7	-296.9	-298.0	-300.1	-300.7	-301.0	-10.4	-13.0	-14.1	-15.8	-16.1	-16.7	-16.6	-14.9	-7.2	-8.4	-9.5	-12.9	-13.2	-12.9	-12.8	-11.4	-6.1	-8.8	-10.2	-12.7	-13.3	-13.6	-12.5	-11.1	PC X delays (ns)	
H	-297.8	-300.6	-301.6	-303.7	-304.0	-304.4	-10.4	-14.6	-15.8	-18.3	-18.6	-19.2	-18.8	-17.6	-8.6	-11.7	-12.4	-14.9	-15.4	-15.3	-15.4	-14.3	-9.4	-11.4	-13.0	-14.4	-14.6	-15.7	-15.0	-13.5	PC Y delays (ns)	
O:H	172:-179	21:-14	-99:169	134:-105	50:180	10:-109	-86:-91	167:43	75:-168	87:156	-95:-16	-100:-4	-92:3	85:179	127:119	-73:-156	37:-60	-81:99	10:167	-38:96	-122:26	25:161	-98:-66	152:15	140:121	-144:-113	47:-47	159:-127	15:151	-47:-72	PC phase	
O:H	169:-4	162:-6	165:-4	163:-1	170:0	171:4	183:5	181:0	194:0	168:0	184:6	175:7	153:7	163:9	171:-6	165:-6	158:-6	146:-5	143:-6	135:-5	148:-2	143:-4	198:-9	184:2	135:-7	148:0	196:3	210:5	199:5	196:6	Manl PC	
O	100	99	105	65	95	108	57	48	51	59	27	48	50	49	38	43	34	24	19	22	16	16	6	1	5	24	16	15	9	6	PC amp	
H	56	59	56	60	53	58	53	51	45	48	40	43	41	36	33	36	34	38	33	35	32	25	15	15	13	14	12	13	13	11		



HOPS Fourfit: Phase Calibration (pcal) Cont.



- After fringe fitting and phase calibration, the phases should appear normally distributed around a single mean value.



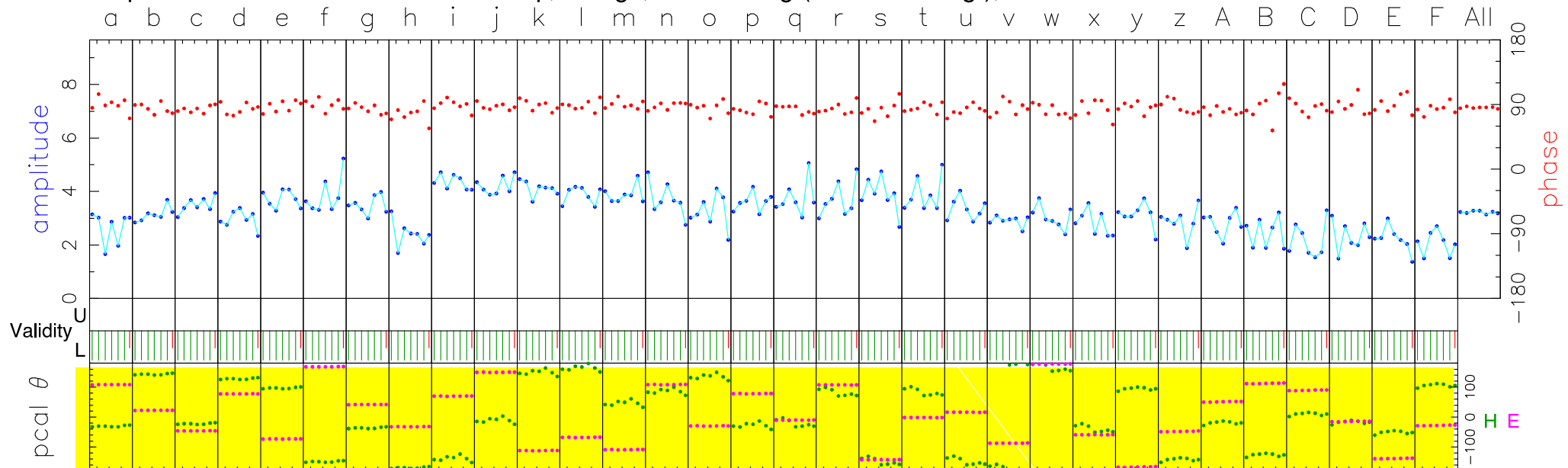


HOPS Fourfit: Phase Calibration (pcal) Cont.



- Measured pcal phase should be relatively flat within each channel.
- Slopes or curves in the pcal phase within a channel can indicate a drifting or unstable phase calibration.

Amp. and Phase vs. time for each freq., 7 segs, 5 APs / seg (5.00 sec / seg.), time ticks 10 sec



	3032.40	3064.40	3096.40	3224.40	3320.40	3384.40	3448.40	3480.40	5272.40	5304.40	5336.40	5464.40	5560.40	5624.40	5688.40	5720.40	6392.40	6424.40	6456.40	6584.40	6680.40	6744.40	6808.40	6840.40	10232.40	10264.40	10296.40	10424.40	10520.40	10584.40	10648.40	10680.40	Freq (MHz)	All
	91.0	84.8	83.1	83.4	87.0	89.6	84.0	76.5	89.8	87.3	89.2	88.0	89.4	87.3	86.8	82.9	83.4	84.3	81.2	85.4	81.5	84.9	82.8	85.0	85.9	87.4	81.0	87.1	86.1	86.1	91.1	84.6	Phase	85.7
	2.6	3.1	3.5	3.0	3.7	3.7	3.5	2.4	4.3	4.2	4.1	3.8	3.9	3.8	3.3	3.6	3.8	3.6	3.9	3.8	3.3	2.9	3.0	2.8	3.2	2.8	2.8	2.4	2.1	2.3	2.2	2.1	Ampl.	3.2
	256.0	256.3	256.8	256.8	257.0	256.9	257.0	256.8	256.7	257.0	257.0	257.2	257.3	257.3	257.2	257.0	256.5	257.0	257.0	257.2	257.2	257.1	257.4	257.1	256.8	257.2	257.0	257.3	257.7	257.1	257.5	257.1	Sbd box	257.0
U/L	0/33	0/33	0/33	0/33	0/33	0/33	0/33	0/33	0/33	0/33	0/33	0/33	0/33	0/33	0/33	0/33	0/33	0/33	0/33	0/33	0/33	0/33	0/33	0/33	0/33	0/33	0/33	0/33	0/33	0/33	0/33	0/33	APs used	
H	-294.7	-297.0	-298.2	-300.3	-300.8	-301.1	-300.5	-298.6	-10.5	-12.8	-14.1	-15.7	-16.1	-16.5	-16.6	-15.1	-7.1	-8.4	-9.4	-13.2	-13.2	-12.9	-12.8	-11.4	-5.9	-8.9	-10.2	-12.8	-13.3	-13.6	-12.7	-11.4	PC X delays (ns)	
H	-297.9	-300.7	-301.7	-303.8	-304.1	-304.5	-304.0	-302.3	-10.3	-14.6	-15.9	-18.3	-18.7	-19.2	-18.7	-17.9	-8.8	-11.7	-12.5	-14.7	-15.3	-15.4	-15.5	-14.3	-9.4	-11.5	-13.0	-14.4	-14.6	-15.6	-15.0	-13.4	PC Y delays (ns)	
E	-52.9	-53.0	-54.2	-55.7	-54.9	-55.3	-53.9	-55.3	-38.1	-38.2	-39.4	-38.8	-39.7	-38.9	-39.8	-39.1	-41.6	-41.6	-40.1	-42.4	-42.1	-41.8	-41.4	-42.0	-40.0	-41.3	-39.9	-40.5	-41.4	-41.0	-40.9	-41.0	PC X delays (ns)	
E	-52.9	-53.0	-54.2	-55.7	-54.9	-55.3	-53.9	-55.3	-38.1	-38.2	-39.4	-38.8	-39.7	-38.9	-39.8	-39.1	-41.6	-41.6	-40.1	-42.4	-42.1	-41.8	-41.4	-42.0	-40.0	-41.3	-39.9	-40.5	-41.4	-41.0	-40.9	-41.0	PC Y delays (ns)	



HOPS Fourfit: Final Look



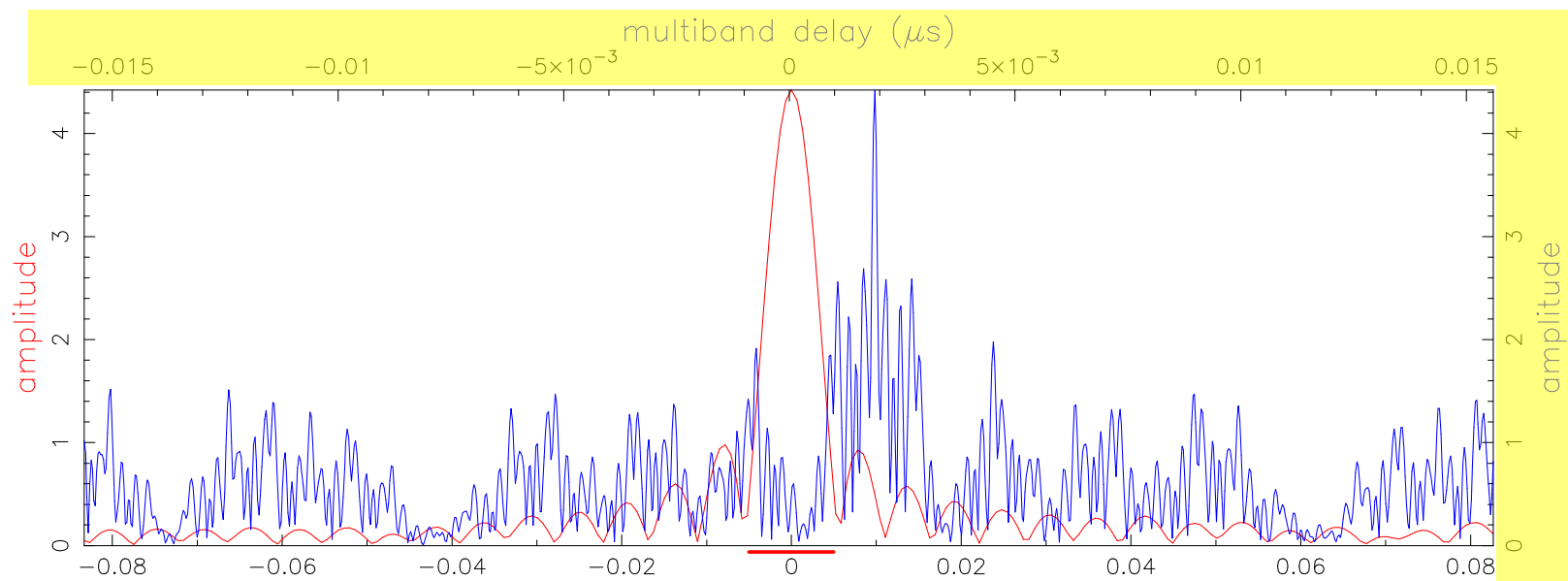
After Configuration:

- Fewer G and H Codes
 - Sometimes a few new ones after pseudo-Stokes I
- Fewer 0 Codes
- More 7—9 Codes
- Goal:
≥ 90% 7—9 Codes

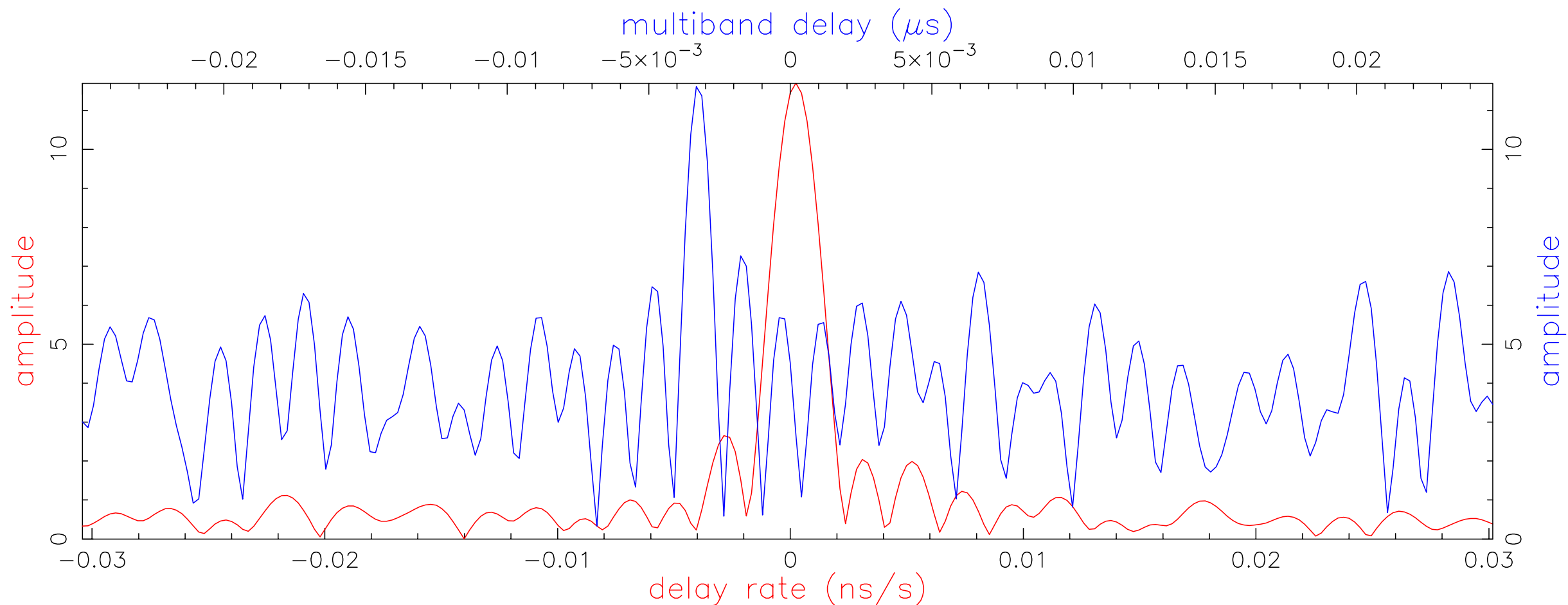
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	*
A:X	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	17	136	792	180	1130
E:X	-	-	-	-	-	-	13	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	16	177	867	20	1097
H:X	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	1	-	-	1	-	2	45	80	198	559	364	1270
I:X	-	-	-	-	-	-	17	1	-	-	-	-	1	23	51	123	477	238	931
K:X	-	-	-	-	-	-	44	-	-	-	1	1	1	34	90	197	53	49	470
M:X	-	-	-	-	-	-	16	-	-	-	-	1	1	17	28	112	689	296	1160
N:X	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	17	56	412	425	183	1095
O:X	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	2	-	-	-	-	1	20	45	122	126	159	484
S:X	-	-	-	-	-	-	90	-	-	2	5	17	36	81	23	135	633	82	1104
T:X	-	-	-	-	-	-	93	-	-	2	5	17	36	85	23	141	610	141	1153
V:X	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	19	111	763	68	970

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	*
*:X	-	-	-	-	-	-	156	2	-	2	6	18	39	166	224	932	2997	890	5432
:	-	-	-	-	-	-	156	2	-	2	6	18	39	166	224	932	2997	890	5432

- Each channel only gives a single mean frequency:
We must combine channels to cover the whole range of frequencies.
- Fourier transforming phase differences between each channel yields a representative sine wave.
- Different spacings produce different sine waves (some redundant).
- The sum of these sine waves is the **multiband delay function**.



- Removing channels removes spacings and causes ambiguities.



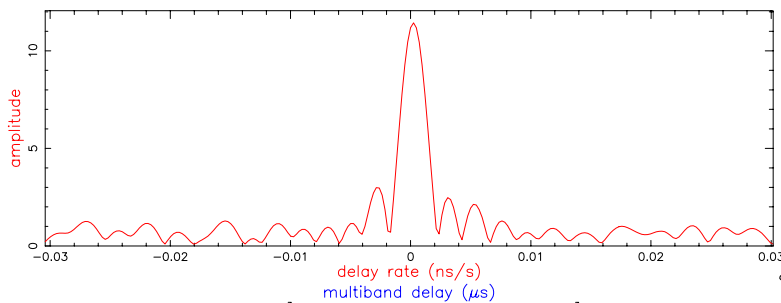
8 channels, 28 spacings



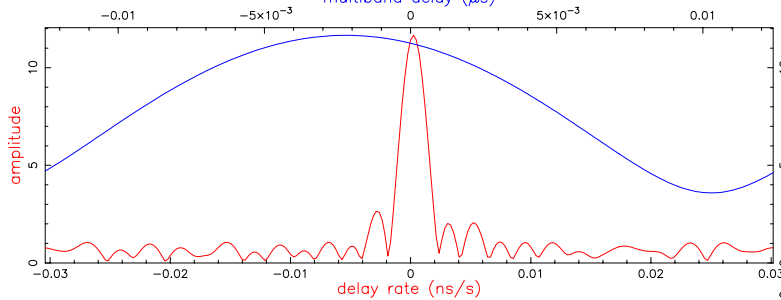
HOPS Fourfit: Multiband Delay Cont.



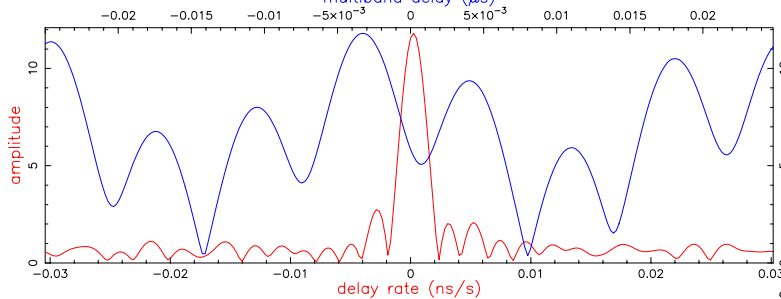
1 channel
0 spacings



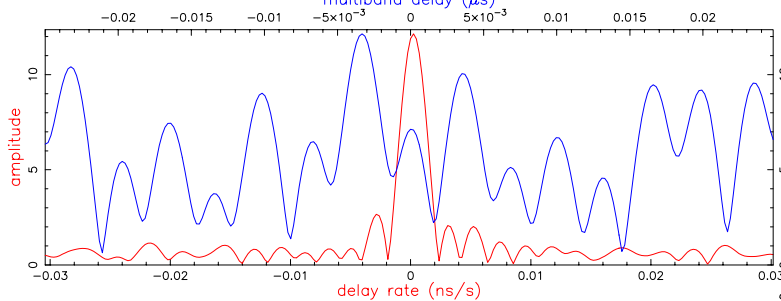
2 channels
1 spacing



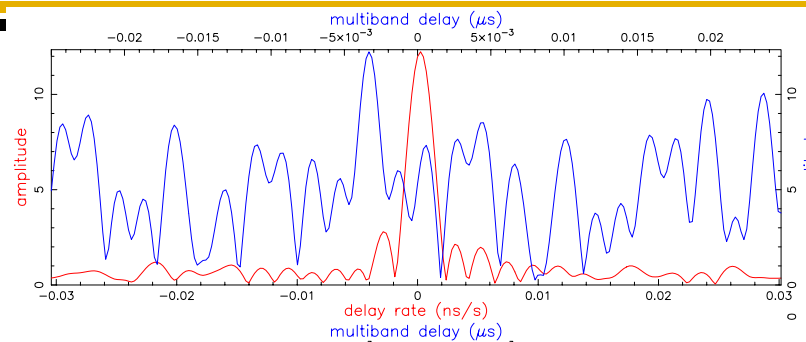
3 channels
3 spacings



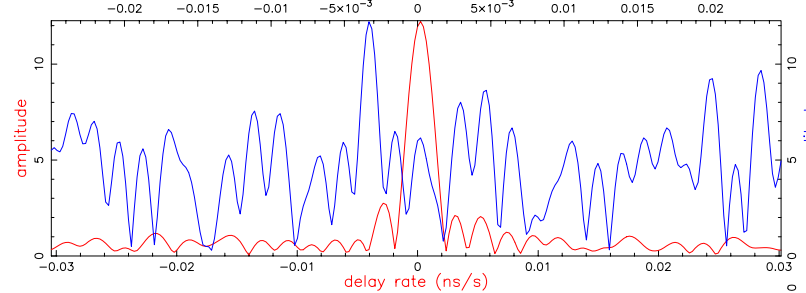
4 channels
6 spacings



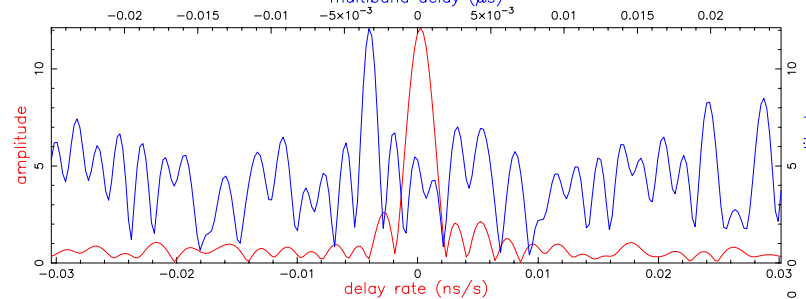
5 channels
10 spacings



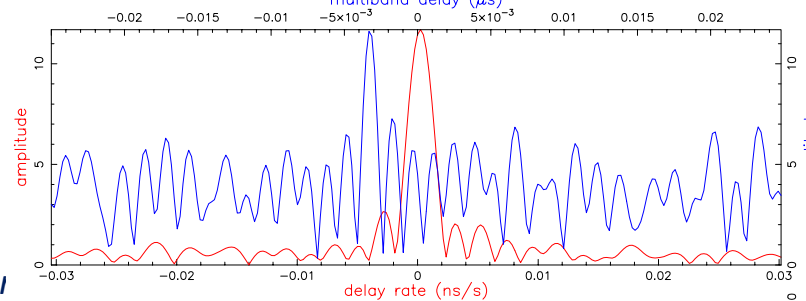
6 channels
15 spacings



7 channels
21 spacings



8 channels
28 spacings

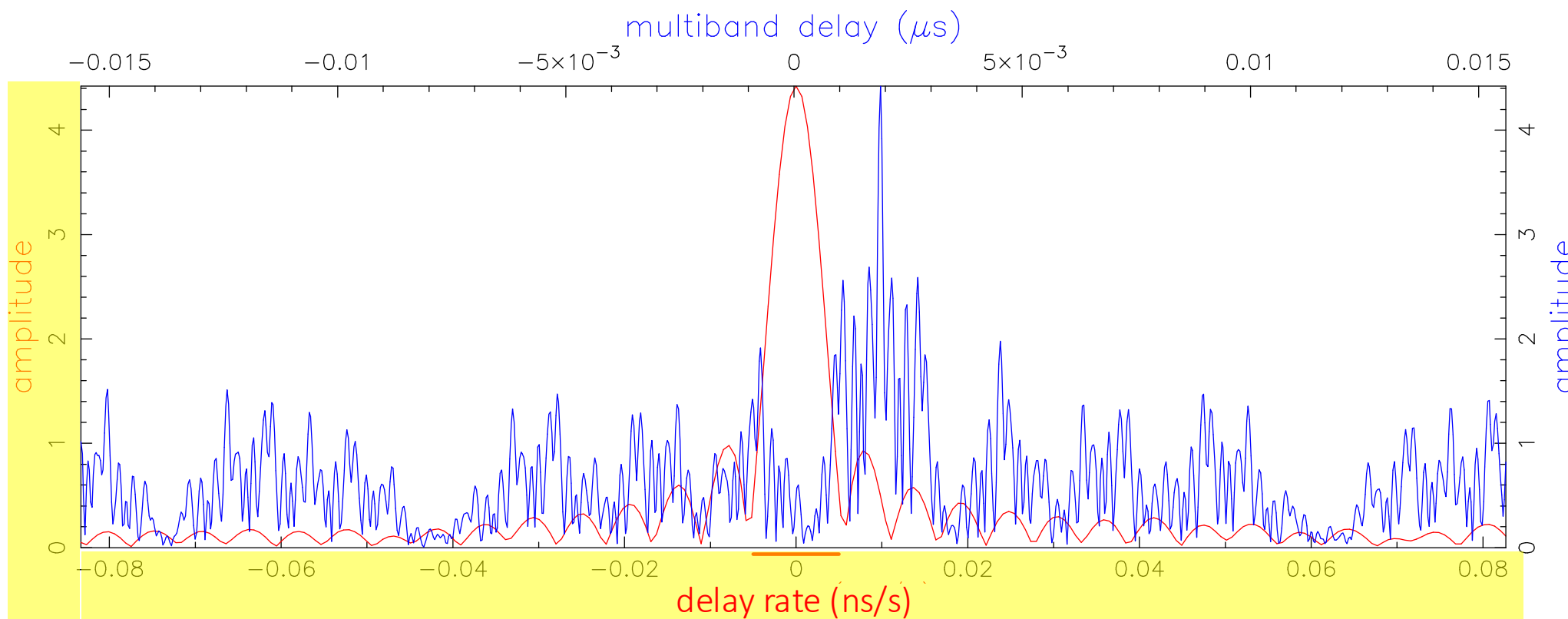




HOPS Fourfit: Fringe Rate and Delay Rate



- Fringe Rate (FR): Phase Slope vs Time
- Delay Rate (DR): Phase Slope vs Frequency



Fringe quality 8

SNR 132.4

Int time 29.982

Amp $4.422 \times 100\text{ppm}$

Phase -131.9

PFD $0.0\text{e}+00$

Delays (μs)

SBD 0.000148

MBD 0.001890

Fringe rate (Hz)

0.000207

Ion TEC 15.865

Ref freq (MHz)

6000.0000

AP (sec) 1.000

Exp. VO4143

Exper # 1234

Yr:day 2024:143

Start 185045.00

Stop 185115.00

FRT 185100.00

Corr/FF/build

2025:093:014228

2025:115:165746

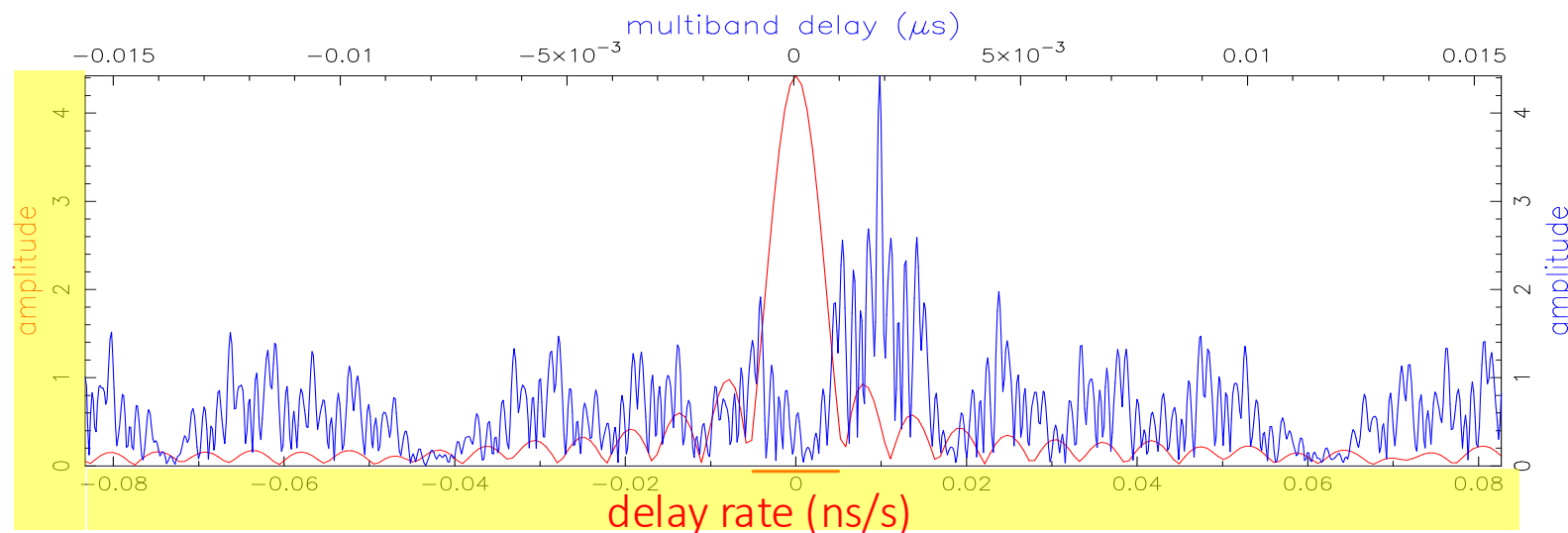
2022:353:141034

RA & Dec (J2000)

h36m58.594810s

47°51'29.100000"

- Delay Rate (DR) window = $\frac{1}{2 \cdot AP \cdot \nu}$
 - AP = accumulation period
 - ν = reference frequency
- The DR plot axes are confined by the DR window:



Fringe quality 8

SNR 132.4

Int time 29.982

Amp 4.422 × 100ppm

Phase -131.9

PFD 0.0e+00

Delays (us)

SBD 0.000148

MBD 0.001890

Fringe rate (Hz)

0.000207

Ion TEC 15.865

Ref freq (MHz)

6000.0000

AP (sec) 1.000

Exp. VO4143

Exper # 1234

Yr:day 2024:143

Start 185045.00

Stop 185115.00

FRT 185100.00

Corr/FF/build

2025:093:014228

2025:115:165746

2022:353:141034

RA & Dec (J2000)

h36m58.594810s

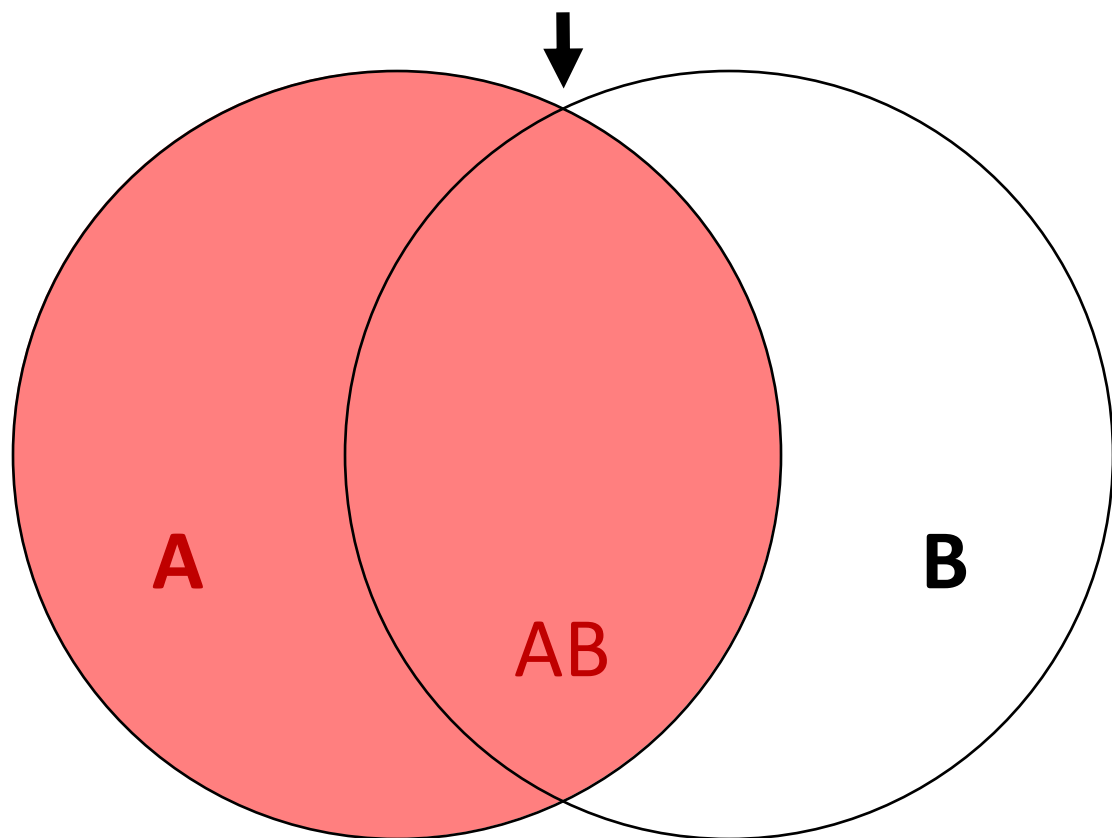
47°51'29.100000"

- Lowest frequency (1 sec AP, 3.03 GHz): DRW = 1.65×10^{-10} ns/s

The Baseline Problem:

We only see 2-station **baselines** and 3-station **closures**.

We can't tell which station
has a problem with only one baseline
(we need to use other information).



Correlator Report:

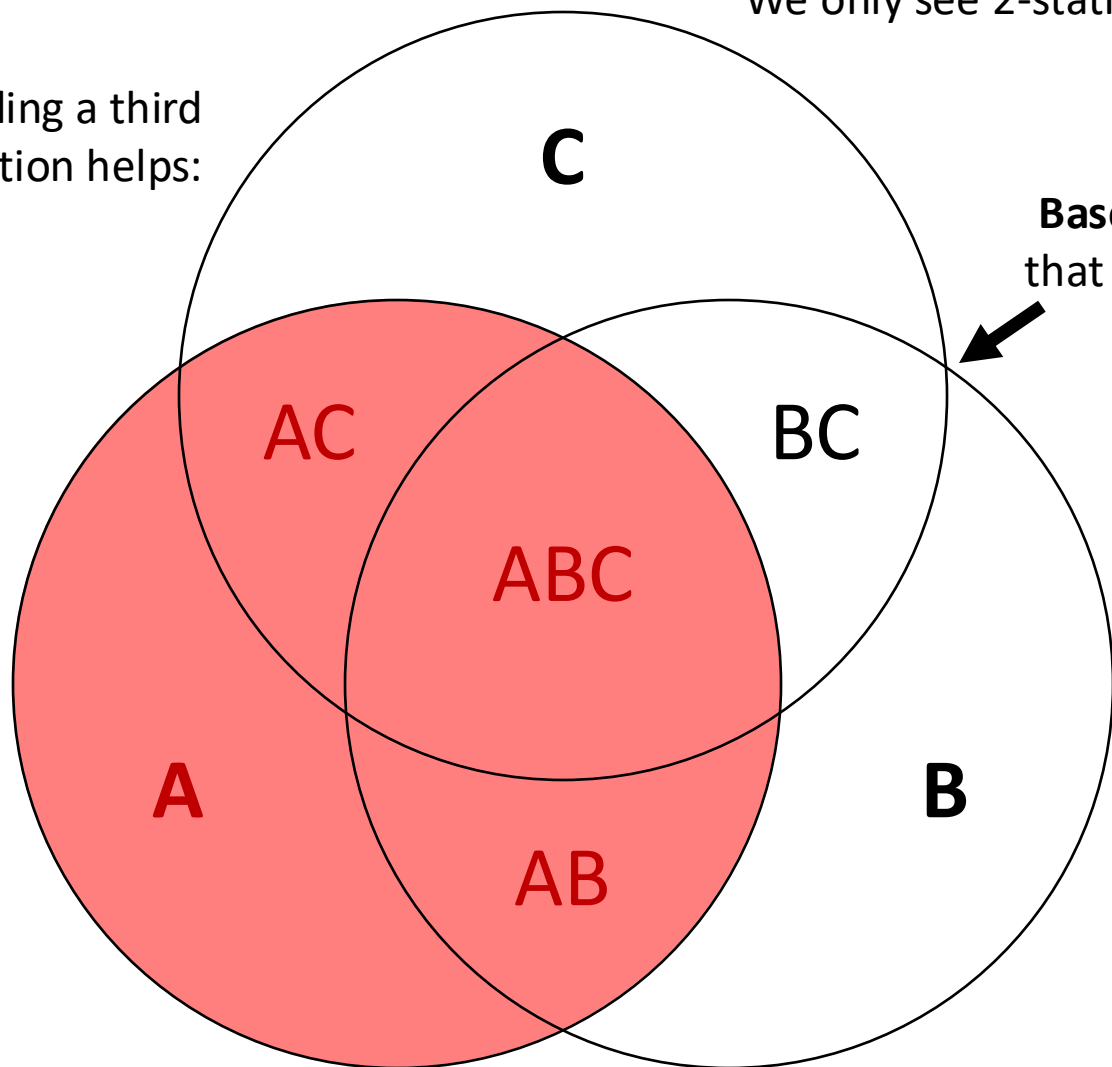
+CORRELATOR_NOTES

Aa-Bb: Removed channel(s) from
fringe fitting: SR1U

The Baseline Problem:

We only see 2-station **baselines** and 3-station **closures**.

Adding a third station helps:

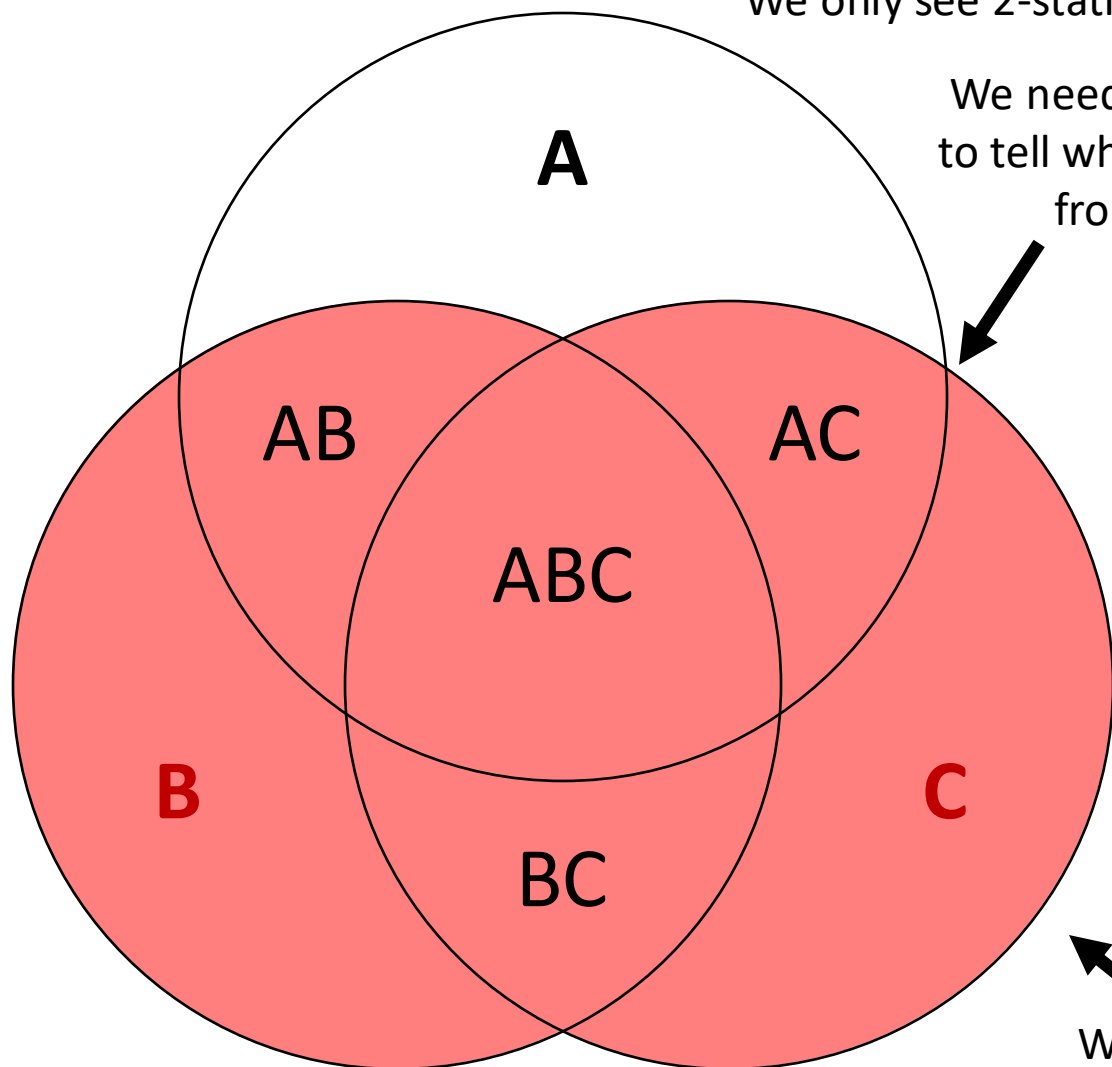


+NOTES

station	note
Aa-Bb	Removed channel from fringe fitting: S03UR
* station	2-char station ID, baseline, closure set, or - for general notes
* note	correlator notes and feedback

The Baseline Problem:

We only see 2-station **baselines** and 3-station **closures**.



We need at least **one okay baseline** to tell which stations have a problem from baseline data alone.

+NOTES

station	note

Aa-Bb-Cc	Removed channel from fringe fitting: S03UR
* station	2-char station ID, baseline, closure set, or - for general notes
* note	correlator notes and feedback

What if two stations have the problem?



The Current Washington Correlator



- Transfer
 - 9 Gbps eTransfer
 - Mark5 systems
- Hardware
 - 6.45 TFLOPS (1,792 CPU cores)
 - 4.17 PB storage (2.04 PB ingest + 2.13 PB internal)
- Software
 - DiFX, HOPS, nuSolve, SKED, VieSched++, Python3



TLDR: What can go wrong?



Slow Data Shipping

Effects:

- **preliminary database** followed by **re-release**
 - data aren't used for EOPs (Earth orientation parameters)
- **station dropped** from session
 - **data are lost** (too late to justify disk space)

Solutions:

- ship data ASAP
- always send the **tracking number** to the correlator.
- carefully fill out **customs** declarations / paper work
- use a reputable carrier



TLDR: What can go wrong?



Large Clock Jump

Effects:

- correlator searches for new clock offset
 - $0 \text{ sec} \pm 100 \text{ } \mu\text{s}$, and $\pm 1 \text{ sec} \pm 32 \text{ } \mu\text{s}$
 - very time consuming (man hours and CPU time)
- clock may not be found
 - **data are lost** (no fringes found)

Solutions:

- always upload log file (with GPS)
- inform correlator of likely jumps
 - put jump and jump size in the **ivs-ops mailing list** start or stop message
- **do not unplug** or reseal cables in the signal chain
 - 1 nm cable shift $\cong$ 1 nm observed position shift

Wrong Schedule Used

Effects:

- **data are lost**
(out of network)
- split-release w/
different subnets
 - very occasional
(special circumstances)
 - smaller subnet usually
ignored after analysis

Solutions:

- check for schedule changes as
close to start time as possible
- check **all three** IVS archives:
 - <https://cddis.nasa.gov/archive/vlbi/ivodata/aux>
 - https://ivs.bkg.bund.de/data_dir/vlbi/ivodata/aux
 - <ftp://ivsopar.obspm.fr/vlbi/ivodata/aux>
- FTP timestamps may be wrong!
 - download SKD and compare
SCHEDULE_CREATE_DATE



TLDR: What can go wrong?



Bad Channel / Frequency Setup

Effects:

- correlator searches for channel / frequency setup
 - try other known configurations first
 - searching for unknown configuration is very costly (*rarely done*)
- data are often lost

Solutions:

- double-check signal chain and IF/recorder setup before session
- report incorrect channel / freq. setup in SKD or VEX files to IVS
- If something goes wrong:
 - explain *exactly* how channels and frequencies are set up in ivs-ops start or stop message

TLDR: What else can stations do?



- Double check:
 - **pointing** control
 - **phase cal** injection
 - field system **time sync** (NTP)
 - **channel/frequency** setup
 - **cable cal** and **weather** monitor
- List **missed / problem scans** in **ivs-ops** mailing list stop message.
 - Try to list **why** scans were missed too.
 - The correlator may forward your message in the station notes.

How can we help you?

- We'll notify you of...
 - Missing or problematic data
 - Clock issues (such as 1 second offsets)
- Correlator report!
 - Provides feedback on overall and individual performance (clock/pcal/RFI, etc.)
 - Lets IVS know when a session has been correlated and ready for analysis
 - Read it please, or we will be sad ☹️



Correlator Report



%CORRELATOR_REPORT_FORMAT 3

+HEADER

SESSION R41083
VGOSDB 20221229-r41083
START 2022-363-1830
END 2022-364-1830
CORRELATOR WACO
ANALYST Mike Dutka
VERSION 1-1

Correlation
Pass Number

Fringing
Pass Number



Correlator Report



+SUMMARY

qcode	total	correlated

5-9	68.01%	80.13%
0	15.85%	18.67%
1-4,A-H,N	16.14%	1.20%
removed	0.00%	0.00%

* qcode quality codes, error codes, or status
* total percent of total scans
* correlated percent of correlated scans

Strong fringes →
No fringe found →
Weak fringes and errors →
Not observed →



Correlator Report



+STATIONS

station	name	mk4

Bd	BADARY	B
Ht	HART15M	J
Is	ISHIOKA	I
Kk	KOKEE	K
Ns	NYALE13S	b
Ny	NYALES20	N
Wn	WETTZ13N	U
Wz	WETTZELL	v
Ys	YEBES40M	C

- * station 2-char station ID
- * name 3- to 8-char station name
- * mk4 1-char HOPS station code



Correlator Report



Could be
poor or missing
phase cal, RFI, ...



Could be RFI,
warm receiver, ...



Could be pointing
problem, cryo issue,
wrong schedule, ...



+NOTES

station	note
---------	------

Bd	Did not observe
----	-----------------

Kk	Applied manual phase calibration
----	----------------------------------

Kk	Removed channel from fringe fitting: S04UR
----	--

Ny	No fringes
----	------------

Wn	Did not observe
----	-----------------

Ys	Removed channel from fringe fitting: S03UR
----	--

* station 2-char station ID, baseline, closure set, or - for general notes

* note correlator notes and feedback



Correlator Report



Epoch is both the origin of the offsets, and the starting time for each clock break

Note that there are two or more clocks at different epochs for clock breaks →

+CLOCK

st	epoch	used-offset	used-rate	raw-offset	raw-rate	comment
Ht	2022-363-1830	9.619	-5.580000e-14	6.667979	-2.010234e-13	
Is	2022-363-1830	0.370	-1.570000e-13	0.148675	2.491744e-14	
Kk	2022-363-1830	7.903	-2.545000e-13	7.346932	-5.665280e-14	
Ns	2022-363-1830	23.987	6.884000e-13	8.110163	8.358000e-13	
Ny	2022-363-1830	-63.386	1.259000e-12	-65.667153	1.259166e-12	
Ny	2022-364-0540	-60.020	2.059000e-12	-65.667153	1.259166e-12	clock-break
Wz	2022-363-1830	-4.385	-1.070000e-13	-6.541582	-1.070275e-13	
Ys	2022-363-1830	53.621	1.257000e-12	55.416536	1.391239e-12	

- * st 2-char station ID
- * epoch time coordinate of offsets and clock model segment start time
- * used-offset (usec) station clock minus offset used in correlation at epoch
- * used-rate drift rate of station clock minus offset used in correlation
- * raw-offset (usec) station clock minus reference clock offset at epoch
- * raw-rate drift rate of station clock minus reference clock offset
- * comment clock-break, reference station, or other notes



Correlator Report



Note:
HOPS channel names
usually have this format:



+CHANNELS

channel id frequency

S00UR	a	2225.99
S01UR	b	2245.99
S02UR	c	2265.99
S03UR	d	2295.99
S04UR	e	2345.99
S05UR	f	2365.99
X06LR	g-	8212.99
X06UR	g+	8212.99
X07UR	h	8252.99
X08UR	i	8352.99
X09UR	j	8512.99
X10UR	k	8732.99
X11UR	l	8852.99
X12UR	m	8912.99
X13LR	n-	8932.99
X13UR	n+	8932.99

- * channel HOPS channel name
- * id short name with sideband indicator
- * frequency (MHz) sky frequency



Correlator Report



Station ID



Ys S03UR
Kk S04UR



Channel(s)

+DROP_CHANNELS

+MANUAL_PCAL

Station ID



Kk



Correlator Report



QCODES gives a
more granular view
of the SUMMARY

+QCODES

bl:band	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	G	H	N	-	total
JI:S	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	84	0	0	0	0	99
JI:X	16	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	75	0	1	0	0	99
Jb:S	16	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	6	44	0	0	0	0	73
Jb:X	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	55	0	3	0	0	73
JN:S	42	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	45	0	87
JN:X	42	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	45	0	87
Jv:S	9	0	0	0	1	0	1	6	15	172	2	0	0	0	206
Jv:X	4	0	0	0	0	0	1	5	22	173	0	1	0	0	206
JC:S	8	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	9	194	2	0	0	0	214
JC:X	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	14	194	0	1	0	0	214
IK:S	21	0	0	0	0	0	1	21	105	182	0	0	0	0	330
IK:X	6	0	0	0	0	0	1	9	56	258	0	0	0	0	330
...															
vC:S	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	17	71	240	0	0	0	0	330
vC:X	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	2	48	277	0	0	0	0	330
total	1186	0	0	0	1	7	18	171	866	4028	18	57	1132	0	7484

- * bl:band baseline and frequency band name
- * 0 no fringe detected
- * 1-9 fringe detected, higher value means better quality
- * B fourfit interpolation error
- * D no data in one or more frequency channels
- * E fringe found at edge of SBD, MBD, or rate window
- * F fork problem in processing
- * G channel amplitude diverges too far from mean amplitude
- * H low phase-cal amplitude in one or more channels
- * N correlation or fringing failed
- * - correlation not attempted
- * total column and row totals



Correlator Report



Low SNR ratio means that the antenna's effective SEFD was lower than scheduling expected

SNR ratio near 1.0 means that antenna and scheduling are working as intended

High SNR ratio means that the antenna's effective SEFD was higher than scheduling expected

+SNR RATIOS

b1	S n_S		X n_X	
JI	0.824748	88	0.698808	83
Jb	0.632045	57	0.575418	65
Jv	0.806562	197	0.655074	202
JC	0.868830	206	0.395182	211
IK	0.537841	309	0.717275	324
Ib	0.751313	186	0.721237	203
Iv	0.806576	189	0.966395	191
IC	0.850378	151	0.603681	152
Kb	0.535537	126	0.687464	163
KN	-	0	0.332825	1
Kv	0.482250	146	0.883386	161
KC	0.573646	110	0.612876	121
bv	0.761767	208	0.878315	217
bC	0.783280	205	0.512325	223
Nv	0.770276	3	-	0
NC	0.337093	2	-	0
vC	1.035180	330	0.815098	330

* b1 baseline
* [A-Z] ratio for this band name
* n_[A-Z] number of scans in average for this band name



Correlator Report



These sections list the software and some settings used for correlation, fringing, and VGOSDB packaging

+CORRELATION

SOFTWARE DiFX
VERSION 2.5.4
ALGORITHM FX
NCHAN 256
FFTSPECRES 0.03125 MHz
SPECRES 0.125 MHz
TINT 2.0 sec

+FRINGING

SOFTWARE HOPS
VERSION 3.23-3383

+VGOSDB

SOFTWARE nuSolve
VERSION 0.8.1



Correlator Report



Configuration file
used for correlation

For DiFX, this will
be the V2D file

+CORRELATION CONFIG FILE

```
vex = r41083.vex
maxGap = 180000.0
maxLength = 360000.0
singleScan = true
startSeries = 1
antennas = HT, IS, KK, NS, NY, WZ, YS
```

```
SETUP normalSetup {
  FFTSpecRes = 0.03125
  specRes = 0.125
  tInt = 2
}
```

```
RULE scansubset {
  setup = normalSetup
}
```

```
ANTENNA HT {
  phaseCalInt = 1
  toneSelection = all
  filelist = filelist
}
```

```
ANTENNA IS {
  phaseCalInt = 5
  toneSelection = all
  filelist = filelist
}
```

```
...
```



Correlator Report



Configuration file
used for fringing

For HOPS, this will
be the CF file

+FRINGING CONFIG FILE

```
sb_win -256.0 256.0
mb_win -256.0 256.0
dr_win -0.030 0.030
pc_mode multitone
pc_period 5

if f_group S ref_freq 2225.99
if f_group X ref_freq 8212.99

if station K and f_group S pc_tonemask abcdef 16 16 16 16 16 16
if station K and f_group X pc_tonemask ghijklmn 148 132 132 132 132 132 132 132

if station J lsb_offset 0.0
if station I lsb_offset 0.0
if station K lsb_offset 70.0
if station N lsb_offset 0.0
if station b lsb_offset 0.0
if station v lsb_offset 0.0
if station C lsb_offset -20.0

if station C and f_group S freqs a b c e f
if station K and f_group S freqs a b c d f

if station K pc_mode manual
if station K and f_group S pc_phases abcdef 20.79209 9.12735 90.70320 70.06696 135.72812 10.49509
if station K and f_group X pc_phases ghijklmn 95.14771 38.72751 62.34361 30.12612 71.47699 93.45794 3.82575 78.31685

if station C and f_group S pc_phases abcef 8.7 -11.2 0.1 0.0 2.5
if station C and f_group X pc_phases ghijklmn 0.3 -1.6 -0.6 3.2 12.2 -8.5 -11.1 6.1

...
```



Correlator Report



General setup
for all stations

Phase cal tone mask

Lower side band offsets

Dropped channels

Manual phase cal

Phase alignment

+FRINGING CONFIG FILE

```
sb_win -256.0 256.0
mb_win -256.0 256.0
dr_win -0.030 0.030
pc_mode multitone
pc_period 5
```

```
if f_group S ref_freq 2225.99
if f_group X ref_freq 8212.99
```

```
if station K and f_group S pc_tonemask abcdef 16 16 16 16 16 16
if station K and f_group X pc_tonemask ghijklmn 148 132 132 132 132 132 132 132
```

```
if station J lsb_offset 0.0
if station I lsb_offset 0.0
if station K lsb_offset 70.0
if station N lsb_offset 0.0
if station b lsb_offset 0.0
if station v lsb_offset 0.0
if station C lsb_offset -20.0
```

```
if station C and f_group S freqs a b c e f
if station K and f_group S freqs a b c d f
```

```
if station K pc_mode manual
if station K and f_group S pc_phases abcdef 20.79209 9.12735 90.70320 70.06696 135.72812 10.49509
if station K and f_group X pc_phases ghijklmn 95.14771 38.72751 62.34361 30.12612 71.47699 93.45794 3.82575 78.31685
```

```
if station C and f_group S pc_phases abcef 8.7 -11.2 0.1 0.0 2.5
if station C and f_group X pc_phases ghijklmn 0.3 -1.6 -0.6 3.2 12.2 -8.5 -11.1 6.1
```

...



Correlator Report



+FRINGING CONFIG FILE

...

if baseline bN

notches

2225.74	2226.24	2226.74	2227.24	2227.74	2228.24	2228.74	2229.24
2229.74	2230.24	2230.74	2231.24	2231.74	2232.24	2232.74	2233.24
2245.74	2246.24	2246.74	2247.24	2247.74	2248.24	2248.74	2249.24
2249.74	2250.24	2250.74	2251.24	2251.74	2252.24	2252.74	2253.24
2265.74	2266.24	2266.74	2267.24	2267.74	2268.24	2268.74	2269.24
2269.74	2270.24	2270.74	2271.24	2271.74	2272.24	2272.74	2273.24
2295.74	2296.24	2296.74	2297.24	2297.74	2298.24	2298.74	2299.24
2299.74	2300.24	2300.74	2301.24	2301.74	2302.24	2302.74	2303.24
2345.74	2346.24	2346.74	2347.24	2347.74	2348.24	2348.74	2349.24
2349.74	2350.24	2350.74	2351.24	2351.74	2352.24	2352.74	2353.24
2365.74	2366.24	2366.74	2367.24	2367.74	2368.24	2368.74	2369.24
2369.74	2370.24	2370.74	2371.24	2371.74	2372.24	2372.74	2373.24
8204.74	8205.24	8205.74	8206.24	8206.74	8207.24	8207.74	8208.24
8208.74	8209.24	8209.74	8210.24	8210.74	8211.24	8211.74	8212.24
8212.74	8213.24	8213.74	8214.24	8214.74	8215.24	8215.74	8216.24
8216.74	8217.24	8217.74	8218.24	8218.74	8219.24	8219.74	8220.24
8252.74	8253.24	8253.74	8254.24	8254.74	8255.24	8255.74	8256.24
8256.74	8257.24	8257.74	8258.24	8258.74	8259.24	8259.74	8260.24
8352.74	8353.24	8353.74	8354.24	8354.74	8355.24	8355.74	8356.24
8356.74	8357.24	8357.74	8358.24	8358.74	8359.24	8359.74	8360.24
8512.74	8513.24	8513.74	8514.24	8514.74	8515.24	8515.74	8516.24
8516.74	8517.24	8517.74	8518.24	8518.74	8519.24	8519.74	8520.24
8732.74	8733.24	8733.74	8734.24	8734.74	8735.24	8735.74	8736.24
8736.74	8737.24	8737.74	8738.24	8738.74	8739.24	8739.74	8740.24

...

Each notch consists of a start
and end frequency in MHz

RF "notches"
to cut out shared RFI
for co-located antennas



Thank you!

