

# Availability and Completeness of IGS Tracking Data

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## Motivation

Timely availability of GNSS tracking data is a basic condition for generation of best possible analysis products. Data availability problems are highlighted, with the main focus on the data flow of hourly observation files. CODE provides high-quality analysis products with regard to all transmitting GNSS satellites. This includes all satellites, and GPS/GPS satellites being repositioned. In all mentioned cases, GNSS tracking data without interruption is desired.

## Complete GNSS Tracking

The IGS has been generating orbit and clock products commonly for all transmitting GPS satellites, independent of whether they are declared unusable or not (by the GPS MCC). It is not unusual that one or more GPS (or GLONASS) satellites are marked unusable over a longer period of time. This was recently the case with respect to PRN01 (G01). The GNSS tracking situation for the entire month of April 2008 is illustrated in Fig. 1. 50% of the IGS ground receivers did sample PRN01.

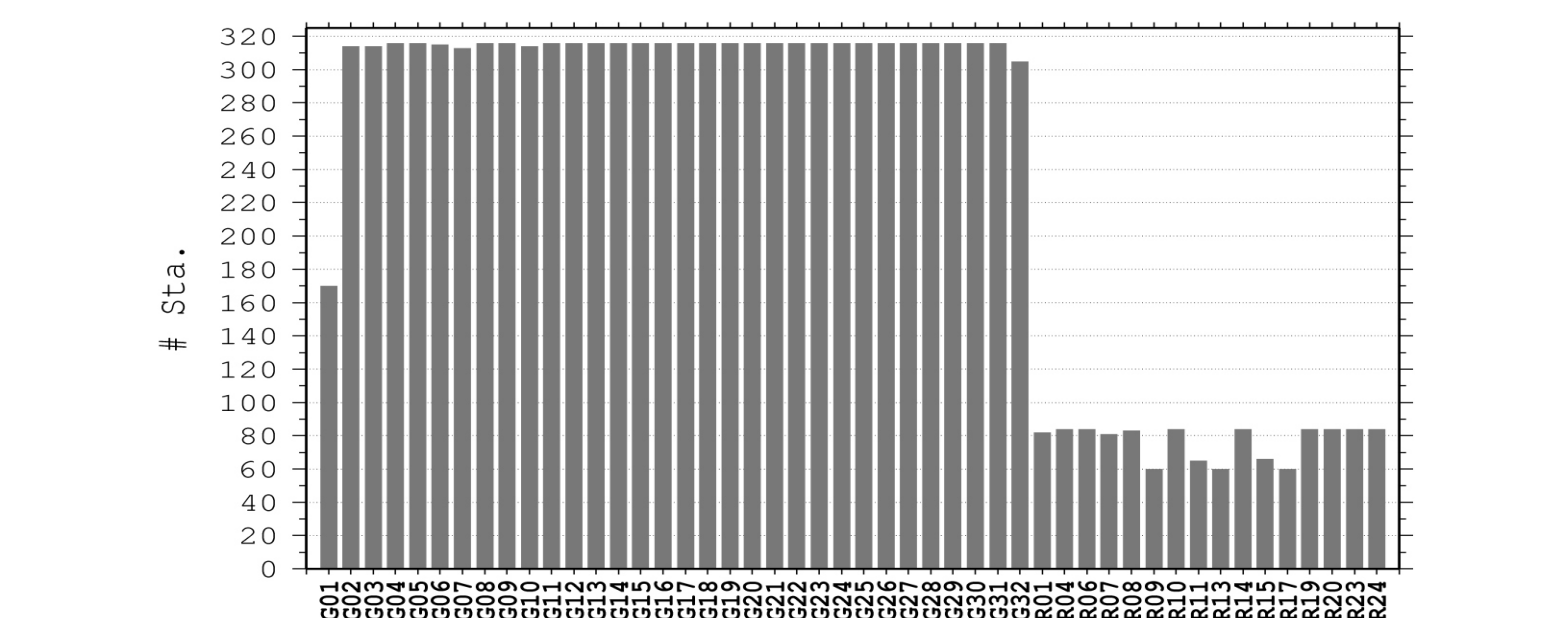


Fig. 1 (a): Absolute number of GNSS stations tracking a specific active GNSS satellite.

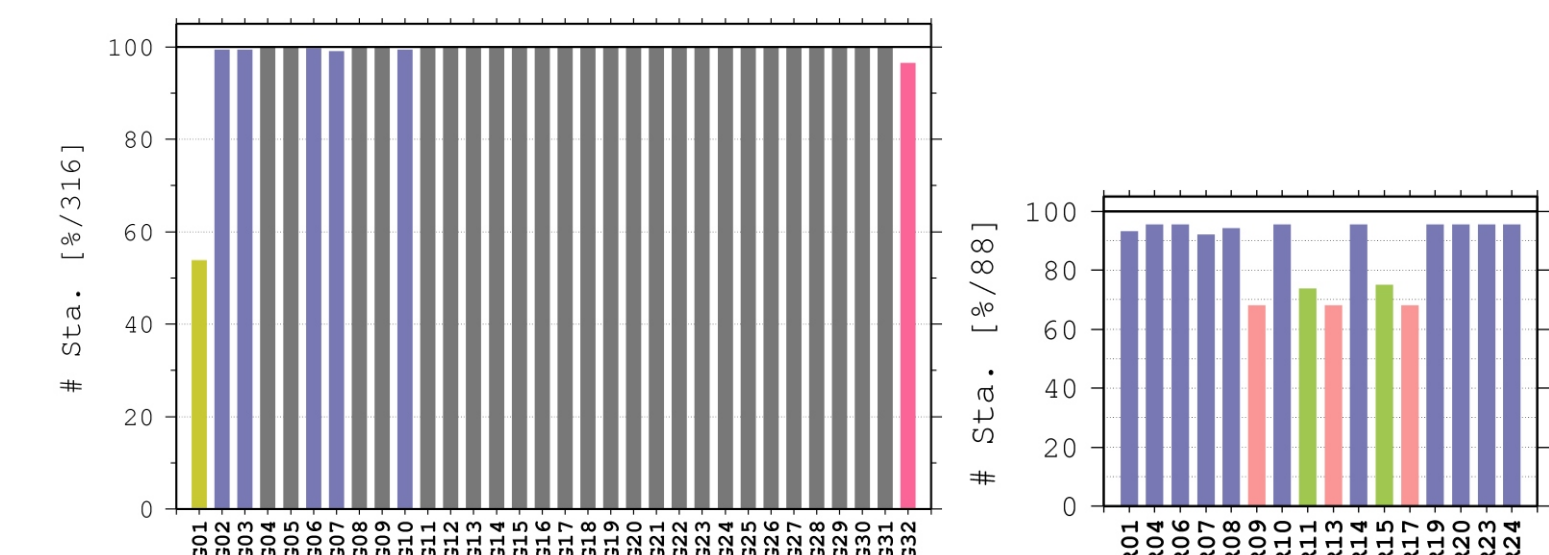


Fig. 1 (b): Relative number (percentage) of GNSS stations tracking a specific active GNSS satellite.

Fig. 1: Number of GNSS stations tracking a specific active satellite of the GPS and GLONASS constellation at least at one day during the entire month of April 2008. All stations (316) archived in CODE's datalop are considered.

We may notice: G01, decommissioned, but still providing MW signals; G32, although declared operational with a reduced number of observing stations due to firmware problems (missing update or old-fashioned hardware, like, Ashtech Z18). Concerning GLONASS, clearly visible are R11 and R15 (at zero frequency channels) and R09, R13, R17 (at negative frequency channels). This is also a firmware (or hardware) issue. Please note that 100% is not reached in case of GLONASS, because there is a number of GPS/GLONASS-combined receivers (4) operating in GPS-only mode. That's a great pity.

For the same reason, POD of GPS satellites being repositioned is difficult due to the lack of tracking data.

## IGS Hourly Data Flow

For NRT processing, the hourly file latency is a crucial factor. There is actually no reason why not all, or at least a significant fraction of the IGS hourly files should become available within few minutes after the end of each hour, the more so because exclusively stations are involved that are fully automatically operated.

A corresponding monthly statistics is shown on Tab. 3. This listing includes IGS stations that delivered hourly data for 30 May 2008. Note that the "min(imum)" delay specified may be considered as "nominal" delay of the station's hourly file submission.

Incompleteness of data is, to an increased extent, a problem concerning GPS/GLONASS combined tracking. The differences between well performing and poorly behaving GNSS receivers is remarkable in terms of data completeness (not data quality!). For example, the number of observations to GLONASS with zero or negative frequency channels is considerably reduced.

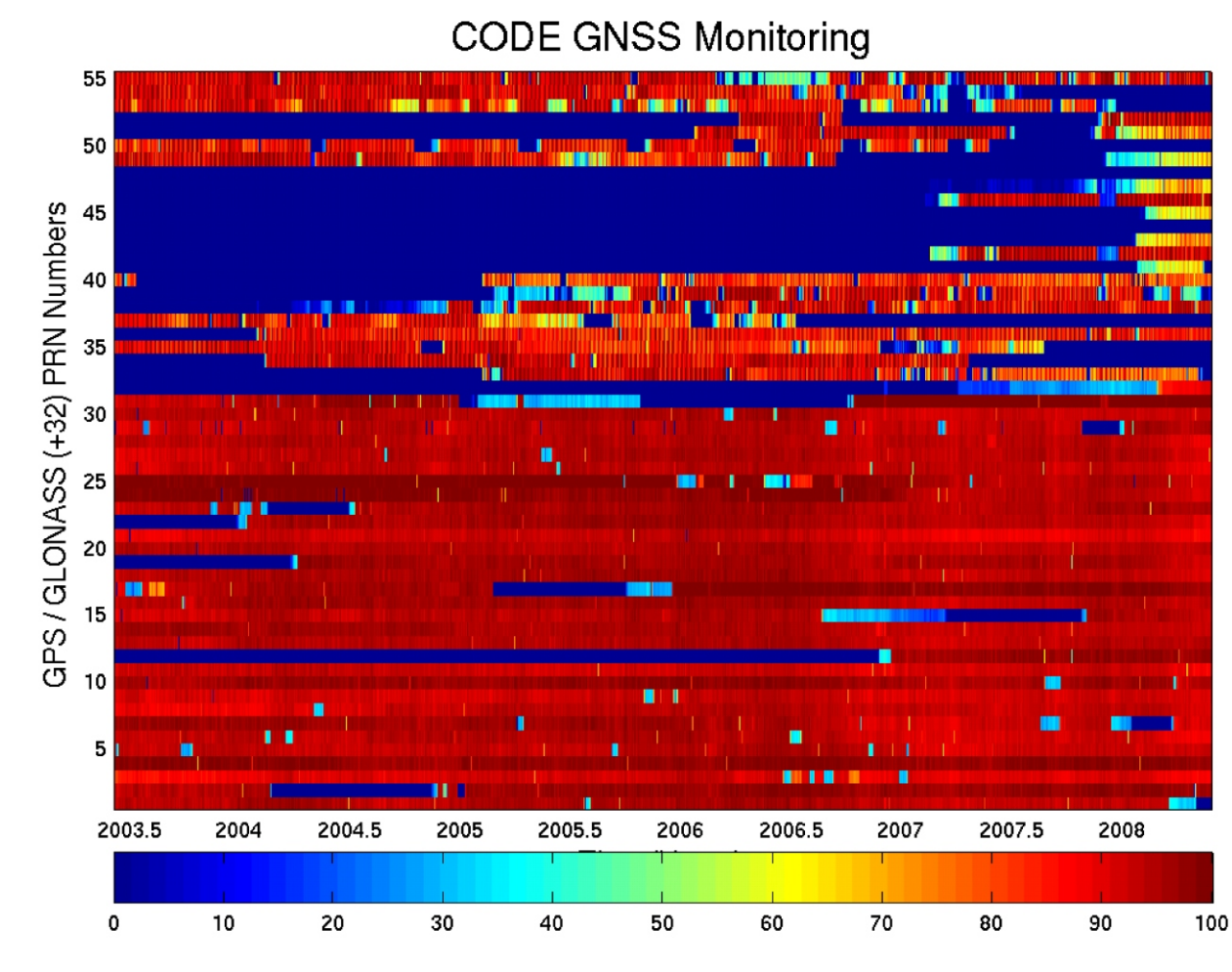


Fig. 2: The daily evolution of the quantity shown in Fig. 1(b) is shown. The varying colors for the GPS constellation indicate different satellite modes (operational, unhealthy, decommissioned, without broadcast orbit information, etc.). In case of GLONASS, we are confronted with a comparably high number of outages and interruptions.

Site	Delay in minutes	Availability	DC
Min	Mean	StdDev	
ABPO	7 8.0 0.8	50.0%	CODES
ABPO	11 17.5 4.8	50.0%	CODES
ABPO	7 8.0 0.8	50.0%	JPL
ABPO	9 14.0 6.3	50.0%	SOPAC

Tab. 1: Absolute and relative numbers of NRT stations where more than 90% of hourly observation files are available with a delay of less than 5 minutes are given for a list of data centers. The statistics shows a typical situation over one day (30 May 2008), available at: [www.aiub.unibe.ch/download/igsdata/nrtdata\\_0d.txt](http://www.aiub.unibe.ch/download/igsdata/nrtdata_0d.txt)

## Conclusions

- It should be possible to drastically reduce the mean hourly file latency. Desirable would be a maximum delay of 5 min, namely for all IGS stations that do not have explicit restrictions in communication. Reviewing the procedures at the IGS data centers would make sense.
- Generally all stations should submit their observation files to at least two IGS data centers (for backup). In case of ftp connection problems, "old", not yet submitted files of the previous (24) hours should be uploaded by the stations as soon as ftp connection is re-established.
- At CODE, we started to create daily observation files on the basis of hourly files for all stations where daily files are not available for rapid analysis. The fact that complete sets of 24 hourly files, but no daily files are available 3-5 hours after the end of the day for a number of IGS stations reveals also potential for improvements in terms of daily files.
- We consider complete GNSS tracking important for a continuous receiver network, like the IGS network. Javad, Topcon, Trimble GNSS receiver models, for example, are able to operate in "all-in-view" tracking mode. This is, however, only the case concerning IGS receivers that have been specifically reconfigured by the station managers (successfully convinced by CODE). An official statement from IGS side addressing this issue would be appreciated. Finally, the wish for complete GNSS tracking had to be manifested when interacting with receiver manufacturers.

Inconsistencies of 1 Hz data compared to nominal 30 sec data are described on poster by Bock et al.

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Fig. 3: GNSS satellites appearing in at least one daily observation file during the entire month of April 2008 were extracted for each station. We list here exclusively stations with incomplete tracking. Note that GPS-only stations just missing (decommissioned) G01 were disregarded.

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Tab. 2: Extract of the IGS hourly data latency statistics derived by CODE for near real-time analysis purposes. For a big number of IGS stations, the statistics shows serious data flow problems. The many percentage values far from 100% are unpleasant. (The complete list and further statistics are accessible at [www.aiub.unibe.ch/download/igsdata/](http://www.aiub.unibe.ch/download/igsdata/).)

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Tab. 3: Left: Excerpt of availability of hourly observation files over 60 hours (2.5 days). See also [www.aiub.unibe.ch/download/igsdata/nrtdata.sum](http://www.aiub.unibe.ch/download/igsdata/nrtdata.sum) Right: Excerpt of availability of daily observation files over 60 days. See also [www.aiub.unibe.ch/download/igsdata/rnxdata.sum](http://www.aiub.unibe.ch/download/igsdata/rnxdata.sum)