Subject: Re: IDL code to read MSU and HIRS in Level1b
Posted by David Fanning on Fri, 20 Aug 2004 15:17:31 GMT
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Dear Yamout,

You write:

> After many
> weeks of errors, I discovered that those data are in a "little bit"
> different format. But the problem now is that the differences are not
> the same as the notes from the automatic help mail from SAA.

I am sorry if I have seemed to belittle your experience.
That was not my intention. Rather, I wanted to commiserate
with it. The weeks and weeks of frustration you have
experienced with satellite data is, in my experience,
par for the course. I've never known it to be anything
BUT frustrating. You can count on the directions being wrong.

I assure you there is someone, somewhere who has read
this data. It is your job to find him. He almost certainly
does NOT work on the help desk. Probably he is a low-level
flunky working for somebody on the committee who designed
this godawful data format. He probably *used* to be somebody,
but had an innovative idea once and got moved to the closet
office next to the boiler room for his pains. His name will
be the fourth or fifth on the list you get from the cousin
of the guy on the help desk of people that "might be able
to help, but probably not".

He probably wrote the program that reads the data in some
obscure language (you hope fervently wasn't COBOL), but
even that will help you. What you need is a simple file, a
program that reads the file, and a list of what the data looks
like. Then you start randomly poking around until things
start to make sense to you. It usually takes a while.

In the words of Barry Lopez, in my favorite story "Directions",
from his _Desert Notes_ book, it will be like this:

> "You will need three of four days to follow it out. The
> last part will be on foot. Prepare for this. Prepare for
> the impact of nothing. Get on a regimen of tea and biscuits
> and dried fruit. On the third or fourth day, when you are
> ready to quit, you will know you are on your way. When
> your throat is so thick with dust that you cannot breathe
> you will be almost halfway there. When the soles of your

> feet go numb with the burning and you cannot walk you will
> know you have made no wrong turns. When you can no longer
> laugh at all it is only a little further. Push on.
>
> "It will not be as easy as it sounds. ... [But] you will
> always know this: others have made it. The man you gave
> you the map has been here."

Good luck! :-)

Cheers,

David

--
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