Subject: Re: Division in a conditional statement Posted by David Fanning on Sat, 30 Aug 2003 15:46:01 GMT View Forum Message <> Reply to Message

Hassan Iqbal writes:

> Can anybody tell me what does this mean:

>

> x= a LT total(abs(b))/1e7/NFREE

>

- > where:
- > b= an array of floating point numbers
- > a= a floating point number
- > NFREE= an integer

>

> I will be very much thankful. I really need to understand this.

This means that the person who wrote this code was overly concerned with job security and was trying to write code only he could decipher. Either that or he had a sadistic personality, but I prefer the kinder interpretation. :-)

To interpret this code, you have to have an understanding of "operator precedence" (you could look this up on IDL's on-line help).

Parentheses have the highest or first order of precedence (and your code writer should have used them to give meaning to this expression). Followed by multiplication and division operators (fourth highest order), and followed up by the LT operator, which has the sixth highest order of pprecedence.

So, everything to the right of the "LT" operator happens first and a result is stored in a temporary variable. Then this result is compared to A with the LT operator. A couple of parentheses would have made this plain:

x= a LT (total(abs(b))/1e7/NFREE)

Operators of the same order of precedence, by the way, are handled left to right.

Cheers,

David

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