

Airborne Lidar and Radar Measurements In and Around Greenland CryoVEx 2006

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ESA CONTRACT REPORT ESA CONTRACT NO 19601/05/NL/GS **SUBJECT** Technical Assistance for the Deployment of the ASIRAS Radar and Laser Altimeters, and Logistical Support for the CVRT2006 Campaign **CONTRACTOR** Danish National Space Center (DNSC) **ESA CR No STAR CODE No of volumes** 1 **This is Volume No** 1 **CONTRACTORS REFERENCE** CryoVEx 2006

ABSTRACT

This report describes the airborne part of the fieldwork performed as part of the CryoSat Validation Experiment (CryoVEx) 2006 and the processing of the collected dataset. The airborne part of the campaign was carried out by the Danish National Space Center (DNSC) using a Twin-Otter chartered from Air Greenland. The main purpose was to collect coincident ASIRAS and laser data at validation sites placed on land ice and sea ice in the Arctic area and offer logistic support to ground teams. The data collected will be important for the understanding of CryoSat-2 radar signals. A number of overflights of corner reflectors both on sea ice and inland ice will aid this understanding and serve the calibration of ASIRAS.

The airborne part of the CryoVEx 2006 campaign has successfully been carried out by DNSC during the period April 18 to May 18 and the gathered datasets are now stored and secured at DNSC and the Alfred Wegener Institute (AWI). Since then an intensive collaboration between ESA, AWI and DNSC have ensured a solid processing of data where many minor and major problems have been identified and solved. Different investigations of the ASIRAS datation have also been performed and are discussed in the report.

A description of the airborne system, the campaign, and the processing is given together with a short description of each validation site. This should aid the user in the understanding and correct use of the dataset.

The work described in this report was done under ESA Contract. Responsibility for the contents resides in the author or organisation that prepared it.

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Contents

1 Introduction

The European Space Agency (ESA) CryoSat Validation Experiment (CryoVEx) 2006 took place during April and May 2006. During the period April 18 to May 18 the airborne part of this campaign was successfully carried out by the Danish National Space Center (DNSC) using a chartered Air Greenland Twin-Otter aircraft.

The DNSC fieldwork consisted of:

- Airborne data collection with the ASIRAS and laser scanner system following installation and certification of ASIRAS in the Air Greenland Twin Otter (Registration: OY-POF). The airborne operations were coordinated with ground and helicopter activities over land and sea ice in polar areas in Greenland, Svalbard, Canada, and the Arctic Ocean.
- Logistical support for participants in the CryoVEx 2006 experiment especially concerning access to military facilities in Thule Air Base and Canadian Forces Station Alert and aircraft support to the UK teams on the Greenland Ice Sheet.
- Support for the sea ice ground truth work by Finnish and UK teams off Alert.

In general the airborne activities were successful and the objectives were met. A few survey lines were canceled due to the weather conditions as well as the time plan had to be adjusted during the campaign, but overall the expected data collection was carried out. Following the campaign all hard disks with ASIRAS data were transfered to the Alfred Wegener Institute (AWI).

The GPS and INS data were processed at DNSC and delivered to AWI for the ASIRAS processing. Laser data from the validation sites were also processed at DNSC and delivered to AWI for comparison. Throughout the processing phase DNSC, ESA and AWI had several meetings and teleconferences to address issues in the datasets.

This report outlines the field operations and processing of the data collected by DNSC during the CryoVEx 2006 campaign. In addition examples from the processed datasets will be presented, some of which were presented in a preliminary form at the CryoSat Validation and Retrieval Team (CVRT) meeting, ESA-ESTEC, June 2006.

2 Summary of the DNSC Operations

After successful installation and certification in March 2006 of the joint ASIRAS and DNSC laser scanner system in the Air Greenland Twin Otter, the system was ready for operation for the April-May campaign. The installation of the system was this time carried out in the Air Greenland hangar in Kangerlussuaq after the first two days of the charter (April 18 and April 19) had been used to deploy the UK teams on their positions on the EGIG line on the ice sheet. This transport consisted of all together four flights from Kangerlussuaq to the T05 and T12 sites with cargo and personnel. A test flight was performed on April 20 after instrument installation and ground tests with assistance from Radar Systemtechnik's (RST) engineer. The next days were spent on a Danish project surveying the sea ice west of Greenland near the Disko Island until the UK teams were ready for overflights. These local flights were used for more extensive testing of the ASIRAS system and training of the DNSC scientists in operation and backup of the system.

The first main site overflight was carried out on April 25 with a repeated survey of one site (T05) on April 26. This was done since the overflight of T05 on April 25 was not optimal. The campaign flight tracks can be seen in Figure [1.](#page-10-1) Thereafter followed a few days of waiting caused by poor weather on the Greenland east coast and Svalbard. We succeeded in reaching Svalbard on April 30 in between low-pressure systems. Because of the delay, we decided to base our Svalbard operations out of Longyearbyen instead of Ny Ålesund as planned. Before the Austfonna overflight the Starlab Oceanpal GPS system was mounted on the aircraft to be tested during that flight. A planned sea ice flight on an Envisat track was canceled due to lack of sea ice near Svalbard. On April 2 and 3 the team transited to Thule Air Base via Station Nord, Northeast Greenland. The flight out of Svalbard was over the Kongsvegen glacier coordinated with the ground team there. Unfortunately the wind conditions made it difficult to follow the planned track. Over the Fram Strait an Envisat track was followed with some ASIRAS and laser scanner data acquired despite of some clouds in the area. Also a local flight out of Station Nord was carried out to resurvey previously surveyed lines in the Arctic Ocean.

From Thule Air Base the Devon site was overflown on April 5. The southern part of the track had to be aborted due to dangerous wind conditions. This was afterward discussed with the Devon ground team and it was agreed that they would focus their work near the summit of the ice cap where the best data was obtained. After transit to Canadian Forces Station Alert, Ellesmere Island, on May 8 sea ice flights were done in cooperation with the ground and helicopter work on the ice. Two sites on first year ice and multi year ice close to the station were selected where the work was focused. On May 10 corner reflector overflights were performed repeatedly for each site at different elevations together with runway and building calibration survey. Also longer flights of coordinated Twin Otter (laser scanning and ASIRAS radar altimetry) and helicopter electromagnetic (HEM) data acquisition were done. One of these flights involved placing of UK-SAMS GPS buoys along the line transmitting positions by satellite, as a test for aligning helicopter and Twin-Otter tracks during the future CryoSat calibration campaign.

The aim of the last part of the airborne work was to remeasure previously surveyed sea ice and inland ice margin lines and to assist a Danish glaciology team at Station Nord with transport of equipment and personnel to a local ice cap, Flade Isblink. On May 12 the Twin Otter transited from Alert to Station Nord with data acquisition over the sea ice in the Arctic Ocean and on May 14 the cargo flights to Flade Isblink was carried out. In order to protect the instruments, the ASIRAS system was unmounted before these local flights. The

Figure 1: Tracks flown during CryoVEx 2006 by the Air Greenland Twin Otter equipped with the DNSC laser scanner system and the ASIRAS radar.

last flights back to Kangerlussuaq were over the East Greenland ice sheet margin including several outlet glaciers with landings at airfields in Constable Pynt and Kulusuk. After returning to Kangerlussuaq on May 17 the equipment was unmounted.

2.1 Overview of Day to Day activities

- April 18-19: Deployment of UK teams to T05 and T12 on the ice sheet. Two flights per day. Installation of the instruments were started on April 19 after the last cargo flight.
- April 20: Installation and local test flight.
- April 21-24: West-coast sea ice project based in Qaarsut near Uummannaq. Extensive tests and training with RST on the ASIRAS system including the backup system.
- April 25-26: EGIG line overflights including the T05 and T12 sites with corner reflectors. The April 26 flight also included a sea ice flight off the west coast coordinated with

helicopter landings on the ice and a medical evacuation of the team on T12 due to illness.

- April 27-28: No flights due to bad weather on the Greenland east coast.
- April 29-30: Transit flights from Kangerlussuaq to Svalbard via the EGIG line, Constable Pynt, and Danmarkshavn. High level ASIRAS data acquisition over the ocean between East Greenland and Svalbard.
- May 1: Over-flight of the Austfonna ice cap including 3 of the 4 corner reflectors. Small leg over sea ice east of Svalbard to test the Oceanpal GPS system.
- May 2: Transit flight to Station Nord, Greenland via Kongsvegen glacier and Envisat track in the Fram Strait. Local sea ice survey from Station Nord.
- May 3: Transit to Thule with survey of the northern part of the Greenland ice sheet.
- May 4: No flight.
- May 5: Devon ice cap survey. Southern part of the track was aborted due to dangerous wind conditions.Upon consultation with the pilot it was decided not to resurvey the southern part of Devon due to the continued dangerous conditions at the low flight elevations and a heavy aircraft.
- May 6-7: No flight.
- May 8: Transit to Alert via Politikens Bræ, Qaanaaq, Peterman Glacier, and the ice sheet margin. Change of personnel (R. Forsberg and H. Skourup replaces L. Stenseng and S. M. Hvidegaard, Susanne Hanson continues to Alert for in situ work).
- May 9-11: Alert sea ice flights coordinated with sea ice ground observations and helicopter EM flights (HEM).
- May 12: Transit flight to Station Nord with sea ice survey (with HEM). Unmount ASIRAS.
- May 13: No flight.
- May 14: Cargo flight to local ice cap for Danish glaciologists.
- May 15: No flight.
- May 16-17: Transit flight to Kangerlussuaq via Constable Pynt and Kulusuk, East Greenland. Unmount equipment.
- May 18: Cargo flight to pick-up equipment for UK team.
- May 19: Shipment of equipment.
- Airborne field team:
- DNSC: R. Forsberg (RF), S. M. Hvidegaard (SMH), H. Skourup (HSK), and L. Stenseng (LS).
- RST: H. Lentz.

Table 1: GRL06 Flights. Off B: Off Bloc, T O: Take Off, L: Landing, On B: On Bloc, Air: Airborne.

3 Hardware Installation

In the Air Greenland hangar in Kangerlussuaq the equipment was installed in the Twin Otter according to the experience from the test campaign in Nuuk in March 2006. No major difficulties were encountered. Table [2](#page-13-1) gives the offsets between the instruments and Figure [2](#page-13-2) sketches the approximate position of the instruments in the aircraft.

For the Twin-Otter new antenna cables had to be made to accommodate the longer distance between the ASIRAS instrument and the ASIRAS antenna. After a discussion between DNSC, RST and Air Greenland engineers it was decided that the optimal installation in the aircraft would be with cables of 240 cm each. These 240 cm cables were then supplied by RST and used throughout the CryoVEx 2006 campaign.

Figure 2: Sketch of approximate instrument positions.

Table 2: The lever arm from the GPS antennas to the origin of the laser scanner, and to the back center of ASIRAS antenna frame (see arrow). Offset definition: *X* positive to the front, *Y* positive to the right and *Z* positive down.

(a) ASIRAS antenna mounted on OY–POF (b) ASIRAS instrument installed in the rack with AIR4 (Trimble 4000).

Figure 3: Photos of the ASIRAS installation.

(a) Setup inside the cabin during survey.

(b) From left: Laser scanner, altimeter, camera (behind altimeter) and INS installed in aft luggage compartment.

(c) Laser scanner (center), altimeter (botom right) and camera (bottom left) seen from outside.

Figure 4: Photos of the laser installation.

4 Overview of Acquired Data

During the CryoVEx 2006 Campaign the DNSC collected around 4.5 Tb of ASIRAS data and 30 Gb of GPS, INS, Laser and photos with the airborne system. ASIRAS data were stored on hard disks and backed up to AIT-3 tapes after each flight, using the ASIRAS PC3. The tapes are stored at DNSC and the hard disks were delivered to AWI for processing. All other data were stored on an external hard disk, written to CD-roms and copied to the operators laptops to minimize the risk of data loss due to media failure.

An overview of the collected data can be seen in Table [3](#page-16-0) and a more detailed list of data can be found in the following sections and relevant appendices.

4.1 Auxiliary Data

During the survey flights operator logs were kept for both the DNSC laser scanner system and the ASIRAS radar system. These logs have been stored as separate files together with the data files and can also be found in the Appendix [B](#page-73-0) and [E.](#page-96-0)

A downward looking camera was installed next to the laser scanner and operated during most flights to acquire visual documentation of the observed surface. Images were obtained every 2 seconds with a resolution of 640 by 480 pixels, with one pixel roughly corresponding to 1 by 1 m. These were logged directly on a dedicated laptop PC after initial tests on a rack mounted PC was unsuccessful. In addition to the downward looking camera, the operators took digital photographs and digital video out of the Twin Otter windows on irregular basis during flights. These photos have been gathered and stored together with the survey data files.

As a backup for the laser scanner instrument a profiling laser altimeter (Optech) was mounted next to the scanner. The instrument was tested but data were only sporadically stored as most flights were out of range of this altimeter.

4.2 Summary

Nearly all data were recovered during the campaign except for the few cases discussed above. The full set of raw data is now stored on the DNSC server system (with tape backup) and copies are kept on CD-roms except for the ASIRAS data, which were stored on tapes and hard disks. The hard disks with ASIRAS data have been delivered to AWI and the backup tapes are at DNSC. An overview of collected data can be found in Table [3.](#page-16-0)

Table 3: Data acquired from reference stations and aircraft instruments. Table 3: Data acquired from reference stations and aircraft instruments.

"EGI file errors when read by readegi, output to screen OK
^bTest Flight, WEBCAM PC stopped halfway
'webcam PC error
⁴1 hour side-looking radar *a*EGI file errors when read by readegi, output to screen OK

*b*Test Flight, WEBCAM PC stopped halfway

*c*webcam PC error *d*1 hour side-looking radar

^eEGI logging startet late *e*EGI logging startet late

*f*no data in 2 scanner files

*g*no scanner data

*i*4 reflectors possible

*j*reflectors at KV. ASIRAS 2nd leg

*k*two files, mem card full

*l*ref. GPS too short 14:34 landing 16:06

*m*ASIRAS: Acad.+H6-7 *n*reflector at Devon

*o*reflectors at sea ice

*f*no data in 2 scanner files
8no scanner data
^{*h*}ASIRAS HAM
^{*d*}ASIRAS HAM
^{*d*} areflectors possible
*f*ereflectors at KV. ASIRAS 2nd leg
fereflectors at KV. ASIRAS 2nd leg
fereflectors at Sea at AH6-7
*m*ASI *p*EGI disc full, last hour missing; scan file missing due to accidental closure of PC

5 Processing GPS and INS data

Kinematic GPS is the key positioning method of the aircraft. GPS dual-frequency phase data were logged at 1 Hz using one or several ground base receivers at one or more reference sites, and 4 aircraft receivers; one of these dedicated to datation for the ASIRAS system. The aircraft GPS receivers are named AIR1 (Trimble, 4000-SSI), AIR2 (Ashtech, Z-extreme), AIR3 (Javad, Legacy), and AIR4 (Trimble, 4000-SSI, connected to ASIRAS). AIR1 and AIR3 share the front GPS antenna; AIR2 and AIR4 the rear antenna. Antenna offsets are given in Table [2.](#page-13-1) Data were logged in the receivers internal memory during flights and downloaded to laptop PCs upon landing. Most data were recovered and only a few files missing, see Table [3,](#page-16-0) but the redundancy of receivers meant that GPS data are available for all flights. The AIR2 Ashtech receiver had a problem with the memory card and did not collect data on the last 3 flights.

The GPS base stations to be used as reference stations for differential post processing of the GPS data are listed in Table [4.](#page-17-1) These stations were mounted on roofs or tripods in the field near the landing sites during the flights; the reference points were generally not marked. In a few cases data from permanent GPS stations have been used.

Name	Location	Hardware (ant. type)
CNP ₀	Constable Pynt, near runway	Javad (Marant)
JQA	Western part of Nuussuaq, near Qaarsut,	Javad (Marant)
	tripod on ground	
KELY	Kellyville permanent station	Ashtech Z-XII3
LYR1	Longyearbyen, tripod on ground	Javad (Regent)
	near NPI Hotel	
NRD1	Station Nord, on building 7 roof (light pole)	Javad (Regent)
NRD ₂	Station Nord, on snow next to apron	Javad (Regent)
NYA ₂	Ny Ålesund, permanent station	AOA Benchmark ACT
SCOR	Scoresbysund, permanent station	Ashtech UZ-12
SFJ1	Kangerlussuaq, on KISS building roof	Trimble 4000 SSI
	(between tile 16 & 17 of the outermost row)	
T ₁₂	On the ice sheet (8 m west of)	Leica SR530
	T12 corner reflector	
TAB1	Thule Air Base, on snow pile	Javad (Regent)
	near Air Greenland hangar	
THU ₂	Thule Air Base, permanent station	Javad Legacy
THU ₃	Thule Air Base, permanent station	Ashtech UZ-12
UMD1	Uummannaq, at airfield point	Ashtech
YLT1	CFS Alert, tripod on ground	Javad (Regent)
	near Spinnaker Building	
YLT ₂	CFS Alert, tripod on ground	Javad (Marant)
	near garage	

Table 4: CryoVEx 2006 GPS Reference Stations

A Honeywell medium-grade inertial navigation system H764-G was used throughout the surveys to record inertially integrated position, velocity and attitude information. The unit has an on board GPS receiver for datation and position updates of the built in Kalman filter. Data packets were obtained through a 1553 mil-spec serial communications bus and logged on a rack mounted PC with a 2 Gb Compact Flash memory card in binary format. Data from all flights have been secured except for the following cases:

April 10 On the test flight the INS failed to initialize properly.

April 29 INS data logging stopped premature.

May 12 The last hour of data is missing due to an operator error.

May 16 INS data corrupted in the first part of the flight.

Recordings and comments can be found in Table [3.](#page-16-0)

Table 5: Processed GPS data selected for further use.

5.1 GPS Data Processing

GPS solutions is based on static processing of the reference stations and kinematic differential processing of the airborne data. First the position of the reference stations is determined using the SCOUT (Scripps Coordinate Update Tool) service operated by

SOPAC (Scripps Orbit and Permanent Array Center) (<http://sopac.ucsd.edu>). SCOUT calculates the reference station's position in ITRF2000 using data from three permanent GPS stations nearby. Even though there in the Arctic are several hundreds of kilometers to "nearby" permanent stations, the standard deviation of the resulting position is often within 2 cm.

Reference stations used during the CryoVEx 2006 campaign can be found in Table [4,](#page-17-1) note that data from permanent GPS stations in the Arctic also were used when available in 1 Hz.

The kinematic differential GPS processing were performed with GPSurvey (version 2.35) using precise IGS orbits and the Goad-Goodman tropospheric model. On each flight several solutions are made using different combinations of GPS reference stations and aircraft GPS receivers. The best solutions for each flight is shown in Table [5](#page-18-1) and for a complete list of all GPS solutions see Appendix [23.](#page-92-1) On the last flight it was not possible to get an acceptable solution when using the GPSurvey software, instead a solution was calculated using CSRS-PPP (Canadian Spatial Reference System Precise Point Positioning) (<http://http://www.geod.nrcan.gc.ca>). Finally the GPS solutions were converted into binary format as specified in the ESA document by [Cullen](#page-57-1) [\(2006\)](#page-57-1) for the ASIRAS processing.

5.2 Merging GPS and INS Data

The position and attitude information is extracted from the INS data packets and averaged to 10 Hz. The averaging to 10 Hz has proven to be a good balance between file size and resolution in time. To obtain a higher resolution in the time domain and preserve precision the post processed GPS and the INS data is merged by draping the INS derived positions onto the GPS positions. This draping is done by modeling the function, found in equation [\(1\)](#page-19-1), by a low pass filtered smooth correction curve, which is added to the INS.

$$
\epsilon(t) = P_{GPS}(t) - P_{INS}(t) \tag{1}
$$

This way a smooth GPS-INS solution is obtained, which can be used for geolocation of laser and camera observation. The full resolution INS data were also converted into binary format as specified in the ESA document for the ASIRAS processing by [Cullen](#page-57-1) [\(2006\)](#page-57-1).

Figure 5: Draping high rate INS derived heights (blue) onto precise GPS heights (red) to get high rate, precise heights (black).

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Table 6: INS data processing.

6 Processing Laser Scanner Data

A Riegl laser scanner (LMS-Q140i-60) was used to measure the distance between the aircraft and the surface, with a range resolution of 5 cm. The nominal data logging rate is 40 scans/second; each scan consists of 208 single laser shots in a 60◦ cross track swath. The laser scanner data were logged as hourly files on a PC laptop. The files are time tagged by a 1 PPS signal from the AIR1 GPS receiver with start time of the scans given by the operator as the file name. It should be noted that this procedure gives a slight risk of timing errors of 1 second (approximately 60 m on ground) however after processing it is easy to identify and correct these time errors by visual inspection. Table [7](#page-22-0) shows the laser scanner files logged during the campaign. The typical files size is about 200 Mb for one hour in the standard binary file format. Backup of the data was made on hard disk and CD-roms after flights.

Figure 6: Sketch of the Riegl laser scanner principle. (1)Laser and photo diode assembly. (2)Swath pattern. (3)Rotating mirror.

The principle in the laser scanner can shortly be described as following:

- 1. The laser (1) emits a laser pulse and starts a timer, see Figure [6.](#page-21-1)
- 2. The pulse is reflected in a direction dictated by the mirror (3).
- 3. If the pulse hits a target with a suitable reflectance it is returned to the mirror (3) that reflects it into the photo diode (1) and hereby stops the timer.
- 4. The mirror (3) is now rotated by a small angle before the process is repeated.

After initial quality control of the laser scanner data, it was seen that scans were missing on a regular basis. The reason for this was believed to be increased vibrations of the laptop PC in the new aircraft installation. This lead to a shift in storage method in the PC from the standard hard disk to a 2 Gb Compact Flash memory card. This reduced the data loss from approximately 1 out of 4 to 1 out of 40 scans.

Laser scanner data were recovered for most flight lines except a few cases where fog or low clouds were encountered or system/operator errors occur. Also a loss of INS data will hinder the laser scanner data in being processed.

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Continued on next page

JD-Date	Filename	2dd	Start	Stop	Comments
	143900.2dd	\overline{T}	14.650005	15.629081	
	153900.2dd	T	15.650004	15.749702	
	162000.2dd	T	16.333337	17.439360	
$128 - May 8th$	143500.2dd	\overline{T}	14.583336	15.050474	
	162800.2dd	T	16.466767	17.022718	
	171400.2dd	T	17.233503	18.375890	
	182400.2dd	$\mathbf T$	18.400105	18.847553	
$129 - May 9th$	160300.2dd	$\mathbf T$	16.050005	17.071888	
	170530.2dd	T	17.091673	18.119551	
	180800.2dd	T	18.133334	19.118778	
	190800.2dd	T	19.133339	20.128485	
	200900.2dd	$\mathbf T$	20.150005	20.887151	
$130 - May 10^{th}$	175500.2dd	$\mathbf T$	17.916670	19.283643	
	193200.2dd	T	19.533335	19.759668	
$131 - May 11$ th	154300.2dd	$\overline{\mathrm{T}}$	15.716668	16.903191	
	165500.2dd	T	16.916669	17.982145	
	180000.2dd	T	18.000006	19.189834	
	191200.2dd	T	19.200006	19.205010	
$132 - May 12$ th	143500.2dd	T	14.583334	15.857933	
	155300.2dd	$\mathbf T$	15.883336	16.951398	
	165800.2dd	$\mathbf T$	16.966667	18.206486	
	181330.2dd	$\mathbf T$			
	190200.2dd	$\mathbf T$	19.033336	19.501453	
$136 - May 16$ th	095300.2dd	$\mathbf T$	9.883336	11.013569	
	110730.2dd	$\mathbf T$	11.125007	11.219440	
	112130.2dd	T	11.358338	12.585829	
	123600.2dd	T	12.600002	13.699031	
	134300.2dd	$\mathbf T$	13.716669	14.550885	
$137 - May 17th$	083900.2dd	\overline{T}	8.650003	8.865336	
	091400.2dd	$\mathbf T$	9.233336	9.611292	
	095700.2dd	$\mathbf T$	9.950005	11.244140	
	111600.2dd	T	11.266668	12.223921	
	121400.2dd	$\mathbf T$	12.233336	13.284667	
	143100.2dd	$\mathbf T$	14.516668	15.641005	
	153900.2dd	T	15.650003	16.808849	
	165000.2dd	$\mathbf T$	16.833335	17.499100	
	174900.2dd	$\mathbf T$	17.816671	18.088543	

Table 7: Recorded Laser Scanner Files.

6.1 Processing of Laser Scanner Data

Geolocation of each point in the laser scanner data is performed with standard trigonometry in two steps. First all points are described as vectors (*dXNWU*,*dYNWU*,*dZNWU*) in a local cartesian North-East-Up system using the lever arm between the laser scanner and the gps (*dX*,*dY*,*dZ*), the range measured by the laser (*r*), the angle of the laser mirror (*a*) and the orientation of the laser in an earth fixed system $(\omega_r,\omega_p,\omega_h)$. Next these vectors are added with the position derived from GPS

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 $(\varphi_{\text{gps}}, \lambda_{\text{gps}}, h_{\text{gps}})$ to get the position of the reflector in an earth fixed system (φ, λ, h) .

$$
dX_{NWU} = \cos(\omega_h) \cos(\omega_p) dX + (\cos(\omega_h) \sin(\omega_p) \sin(\omega_r) - \sin(\omega_h) \cos(\omega_r)) (-\sin(a)r + dY) + (\cos(\omega_h) \sin(\omega_p) \cos(\omega_r) + \sin(\omega_h) \sin(\omega_r)) (\cos(a)r + dZ) dY_{NWU} = -\sin(\omega_h) \cos(\omega_p) dX - (\sin(\omega_h) \sin(\omega_p) \sin(\omega_r) + \cos(\omega_h) \cos(\omega_r)) (-\sin(a)r + dY) + (-\sin(\omega_h) \sin(\omega_p) \cos(\omega_r) + \cos(\omega_h) \sin(\omega_r)) (\cos(a)r + dZ) dZ_{NWU} = \sin(\omega_p) dX - \cos(\omega_p) \sin(\omega_r) (-\sin(a)r + dY) - \cos(\omega_p) \cos(\omega_r) (\cos(a)r + dZ) \varphi = \varphi_{gps} + \frac{dX_{NWU}}{degm} \lambda = \lambda_{gps} - \frac{dY_{NWU}}{degm \cos(\varphi)}
$$
(3)
\nh = h_{gps} + dZ_{NWU}

6.2 Calibration of Laser Scanner Data

The geolocation process just described assumes perfect alignment between the laser scanner and the INS system, this is however not practical possible in this type of installation. To compensate for the imperfect installation several calibration maneuvers are performed during the campaign. The purpose of these maneuvers is to determine and monitor the offset angles between the laser scanner and the INS.

(a) Zoomed in view of two flights over a building in Kangerlussuaq used for calibration.

(b) Difference between two flight over the building in Kangerlussuaq.

Figure 7: Laser data acquired over a building in Kangerlussuaq.

The main calibration site for the laser is a building where the corners of the roof is known from a GPS survey. Using this building and two swaths of laser scanner data, one east-west and one north-south, one can estimate the offset angles through an iterative process. In Figure [7a](#page-24-1) points from the two swaths (in height coded colors) are plotted on top of the black outline of the building. The difference between first and second swath can be seen in Figure [7b.](#page-24-2) Statics show a mean difference of 0.00 meters and a 0.43 meters standard deviation of the mean. The relatively high standard deviation is caused by the non-continuous surface, where the interpolation between the two data sets fails to describe the edges of buildings correctly, this is clearly seen in Figure [7b.](#page-24-2)

Table 8: Statics for crossing swaths. All units are meters.

Table [8](#page-25-0) gives an overview of the the statics of all crossing swaths during the campaign. Each of these crossings is used to verify and, if necessary, correct the offset angles. Apart from crossing swaths where all three offset angles can be determined, it is also possible to determine the roll offset angle when flying over level sea ice and calm water. This is based on the assumption that the level sea ice and calm water is parallel with the geoid. The change in geometry will also have an influence when comparing crossing swaths over land ice areas with many crevasses and steep topography.

The table in Appendix [24](#page-94-1) gives the offset angles and other parameters used in the processing of each laser scanner file. One should use the figures in Table [8](#page-25-0) carefully. For example one would expect that sea ice has moved in the period from the first to the second flight and this gives a false impression of low accuracy. The change in geometry will also have an influence when comparing crossing swaths over land ice areas with many

crevasses and steep topography.

6.3 Estimation of Ice Thickness from Freeboard Height

The sea ice freeboard (*F*) can be determined as a function of height above the ellipsoide from GPS (*h*), slant corrected laser range (*r*) and geoide height (*N*), see equation [4.](#page-26-1) *e* is a sum of local deviations of the sea surface and errors, that by means of a lowest level filter technique can be reduced or removed. This technique determines *e* by a selection of the lowest values in the dataset, assuming that these corresponds to the sea surface or very thin ice. The lowest values are then interpolated to form the filter.

$$
F = h - r - N + e \tag{4}
$$

Figure 8: Sea ice thickness estimation.

From the freeboard data the total sea ice thickness (including snow cover), see *T* in equation [5](#page-26-2) and Figure [8,](#page-26-3) can be estimated using the assumption of an isostatic balance between ice, including snow, and the seawater. This is commonly described by the single factor *K*. This factor is dependent of densities of ice, snow and seawater.

$$
T = KF \tag{5}
$$

$$
K = 1 + \frac{\rho_i h_i + \rho_s h_s}{h_i(\rho_w - \rho_i) + h_s(\rho_w - \rho_s)}
$$
(6)

It is now possible to calculate the freeboard heights from the laser scanner data and through this estimate the sea ice thickness. Figure [9](#page-27-0) shows an example of sea ice freeboard heights north of Greenland.

Figure 9: Example of sea ice freeboard.

7 ASIRAS Data Processing

The ASIRAS system was installed and run as tested during the test campaign in March 2006. The system was timed using a 1 PPS signal and an ASCII datation string from the AIR4 GPS receiver.

Extensive tests of the ASIRAS instrument and backup system were performed on the first flights: The tests flight near Kangerlussuaq and the lines off the Greenland west coast. The logged data were stored on the dedicated hard disks in the ASIRAS PCs during flight and transferred to the PCs for backup after flights. The data were then stored on AIT-3 magnetic tapes and on hard disks. No data compression was done as this method was tested to be more time consuming than regular data backup. All together 1 hr of ASIRAS data acquisition demanded approximately 7 hours of backup time.

ASIRAS data were obtained primarily in the LAM mode at 20 MHz. Data were acquired continuously over the main sites and limited to parts of the other survey lines. Tests of the HAM mode over open ocean were carried out on April 30 between Greenland and Svalbard. Operator log files regarding the ASIRAS data can be found in Appendix [E](#page-96-0) and Appendix [F](#page-114-0) lists the recorded data files.

The data quality has been checked after each survey flight with the "Quicklook viewer" software from RST. Especially for the corner reflector sites the data were checked, see Table [12](#page-36-1) for corner reflector positions from hand held GPS receivers. Examples from the "Quicklook-Viewer" can be found in Section [9.](#page-40-0)

Figure 10: Outline of the ASIRAS processor (from [Cullen](#page-57-1) [\(2006\)](#page-57-1)).

7.1 Processing of ASIRAS Data

The processing of the acquired ASIRAS data were done by AWI with input of GPS position and INS attitude data from DNSC. Figure [10](#page-28-1) briefly outlines the processing of ASIRAS L1b data. Plots, showing ground track and height estimates from the OCOG retracker, of all processed ASIRAS profiles can be found in Appendix [G.](#page-118-0)

7.1.1 Low Altitude Mode Pulse to Pulse Phase Correction for 2.5 kHz PRF

It was noticed during routine level 1b processing of LAM acquisitions from Bay of Bothnia (Test campaign March 2005) that waveforms were highly degraded. Subsequent analysis of range and phase histories retrieved from passes over corner reflectors showed a linear pulse to pulse phase term and it was further shown that this phase term was different for each FMCW frequency offset (20, 40, 60 and 80 MHz) which are programmed as a function of aircraft altitude (shown in Figure [11\)](#page-29-2)

Figure 11: Frequency offset and corresponding elevations for ASIRAS LAM mode

The effect results in azimuth formed beams pointing in the wrong along-track direction. Empirical phase corrections were determined which solved the problem. An analysis of instrument operation resulted in speculation of the cause and the empirical phase corrections as a function of frequency offset were verified. March 2005 data were acquired at a pulse repetition frequency (PRF) of \sim 3 kHz. CryoVEx 2006 acquisitions were recorded at a PRF of ∼ 2.5 kHz. Since it was known the phase term (error) was also a function of PRF phase corrections were computed following a test campaign in Greenland (March 2006) when no corner reflector deployment was possible. Corrections for 2006 are provided in Table [9.](#page-29-3)

Frequency offset,	ASIRAS to surface elevation	Phase correction,	
F(MHz)	range (meters)	$\phi(F)$ (radians)	
20	40-440	3.35103216	
40	280-680	0.41887902	
60	520-920	3.76991118	
80	760-1160	0.83775804	

Table 9: LAM phase corrections.

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7.1.2 Echo phase correction

A complex raw time domain echo recorded by the ASIRAS can be described as $\psi_n[0, l-1]$ where, *n*, is the echo number (in the range 0 to $N - 1$) and *l* is the number of samples (3072) sample for LAM). The phase corrected counterpart is given by

$$
\forall k \in [0, l-1] \qquad \psi_n^c[k] = \psi_n[k] e^{i\phi(F)n}
$$

(a) Range history computed by isolating corner reflector response from surface response and plotting the range bin at which the peak power is found. Waveforms have been interpolated by a factor 8. The jitter is due to the low interpolation factor and also SNR.

(b) Uncorrected phase history computed by computing the phase of the echo at the location determined by the plot (a)

(c) Phase history after correction. The curve appears smooth in comparison with (a) this shows the phase across the impulse response is stable. Phase noise is, however, evident if the smaller scale is examined.

Figure 12: An example of a corrected corner reflector phase history.

Note: Since the nature of the phase behavior is now understood efforts are being made to solve the pulse to pulse phase problem within the hardware. It is expected that, though not confirmed until mid April 2007, future campaign ASIRAS data will be free from this phenomena.

7.2 CryoVEx 2006 ASIRAS processing results

The ASIRAS processing of the CryoVex2006 data is analogous to the concepts already presented in [Helm et al.](#page-57-2) [\(2006\)](#page-57-2). The full data set was processed with ESA's processor version ASIRAS_03_06. In agreement with ESA, AWI processed the full rate data instead of the desampled data set. A summary of the processing is given in Appendix [F](#page-114-0) and [G](#page-118-0) gives plots of every single profile.

A couple of tests were applied to address datation issues and show the quality of the level_1b product (see Section [7.2.1\)](#page-31-1). In general the data shows good quality, however in some specific areas the retracked elevation shows a lack of quality (Section [7.2.3\)](#page-33-0). We suggest to apply a different retracker algorithm here, since the implemented OCOG retracker fails.

7.2.1 Datation tests

Two different types of tests were applied to investigate the datation issue. The first test uses ground positions of the corner reflector and compares them to the position derived from the analysis of ASIRAS echoes. Here we found no time shift, see Section [9.6.](#page-49-0) The second test is a comparison of the ASIRAS surface elevation with the laser scanner elevation model in small sections of some profiles. Details of the procedure are described in [Helm et al.](#page-57-2) [\(2006\)](#page-57-2). In table [10](#page-31-2) a summary of the results are listed. In some of the tested profiles (retracked with a threshold spline retracker) we clearly identify that a time lag is present. The reason for the apparent time shift has not yet been identified and therefore the processing of the full data set were performed with a zero time shift.

Table 10: Datation tests

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(a) Median difference is determined to 5.30 ± 0.18 m. The ASIRAS profile was shifted by 0.0 s.

(b) Median difference is determined to 5.30 ± 0.07 m. The ASIRAS profile was shifted by -0.24 s.

Figure 13: Comparison between ASIRAS elevation of profile A060425_07 and ALS elevation model.

7.2.2 Runway overflights and comparison with ALS-DEM

Runway overflights where performed in Alert at 11*th* may 2007. Figure [14](#page-32-1) shows the laser scanner elevation model. ASIRAS profile A060510_12 was used to calibrate the system with the ALS-DEM. In figure [15b](#page-33-1) the comparison is shown. The black line in the upper panel shows the ALS elevation, whereas the dark gray line shows the ASIRAS elevation. The light gray line shows the roll, which is close to zero for this section. A difference of approx. 5.34 m between both elevations is determined. The lower left panel shows the variation of the difference around the median value. Statistics of this variation is shown in the histogram. The above calibration was done with a -0.14 s time shifted ASIRAS profile (figure [15b\)](#page-33-1) and the original non time shifted ASIRAS profile [\(15a\)](#page-33-2). Table [11](#page-33-3) shows the result of the above calibration.

Figure 14: Laser scanner elevation model of runway in Alert

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(a) Median difference is determined to 5.33 ± 0.08 m. The ASIRAS profile was shifted by 0.0 s.

(b) Median difference is determined to 5.34 ± 0.04 m. The ASIRAS profile was shifted by -0.13 s.

Figure 15: Comparison between ASIRAS elevation and ALS elevation model of runway in Alert.

Profile	STDDEV without tshift correction [m]	STDDEV witht shift correction [m]	Tshift [s]	Median difference between ALS and ASIRAS [m]	Remarks
A060510 12	$0.08\,$	0.04	-0.14	5.34	runway

Table 11: Runway calibration

7.2.3 Retracker performance

ASIRAS elevations are retracked by a simple but very fast and robust OCOG retracker. This value is a rough approximation and should be taken with care. It was shown in [Helm](#page-57-2) [et al.](#page-57-2) [\(2006\)](#page-57-2) that the OCOG retracker gives very good results for the dry snow zone, however for the percolation zone the retracker fails in tracking the surface response. We found that this is also the fact for the 2006 LAM data. Figure [16](#page-34-0) is showing two typical LAM-ASIRAS echoes in the percolation zone of Greenland. The vertical line shows the position of the re-tracked OCOG elevation. As it can be seen, the OCOG retracker jumps between the peaks and does not re-track the surface response in every case. Figure [18](#page-35-0) shows the ASIRAS elevation for a 100 s long section in the percolation zone of Greenland. From this figure we can clearly identify the jumping of the OCOG retracker. We also determined such jumps over sea ice and in the dry snow zone (shown in figures [17](#page-34-1) and [19\)](#page-35-1). As a consequence, care must be taken when using the elevation data for further analysis.

Figure 16: Two typical LAM-ASIRAS echo in the percolation zone of Greenland re-tracked with the standard OCOG retracker.

Figure 17: LAM-ASIRAS elevation for a 100 s long section over the sea ice. The elevation was determined by using the standard OCOG retracker.

Figure 18: LAM-ASIRAS elevation for a 100 s long section in the percolation zone of Greenland. The elevation was determined by using the standard OCOG retracker.

Figure 19: LAM-ASIRAS elevation for a 100 s long section in the dry snow zone of Greenland. The elevation was determined by using the standard OCOG retracker.

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7.2.4 Corner reflector overflights

Throughout the campaign there have been overflights of the corner reflectors raised at the test sites. The positions of all the corner reflectors can be found in Table [12.](#page-36-0) Figure [20](#page-36-1) and [21](#page-37-0) shows details of one pass over the YLT3 corner reflector. Figure [21](#page-37-0) shows the stack before the averaging that leads to the profile shown in Figure [20.](#page-36-1)

Site	Latitude	Longitude	Latitude	Longitude
T ₀ 5	$69^{\circ}51'$ 1.71154"N	47°15'30.50837"W	69.8504754	-47.2584745
T ₁₂	70°10'31.13635"N	45°20'51.38740"W	70.1753157	-45.3476076
AUST1	79°47'56.52000"N	$24^{\circ}25'$ 3.66000" E	79.7990333	24.4176833
AUST ₂	79°49'55.26000"N	0'13.92000" 24° E	79.8320167	24.0038667
AUST3	79°44′ 1.50000"N	22°24'59.70000" E	79.7337500	22.4165833
AUST4	79°56'34.20000"N	24°14'36.72000" E	79.9428333	24.2435333
KONG1	78°45'20.00000"N	$13^{\circ}20'$ 7.00000" E	78.7555810	13.3355170
KONG ₂	78°48′ 9.00000"N	12°57'35.00000" E	78.8025970	12.9599470
DEVON	75°20'17.28000"N	82°40'38.58000"W	75.3381333	-82.6773833
YLT1	82°33'48.00000"N	62°15'40.00000"W	82.5635300	-62.2611600
YLT2	82°33'45.00000"N	$62^{\circ}16'$ 4.00000"W	82.5627100	-62.2679300
YLT3	82°38'21.00000"N	62°17'30.00000"W	82.6394300	-62.2918000
YLT4	82°38'17.00000"N	$62^{\circ}17'31.00000''W$	82.6382300	-62.2920100

Table 12: Corner reflector positions.

Figure 20: Echo (no. 10736) from a corner reflector overflight (profile A060510_00).

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Figure 21: Stack (no. 10736) from a corner reflector overflight (profile A060510_00).

8 Geolocating Downward Looking Camera

The images, from the downward looking camera, were timestamped by an internal clock (adjusted to GPS time) in the camera and can, after data processing, roughly be geolocated using the laser scanner data. For an example see Figure [23.](#page-39-0) Table [13](#page-38-0) shows the offset caused by drift in the cameras clock. Flights with downward looking images are listed in Table [3.](#page-16-0) Since the pictures are geolocated using the laser scanner data there are some days where existing pictures are not gelocated due to the lack of laser scanner data. Pictures from the downward looking camera is primarily used as an aid when differentiating between ice types. However the pictures are also helpful when investigating strange or unexpected features on the ice.

Figure 22: Uncorrected photo from the downward looking camera, with timestamp in the upper left corner.

Date - JD	Time Offset [sec]
115 – April $25th$	10
$116 - April 26th$	0
$119 - April 29th$	-10
$120 - April 30th$	6
$121 - \text{May } 1^{\text{st}}$	8
$122 - May$ $\overline{2^{nd}}$	1
$123 - May 3ed$	$\overline{2}$
$125 - May \overline{5^{th}}$	10
$128 - May 8th$	10
$129 - May 9th$	13
$130 - May 10th$	14
$131 - May\ 11^{th}$	18
$132 - May 12^{\text{th}}$	20
$136 - May \overline{16^{th}}$? (no proc. laser)
$137 - May 17th$	28

Table 13: Time correction for the downward looking camera.

Figure [23](#page-39-0) shows photos from the downward looking camera together with a laser scanner profile of some sea ice north of Greenland. The photos in the figure have been more precisely geolocated, stitched and color corrected manually.

Figure 23: Laser scanner profile below; geolocated photos from the downward looking camera above.

9 Validation Sites

A main purpose of the CryoVEx 2006 campaign were to collect radar and laser data over several validation sites, see Figure [24.](#page-40-0) The sites represents the different snow and ice types one can expect to find in the Arctic. At least one radar corner reflector were installed at each sites, and in-situ measurements relevant for that particular site were performed.

In the following subsections are brief descriptions and some examples of ASIRAS and laser scanner data from each site. No corrections have been applied to the L1b ASIRAS data. These sections are meant as a quick overview of the sites and will not go into the in-situ measurements or a deeper description of the site.

Figure 24: Validation sites overflown during CryoVEx 2006.

Since the Alert sea ice sites include several overflights of the same four corner reflectors, this site is described in greater details than the other sites. With the many overflights of each corner reflector it is possible to make an independent test of the datation issue of ASIRAS, see section [7.2.1.](#page-31-0)

In some of the figures of the L1b data the OCOG retracker have been included as an illustration of the product. It should be obvious, when seeing these figures, that the OCOG retracker is unsuitable as a description of the surface elevation.

The following marks have been used in the figures:

Gray dot Position of processed L1b echoes.

Red triangle Marks the position where the corner reflector is observed in the L1b product.

- **Black star** Marks the position of the corner reflector obtained by the ground teams using a hand held GPS.
- **Red star** Marks the estimated position of the corner reflector using multiple observations of the same corner reflector.

9.1 EGIG Line, T05

The T05 site is placed around 1940 meters ellipsoidal height on the EGIG line that crosses the icecap of Greenland from East to West. Figure [26a](#page-42-0) shows several radar echoes in columns next to each other, each row corresponds to a range bin that is color coded according to the normalized power of that particular echo. The Figure is overlayed with the OCOG retracker (white line). It is clear that this retracker does not track the surface, but a strong reflector at some depth. In Figure [26b](#page-42-1) the first echoes without corner reflector traces before and after the corner reflector are showed together with the echo closest to the corner reflector.

Figure [25](#page-41-0) shows a elevation model based on laser scanner data. The model has been overlayed with positions of radar echoes (gray dots), the corner reflector (black star) and the echo closest to the reflector (red triangle).

Figure 25: Laser scanner data from the 25*th* of April plotted with positions of ASIRAS echoes (gray dot and red triangle) and position of the corner reflector (black star).

Time [hr]

(a) Normalized return power plotted in color as function of time and ellipsoidal height.

(b) Normalized return power plotted as function of ellipsoidal height for waveforms before, over, and after the corner reflector pass.

Figure 26: ASIRAS data from the T05 site on the 26*th* of April.

9.2 EGIG Line, T12

Further up on the greenlandic icecap at approximate 2350 meters ellipsoidal height is the T12 site. When inspecting the radar echoes plotted in Figure [27a](#page-43-0) two features, near the center of the plot, show up as possible corner reflector responses. After inspection of the ASIRAS profile before focusing it is clear that the left floating area is the true corner reflector response. A correspondence with the ground team revealed that the reflecting object after the corner reflector were an aluminum Zarges box. At the T12 site it is possible to detect deepere layers compared to the T05 site and the layers are more easy to follow through the profile.

Time [hr]

(b) Normalized return power plotted as function of ellipsoidal height for waveforms before, over, and after the corner reflector pass.

Figure 27: ASIRAS data from the T12 site on the 25*th* of April.

Figure 28: Laser scanner data plotted with positions of ASIRAS echoes (gray dot and red triangle) and position of the corner reflector (black star) from the 25*th* of April

In Figure [28](#page-44-0) two high objects (red/orange dots, one above the black star and one to the left partly covered by the red triangle) are seen near the assumed corner reflector position (black star). Since the point partly covered by the red triangle is very close to the corner reflector position found in Figure [27,](#page-43-1) it is possible that this point is the true corner reflector position that has been captured by the laser scanner. However since the laser captures two high objects near the observed corner reflector position (red triangle) it is not possible to make a final conclusion about the true corner reflector position. Another possibility is that the high objects seen by the laser scanner are part of the T12 sites equipment or camp items.

9.3 Austfonna Icecap

During the CryoVEx 2006 campaign four corner reflectors were placed on the Austfonna icecap, see Figure [30.](#page-45-0) The flight lines cover a series of ground validation tracks along which various snow and ice properties have been measured over a longer period of time.

In the L1b dataset a clear surface return is seen, together with another clear reflector approximate three meters down (See Figure [31a\)](#page-46-0). Between the two strongly reflecting layers it is possible to detect three layers with a weaker reflection.

Figure 29: The AUST1 corner reflector position (black star) and ellipsoidal heights as measured with the laser scanner.

Figure 30: The four corner reflectors (black stars) on Austfonna and ellipsoidal heights as measured with the laser scanner.

Time [hr]

(a) Normalized return power plotted in color as function of time and ellipsoidal height, at the AUST1 corner reflector.

(b) Normalized return power plotted as function of ellipsoidal height for waveforms before, over, and after the corner reflector pass.

Figure 31: ASIRAS data recorded at Austfonna on the 1*st* of May.

9.4 Kongsvegen

Unfortunately the weather conditions were very bad at the Kongsvegen site with strong winds and low scattered clouds. These conditions made it difficult to perform a steady and near passage of the corner reflector site and clouds did block the view of the laser scanner, see the white areas in Figure [33.](#page-48-0) Despite the turbulens it is possible to detect two clear reflecting layers (see Figure [32a\)](#page-47-0) in the first profile from the upper part of Kongsvegen, but the profile from the lower part is very noisy. Note also the scale on the normalized return power which indicates that other returns is stronger than the surface return.

(a) Normalized return power plotted in color as function of time and ellipsoidal height, near the KONG1 corner reflector position.

Height [m]

(b) Normalized return power plotted as function of ellipsoidal height for three waveforms around the corner reflector position.

Figure 32: ASIRAS data collected at Kongsvegen on the 2*nd* of May.

Figure 33: The corner reflector position (black star) on Kongsvegen and ellipsoidal heights as measured with the laser scanner.

9.5 Devon Icecap

The Devon Icecap corner reflector site were overflown three times, unfortunately it was not possible to detect the reflector in any of the passes. The north-south line had to be terminated after a while due to heavy downdraft on glacier and the full validation line is therefore not in the airborne dataset.

Both the ASIRAS and the laser figures shows similar features as the T05 site, with a strong reflector roughly one meter below the surface and weaker reflector above and below (see Figure [35a](#page-49-0) and [35b\)](#page-49-1).

Figure 34: The corner reflector position (black star) on Devon and ellipsoidal heights as measured with the laser scanner.

Time [hr]

(a) Normalized return power plotted in color as function of time and ellipsoidal height, on the northsouth flight near the DEVON corner reflector position.

(b) Normalized return power plotted as function of ellipsoidal height for three waveforms around the corner reflector position.

Figure 35: ASIRAS data collected at Devon Icecap on the 5*th* of May.

9.6 Sea Ice North of Alert

The sea ice sites north of Alert was located on the fast ice along the coast and consisted of one validation line on first year ice and one on multi year ice, with two corner reflectors each. At both sites the corner reflectors were placed approximate 120 meters apart. Several measurements of snow depth, ice thickness and density have been performed along the two validation lines.

9.6.1 Multi year sea ice

The multi year ice site was placed approximately 5 km from Alert on a 200 m by 200 m patch with level ice surrounded by large ridges and heavy rubble. The snow surface at and between the two corner reflectors were relatively smooth. Figure [37](#page-51-0) shows that the variation of the surface is below 50 cm between the two reflectors, but reaches more than 1 m outside the patch.

Figure [36a](#page-50-0) show the ASIRAS echoes from the site and it is clear that the area between two corner reflectors is much smoother than outside. The echoes in Figure [36b](#page-50-1) show a range of reflections from the complex structure of the multi year ice.

Time [hr]

(a) Normalized return power plotted in color as function of time and ellipsoidal height at the YLT1 and YLT2 positions.

(b) Normalized return power plotted as function of ellipsoidal height for waveforms before, over, and after the YLT1 corner reflector pass.

Figure 36: Multi year ice north of Alert.

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Figure 37: The YLT1 and YLT2 corner reflector positions (black stars) and ellipsoidal heights as measured with the laser scanner.

Figure 38: YLT3 and YLT4. The red dot (left of the upper black star) is believed to be the corner reflector captured by the laser scanner.

9.6.2 First year sea ice

The first year ice site was 200 m by 200 m and formed in a shear zone between multi year ice floes and therefore surrounded with large ridges and heavy rubble. The snow surface was very smooth with height variations around 20 cm, see Figure [39b.](#page-52-0) Figure [39a](#page-52-1) and [39b](#page-52-0) show simple echoes from one large and well defined reflection, corresponding to the snow/ice interface.

Time [hr]

(a) Normalized return power plotted in color as function of time and ellipsoidal height at the YLT3 and YLT4 positions.

Height [m]

(b) Normalized return power plotted as function of ellipsoidal height for waveforms before, over, and after the YLT3 corner reflector pass.

Figure 39: First year ice north of Alert.

9.6.3 Comparing multiple corner reflector overflights

The repeated passes over the corner reflectors on the sea ice site makes it is possible to investigate the datation issue using only ASIRAS data. Figure [40,](#page-53-0) [41,](#page-54-0) [42,](#page-54-1) and [43](#page-55-0) illustrates the several passes over the four corner reflectors YLT1, YLT2, YLT3, and YLT4. In the figures the flightpath is indicated by a colored line and each ASIRAS L1b echo is marked with a bullet. The echo in which the point of closed approach has been identified is marked with a triangle and the footprint of this echo is indicated with a colored rectangle.

If there exists a datation error in one of the corner reflector passes it would be impossible to find a position where all footprints overlap and thus the true position of the corner reflector. In Figure [40,](#page-53-0) [41,](#page-54-0) and [43](#page-55-0) there exists a small and well defined area where all footprints overlap (marked with a red star). Figure [42](#page-54-1) consists only of parallel flights and the overlap is therefor not a well defined area but instead a wide and short strip, the true position of the YLT3 corner reflector is therefor estimated from the laser scanner data which has captured the corner reflector, see Figure [38.](#page-51-1) The corner reflector position obtained from the laser scanner data lies within all footprints and is thus accepted as the true position.

All four figures also shows the positions of the corner reflectors as obtained by the ground team using hand held GPS receivers (black star). The distance between the positions reported by the ground team and the positions estimated from the airborne dataset is all within 7 m which is within the 10 m accuracy of real time GPS.

This analysis shows that there is very little or no datation error in the ASIRAS data collected at the four corner reflectors north of Alert. It can however only be concluded that the datation error is absent in these cases, and further tests must be conducted before a final conclusion can be drawn.

Figure 40: Five overflights of YLT1. Corner reflector position from hand held GPS (black star). Estimated true corner reflector position (red star).

Figure 41: Four overflights of YLT2. Corner reflector position from hand held GPS (black star). Estimated true corner reflector position (red star).

Figure 42: Five overflights of YLT3. Corner reflector position from hand held GPS (black star). Estimated true corner reflector position (red star).

Figure 43: Five overflights of YLT4. Corner reflector position from hand held GPS (black star). Estimated true corner reflector position (red star).

10 Conclusions

The airborne part of the CryoVEx 2006 campaign has successfully been carried out by DNSC and the gathered data sets are now stored and secured at DNSC and AWI. A total of 127 hr were flown with the Air Greenland Twin-Otter where laser scanner data were acquired most of the time. ASIRAS radar data were gathered on the main campaign sites and on parts of the survey lines. About 25 hr were spend on flights over the main sites, 20 hr on positioning of the British ground teams on the ice sheet, 25 hr on different other project, and the rest on transit flights and repeated coverage of sea ice and land ice lines previously flown by DNSC.

Preliminary analysis of the data sets showed good results, which were presented to the involved parties at the June 15th-16th, 2006 CryoSat CVRT meeting at ESA-ESTEC. Since then an intensive collaboration between ESA, AWI and DNSC have ensured a solid processing of data where many minor and major problems have been identified and solved.

The data collected during CryoVEx 2006 will be important for understanding CryoSat-2 radar signals, and the processed data presents many opportunities for additional scientific investigations, such as e.g. the direct mapping of snow thickness by combination of laser and radar, detailed understanding on snow and firn penetration of CryoSat-2 signals etc. A number of overflights of corner reflectors both on sea ice and inland ice will aid this research, as well as serving the calibration of ASIRAS.

A number of independent in-situ data on ice thickness and snow depth were collected during CryoVEx 2006 on two large ice floes north of Alert; additional scientific activities included flights with the AWI EM-system, which provides an independent estimate of sea ice thickness. The comparison to the in-situ or EM data is outside the scope of this report, and will be presented in other scientific papers.

Please note: An investigation of the of the platform motion impact on ASIRAS have given new knownledge about the datation issue. Refer to the ESTEC Working Paper 2320: "ASIRAS Calibration and Validation, Simulation of Platform Motion Impact on DGPS Position and SARIn Phase Difference" by Marco Fornari.

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Cullen, R. (2006). *ASIRAS, Product Description, Issue: 2.4*. European Space Agency.

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A File Formats

The format description for the core products is taken from the "ASIRAS, Product Description, Issue: 2.4" by [Cullen](#page-57-0) [\(2006\)](#page-57-0) and the users should refer to this document for in depth information. The definition of the types used in the binary files can be found in Table [14.](#page-58-0)

Table 14: Definition of binary types used in the describtion of the file formats.

A.1 ASIRAS L1b

Processed L1b ASIRAS data is delivered in binary, big endian format as described by [Cullen](#page-57-0) [\(2006\)](#page-57-0) and Tables [15,](#page-58-1) [17,](#page-67-0) and [18.](#page-69-0)

The L1b product consists of two elements.

- 1. An ASCII header consisting of a main product header (MPH), a specific product header (SPH), and the data set descriptors (DSDs).
- 2. A binary, big endian measurement data set (MDS).

Continued on next page

Table 15: ASIRAS main product header (MPH) format.

Continued on next page

Table 16: ASIRAS specific product header (SPH) format.

Continued on next page

Table 17: ASIRAS data set descriptors (DSD) format.

The MDS can be further divided into five parts as described below.

- 1. Time and Orbit Group (20 blocks per record).
- 2. Measurements Group (20 blocks per record).
- 3. Corrections Group (one block per record) (Zeroed for ASIRAS).
- 4. Average Waveforms Group (one block per record) (Zeroed for ASIRAS).
- 5. Waveform Group (20 blocks per record).

Continued on next page

Table 18: ASIRAS measurement data set (MDS) format.

A.2 GPS

Processed DGPS data is delivered in binary, big endian format with each record formated as described by [Cullen](#page-57-0) [\(2006\)](#page-57-0) and Table [19.](#page-70-0)

Table 19: GPS file format.

A.3 INS

Processed INS data is delivered in binary, big endian format with each record formated as described by [Cullen](#page-57-0) [\(2006\)](#page-57-0) and Table [20.](#page-71-0)

Table 20: INS file format.

A.4 Laser Scanner

Processed lidar data is delivered in binary, little endian format with each record formated as described in Table [21.](#page-72-0) Note that the time is decimal hours since the beginning of the day with respect to UTC time.

A.5 Vertical Camera

Approximate time and position of the vertical camera when a picture is taken is delivered in windows ASCII format as described in Table [22](#page-72-1) and all individual pictures are in JPEG format. Each ASCII line gives the filename, time, and position for the named picture. If no DGPS data is available the time and position is replaced with the string "No position available".

Table 21: Laser scanner file format.

Table 22: Vertical camera file format.

B Airborne Log with GPS Track Plot

JD 110 – 2006 April 20th **GPS week 1371 (day 4)**

JD 111 – 2006 April 21st **GPS week 1371 (day 5)**

JD 114 – 2006, April 24th **GPS week 1372 (day 1)**

JD 115 – 2006, April 25th **GPS week 1372 (day 2)**

JD 116 – 2006, April 26th **GPS week 1372 (day 3)**

JD 119 – 2006, April 29th **GPS week 1372 (day 6)**

JD 120 – 2006, April 30th **GPS week 1373 (day 0)**

- $10:10$ $2 \cdot 10$ min HAM radar data at 2800 m some wind at surface, waves, see photo before climb
- $11:58$ landing

JD 121 – 2006 May 1st **GPS week 1373 (day 1)**

JD 122 – 2006, May 2nd **GPS week 1373 (day 2)**

JD 123 – 2006, May 3rd **GPS week 1373 (day 3)**

JD 125 – 2006, May 5th **GPS week 1373 (day 5)**

JD 128 – 2006, May 8th **GPS week 1374 (day 1)**

JD 129 – 2006, May 9th **GPS week 1374 (day 2)**

JD 130 – 2006, May 10th **GPS week 1374 (day 3)**

JD 131 – 2006, May 11th **GPS week 1374 (day 4)**

JD 132 – 2006, May 12th **GPS week 1374 (day 5)**

Buoy waypoints

JD 136 – 2006, May 16th **GPS week 1375 (day 2)**

JD 137 – 2006, May 17th **GPS week 1375 (day 3)**

C Processed GPS data

²JPL orbits, 10 degree cutoff angle

 3 Trip2 løsning (rms, weighted and unweighted)
 4 JPL orbits, 15 degrees, offset to air3/trip in start and end
 5 IGS orbits, 10 deg
 6 JPL orbits, 10 degree cutoff angle
 7 IGS orbits, 10 deg, correct via resi

⁹IGS orbits, 15 deg, correct via residuals

Table 23: GPS data processing.

¹⁰Solution by CRRS

D Processed Laser Scanner Data

Continued on next page

Table 24: Processed Laser Scanner Files.

E Airborne Log of the ASIRAS Operations

JD 111 – 2006 April 21st

GPS week 1371 (day 5)

PC1+PC2 on, ASIRAS on, CPC on

- 12:08 record on (0), open water
- 12:09 thin ice
- 12:10 open water
- 12:13 thin ice, floes
- 12:16 record off, descend due to snow
- 12:17 record on (1)
- 12:21 open water
- 12:23 record off Harald takes over ASIRAS Lars takes over DNSC system
- 13:40 Lars returns to ASIRAS
- 13:43 record on, sea ice with snow and some leads
- 13:51 record off
- 14:00 record on, some large leads
- 14:07 record off
- 14:15 record on, thick sea ice with snow
- 14:17 ice thickness decreases, bigger leads
- 14:22 record off
- 14:34 record on, open water scattered sea ice
- 12:40 record off
- 12:40 PC1+PC2 off, ASIRAS off, CPC off

JD 113 – 2006, April 23rd **GPS week 1372 (day 0)**

21:54 take off

JD 114 – 2006, April 24th **GPS week 1372 (day 1)**

JD 115 – 2006, April 25th **GPS week 1372 (day 2)**

JD 116 – 2006, April 26th **GPS week 1372 (day 3)**

JD 119 – 2006, April 29th **GPS week 1372 (day 6)**

JD 120 – 2006, April 30th **GPS week 1373 (day 0)**

- 10:24 record off
- 10:24 record on (04), EInSAR mode
- 10:35 record off
- 10:35 IRF calibration
- 11:17 PC1+PC2 off, ASIRAS off, CPC off
- 11:58 on ground

JD 121 – 2006 May 1st **GPS week 1373 (day 1)**

JD 122 – 2006, May 2nd **GPS week 1373 (day 2)**

JD 123 – 2006, May 3rd **GPS week 1373 (day 3)**

- 10:47 Take off (NRD) Minus altimeter PC1
- 12:01 Record on 240 m 20 MHz
12:06 Record off due to error on
- Record off due to error on "DATA PC REC" Record on
- 12:07 Record off due to error on "DATA PC REC" Record on
- 12:08 Record off due to error on "DATA PC REC" Switch to PC2
- 12:09 Record on
- 12:30 Record off (25%) Record on
- 12:55 Record off End of Line (55%)
- 16:06 On ground (TAB)

JD 125 – 2006, May 5th **GPS week 1373 (day 5)**

- 15:46 IRF calibration
- 15:55 PC1+PC2 off, ASIRAS off, CPC off
- 17:28 on ground

JD 128 – 2006, May 8th **GPS week 1374 (day 1)**

JD 129 – 2006, May 9th **GPS week 1374 (day 2)**

20:51 On Ground

JD 130 – 2006, May 10th **GPS week 1374 (day 3)**

JD 131 – 2006, May 11th **GPS week 1374 (day 4)**

JD 132 – 2006, May 12th **GPS week 1374 (day 5)**

- 18:05 Record off (80%)
18:09 E2
-
- 18:20 Record on _09
- 18:28 Record off (PC2 100%)
- 18:29 IRF calibration
- 18:32 System shut down Change HDD PC1
-
- 18:47 Record on _10
19:09 Record off (25^o) Record off (25%) Record on _11
- 19:11 E3
-
- 19:18 Record off (36%)
19:21 IRF calibration
- 19:21 IRF calibration
19:27 System shut do 19:27 System shut down
19:29 On ground
- \overline{O} n ground

JD 136 – 2006, May 16th **GPS week 1375 (day 2)**

JD 137 – 2006, May 17th **GPS week 1375 (day 3)**

13:17 Record on _08, Fjord (720m, 60MHz) Record off

- 17:58 Overflight building
- 17:59 IRF calibration
18:01 On ground SFJ
- On ground SFJ

F Processed ASIRAS files

Continued on next page

Continued on next page

 11 No processor available

Continued on next page

Table 25: ASIRAS processing.

G Processed ASIRAS Profiles

Following is plots showing all processed ASIRAS profiles. Each profile plot consists of four parts.

- 1. Header composed of daily profile number and the date and subheader with the filename.
- 2. Geographical plot showing the profile (diamond indicates start of profile).
- 3. Rough indication of height as determined by the OCOG retracker plotted versus time of day in seconds.
- 4. Info box with date, start and stop times in hour, minute, second and in square brackets second of day, acquisition mode, etc.

It should be emphasized that the surface height determined by the OCOG retracker is a rough estimation and not the true height.

Danish National Space Center

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 $1 H₂$

 3.06

 $GPSR$

Processor Version

A08_20060501

Danish National Space Center

Dis nce
...

<u>ıration</u>

 $13.312 km$

 $00 h 03 m 31 s$

A09_20060502

GPS R

Processor Version

 $1 H₂$

 3.06

Distance

Duration

26,550 km

 $00 h 06 m 24 s$

Proce

ation
C

Pro

Duration

 $00 h 01 m 30 s$

 3.06

Processor Version

Danish National Space Center

<u>ıration</u>

Ţ Elevation $\frac{1}{2}$ $rac{1}{6200}$ 63000
Time [UTC] -63400 5000 $2006 - 05 - 11$ Low Altitude .
Dati 17:20:26 (624 **DNSC Twin Otter** $_{\rm ocos}$ 17:39:42 (63582) $\ddot{}$ Disto 76,104 km GPS F $1 H₂$ nc.

e_{ro}

 3.06

 $00 h 19 m 16 s$

.
Duration

64000 64500 Time [UTC]

65000

148 APPENDIX G. PROCESSED ASIRAS PROFILES

Technical Report Series

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