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Dear Dr. Arias,

Attached is the report of our most recent formal evaluation of NIST-F1, a cesium fountain primary frequency standard. The report period is for the 25 day interval from MJD 54774 to 54799. However, the fountain was operated in a nearly continuous fashion over a shorter evaluation interval from MJD 54776.0 to 54799.0. Details of the standard's design, construction, and performance are presented in references 1 - 8 listed on page 8. A detailed summary of the present evaluation is included in this report. The evaluation results using the BIPM format are given on pages 2 and 7. This is a full evaluation in which a range of atom densities were used in order to help determine the spin exchange shift. There are no significant physical changes in NIST-F1 since the last report. The only significant change in this report is how the spin exchange shift is handled. NIST-F1 has been in a stable configuration for nearly two years and it is felt that the best estimate of the spin exchange shift is obtained by using previous values of the slope as well as the current value. The new process is discussed in more detail in section 1B.

It is also noted that the frequency stability (Type A uncertainty) of NIST-F1 has been improved through adjustments to the optical system. With improved polarization stability, reduced scatter in the detection region, and a relatively long run time,  $u_A$  has been reduced to  $0.15 \times 10^{-15}$ .

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## SUMMARY

### November 2008 Evaluation of NIST-F1

The most recent evaluation of NIST-F1 is reported. The number

$$Y_{(\text{Maser-NISTF1})} = -286.26 \times 10^{-15} \quad (\text{Please note the sign change from previous reports})$$

is the average fractional frequency difference between NIST-F1 and the hydrogen maser ST0022, (clock # 40222) over the 25 day report period MJD 54774 to 54799. The type A uncertainty of the fountain for this evaluation (statistical confidence on the frequency measurement, but not including dead time) is  $0.15 \times 10^{-15}$  ( $1\sigma$ ). The type B uncertainty from known biases, including spin exchange, is  $0.33 \times 10^{-15}$  ( $1\sigma$ ). The combined uncertainty (type A and type B) is  $0.36 \times 10^{-15}$  ( $1\sigma$ ). The uncertainty becomes  $0.38 \times 10^{-15}$  ( $1\sigma$ ) when the contribution from dead time,  $u_{\text{link/lab}}$ , is included. A detailed description of the various biases and uncertainties is given in the following sections of this report.

### RESULTS IN BIPM FORMAT

Report period		MJD 54774 to 54799
Maser frequency (ST0022), clock # 40222)		$Y_{(\text{Maser-NISTF1})} = -286.26 \times 10^{-15}$
Statistical	$u_A$	$0.15 \times 10^{-15}$
Systematic	$u_B$	$0.33 \times 10^{-15}$
Link to clock	$u_{\text{link/lab}}$ (25 days)	$0.10 \times 10^{-15}$
Link to TAI (estimated)	$u_{\text{link/TAI}}$ (25 days)	$0.385 \times 10^{-15}$
Combined (estimated)	$u$	$0.54 \times 10^{-15}$

## 1. DETAILS OF EVALUATION

An accuracy evaluation of NIST-F1 has been completed in which the frequency of a hydrogen maser was determined with respect to the primary frequency standard. The report period is 25 days, but the fountain was operated only over the 23.0 day evaluation interval of MJD 54776.01 to 54798.96. Of the 23.0 days intended for the measurement of the maser frequency, 22.5 days of data were collected (98.0% run time). The lost run time was from intentional and unintentional interruptions to the fountain operation. The percentage run time for the entire report period is 90.0%. A time line of the 25 day report period is shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Time Line

MJD	Event
54774.00	Start report period
54776.01	Start fountain run, low density (8)
54787.92	End low density,
54787.97	Start high density (38)
54789.99	End high density (38)
54790.01	Start low density (8)
54798.96	End low density, end fountain run
54799.00	End report period

A factor of 4.8 in atom densities was covered in this evaluation and the current atom density slope was obtained by a weighted linear least-mean-square fit [3]. The atom densities in laboratory units are shown in parentheses in Table 1. The zero density frequency was obtained using the current as well as previous atom density slope data. Other corrections are also made to the raw frequency data in order to compensate for known biases which are described below [2]. Units for all biases are fractional frequency  $\times 10^{-15}$  and all uncertainties are 1 sigma.

### 1A. Quadratic Zeeman Bias

The quadratic Zeeman bias was determined by measuring the linear Zeeman splitting of the microwave spectrum. The magnetic field was monitored during the entire run. No significant changes were made to the Zeeman bias since the last run. The resulting bias and uncertainty are shown below.

Bias	Type B Uncertainty
+180.65	0.013

## 1B. Spin Exchange Bias

Measurements were made at two different atom densities. A factor of 4.8 in atom density was covered and the atom density slope was obtained from a weighted linear least-mean-square fit of frequency versus atom density [3]. Twenty three data points (each nominally 24 hours) were used in the fit and a reduced chi squared of 2.63 was obtained. This corresponds to a Birge ratio of 1.62. The uncertainty of the current slope was adjusted by this Birge ratio [3]. The Birge ratio is relatively high since the frequency stability of NIST-F1 has been improved, and the stability of the time scale is somewhat degraded at this time due to a reduced number of clocks and poor environmental stability. An average slope of  $-0.051 \pm 0.008 \times 10^{-15}$  per unit atom density was obtained from the current and previous four full evaluations made in 2007 and 2008, and was used to estimate the frequency at zero density. The slopes from these five runs are all statistically consistent. Furthermore, no changes in the fountain configuration have been made over the course of the five evaluations used to determine the slope of the atom number vs. frequency curve, so there is no reason to expect the spin exchange shift to have changed. The frequency at zero density for this run was obtained from the weighted average maser frequency corresponding to the average density (10.8 in lab units) and extrapolating to zero density. The spin exchange uncertainty is included in the Type B uncertainties.

Bias	Type B Uncertainty
-0.55	0.09

## 1C. Blackbody Bias

The blackbody bias is calculated from the temperature of the drift region. The resulting bias and its uncertainty are shown below.

Bias	Type B Uncertainty
-22.65	0.28

## 1D. Microwave Amplitude Shift

No additional measurements on the microwave amplitude dependence were made for this evaluation, so the bias is unchanged from the previous run. The observed bias is consistent with zero, but we have chosen to include it in the list of corrected biases.

Bias	Type B Uncertainty
-0.026	0.12

## 1E. Combined variable and fixed biases

There are additional biases that do not change under normal circumstances. The complete list of all biases (run dependent and fixed) and their corresponding uncertainties are shown in Table 2. This table is based on [2]. Only the first 5 biases are explicitly corrected for since the rest are all well under  $1 \times 10^{-16}$ . **The maximum magnitudes of all uncorrected biases are indicated in blue.**

Table 2: Known Frequency Biases and Their Type B Uncertainty.  
(Units are fractional frequency  $\times 10^{-15}$ )

Physical Effect	Bias	Type B Uncertainty
Gravitational Red shift	+179.95	0.03
Second-Order Zeeman	+180.65	0.013
Blackbody	-22.65	0.28
Microwave Amplitude Shift	-0.026	0.12
Spin Exchange shift (average density =10.9)	-0.55	0.09
AC Zeeman (heaters)	0.05	0.05
Cavity Pulling	0.02	0.02
Rabi Pulling	$10^{-4}$	$10^{-4}$
Ramsey Pulling	$10^{-4}$	$10^{-4}$
Majorana Transitions	0.02	0.02
Fluorescence Light Shift	$10^{-5}$	$10^{-5}$
Cavity Phase (distributed)	0.02	0.02
Second-Order Doppler	0.02	0.02
DC Stark Effect	0.02	0.02
Background Gas Collisions	$10^{-3}$	$10^{-3}$
Bloch-Siegert	$10^{-4}$	$10^{-4}$
RF Spectral purity	$3 \times 10^{-3}$	$3 \times 10^{-3}$
Integrator offset	0	0.01
Total Type B Standard Uncertainty		0.33

\*For information purposes only. Not used in total, see section 1-B for details

## 2. EVALUATION INTERVAL RESULTS (MJD 54776.01 to 54798.96)

When corrections for the biases of Table 2 are applied, the following result for the measurement of  $Y_{(\text{Maser-NISTF1})}$  is obtained. Units are fractional frequency  $\times 10^{-15}$ .

Corrected Frequency	Type A Uncertainty	Total Type B Uncertainty - includes spin exchange	Combined Uncertainty
-286.33	0.15	0.33	0.36

## 3. INFLUENCE OF DEAD TIME

NIST-F1 was operated for a total of only 22.50 days during this 25 day report period so the dead time has a small impact on the overall uncertainty. However, NIST has a well characterized ensemble of hydrogen masers so this impact can be quantified. The frequency stability and drift of the reference maser and ensemble are well known. A small drift correction of  $+0.07 \times 10^{-15}$  is necessary and the dead time contributes an additional type A uncertainty of  $0.10 \times 10^{-15}$ . See references 10 - 13. A new procedure was used to handle distributed dead time [13]. This results in an improved estimate of the dead time uncertainty.

#### 4. FINAL REPORT PERIOD RESULTS (without time transfer uncertainty)

Applying the correction resulting from dead time to the evaluation interval results yields the following 25 day final report period results.

Report period	MJD 54764 to 54799
Maser frequency (ST0022, clock # 40222)	$Y_{(\text{Maser-NISTF1})} = -286.26 \times 10^{-15}$
Type A uncertainty (not including dead time)	$0.15 \times 10^{-15} (1\sigma)$
Type B uncertainty	$0.33 \times 10^{-15} (1\sigma)$
Combined uncertainty (fountain only)	$0.36 \times 10^{-15} (1\sigma)$ .
Type A uncertainty from dead time	$0.10 \times 10^{-15} (1\sigma)$
Combined uncertainty with dead time	$0.38 \times 10^{-15} (1\sigma)$ .

#### 5. FINAL RESULTS USING BIPM FORMAT (includes time transfer uncertainty)

Report period	MJD 54764 to 54799
Maser frequency (ST0022), clock # 40222)	$Y_{(\text{Maser-NISTF1})} = -286.26 \times 10^{-15}$
Statistical $u_A$	$0.15 \times 10^{-15}$
Systematic $u_B$	$0.33 \times 10^{-15}$
Link to clock $u_{\text{link/lab}} (25 \text{ days})$	$0.10 \times 10^{-15}$
Link to TAI (estimated) $u_{\text{link/TAI}} (25 \text{ days})$	$0.385 \times 10^{-15}$
Combined (estimated) $u$	$0.54 \times 10^{-15}$

## 6. REFERENCES

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## Appendix A

### Summary of accumulated changes in biases and uncertainties since the state of NIST-F1 discussed in references 2 and 3

- (1) 30 day evaluation of June/July 2005 (MJD 53529-53559)  
Modifications to the optical detection electronics and the low noise quartz oscillator improved the stability ( $u_A$ ) of NIST-F1. More measurements with respect to microwave leakage reduced this uncertainty from  $2 \times 10^{-16}$  to  $1.4 \times 10^{-16}$ .
- (2) 40 day evaluation of September/October 2005 (MJD 53629-53669)  
A magnetic field monitor was added to NIST-F1. No change was needed in the second order Zeeman bias uncertainty. Also, no other Type B uncertainties have been changed.
- (3) 40 day evaluation of December 2005/January 2006 (MJD 53724-53764)  
The fountain cycle time was shortened a bit and this resulted in a small improvement in short-term stability. Also the magnetic field uniformity was improved by shield degaussing and shimming, and this resulted in a small decrease in the Zeeman bias. There were no changes in the Type B uncertainties.
- (4) 40 day evaluation of February/March 2006 (MJD 53784-53824)  
No significant changes were made to NIST-F1 other than a slight increase in the average atom density. There were no changes in the Type B uncertainties.
- (5) 30 day evaluation of October 2006 (MJD 54009-54039)  
NIST-F1 was moved to a room with better environmental control and which is closer to the hydrogen masers and the time scale (shorter cables). The fountain was damaged in the move and as a result the microwave cavities, drift tube, and source region were replaced with nearly identical parts. All of the replaced parts are functionally the same as the originals. Because of the change in location and the repairs, the Zeeman and blackbody corrections are slightly larger, along with their uncertainties. The gravitational red shift is slightly smaller due primarily to the fact the fountain is now one floor lower than before, but there is no change in uncertainty. The bias and uncertainty for microwave leakage below the cavities are slightly larger.
- (6) 20 day evaluation of February 2007 (MJD 54134-54154)  
No significant changes were made to NIST-F1 for this evaluation, except that the magnetic field above the Ramsey cavity was increased by a factor of 2 in order to improve the field uniformity and decrease the possible effects of off resonant transitions. As an indirect result of these changes the atom cloud was slightly larger and probably colder. This resulted in a higher atom number at the lowest density used and consequently an improved short-term stability. Also additional microwave amplitude measurements were made to reduce the uncertainty on the microwave amplitude shift. This resulted in a slight decrease in the overall Type B uncertainty.

- (7) 15 day evaluation of April 2007 (MJD 54204-54219)  
No significant changes were made to NIST-F1 since the February 2007 evaluation.
- (8) 15 day evaluation of May 2007 (MJD 54219-54234)  
No changes were made to NIST-F1 since the April 2007 evaluation.
- (9) 25 day evaluation of August 2007 (MJD 54314-54339)  
No changes were made to NIST-F1 since the May 2007 evaluation other than additional microwave power measurements which resulted in a slight decrease in the Type B uncertainty.
- (10) 15 day “mini” evaluation of October 2007 (MJD 54384-54399)  
No changes were made to NIST-F1 since the August 2007 full evaluation.
- (11) 10 day “mini” evaluation of November 2007 (MJD 54409-54419)  
No changes were made to NIST-F1 since the August 2007 full evaluation.
- (12) 25 day evaluation of January 2008 (MJD 54469-54494)  
The state selection synthesizer was replaced, but this had no impact on the accuracy or operation of NIST-F1.
- (13) 15 day “mini” evaluation of April 2008 (MJD 54554-54569)  
The repump laser was replaced, but this had no impact on the accuracy or operation of NIST-F1.
- (14) 20 day “mini” evaluation of July 2008 (MJD 54654-54674)  
No changes were made to NIST-F1 since the April 2008 evaluation other than a slight refinement to the blackbody temperature.
- (15) 25 day evaluation of November 2008 (MJD 54764-54799)  
No significant changes were made to NIST-F1 since the July 2008 evaluation other than adjustments to the optical system which resulted in a modest improvement to the frequency stability of NIST-F1. Also, a change was made in the method for calculating the spin exchange shift and its uncertainty. The new method uses slopes from previous full evaluations as well as the current slope.