# Exposure Time Algorithm For the Final Archives Nancy Oliversen February 27, 1991

During the IUE final archiving effort the plans are for the IUE image processing system to produce a true flux calibration (i.e. time divided out: ergs/cm\*cm/A/sec). The current image processing system only produces a time-integrated flux (i.e. ergs/cm\*cm/A) calibration for low and high dispersion extracted spectra. To-date a true flux calibration has never been provided by the IUE image processing system because the determination of an accurate exposure time can be quite tricky. The determination of the best exposure time has been left to the IUE researcher to figure out. The purpose of this report is to assess, what sort of exposure time accuracy would be required for the final archiving effort, to identify the best location for this information, and to specify the appropriate algorithm. Until IUE data processed with the final archve processing system are generally available, IUE researchers may find this report to be useful in deriving exposure times for images processed with the current system.

The "best" exposure time will also be included as one of the Core Data Items in the IUE final archive FITS headers and in the expanded version of the IUE Merged Log of Observations (see Levay, 1990). The exposure times listed in the current version of the IUE merged log are checked against each script by the IUE Data Management Center personnel. Within the limits of the current IBM data base (i.e. 3 digits for the minutes and 2 digits for the seconds) the database and the scripts should be identical. However, the commanded exposure time typed in by the telescope operator, as listed on the script, can differ from the "true" or effective exposure time and can also differ from the exposure time stored in the image header. Thus, the exposure time in the current version of the IUE Merged Log may also be inaccurate. These inaccuracies tend to occur mainly for short exposure times, as described below. An exposure time is recorded in line 2 and in the round robin part of the IUE image header. The exposure time is not recorded in the binary portion of the header.

Note that some aspects of this report only pertain to Goddard images. VILSPA's database and log books are derived slightly differently from at Goddard, but the algorithm's proposed and the way the command computer behaves will, of course, be the same at the two stations.

#### Point-source and multiple exposures

The length of the exposure is controlled by the OBC. The total exposure time is commanded in discrete units of OBC "tics" of 0.4096 seconds. The ground command computer determines the total number of tics needed for each commanded exposure by:

# [A] # OBC tics = INT [(commanded time) / 0.4096 sec]

# [i.e. truncates down to nearest integer]

The effective exposure time is also reduced by the rise and fall time of the camera UVC and SEC voltages:

### [B] Effective exposure time = [(# OBC tics) \* 0.4096 sec ] - R/F time

The rise/fall time may vary slightly as a function of camera and voltage level. The various published rise/fall times have differed slightly in the literature (Schiffer 1980, Imhoff 1984, Crenshaw 1986 and 1987). In the past we have just adopted an average value for all cameras of 0.120 sec because this was within the error bars of the various experiments. However, for the final archive we will adopt the SWP and LWP camera rise time values given by Gonzalez-Riestra (1990), which seem to be the most accurate available. The observational techniques used by Gonzalez-Riestra (1990) were similar to previous studies. However, the exposure time of the target star was longer than previous studies, which minimized uncertainties resulting from the command decoder cycle time (Oliversen, 1988). The final value of the LWR camera rise time has not yet been determined: additional observations are scheduled shortly to finalize this.

#### Table 1

Camera	Rise/fall (R/F) time	
LWP SWP LWR	0.127 sec +/- 0.003 0.129 sec +/- 0.005 TBD	Gonzalez-Riestra, 1990 Gonzalez-Riestra, 1990

For point-source spectra the exposure time recorded on the script is the time the telescope operator enters into the ground command computer (= commanded exposure time). The time listed on the script is NOT corrected for OBC tic time and camera voltage rise/fall time.

The OBC tic and the camera voltage rise and fall time corrections are most important for "short" point-source exposures. The error from not correcting for these effects can be quite significant. For example, for a 1 second commanded SWP exposure, the effective exposure time would be 0.6902 sec, which would result in a 45% flux error if the 1 second time were not corrected for. The flux error from this effect is less than 1% for exposure times longer than about 1 minute. Thus, the IUE project has adopted a 1-minute exposure time threshold for correcting the effective exposure times.

Note that the corrections for OBC tic time and camera voltage rise and fall time apply each time the camera is turned on. For example, if a GO took a 1 second SWP exposure at each of 2 positions in the large aperture, the total effective exposure time would be 1.3804 sec. This also applies to multiple exposure segments obtained

at a single position in the aperture. Thus, the 1-minute threshold for correcting the effective exposure time applies to each exposure segment and aperture.

Point-source and multiple exposure times from the label:

The following describes what should be present in a "normal", current label. Computer crashes, history replays, ground-system glitches, etc. can of course, cause pieces of the label to be missing. Many of the early IUE labels may be missing information too.

For a "normal" point-source exposure the exposure-start tag in the round-robin looks like:

EXPOBC cam# #minutes #seconds MAXG NOL

The number of seconds is rounded to the nearest integer by the ground command computer and is thus, not accurate enough for "short" exposures.

The exposure end tag is also recorded by the "FIN" round-robin entry:

FIN cam# T t S sec voltage U uvc voltage

where, t= total accumulated exposure time truncated by the ground command computer to the nearest second. Due to truncation this value may not agree with the value in the EXPOBC tag. For a given image, the exposure time in the FIN tag is incremented every time another exposure segment is taken. Thus, a given image can have more than one FIN tag. The last FIN tag should record the total exposure time accumulated for a given image (e.g. IGAP + SMAP + each segment). Note that the FIN tag is placed in the image header by the EXPFIN procedure. The EXPFIN procedure is run automatically for all trailed exposures and for each point-source exposures (segments) less that 3 minutes in length. However, for exposure times longer than 3 minutes the telescope operator must remember to run the EXPFIN procedure separately. Thus the exposure time in the FIN tag can be subject to errors and is not accurate enough for recording short exposure times.

The total time the camera was turned on (seconds) is also taken from the final FIN tag and is recorded in line 2 of the image header. It should be the total sum of all exposure segments (LGAP + SMAP) for a given image.

II. Low Dispersion Trailed spectra:

The effective exposure time (in seconds) for a trailed spectrum is given by:

[C] Effective expotime = [(eff. aperture length)/(trail rate)] \* (# passes)
where,

#### Table 2

CAM EII. aberture lendt	CAM	Eff.	aperture	length
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SWP	21.4 arcseconds	Panek, 1982; Crenshaw and Park, 1989
LWR	21.3 arcseconds	Oliversen, 1987
LWP	21.3 arcseconds	[LWR value assumed]

Note that the camera rise/fall time and OBC tic time corrections are NOT applicable to trailed spectra.

For ALL trailed spectra the exposure time on the script is NOT accurate. The trailed exposure time on the script may be rounded off and assumes an aperture length of 20 arcseconds. For trailed exposures the EXPOBC tag, the FIN tag exposure times, and the exposure time listed in line 2 of the header are also NOT accurate.

The trail <u>rate</u> (arcseconds/second) given on the script (usually under the "Remarks" section) is the value entered by the Telescope Operator into the ground computer. The trail rate is also recorded in the round-robin of the image header:

TRAIL cam# rate

The round-robin trail rate is rounded to 6 significant digits which should of be sufficient accuracy for most trails.

The number of trail passes is given on the script (if the number of passes is not listed on the script then it can be assumed that a single pass trail was performed) and in the round robin:

ITER #passes TIME expotime

Note that the expotime given in the ITER statement assumes an effective aperture length of 20 arcseconds and thus differs slightly from the "best" effective exposure time.

The effective trailed exposure times are also affected by a truncation in the trail rates actually performed versus the requested trail rates. The source of this truncation is due to the OBC using integer arithmetic for the pitch and yaw components of the trail slew angles. Only the slowest trails are affected significantly. For very long trailed exposures (greater than about 10 minutes) the actual exposure time may be up to 4% longer than requested. This effect may also vary as the TRAIL procedure was changed with time. This effect was initially discussed by Al Holm in an internal IUE memo dated Jan 31, 1984. It has not yet been determined if this effect will be corrected for in the IUE Final Archive. The number of IUE images affected by this are actually quite small and may therefore be ignored.

The fastest possible trail rate is 120 arcsec/sec and the corresponding shortest possible trailed exposure time is 0.1775 sec.

Thus, for fast trails a minimum of 3 significant digits after the decimal point are needed to record an exposure time with an accuracy of better than 2%.

### III. Other Items Which Can Affect the Derived Fluxes

There are many things that can affect the final derived fluxes. It is not the intention of this report to try to discuss all the potential observing problems. However, a couple of the most common are mentioned below.

- (1) The very shortest 1 and 2-tic point-source exposures are also affected by the 0.03 sec command decoder cycle time (Oliversen, 1988). This introduces an uncertainty of about 10% in 1-tic exposure times. However, the uncertainty acts randomly. The OBC exposure tic length of 0.4096 sec is actually an average value, and 65% of the time a 1 tic exposure will be 0.0104 sec too long while 35% of the time it will be 0.0196 sec too short. Unfortunately, one can't predict, for a given image, which way it will be affected without looking at the spectral data and comparing it to other identical 1-tic exposures. Thus, the final IUESIPS/database system will not include a correction for the command decoder cycle time.
- (2) Trails with high trail rates (>~ 50 arcsec/second) can graze or in some instances miss the large aperture all together. This was particularily true for trails obtained before the implementation of the "fast" trail technique in 1985 (Oliversen, 1986). This, also can mimic a change in the effective exposure time. Careful examination of the trailed images can usually help to identify obviously "bad" trails.
- (3) The through-put of the small aperture is roughly 67% times the through-put of the large aperture for point source spectra (Talavera 1987). However, the exact response of the small aperture is variable depending on how well centered the target is in the small aperture. For this reason the small aperture is not recommended for use to obtain accurate absolute fluxes.

#### IV. Potential Pitfall

There is a small chance that the above values used for the effective trail path length and the camera rise/fall time may have to be revised slightly later. The effective trail path length is determined during the derivation of the absolute calibrations by comparison of the response of trailed spectra with point-source large aperture spectra. The "final" values probably won't be available until shortly before the final archive reprocessing begins. The values given above are our current best estimates, which are not likely to change much but, we can't absolutely guarantee that no changes will occur at the last minute.

#### V. Summary

The following is recommended:

For all point-source and multiple exposures with individual segments shorter than 60 seconds in length, the commanded time(s) should be taken from the GSFC script and effective time calculated from equation [A] and [B] using a camera voltage rise/fall time of 0.129 sec for the SWP and 0.127 sec for the LWR. For times longer than 60 seconds the existing database value can be used without any further corrections (unless it disagrees with the script).

For all trails, take the trail rate and the number of trail passes from the script (or possibly the round-robin) and calculate the effective exposure time using equation [C] and the effective trailed path length given in Table 2.

Some sample scripts and label prints are attached for reference.

#### REFERENCES:

Crenshaw, D. M., 1986. NASA IUE Newsletter, No. 31, p. 37.

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Panek, R. 1982, NASA IUE Newsletter, No. 18, p. 68.

Schiffer, F. 1980, NASA IUE Newsletter, No. 11, p. 33.

Talavera, A. 1987, ESA IUE Newsletter, No. 28, p. 53.

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SAMPLE Point-Source Exposure

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