VDFS-WSA Quarterly Report: 2006 Quarter 4 (October - December) : Narrative

1. General

NJC and RSC attended and presented posters at the ADASS meeting in Tucson (October 15-18) and RSC has produced a report of highlights and other bits for the rest of us on the Twiki.

NCH, RSC and PMW attended the VDFS FDR in Cambridge on October 24-25 and responded to the queries and comments raised by the Panel. The Panel were strongly supportive of continued funding of the VDFS development work beyond the present grant end date (30/9/07) and this was included in their favourable report delivered in November.
NCH participated in the UKIDSS consortium meeting on October 13. A draft schedule for UKIDSS DR2 has been drawn up. The photometric recalibration has taken very much longer than the tests of the task had suggested and this will delay DR2.

NCH and RSC observed for UKIDSS on UKIRT in December

2. Hardware and Networking

After studying various options for the next pixel data storage brick built around 750 GB SATA disks, including another server+disks, NAS, iSCSI attached storage and SAS, with a view to minimising maintenance costs as well as maximising disk space economically, we purchased and installed a 18-TB NAS brick.

We have been concerned at the slow-down of data transfer from CASU in the last few weeks, down to 2 MB/s. There appears to be plenty of spare network capacity at the WFAU end: for some of the time, we were downloading SDSS-DR5 (at 5.3 MB/s) but the CASU-WFAU speed was the same before, during and after the DR5 download. We continue pressure on EUCS for our UKlight connection.

3. Software

The CU1-4 transfer/input tasks are being optimised for scaling to VISTA data rates and to improve turnaround for flat-file access of pipeline-processed products. This included parallelization of CU3 and CU4 (CU2 has already been parallelized). Functions for generating IAU-style source names for UKIDSS sources have been added. Tools for archiving synoptic surveys have been designed and work on quality bit flagging done. Progress is summarised on the chart and blow-by-blow progress reported in the minutes circulated.

4. Tables

Progress and project status are summarized in the usual Quarterly Summary and EVA tables circulated with this report, together with a table of our plans for Q1 of 2007.

PMW (2007 Jan 18)