

Thirteenth IVS TOW (TOW2025)
 Summary of participants' evaluation
 Compiled by D. Behrend

Multiple "x"s indicate the number of people making the same comment.

1. Classes

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Best: xxxxx x VLBI Data Acquisition, Formats, Transfer and Tools
 xxxxx VLBI Basics
 xxxxx Science Overview
 xxxx Phase Cal Basics and RF System Testing
 xxxx Antenna Gain Calibration
 xxx Setup and Operations of the DBBC3
 xx VLBI Session Pre-checks and IVS Operations
 xx Operational Recovery from System Failures
 xx Field System Operations
 xx Operational Data Transport in the IVS
 xx Pointing and Amplitude Calibration Concepts
 x Understanding Correlator Feedback
 x R2DBE Setup and Operations
 x Operational Use of Mark 6
 x Demo of the VLBI Communications Center (VCC)
 x RFI Determination and Spectrum Management

Least: xx R2DBE Setup and Operations
 xx Setup and Operations of the DBBC3
 xx Instrumentation Developments for VGOS at Yebes
 x Demo of the VLBI Communications Center (VCC)
 x Pointing and Amplitude Calibration Concepts
 x Advanced Pre-checks and Operations
 x Understanding Correlator Feedback
 x Time and Frequency in VLBI
 x RFI Determination and Spectrum Management
 (xxx All were worthwhile)

2. Arrangements

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Web registration	10	5	3	.	
Hotel	5	7	3	.	(3 N/A, in other hotel)
Food	9	8	1	.	
Transportation	10	4	1	.	(3 N/A)
Class content	8	8	2	.	
Class assignment	7	10	1	.	
Other	.	.	.	1	(weather)

3. Overall

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Liked best: xxxxx xxxx getting to know people (in person), share knowledge

- xxxx general helpfulness of people
- xxx meeting new staff, reconnecting with old hands
- xxx (hallway) discussions
- xx quality of classes
- x covering wide range of VLBI signal chain components
- x conveying basic concepts
- x learning about updates
- x contacts for help and collaboration opportunities
- x seeing Haystack's telescope and learning its history
- x food (taste and amount)

Liked least: xxx more hands-on and practical tasks, too theoretical

- xxx long days, tight schedule
- xx weather
- x stuffy room
- x some classes ran over time
- x mac 'n' cheese in Italian restaurant (Teachers'

Dinner)

Wanted but was not offered in a class:

- BRAND and DBBC4 lecture
- more hands-on classes or interactive sessions
- longer "basics" class on SBD and MBD, phase delay, delay rate, etc.
- class on mechanical antenna maintenance, telescope mechanics
- extended version (or part two) of VLBI Basics lecture
- outline differences/commonalities between geo and astro VLBI
- troubleshooting at each station
- VLBI astronomy operations
- class on seeing/touching entire VLBI signal chain
- class covering alternative (non-CNS) frequency/time standard options
- hands-on Field System class (similar to e-transfer class)

Improvements for TOW2027:

- make slides of presentations available before TOW
- roundtable introductions from all participants
- start earlier in the morning, finish earlier in the afternoon
- longer breaks, e.g., 1.5 hours for lunch
- 60 min classes with 15 min discussion
- time permitting, have a longer VLBI Basics session
- make hands-on classes longer (e.g., 2 hours), less classes per person:
 - e.g., only one hands-on session before/after lunch plus one lecture per day per participant (total of 6 hands-on sessions and 4 lectures)

- more hands-on tutorials
- add classes related to scheduling and/or analysis
- more hands-on activities (e.g., extend Discussion Board, engage station staff in IVS activities), similar to e-transfer class
- connect the dots from theory classes to practical classes
- distinguish more between Mark 5/6 and Flexbuff systems
- have a longer Correlator Workshop (even overlapping with TOW days)
- nothing really to add

Other comments:

- have a few more vegetarian options
- hotel was good, but a bit difficult to book
- I felt very welcome and will carry a lot of knowledge back home.
- It was a really good experience, meeting people and asking a lot of VLBI-related questions. Thank you very much.
- These were fruitful days. I learned a lot and made connections with colleagues from other sites. I'm looking forward to the next TOW.
- In general, an excellent workshop, will recommend it!
- Heidi and Dirk did an excellent job in organizing everything.
- You are doing a great job. Keep it going!
- Thanks for a great conference!