Proposals for the IERS Combination Pilot Project

Questions/Clarifications

General Remarks:

a) We expect that SINEX files are submitted for **all combinations** belonging to Step 1 and Step 2 (for either further combinations or for validation). Just the combination in itself without delivering SINEX files is not what we aim for because of the validation and comparison step that has to follow the combinations.

b) Each group participating in the IERS CPP has to submit a **weekly report file** carefully documenting the processing done (e.g., extracted from a program output). The report should be an ASCII text file, the format and exact content of the report file is free.

c) We expect that those institutions, that proposed for both, Step 2 "Inter-Technique Combination" and Step 3 "Validation" , will **not only perform an internal validation** (quality check) of their own results but that they will generate a weekly report of the validations they do in essentially the same way as groups that proposed to go for Step 3 only.

d) According to the Call for Proposals (CfP) solutions combining station coordinates, EOP (and quasar coordinates) on the **observation level** will be assigned to Step 1 of the IERS CPP. Combinations involving other parameter types than ITRF/EOP/ICRF will be considered to belong to Step 4. The same is true for combinations that involve just **one parameter type**, e.g. station coordinates only or EOPs only.

e) **Single-technique single-center solutions** (i.e., neither intra- nor inter-technique solutions) are accepted within the IERS CPP as long as no mature technique service intra-technique combination is available: "In case that one of the services is not yet ready to contribute with a mature combined SINEX product, it may also consider to contribute with SINEX products of its individual ACs." Such submissions of single-technique single-center solutions should be agreed upon by the respective technique service. It is anticipated and has to be a goal that, after an initial phase, official intra-technique solutions will be available from all technique services. These solutions will eventually be the building blocks for a new set of operational rigorously combined IERS products.

Question to individual proposals to be answered by the respective institution:

1. **AICAS**
   - It seems that this proposal should be part of Step 2, since a combination of SINEX files including EOPs and station coordinates is foreseen. Is this correct ? Is there a problem for you if we put this proposal into Step 2?
   - It is not exactly clear, what the difference is between the two solution types proposed and whether both will be available to the IERS CPP as SINEX files. The submission of two solutions is no principle problem (see naming conventions).

2. **GRGS**
   - According to the CfP, the combination on the observation level belongs to Step 1 rather than to the „special products". Is this a problem for you ?
   - In principle (see comment above) we expect SINEX files to be generated for this combination on the observation level that can be compared and validated. Is this foreseen ?

3. USNO

- Proposal for Step 2: since the combination is limited to EOPs, it should be considered as a „special product“ for Step 4 (or “validation” for Step 3); Step 2 is reserved for the combination of station coordinates and EOPs, and possibly quasar coordinates on the SINEX level. Is this ok for you ? Did we interpret the proposal correctly ?

There are no additional questions for the rest of the proposals.