



Overall Y2K Status Summary

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Telescope Operations

In theory, NRAO's telescopes are Y2K compliant by design because they use Julian day numbers for internal time calculations. Reviews of the control software for many NRAO telescopes (including the VLA, the VLBA, the 12 Meter, and the 140 Foot) were completed in 1997.

Small problems were corrected for the VLA, which was tested in 1997 October. It successfully observed sources and obtained fringes when the system time was advanced by three years. One minor problem turned up in the VLA operating system, which was corrected during routine maintenance.

The VLBA control software was reviewed and tested as much as possible in advance of a compliance test for VLBA operations that was carried out in 1999 February. The test was designed to test the complete system, from scheduling to data processing. There were no major surprises. Monitor data was correct following a reboot of all site computers with the date advanced, and the array operators successfully exercised some tools. A few other operations programs remain to be tested, along with some aspects specific to space VLBI. The data taken during the Y2K exercise were correlated successfully in 1999 April. One minor issue (a 1000-day ambiguity in date decoding at the playback drives) was revealed and fixed.

Y2K tests of the 12 Meter control system and on-the-fly data recording and analysis were carried out successfully in 1998 June. A few minor bugs were found; all have been fixed.

The Green Bank Interferometer control software has been evaluated and made Y2K compliant.

The NRAO does not currently intend to operate the 140-ft telescope in Green Bank beyond the end of 1999. Assessment of the control software for the Green Bank 140-foot telescope has been completed; if it proves necessary to operate the 140-foot beyond the end of 1999, we believe that the changes needed could be made in a short period of time.

Financial Systems

NRAO's key financial management software and payroll systems are purchased from outside vendors with active or complete Y2K compliance efforts. All software and hardware for NRAO's financial systems has been upgraded to versions certified by their manufacturers to be Y2K-compliant. Although NRAO's own customizations to these systems had been tested and verified as compliant, the vendors recommended against full testing using production systems. However, as a result of recent reorganization within the Fiscal divisions, there is now a spare system running the same software, which could be used to verify Y2K compliance of NRAO's data. Such tests are now being discussed and will be scheduled during May 1999.

Although Y2K-compliant, the older model of IBM AS/400 computer used for our J. D. Edwards purchasing and accounting package will soon cease to be supported by IBM; the version of the software we have is also being replaced by the manufacturer. A major upgrade of this platform is therefore necessary, whether to a newer release/model of the same products or to something entirely different. A review of software which supports these critical functions is underway, with a view to evaluating the state of PC-based client-server packages in this market. Y2K compliance will of course be a mandatory requirement of any alternative that may ultimately be recommended. A report is expected by the end of April 1999.

NRAO Software