

Annual Report, 2000
Working Group on Astronomical Software

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The primary role of the AAS Working Group on Astronomical Software is to function as the body which formulates, reviews, and endorses modifications to the FITS data format standard. The WGAS FITS Committee, chaired by Dr. Peter Teuben (University of Maryland) is composed of representatives from major data providers and major astronomical software systems in North America. This WGAS Committee deliberates (primarily by email) whenever proposals arise for additions to or codification of the FITS standard. The last such action was in 1999 when the WGAS FITS Committee conducted a formal review of the Version 100-2.0 of the FITS Standard, culminating on 1 October 1999 by a formal vote to endorse the NOST document to be the official FITS standard. In this action the Committee was representing the AAS. After the European and Japanese Committees had taken similar votes, the IAU FITS Working Group (which also has strong North American representation) took the final vote which adopted the document as the IAU (worldwide) standard. The AAS WGAS Chair is currently in the process of preparing the final version of this document for publication. The current draft can be obtained at http://www.stsci.edu/~hanisch/FITS/aa_fits_standard.pdf.

Late in 2000 the WGAS FITS Committee began the formal review process for the proposed standards for representation of world coordinate systems (WCS) in FITS. This work is still in progress. The three WCS papers can be obtained from <ftp://ftp.cv.nrao.edu/NRAO-staff/egreisen/> in the files `wcs.ps`, `ccs.ps`, and `scs.ps` (G-zipped versions are also available).