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Subject: IDL 5.3 serious problem: save files sneakily restored

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

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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.

<whatever> does not have to be a string.  
It must have the ".sav" extension, and must be a valid IDL save file.

This is very dangerous, because there is no telling when local variables  
will suddenly get overwritten.

I checked the online help documentation and didn't see anything about  
this immediately. Even if it is a documented feature, it's a mistake.

This was discovered because we have a function called fitlines.pro  
which wasn't being run because there was a goddammed savefile called  
fitlines.sav in the current directory.

The log of a demonstration is appended below.

Comments?

Vinay

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suppose, in the current directory, there are some IDL savefiles:

(which were made say, as follows:

idl

```
IDL> x=findgen(100)
```

```
IDL> save,file='whatever.sav'
```

```
IDL> y=x^2
```

```
IDL> save,file='kursk.sav'
```

```
IDL> exit
```

```
)
```

Then, when you start IDL and say

idl

```
IDL> print,!version
```

```
{ sparc sunos unix 5.3 Nov 11 1999}
```

```
IDL> help
```

```
% At $MAIN$
```

Compiled Procedures:

\$MAIN\$

Compiled Functions:

IDL> help,whatever()

% Restored file: WHATEVER.

% Attempt to call undefined procedure/function: 'WHATEVER'.

% Execution halted at: \$MAIN\$

IDL> help

% At \$MAIN\$

X        FLOAT    = Array[100]

Compiled Procedures:

\$MAIN\$

Compiled Functions:

IDL> tmp=kursk()

% Restored file: KURSK.

% Attempt to call undefined procedure/function: 'KURSK'.

% Execution halted at: \$MAIN\$

IDL> help

% At \$MAIN\$

TMP        UNDEFINED = <Undefined>

X        FLOAT    = Array[100]

Y        FLOAT    = Array[100]

Compiled Procedures:

\$MAIN\$

Compiled Functions:

IDL>

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