
Subject: Re: IDL 5.3 serious problem: save files sneakily restored

Posted by [davidf](#) on Thu, 24 Aug 2000 07:00:00 GMT

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Vinay L. Kashyap (kashyap@head-cfa.harvard.edu) writes:

- > IDL 5.3 appears to have a major hull breach.
- >
- > If there is an idl save file named "<whatever>.sav" in the current
- > directory,
- > the contents of that file get restored whenever <whatever> is referenced as
- > a function within IDL.
- >
- > Comments?

Uh, I'm not sure it's a hull breach. If I understand you correctly this has been a behavior of IDL for a long, long time.

If you have a piece of code like this:

```
IDL> a = junker()
```

IDL assumes that JUNKER is a function. Many people think IDL goes looking in the !Path for a file junker.pro, but in fact it looks for a file junker.sav *first*. This is so that if you have compiled the file junker.pro and saved it:

```
IDL> .Compile junker.pro  
IDL> Save, junker, /Routines, File='junker.sav'
```

the compiled version will be found and used. You don't have to always be compiling everything and slowing yourself down. A *very* nice feature of IDL that I like a lot.

You are just running into a situation in which you have a variable and a function with the same name. It's not an unknown problem in IDL, but a relatively rare one, given the huge number of functions and variables people create. IDL does an excellent job of keeping track normally.

I think the solution is to just be a little more careful with naming conventions. Perhaps a dollar sign (\$) in the name if the file contains saved variables and not saved routines.

Cheers,

David

P.S. Let's just say having to be careful is a whole lot better than having to be rigorous and compile everything every time we need it. :-)

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