The FITS Test Tape
Version 4B

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Document printed: September 22, 1992

Abstract

The contents of FITS Test Tape 4B are described. This tape is an interim version. Its sole purpose is to distribute examples of the new Tables Extension format to sites which are reviewing it. Four tables files are first on the tape (two by ESO, two by NRAO), followed by the twelve files of Version 4 of the test tape.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Version 4 of the FITS Test Tape was constructed in February 1982. During 1983 the design of the new Tables Extension of FITS was negotiated. Draft proposal documents have circulated. Now the European Southern Observatory (ESO) and the National Radio Astronomy Observatory (NRAO) have each developed the ability to write tapes in the new format. They have exchanged sample files. ESO has already demonstrated that the generalized tables software of its MIDAS system (Munich Interactive Data Analysis System) is able to read tables written by NRAO's AIPS system (Astronomical Image Processing System) and also those written by ESO's older "IHAP" system. NRAO can read its own extension files and is currently developing a more generalized capability (the first test will be to read ESO's sample files). When this work is finished and a few more experiments are completed, it will be possible to say that the feasibility, practicality, and desirability of the new design are fully demonstrated. The group which developed the design expects that it will be adopted in 1985 by the North American working group, the European working group and by the IAU Commission 5 as a new extension to the FITS agreement. Recipients of this tape and the supporting documents are requested to study them closely. Please send comments and reports of discrepancies to either

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or to

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Reports of successful new implementations which read the tables files or of intentions to implement it as the format for writing tables data will be especially welcome.

Chapter 2

The four sample tables extensions

The first four files on the tape are examples of the new FITS tables extension format. Note that the content of the files is quite different, reflecting the different needs of the software packages which wrote these files. Please consult the tape dump listings as you read the following discussion:

```
Clean Components appended to a VLA map (NRAO)
Antenna Locations appended to a random-groups file (NRAO)
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Chapter 3

The 12 files of Version 4

The original 12 files of Version 4 of the test tape (February 1982) are appended to the four new tables files. Therefore, in the documentation for the 12 files increase the file number by 4 (i.e., where the document talks about file "7" read "11").