



Interface Control Document

Client to Detector Controller Server

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DOCUMENT APPROVAL

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

COO has developed generic detector controller software suitable for operating both STA/Archon and Astronomical Research Camera (a.k.a. "Leach") detector controllers. Regardless of the type of detector (e.g. CCD, IR) a detector controller must perform the same set of functions. These include configuring the controller hardware (load waveforms, set biases, etc.), setting up for an exposure (set geometry, exposure time, etc.), initiating an exposure, reading pixels and saving them in a FITS file. The detector controller software is a server which provides this functionality to a client.

A variety of clients may connect to the server via standard sockets, send ASCII character based commands to access all possible detector functions, and receive back ASCII character replies.

This document describes the interface between a client and the detector controller server so that any client can utilize it in any environment, whether that be in a lab/test/engineering setting or as part of a suite of other software modules of a deployed instrument in a larger observatory environment.

The intended audience for this document includes the following:

- detector engineers who wish to interface to a detector controller directly
- programmers who are integrating a detector controller into an instrument

1.2 SCOPE

The broken black line in Figure 1 illustrates the interface that this document describes, which is the client interface to the detector controller server (blue box in the figure).

The grey box at left is any detector controller, e.g. Archon or ARC. The interface between the detector controller server and the detector controller hardware is indicated by the green arrows, the details of which are beyond the scope of this document.

Possible clients are shown by the grey boxes to the right of the interface line. Details of clients suitable for communicating with the detector controller server is beyond the scope of this document, although suggestions and example clients will be given in Section 3.4.

Pixel data written by the detector controller server are shown crossing to the right of the interface because data can be written to any (shared) disk; no special interface is required to access the data, which are stored in standard FITS file format.

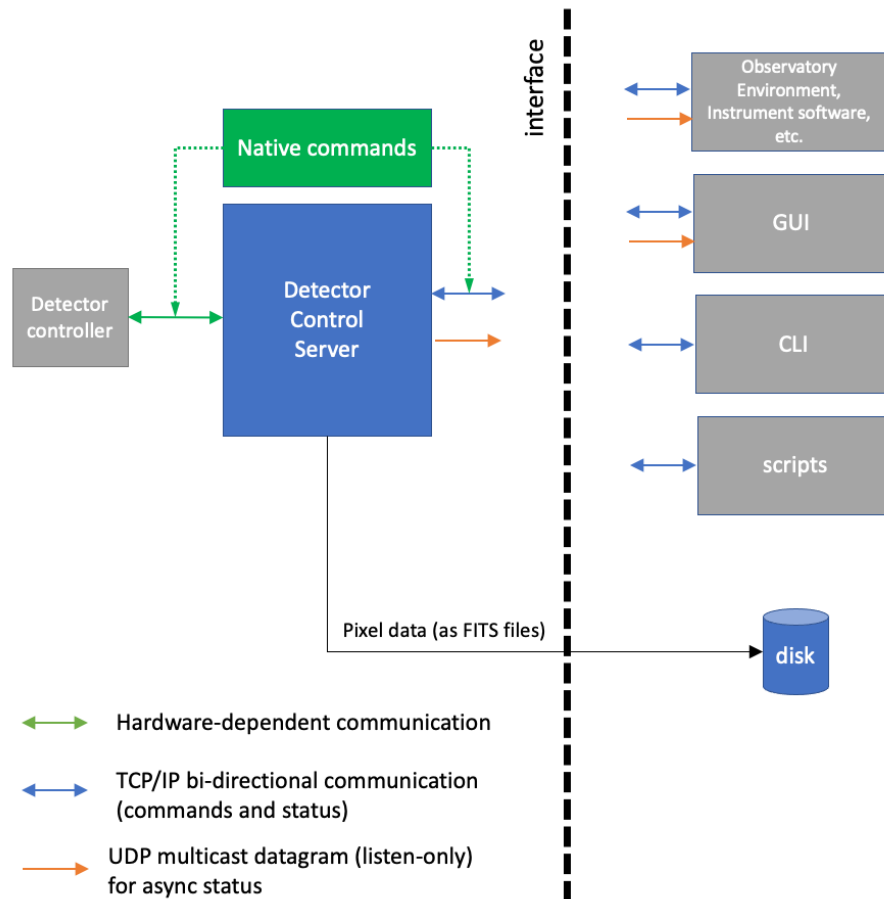


Figure 1. Detector Controller Server Interfaces

1.3 DOCUMENT OUTLINE

Section 1 is this introduction.

Section 2 contains worked examples for using the detector controller server.

The remainder of the document is reference material.

Section 3 describes the interface specifications including protocol, configuration and possible clients.

Section 4 describes the command syntax accepted by the interface.

Section 5 describes the FITS header handling by the server.

Section 7 identifies some commonly used native commands which are passed from the user through the interface directly to the controller, without interaction on the part of the detector controller server software.

Section 8 describes an optional detector controller emulator which can be used for software testing purposes, when a live detector controller is not available.



1.4 CHANGE RECORD

Revision	Date	Section	Modifications
REL01(DRF01)	XXXXXX	All	XXXXXX

1.5 ABBREVIATIONS, DEFINITIONS AND NOMENCLATURE

ACF	Archon Configuration File
API	Application Programming Interface
ARC	Astronomical Research Cameras, Inc. (a.k.a. "Leach")
BOI	Band of Interest
CIT	California Institute of Technology
CLI	Command Line Interface
COO	Caltech Optical Observatories
DMA	Direct Memory Access
DRP	Data Reduction Pipeline
FITS	Flexible Image Transport System
GUI	Graphical User Interface
ICD	Interface Control Document
ICS	Instrument Control Software
IP	Internet Protocol
OIR	(COO) Optical / Infrared Service Center
PCI/e	Peripheral Component Interconnect/express
ROI	Region of Interest
SNR	Signal to Noise Ratio
STA	Semiconductor Technology Associates, Inc.
TCP	Transmission Control Protocol
TCS	Telescope Control System
UDP	User Datagram Protocol
UTC	Universal Coordinated Time

2. WORKED EXAMPLES

2.1 COMPILATION

Edit the file CMakeLists.txt. The first few lines contain user definitions, as shown below.



```
# -----  
# BEGIN USER DEFINITIONS  
# -----  
# user must define the interface type here  
# valid types are: "AstroCam" | "Archon"  
  
set(INTERFACE_TYPE "Archon")  
  
# If your software is not installed in the indicated directory then change this:  
set(PROJECT_BASE_DIR $ENV{HOME}/Software/camera-interface)  
  
# This prints a large number of debugging messages and may be eliminated in future releases:  
#add_definitions(-DLOGLEVEL_DEBUG)
```

Set (or un-comment) the desired interface type using the syntax:

```
set(INTERFACE_TYPE "<TYPE>").
```

Allowable interface types are (as indicated in the file), *AstroCam* or *Archon*. As shown in the above example, this user has set the interface type to *Archon*.

Next, indicate where your software has been installed, using the syntax:

```
set(PROJECT_BASE_DIR $ENV{HOME}/Software/camera-interface)
```

Above, this user has installed the software in the *Software/camera-interface/* sub-directory in their home directory.

Do not run *cmake* or *make* from the same directory as the *CMakeLists.txt* file. Change to the build directory and run *cmake* and then *make* from there, as follows (keystrokes entered by the user are shown in **blue**):

```
[developer@localhost ~]$ cd Software/camera-interface/build  
[developer@localhost build]$ cmake ..  
[developer@localhost build]$ make
```

The executable binary programs are located in *~/Software/camera-interface/bin* and for the remaining examples in this document it will be assumed that they are in the user's path.

2.2 CONFIGURATION

Example configuration files are shown in Figure 2 where an *Archon*-suitable configuration file is shown at left and one for *AstroCam* is shown at right. The *astrocam.cfg* example shown at right illustrates how to define *DEFAULT_FIRMWARE* as an array for multiple controllers. In this example the system supports four PCI cards.



```
# Example archon.cfg
#
ARCHON_IP=192.168.1.2
ARCHON_PORT=4242
DEFAULT_FIRMWARE=/home/acf/archon.acf
EXPOSE_PARAM=Expose
IMDIR=/data
BASENAME=image
NBPORT=3030      # non-blocking port
BLKPORT=3031     # blocking port
ASYNCPORT=1234   # asynchronous message port
ASYNCGROUP=239.1.1.234
LOGPATH=/home/logs

# Example astrocac.cfg supports 4 controllers
#
DEFAULT_FIRMWARE=(0 /home/dsp/E2V4240/tim.lod)
DEFAULT_FIRMWARE=(1 /home/dsp/E2V4240/tim.lod)
DEFAULT_FIRMWARE=(2 /home/dsp/E2V4240/tim.lod)
DEFAULT_FIRMWARE=(3 /home/dsp/E2V4240/tim.lod)
IMDIR=/Data/E2V4240
BASENAME=image
NBPORT=4000      # non-blocking port
BLKPORT=4001     # blocking port
ASYNCPORT=2345   # asynchronous message port
ASYNCGROUP=239.1.1.234
LOGPATH=/home/E2V4240/logs
```

Figure 2. Example server configuration files

2.3 RUNNING THE SERVER

It is assumed that the detector controller server has been compiled, that the executable is named "camerad" and that it is in the user's path, and that it is run in the foreground of its own terminal. Keystrokes entered by the user are shown in **blue**:

```
[developer@localhost ~]$ camerad /home/user/camera.cfg
2021-07-09T23:28:29.965163 (Camera::main) this version built Jul  9 2021 16:07:03
2021-07-09T23:28:29.965187 (Camera::main) 13 lines read from /home/user/camera.cfg
2021-07-09T23:28:29.965196 (Camera::Server::configure_server) applied 4 configuration
lines to server
2021-07-09T23:28:29.965283 (Archon::Interface::configure_controller)
applied 7 configuration lines to controller
```

2.4 THE SIMPLEST COMMAND-LINE EXPOSURE

The most simple example is taking a single exposure and saving it to a FITS file. It is assumed that the user is typing in a terminal on the host which is running the detector controller server and that the server is running in another terminal or as a daemon.

The keystrokes entered by the user are shown in **blue**:

```
[developer@localhost ~]$ telnet localhost 3031
Trying 127.0.0.1...
Connected to localhost.
Escape character is '^]'.
open
DONE
load
DONE
expose
DONE
```



3. INTERFACE SPECIFICATIONS

3.1 PROTOCOL

The user interface to the detector controller server supports standard TCP/IP sockets. The interface uses simple mnemonic, English-looking ASCII-character commands and return values.

3.2 CONFIGURATION

User-configurable parameters are defined in a configuration file which is read upon start-up of the server. When the server is run as a daemon then the configuration file will also be read when the HUP signal is received. The configuration file is ASCII plain text formatted as:

```
KEY=VALUE # optional comment
```

Configuration keys also support arrays by specifying the configuration line as:

```
KEY=( IDX VALUE )
```

```
KEY=( IDX VALUE )
```

```
etc.
```

This will assign `VALUE` to index `IDX` in an array of keys of name `KEY`. Allowed keywords are shown in Table 1. Any text following the number sign "#" is ignored and may be used to include comments. Some of these keys can only be set in the configuration file and cannot be changed while the server is running, but others are simply defaults which can be readily changed or overridden by a command. Keys which can be changed or overridden via command are indicated in the 3rd column of Table 1 by the command which changes them.

Table 1. Server configuration keywords

KEY	Description	Command override?
ARCHON_IP	IP address for Archon controller communications (Archon-only)	no
ARCHON_PORT	Port number for Archon controller communications (Archon-only)	no
EXPOSE_PARAM	Archon parameter used to trigger an exposure (<i>param</i> =1 to trigger exposure) (Archon-only)	no
SHUTENABLE_PARAM	Archon parameter used to enable/disable shutter opening on exposure (see SHUTENABLE_ENABLE and SHUTENABLE_DISABLE) (Archon-only)	no
SHUTENABLE_ENABLE	(<i>optional</i>) Value to write parameter identified by SHUTENABLE_PARAM which enables shutter opening on exposure. Default value is 1 if omitted. (Archon-only)	no



SHUTENABLE_DISABLE	(optional) Value to write parameter identified by SHUTENABLE_PARAM which disables shutter opening on exposure. Default value is 0 if omitted.	(Archon-only)	no
HDR_SHIFT	Sets the number of bits to right-shift the Archon buffer when in HDR mode, <i>i.e.</i> SAMPLEMODE=1, 32 bits per pixel.	(Archon-only)	hdrshift §4.3.19
TRIGIN_EXPOSE_PARAM	Parameter name used to control normal, timed exposures triggered externally by TRIGIN. See <i>External Triggering</i> §8.1.	(Archon-only)	no
TRIGIN_EXPOSE_ENABLE	(optional) Value to write to parameter identified by TRIGIN_EXPOSE_PARAM to enable externally triggered timed exposures. Default value is 1 if omitted.	(Archon-only)	no
TRIGIN_EXPOSE_DISABLE	(optional) Value to write to parameter identified by TRIGIN_EXPOSE_PARAM to disable externally triggered timed exposures. Default value is 0 if omitted.	(Archon-only)	no
TRIGIN_UNTIMED_PARAM	Parameter name used to control start-of-exposure for untimed exposures triggered externally by TRIGIN. See <i>External Triggering</i> §8.1.	(Archon-only)	no
TRIGIN_UNTIMED_ENABLE	(optional) Value to write to parameter identified by TRIGIN_UNTIMED_PARAM to enable externally triggered untimed exposures. Default value is 1 if omitted.	(Archon-only)	no
TRIGIN_UNTIMED_DISABLE	(optional) Value to write to parameter identified by TRIGIN_UNTIMED_PARAM to disable externally triggered untimed exposures. Default value is 0 if omitted.	(Archon-only)	no
TRIGIN_READOUT_PARAM	Parameter name used to control end-of-exposure for untimed exposures triggered externally by TRIGIN. See <i>External Triggering</i> §8.1.	(Archon-only)	no
TRIGIN_READOUT_ENABLE	(optional) Value to write to parameter identified by TRIGIN_READOUT_PARAM to enable externally triggered readout. Default value is 1 if omitted.	(Archon-only)	no
TRIGIN_READOUT_DISABLE	(optional) Value to write to parameter identified by TRIGIN_READOUT_PARAM to disable externally triggered readout. Default value is 0 if omitted.	(Archon-only)	no
DEFAULT_FIRMWARE	default firmware to load when load command is issued with no arguments		load §4.3.27



READOUT_TIME	detector readout time in msec, used to inform system of a timeout if readout doesn't occur within this time plus 10%	no
IMDIR	default base image directory	imdir §4.3.21
AUTODIR	set = "yes" or "no" to automatically create a UTC subdirectory for images, i.e. <i>IMDIR/YYYYMMDD/filename.fits</i>	autodir §4.3.3
BASENAME	default base image name for FITS files	basename §4.3.3
LOGPATH	fully qualified path to save log files	no
BLKPORT	blocking port number for the server	no
NBPORT	non-blocking port number for the server	no
ASYNCPORT	async message port number	no
ASYNCGROUP	asynchronous broadcast group	no
TM_ZONE	set to <code>local</code> to use local time instead of GMT. Defaults to GMT if this key is omitted	no
DAEMON	set to <code>yes</code> or <code>no</code> to run as a daemon or not. The command line <code>-d</code> option will override a "no" here.	no
LONGERROR	set <code>true</code> or <code>false</code> to enable or disable long error messages being returned on the command port	longerror §4.3.29
AMPS_AS_CUBE	for CCDs with multiple amplifiers, write each amplifier to a separate extension when = <code>true</code> . Default is <code>false</code> if undefined.	cubeamps §4.3.9

It is by convention only, and not a requirement that the server configuration file ends in `".cfg"`. There are no constraints on the configuration filename.

3.2.1 Time Zone

By default, the system will use Universal Coordinated Time (UTC) for all logging and time stamps. Adding the line `"TM_ZONE=local"` to the configuration file will cause the system to use local time, which may be useful for lab testing where the UTC date could change in the middle of the day. The system will automatically include a FITS header keyword to indicate the time zone.



3.3 PORTS

Communication ports are defined in a configuration file as described in Configuration, §3.2. The detector controller server uses three ports, a blocking port, a non-blocking port, and an asynchronous message port, defined by BLKPORT, NBPORT, and ASYNCPORT, respectively.

3.3.1 Blocking Port

When a client connects to the blocking port it will remain open as long as the client maintains its connection. This port can be used with Telnet (for example) to easily create a form of a command line interface. Only one command at a time can be received on this port. If the client tries to send a command before the previous command has completed, then it will be ignored. Completion of a command will be signaled by returning a response on that same port.

3.3.2 Non-Blocking Port

The non-blocking port will accept a single command and immediately close the connection. The server spawns a new thread for each non-blocking connection so multiple commands can be received on this port. Since each non-blocking connection is handled by a separate thread of executing, this means that non-blocking port commands are processed in their own thread, as simultaneously as the host CPU allows. Note that the order of processing of commands in these independent threads is not guaranteed so one must take care when sending commands to the non-blocking port. If the order of execution must be guaranteed then the blocking port should be used.

Since each non-blocking connection spawns a separate thread, in order to prevent multiple clients from wasting resources by opening connections to the non-blocking port and not sending a command, all non-blocking port connections will time-out and automatically close after a period of 3 seconds.

The server automatically guards against multiple simultaneous access to hardware which doesn't allow for it.

3.3.3 Asynchronous Message Port

The asynchronous message port is a connectionless UDP multicast port. The server will multi-cast datagrams to the broadcast group defined in the configuration file by ASYNCGROUP. Responses to commands sent on the non-blocking port, lengthy responses to all commands, and other instantaneous status messages (such as exposure time remaining, etc.) will be sent to the async port. Asynchronous status messages are preceded by a message tag to indicate the type or source of the message. These tags are listed in Section 5.

3.4 CLIENTS

Any client which follows the TCP/IP protocol is capable of communicating with the detector controller server. Example clients might include scripting languages (MATLAB, Python, etc.), shell scripts, or even telnet, as described below.

3.4.1 Scripting languages

All common / popular scripting languages such as MATLAB, Python, etc. possess a TCP/IP stack and are capable of communicating with the server. In these instances it would be up to the user to develop an appropriate script for sending commands to, and receiving responses from the detector controller server, in accordance with this document.



3.4.2 Shell (e.g. csh, bash, etc.)

As another example, COO/OIR often uses a simple C-language based program called `sendsockcmd`¹ which accepts command line arguments to send an ASCII string to a specified host:port and then closes the connection. Combining this program with a shell script can make a quick and easy command-line tool for sending commands to the server, which can in turn be listed in a bash script for performing frequently used sequences.

Consider for example, the shell script shown in Figure 3. If the shell script from Figure 3 were saved under the filename "cam" then one could simply type (in blue):

```
[developer@localhost ~]$ cam open
```

which would send the "open" command to the localhost on port 2158. Similarly, entire shell scripts could be built around "cam" to send commands to the detector controller server.

```
#!/bin/csh
setenv camport 2158
setenv camhost localhost
setenv camtimeout 20000
set command = "$argv[1]"
    shift argv
while ($#argv > 0)
    set command = "$command $argv[1]"
    shift argv
end
$HOME/bin/sendsockcmd -h $camhost -p $camport "$command" -t $camtimeout
```

Figure 3. Example shell script utilizes sendsockcmd to send ASCII strings to a TCP/IP socket.

3.4.3 telnet

An example client can be as simple as using the `telnet` command which uses the Telnet application protocol. This can be useful as a quick check, or as a way to provide a simple, "no-code" CLI for test and engineering purposes by using telnet to connect to the blocking port. An example telnet session might look like the following (where the user types the strings in blue):

```
[developer@localhost ~]$ telnet localhost 3031
Trying 127.0.0.1...
Connected to localhost.
Escape character is '^]'.
open
DONE
load
DONE
buffer 4200 4200
35280000 DONE
geometry 4200 4200
4200 4200 DONE
```

¹ `sendcmd.c`, a 146-line program written by Marco Bonati continues to live on today



```
exptime 2000
```

```
2000 DONE
```

```
expose
```

```
DONE
```

3.5 DAEMONIZE

The user may choose to run the detector controller server as a daemon². This might be done to ensure that the server runs independently of user activity such as logins, logouts, accidentally closing a terminal, etc. To run the server as a daemon, add "-d" to the command line when starting the application or set `DAEMON=yes` in the server's configuration file.

3.6 COMPILATION

The type of detector controller to be used must be selected prior to compiling the detector controller server application. This information is also supplied with the software in the `README.md` file which is included in the git archive.

3.6.1 Requirements

Cmake 3.5 or higher

cfitsio and CCFits libraries (expected in `/usr/local/lib`)

3.6.1.1 For ARC controllers

C++17

g++ 8.3

ARC API 3.6 and Arc66PCIe driver

3.6.1.2 For STA/Archon controllers

C++11

g++ 4.8 or higher

3.6.2 Build Instructions

To select the controller, edit the file `CMakeLists.txt` in the main camera-interface directory to uncomment one of the following two lines:

```
set(INTERFACE_TYPE "Archon")  
#set(INTERFACE_TYPE "AstroCam")
```

by removing the number sign (#) from the desired controller, and inserting a number sign in front of the undesired controller (in the example above, the server will be built for Archon support). Change to the build directory. To start with a clean build, delete the contents of the build directory, including the subdirectory `CMakeFiles/`, but not the `.gitignore` file. For example:

```
[developer@localhost camera-interface]$ cd build  
[developer@localhost build]$ rm -Rf *
```

² A daemon is a background process which is not connected to a parent terminal.



Create the Makefile by running `cmake` (from the build directory) as:

```
[developer@localhost build]$ cmake ..
```

then compile the program

```
[developer@localhost build]$ make
```

The program can then be run with:

```
[developer@localhost build]$ ../bin/camerad <file.cfg>
```

4. COMMANDS

4.1 COMMAND FORMAT

In general, commands which require a parameter and value set that parameter to that value. Stating the parameter only, without the value, initiates a query to return the current value, while inclusion of a value implies setting the named parameter to the specified value. Thus, with one exception the "set" and "get" operations are inherent and not sent as separate commands. For example, rather than sending commands like:

"set exptime 100" and "get exptime"

one would *instead* send only:

"exptime 100" and "exptime"

where the former sets the exposure time to 100 and the latter queries the current exposure time.

The exception to this design rule is the `getp` and `setp` commands (Sections 4.3.16 and 4.3.33) used to get and set Archon parameters, respectively. These commands are used to avoid possible confusion between server commands and what might be an allowable Archon parameter name.

Any command received that is not among the syntax in Section 4.3 is assumed to be a native controller command and passed directly to the controller. This allows a user to interact directly with the controller. Every effort has been made to avoid mirroring native and server commands, but in the event that is unavoidable then sending the command in upper case should indicate that it is to be a controller-native command. In general, commands are sent as lower case, even native controller commands.

4.2 RETURN VALUES

Return values are ASCII strings. In general, the response to commands is either `DONE` (on success) or `ERROR` (on error). If the command required or requested a value then on success that value is returned first, before the `DONE`. The command syntax described in Section 4.3 describes in detail what is returned for each command.



4.3 COMMAND SYNTAX

This section describes the syntax recognized by the server, listed in alphabetical order.

Where a command can be used for setting or getting a parameter, the parameter value is shown as an optional argument in [square brackets]. Required arguments are shown in <angled brackets>. Either-or arguments are separated by the "vertical bar" | symbol.

Commands sent to, and responses returned from the server are shown in *courier font*. Non-literals are shown in *italics*; e.g., "basename [*value*]" means **not the word "value"** but that a *value* should be supplied, while "autodir [*yes* | *no*]" means that the literal word "yes" or "no" should be supplied. Commands accepted by only one controller or the other are indicated appropriately as ARC or Archon.

4.3.1 **abort – abort an exposure in progress (ARC-only)**

usage: abort

returns: DONE on success

ERROR on error

Aborts an exposure currently in progress. This can abort any stage, the exposure delay, readout, etc. Currently only available on ARC (AstroCam).

4.3.2 **amplifier – set or get which detector amplifier(s) to use**

usage: amplifier [*ampsel*]

returns: *ampsel* DONE on success

ERROR on error

Set or get the amplifier(s) to use. When an argument <*ampsel*> is included then the amplifier selection will be <*ampsel*>. When no argument is supplied then the current amplifier selection will be returned.

4.3.3 **autodir – automatically create UTC subdirectory for images**

usage: autodir [*yes* | *no*]

returns: *yes* | *no* DONE on success

This command controls whether images will be saved into a UTC date subdirectory within the image directory *imdir* (§4.3.21). If yes then the subdirectory will automatically be created if it doesn't exist. The format of this directory is YYYYMMDD so that images would be saved under */imdir/YYYYMMDD/basename_suffix.fits*. A default state can also be set in the configuration file with the key AUTODIR=*yes* | *no* (see *Configuration* §3.2). If not specified and omitted from the configuration file then the default state is "yes".

When no argument is supplied then the current state is returned.

See also the *imdir* (§4.3.21), *basename* (§4.3.4), and *fitsnaming* (§4.3.15) commands.

4.3.4 **basename – base image name for FITS image files**

usage: basename [*value*]

returns: *value* DONE on success

ERROR on error

Set or get the base image name for image files. When an argument <*value*> is included then the image name is set to <*value*>. When no argument is supplied then the current image name is returned. A default can also be set in the configuration file with the key BASENAME=*value* (see *Configuration* §3.2).



FITS image files are saved to `/imdir/[YYYYMMDD]/basename_suffix.fits`, where the UTC date subdirectory YYYYMMDD is optionally set by `autodir` (see §4.3.3 and Table 1). See also the `imdir` (§4.3.21) and `fitsnaming` (§4.3.15) commands.

4.3.5 **bias – bias voltage**

usage: `bias <module> <channel> [bias]` (Archon)

usage: `bias <pcinum> <boardid> <dac> <CLK|VID> <adu>` (ARC)

returns: `bias` DONE on success

ERROR on error

Set a bias voltage.

For Archon, specify module number {1:12} and channel {1:30} to read the specified bias. Include a voltage (in floating point volts, *E.G.* 14.0, -5.5, etc.) to write that voltage to the specified module and channel. The software automatically checks the board type (HVBias, HVXBias, LVBias, LVXBias) and applies limit checks accordingly.

For ARC, specify PCI device `pcinum`={0,1,2,...}, `boardid` {0:15}, DAC number {0:7}, the string "CLK" or "VID" for the type of bias board (clock or video), and the voltage in A/D units, `adu` {0:4095} which you must scale to the maximum output voltage of the system. *E.G.* for a 3.3V system, `adu` = $4095 \times \text{voltage} / 3.3$.

4.3.6 **buffer – PCI/e image buffer mapping (ARC-only)**

usage: `buffer [pcinum] [cols rows | size]`

returns: `size` DONE on success

ERROR on error

This command will allocate PCI/e buffer space for performing the DMA transfers, for ARC only. If no argument is given then the size of the currently mapped buffer (in bytes) will be returned.

If a single value `<size>` is given, then a buffer of `<size>` bytes will be allocated and mapped to the PCI/e device.

If two values `<cols>` `<rows>` are given then a suitably sized buffer will be allocated to contain an image of those dimensions.

For systems with more than one installed PCI/e device, the PCI device number `[pcinum]` is optional. If specified then the buffer for that device only will be set (or returned). If not specified then all PCI/e buffers will be set (or returned). For systems with only one PCI/e device, this is always omitted.

4.3.7 **cds – CDS/Deinterlace configuration key (Archon-only)**

usage: `cds <key> [value]`

returns: `value` DONE on success

ERROR on error

Allows direct reading and writing of Archon CDS and deinterlacing settings. When an optional `[value]` is supplied then that key/value pair is written to configuration memory and the Archon native `APPLYCDS` command is issued, which parses and applies all CDS and deinterlacing settings to the system.

When `value` is omitted then the value is read.



4.3.8 **close – close the connection to the detector controller**

usage: `close`

returns: `DONE` on success

`ERROR` on error

Closes the connection to the controller. For Archon this closes the TCP sockets; for ARC (AstroCam) this closes the PCI/e driver(s).

4.3.9 **cubeamps – write amplifiers as multi-extensions in data cube**

usage: `cubeamps [true | false]`

returns: `[true|false] DONE` on success

`[true|false] ERROR` on error

When false, all amplifiers will be written in a single extension (flat) FITS file. When true, each amplifier will be written in a separate extension.

Default is false. This can also be set in the configuration file, §3.2.

For Archon, amplifiers will be identified automatically using the `LINECOUNT`, `PIXELCOUNT`, and `TAPLINES` keywords found in the ACF.

For AstroCam, amplifier identification is TBD.

Setting cubeamps will automatically force datacube to the same value, however when cubeamps and datacube are both true, when exposing for multiple sequences (i.e. "expose *N*") cubeamps takes priority. In other words, the data cube extensions will be composed of each amplifier, and the sequence of multiple exposures will be written to separate files. To create a cube of multiple exposures, cubeamps must be false.

4.3.10 **datacube – data cube state**

usage: `datacube [true | false]`

returns: `true | false` `DONE`

When provided with the (optional) state of "true" or "false" (case-insensitive) this will set the datacube state for multiple exposures. When the datacube state is true and the cubeamps state is false, multiple exposures will be written as FITS-formatted multi-extension data cubes; when datacube is false (or when cubeamps is true), separate files will be created for each exposure. See also "cubeamps" in §4.3.9 above and "expose *N*" in §4.3.13 below.

When no state is supplied then the current state is returned.

The default state is false.

4.3.11 **echo – test server communication**

usage: `echo <string>`

returns: `string` `DONE`

The server will write ("echo") any string received back to the connected socket. This is used for testing communication with the server without requiring any detector controller.

4.3.12 **exit – exit the server**

usage: `exit`

returns: `none`



Cleanly closes all connections and exits the server. Note that if the server is run in the foreground, it captures Ctrl-C which will execute this command to cleanly shut down before exiting.

4.3.13 **expose – initiate an exposure**

usage: `expose [N]`

returns: `DONE` on success
`ERROR` on error

Initiate an exposure, where "exposure" is the complete sequence of waiting for an exposure delay (if one was set via `exptime`), reading out the image sensor, transferring of pixel data to the host computer, and writing the image data to a FITS file on disk.

The previously set `exptime` will be used for the exposure time for this image. The command blocks other commands while the exposure is executing and does not return until the image (or optionally-specified `[N]` images) has been written to disk.

If the optional argument `[N]` is included then it will repeat for `[N]` exposures and additional exposures will be written to either separate files or in a single data cube, according to the datacube state (see §4.3.10 above).

If no argument `N` is given then `N=1`.

4.3.14 **exptime – exposure time**

usage: `exptime [value]`

returns: `value <unit>` `DONE` on success
`ERROR` on error

Set or get the exposure time. When an argument `value` is included then the exposure time is set to `value`. When no argument is supplied then the current exposure time is returned. The units are specified by `<unit>`. For ARC only msec is possible but for Archon `<unit>` may be sec or msec, as determined by the state of `longexposure` (§4.3.30). The default unit is msec.

For Archon this requires an ACF which supports an appropriate exposure delay subroutine, and that the exposure delay is controlled by a parameter named "exptime". Since the Archon allows for 20-bit values the largest exposure delay is 0x1FFFFFF or 2,097,151. Represented in milliseconds this equates to a maximum exposure delay of 34.95 minutes. To accommodate longer exposure delays (at the cost of resolution) the command `longexposure` (§4.3.30) will change the Archon exposure delay unit to seconds.

For ARC this requires that the exposure timer is set using the 3-letter command "SET". Since the ARC controller allows for 24-bit values the largest exposure time is 0x1FFFFFFF or 33,554,431. Represented in milliseconds this equates to a maximum exposure delay of 9.32 hours.

4.3.15 **fitsnaming – FITS filename format**

usage: `fitsnaming [type]`

returns: `type` `DONE` on success
`ERROR` on error

Set or get the FITS file naming type. When no parameter is specified the current type is returned. Valid types are "time" and "number".

When `<type>` is `number` then the FITS files are saved as:



`imdir/[YYYYMMDD]/basename_imnum.fits`

where `imnum` is an incremental number which starts at 0000 each time the server is started and increments automatically with each successful exposure, and `[YYYYMMDD]` is an optional date subdirectory (see "AUTODIR" in Table 1 and §4.3.3).

When `<type>` is `time` then the FITS files are saved as

`imdir/[YYYYMMDD]/basename_YYYYMMDDHHMMSS.fits`

where `YYYYMMDDHHMMSS` represents the time of the exposure (to the resolution of the current second).

See also the `imdir` (§4.3.21) and `basename` (§4.3.4) commands.

When multiple controllers are in use, `basename` is replaced with `basename_N` where `N` is the controller number {0, 1, 2, ...} in order to properly correlate the file with the controller.

4.3.16 **framestatus – read the frame status (Archon-only)**

usage: `framestatus`

returns: `DONE` on success
`ERROR` on error

This command prints the Archon frame buffer status to the log file in a human-friendly format similar to that which is displayed in the STA archongui. This is the information obtained from the Archon-native "FRAME" command. Since the frame status for all internal buffers is displayed, there are no return values (other than a possible error sending the `FRAME` command) and this is considered more of a diagnostic, visual command.

4.3.17 **geometry – detector geometry (ARC-only)**

usage: `geometry [cols rows]`

returns: `cols rows DONE` on success
`ERROR` on error

Set or get the detector geometry for ARC (AstroCam) only.

When two arguments are specified then set the `cols` and `rows` (respectively) on the detector controller to those specified. When no arguments are given then return the `cols` and `rows`.

This command writes the `cols` to Y: memory address `0x400001` and the `rows` to Y: memory address `0x400002`.

4.3.18 **getp – get parameter value (Archon-only)**

usage: `getp <parameter>`

returns: `value DONE` on success
`ERROR` on error

Get a parameter value for Archon only.

When the argument `<parameter>` is a stored parameter name, this command will return the associated value stored in the controller's configuration memory. See also `setp` (§4.3.34).

4.3.19 **hdrshift – HDR bit-shift value (Archon-only)**

usage: `hdrshift [value]`

returns: `value DONE` on success
`ERROR` on error



Gets [sets] the number of bits to right-shift the Archon buffer when in HDR mode (*i.e.* SAMPLEMODE=1, 32 bits per pixel). The default is 16.

This can also be set in the config file with the parameter:

HDR_SHIFT=value

4.3.20 heater – control HeaterX module (Archon-only)

There are several forms for the heater command, as described in the following subsections. For each command, ERROR is returned on error. <module> refers to the (integer) module number. The heater ID <A|B> and requested state <on|off> are not case-sensitive. When no optional arguments are provided then both the state and target are returned. When setting a parameter then only the parameter(s) set is(are) returned.

The heater command is slow to execute (~1.5s) because it has built into it an Archon native APPLYMODxx command, which parses and applies the configuration for module xx.

A summary of the heater commands, detailed in the following corresponding subsections, is detailed below.

1. turn heater on/off and set target temperature
2. control loop PID parameters
3. turn ramp on/off and set ramp rate
4. set control loop I limit term
5. set the input sensor for the heater control loop

4.3.20.1 Set or get the state and target for heater A or B on the specified module.

usage: heater <module> < A | B > [<on | off> <target>]

returns: ON | OFF target DONE on success

When state is set to <on> then heater A or B on the specified module is enabled and the target temperature is set to <target>. When set to off then heater A or B on the specified module is disabled. The target alone may be set, the state alone may be set, or the target may be set at the same time with the ON state (*e.g.* heater 1 A ON -205.0).

4.3.20.2 Set or get the PID parameters for heater A or B on the specified module.

usage: heater <module> < A | B > PID [<p> <i> <d>]

returns: p i d DONE on success

When setting parameters, all three must be provided in the order indicated, <p> <i> <d>. Fractional PIDs are supported with backplane version 1.0.1054 or newer.

4.3.20.3 Set or get the ramp and ramprate for heater A or B on the specified module.

usage: heater <module> < A | B > RAMP [<on | off> [ramprate]]

returns: ON | OFF ramprate DONE on success

When setting the ramp to <on> then the [ramprate] is required and requested ramprate is returned. When setting ramp to <off> then the ramprate is not included, and "0" is returned for the ramprate.

The ramprate alone may be set (*e.g.* heater 1 A RAMP 300), the state alone may be set, or the ramprate may be set at the same time with the ON state (*e.g.* heater 1 A RAMP ON 300).

The RAMP command requires backplane version 1.0.548 or newer.



4.3.20.4 Set or get the I limit term for heater A or B on the specified module.

usage: heater <module> < A | B > ILIM [value]

returns: value DONE on success

Acceptable values for value are 0 to 10000.

4.3.20.5 Set or get the input sensor used for the specified heater control loop.

usage: heater <module> < A | B > INPUT [A | B | C]

returns: A | B | C DONE on success

Set the sensor A, B, or C to be used as input for heater A or B on the specified module. (NB. Sensor A, B, C is not to be confused with heater A, B – it's unfortunate that STA has used the same names for both inputs and outputs.)

When no input is specified then the current input is returned.

4.3.21 imdir – base image directory for FITS image files

usage: imdir [name]

returns: name DONE on success

ERROR on error

Set or get the base image directory, in which to save files. When an argument <name> is included then the base image directory is set to <name> which may contain any number of subdirectories. If any directory doesn't exist then it will be created. When no argument is supplied then the current image directory is returned.

This sets and returns the base directory only. Images can be optionally saved in a date subdirectory of the base image directory, using the current UTC date, i.e., imdir/[YYYYMMDD]/ either by default (Table 1) or by command (autodir, §4.3.3).

4.3.22 imnum – image number for FITS image files

usage: imnum [value]

returns: value DONE on success

ERROR on error

Set or get the image number, which is appended to the image base name (e.g. basename_0001) when fitsnaming is set to "number" (§4.3.15). When an argument <value> is included then the image number is set to <value>. When no argument is supplied then the current image number is returned. The image number is automatically incremented after a successful exposure.

4.3.23 inreg – write to VCPU input register (Archon-only)

usage: inreg <module> <reg> <value>

returns: DONE

This command writes <value> to the VCPU input register <reg> on module <module>. The selected module must support digital IO and contain VCPU support. Register <reg> must be in the range {0:15} and <value> must be in the range {0:65535}. The Archon command "APPLYDIOM" is sent automatically after successfully writing the configuration key "MODULExxxxMODm/VCPU_INREGi=vvvvv".

4.3.24 interface – return the detector interface type

usage: interface



returns: type DONE

This command returns a string indicating the type of detector controller interface for which the camera interface software has been compiled.

4.3.25 **isloaded – has the firmware been loaded (Archon-only)**

usage: isloaded

returns: true|false DONE

This command returns `true` or `false` if the firmware has been loaded or not. Note that this is only from the perspective of the camera controller server, whether or not a load command was successful (a failed load command will set this false). Since this does not check the current state of the controller, if the controller was powered off after loading the firmware, this could return a *false positive* indicating that firmware was loaded (which it was), even if it is no longer true.

4.3.26 **key – add FITS keyword to user-defined database**

usage: key < KEYWORD=VALUE//COMMENT | list >

returns: DONE on success

ERROR on error

This command accesses an internal database to include user-defined FITS keyword in the prime image header. This internal database is held in RAM while the server is running and is not independently saved.

When the argument is of the following form:

`KEYWORD=VALUE//COMMENT`

then a new keyword=`KEYWORD` equal to value=`VALUE` and optional comment=`COMMENT` is inserted (or updated, if keyword already exists) in the internal database. The type (BOOL, STRING, INT, FLOAT) is automatically detected (a Boolean is defined as any single character string equal to "T" or "F"). The comment is optional and may be omitted along with the slashes (*i.e.* "key `KEYWORD=VALUE`" is acceptable).

If commands are given the same keyword with different values then that keyword is overwritten in the database with the latest value (*i.e.* there are not multiple keywords of the same name).

If `VALUE=.` (a period) then that keyword will be deleted from the user database.

If the optional argument "list" is passed then all user-defined keywords will be printed in the logfile, indicating the keyword, value, comment and the auto-detected type indicated in parentheses (*TYPE*).

4.3.27 **load – load firmware into detector controller**

usage: load [filename]

usage: load [devnum] [filename] (AstroCam-only)

returns: DONE on success

ERROR on error

Load firmware onto the controller from the file specified. If filename argument is included then it must be a fully qualified pathname. This would be an ACF file for STA/Archon, or a .lod file for an ARC timing board.

If the optional filename argument is omitted then the default firmware specified in the server's .cfg file will be loaded.



For AstroCam, an optional PCI device number or space-delimited list of device numbers *devnum* may be included to indicate which device(s) to load. For example "load 0 tim.lod" or "load 0 2 3 tim.lod". The API `loadControllerFile()` is used to upload the .lod file over the fiber to the timing board.

For Archon, the configuration memory is first cleared, then written (WCONFIG) from the specified .ACF file, after which Archon will parse and apply the complete system configuration (APPLYALL). Power to the detector will be off after this operation (send the Archon-native command POWERON to turn on the power). The DEFAULT mode is automatically selected (see "mode" §4.3.31).

4.3.28 **loadtiming – load timing script and parameters (Archon-only)**

usage: `loadtiming [filename]`

returns: DONE on success

ERROR on error

Loads the specified ACF file into the Archon configuration memory (WCONFIG), then sends the LOADTIMING command. This parses and compiles the timing script and parameters contained in the configuration memory, and applies them to the system. This resets the timing cores.

If filename argument is included then it must be a fully qualified pathname.

If the optional filename argument is omitted then the default firmware specified in the server's .cfg file will be loaded.

4.3.29 **longerror – report long errors to command port**

usage: `longerror [true | false]`

returns: [true|false] DONE on success

[true|false] ERROR on error

When longerror is false, commands will return ERROR on error. The full error message is always written to the asynchronous message port, and details are always written to the log file, but the command port response is simply "ERROR."

When longerror is true, the reason for the error will be added to the command port response, i.e., "ERROR *message*".

This can also be set in the configuration file, §3.2.

4.3.30 **longexposure – long exposure mode to extend exptime unit (Archon-only)**

usage: `longexposure [true | false]`

returns: [true|false] DONE on success

ERROR on error

This command applies only to STA/Archon.

When set to true the controller server assumes that the exposure time unit is in seconds.

When set to false the exposure time unit is assumed to be in milliseconds.

This command requires compatible Archon firmware (ACF) with a parameter named "longexposure" which will be set =1 when longexposure is true, and =0 when longexposure is false. The ACF must also have appropriate exposure delay subroutines for both cases, to produce second and millisecond delays.

The default start-up condition of the server is longexposure=false.



The comment field of the EXPTIME header keyword is controlled by this value and will be set to "msec" or "sec" (for ARC the exposure time comment will always indicate "msec").

4.3.31 **mode – camera mode (Archon-only)**

usage: `mode [modename]`

returns: `modename DONE` on success
`ERROR` on error

This command (currently) applies only to STA/Archon. Modes are defined in ACF file as [MODE_modename]. Every ACF file must contain at least one mode called DEFAULT and that mode must define the following three values:

```
[MODE_DEFAULT]
ARCH:NUM_DETECT=x
ARCH:HORI_AMPS=y
ARCH:VERT_AMPS=z
```

where x, y, z are the number of detectors, number of horizontal amplifiers per detector, and vertical amplifiers per detector, respectively.

4.3.32 **open – open a connection to the detector controller**

usage: `open [devlist]`

returns: `DONE` on success
`ERROR` on error

Opens a connection to the controller by whatever means is supported by the hardware in order to establish a communications channel between the host computer and the controller. This is required before any other operation.

An optional space-delimited device list [*devlist*] can be supplied to open only the specified devices (currently ARC-only but Archon support for multiple devices is planned).

4.3.33 **preexposures – number of exposures to take and discard before saved exposures**

usage: `preexposures [P]`

returns: `P DONE` on success
`ERROR` on error

The requested number "pre-exposures" *P* will be added to the number of exposures *N* given to the expose command (§4.3.13) so the controller will expose for a total of *P+N* exposures (including any exposure time) but the first *P* exposures will not be read from the controller nor saved.

When no argument is given then the current number of pre-exposures is returned.

4.3.34 **sensor – temperature sensor current and averaging (Archon-only)**

usage: `sensor <module> < A | B | C > [current]`
`sensor <module> < A | B | C > AVG [N]`

returns: `current DONE` on success
`N DONE` on success
`ERROR` on error

This command sets or gets the temperature sensor current for the specified sensor (A,B,C) on the specified module. <module> refers to the (integer) module number. <current> is an integer in the range {0:1600000} and is specified in nA. This is used only for RTDs.



When `AVG N` is used then Archon will average the previous N readings of the given sensor on the given module, where N may be one of the following: 1, 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64, 128, 256. When no number N is included with the `AVG` argument then the averaging value is returned.

4.3.35 **setp – set parameter value (Archon-only)**

usage: `setp <name> <value>`

returns: `value DONE` on success

`ERROR` on error

Set a parameter `<name>` to value `<value>` for Archon only. This is the equivalent of Archon native commands `FASTEPREPPARAM` followed by `FASTLOADPARAM`. See also `getp` (§4.3.18). Note that this does not re-write configuration memory, so a `getp` command will not read changes made by `setp`. See also `writep` (§4.3.42).

4.3.36 **shutter – set or get the shutter enable state on expose**

usage: `shutter [enable | disable]`

returns: `enabled | disabled DONE` on success

usage: `shutter [enable | disable | open | close | reset]` (Archon)

returns: `enabled | disabled | OPEN | CLOSED DONE` on success

`ERROR` on error

Set or get the shutter enable state on expose. When enabled, the shutter is allowed to open on expose; when disabled, the shutter is not allowed to open on expose. When no argument is given then the current enable state is returned. Requires firmware support.

For Archon, this will write to the parameter identified by `SHUTENABLE_PARAM`, setting this parameter to 1 or 0 to enable or disable, respectively. These values can be optionally overridden by setting the `SHUTENABLE_ENABLE` and `SHUTENABLE_DISABLE` keywords in the configuration file (see Table 1 under Configuration §3.2).

Archon also supports an optional set of engineering parameters `open | close` to force the shutter open or closed. After the shutter has been forced open or closed, the `shutter` command with no arguments will return only the open/close state (as opposed to the enable/disable state). When forced open or closed the shutter is not controlled for exposures by the firmware so enable/disable has no meaning. Forcing the shutter will set the Archon keyword `TRIGOUTFORCE=1` and `TRIGOUTLEVEL={ 1 | 0 }` for `{ open | close }`. No consideration is made as to the value of `TRIGOUTINVERT` so it is the responsibility of the Archon programmer to take this into consideration. A FITS header keyword "SHUTFORC" will be added which is set = 1 when forced open or = 0 when forced closed. To return to normal operation, send the "shutter reset" command; after this, the `shutter` command with no arguments will once again return only the enable/disable state (and remove the `SHUTFORC` keyword).

4.3.37 **systemfile – generate a system file (Archon-only)**

usage: `systemfile <filename>`

returns: `DONE` on success

`ERROR` on error

Sends the Archon-native `SYSTEM` command to read the current hardware and generate an ASCII text file containing the system information. Such a file may be read by WDL or used for the emulator described in Section 10.



4.3.38 **test – development-level tests**

usage: test < testname [arg] >

returns: DONE on success

ERROR on error

Several "development-level" tests have been implemented which are not meant for the typical user; these are described in the appendix Section 12 – Test Commands.

4.3.39 **trigin – prepare for an external-trigger exposure (Archon-only)**

usage: trigin < expose [N] | untimed | readout | disable >

returns: DONE on success

ERROR on error

This command requires an ACF which supports external exposure triggering. See *External Triggering*, Section 8 for more details.

expose

When the argument is `expose` then this prepares the Archon for a timed exposure which will be triggered by the next TRIGIN pulse; the exposure time will be that set by the `exptime` command (§4.3.14). The asynchronous `EXPOSURE: progress` message is a *predicted* indicator of exposure progress. It is expected that the hardware trigger will immediately follow the "`trigin expose`" command.

untimed

When the argument is `untimed` then this prepares the Archon for an untimed exposure which will be triggered by the next TRIGIN pulse. This command will return `DONE | ERROR` immediately because the exposure is expected to be triggered by hardware. This should be paired with a "`trigin readout`" command to end the exposure. It is expected that the TRIGIN pulse will arrive soon to trigger the exposure, so the FITS file is created now. This is considered the start of the exposure so if `writekeys` (§4.3.41) is set to "before" then FITS header keys are saved now for the current exposure. Once the "`trigin untimed`" has been received, the system is expecting a "`trigin readout`" command to follow. If it is decided to not read out the untimed triggered exposure then the "`trigin disable`" must be sent.

readout

When the argument is `readout` then this prepares the Archon for an end-of-exposure and readout, to be triggered by the next TRIGIN pulse.

disable

The argument `disable` can be used to disable the `untimed` state, so that an external trigger has no effect. This will also close and remove any empty FITS file created by a previous "`trigin untimed`" command.

expose N

The optional argument [*N*] is to be used with the `expose` argument for timed exposures only. When the exposure time (`exptime`, §4.3.14) is ≥ 0 (greater than or equal to zero) and an optional argument [*N*] is supplied, then the next *N* trigger pulses each act as the `expose` (§4.3.13) command, meaning that each trigger initiates a complete exposure sequence; a wait for the defined exposure delay, reading out the sensor, transferring the image buffer to the host computer, and writing to disk.



4.3.40 **useframes – set or get the useframes flag (ARC-only)**

usage: `useframes [true | false]`

returns: `state` DONE on success

ERROR on error

When an argument [true | false] is passed then set the "useframes" flag to true or false; when no argument is passed then return the current useframes flag. This command is for ARC (AstroCam) only. Not all ARC firmware supports frames (some firmware sends only pixels). You must set useframes to false if your firmware does not support sending of frames.

The state of useframes is true by default on start-up.

4.3.41 **writekeys – when to write FITS header keywords**

usage: `writekeys [before | after]`

returns: `state` DONE on success

ERROR on error

When an argument [before | after] is passed then set when the server will write user-defined FITS header keywords in relation to the exposure, before or after. When set to "before" then user-defined keywords are written to the header before the exposure; any new keyword settings received after the exposure will be applied to a future exposure. When set to "after" then user-defined keywords are written to the header after the exposure; this allows the user to utilize an exposure delay to collect FITS header information.

When no argument is supplied then the current state is returned.

The state of writekeys is "before" by default on start-up.

4.3.42 **writep – write parameter value to configuration memory (Archon-only)**

usage: `writep <name> <value>`

returns: `value` DONE on success

ERROR on error

Write a parameter `<name> = <value>` to Archon configuration memory. This is the equivalent of Archon native command `WCONFIGxxxxPARAMNAME=VALUE`. See also `getp` (§4.3.18) and `setp` (§4.3.34).

4.4 TO-DO

I don't want to forget about Steve's list of commands, but I haven't thought much yet about how to include them; the following commands need to be included above:



- 4.4.1 vertical binning
- 4.4.2 horizontal binning
- 4.4.3 region of interest
- 4.4.4 erase userkey DB

5. ASYNCHRONOUS MESSAGES

Asynchronous messages are broadcast on the asynchronous message port. See *Asynchronous Message Port*, Section 3.3.3.

5.1 ASYNCHRONOUS MESSAGE TAGS

Each message is preceded by one of the following tags, as in "*TAG:message*". This allows a listening client to look for only messages that it might be interested in, by looking for a particular tag and ignoring others.

5.1.1 **DATAcube:n COMPLETE | ERROR**

When datacube is true (Cf. §4.3.10) this message is sent after each cube has been written to a FITS extension. The number *n* increments {1, 2, 3, ... } for each extension. If the write was successful then the message terminates with COMPLETE, or ERROR if an error occurred writing the frame.

5.1.2 **ERROR:message**

When an error occurs, the lowest-possible (fundamental) error message is written to the async port. Additional information will be in the log.

5.1.3 **EXPOSURE:n** (Archon-only)

Sent during exposure delay to indicate exposure progress, indicates the remaining exposure delay *n*, in the chosen units (Cf. longexposure §4.3.30).

5.1.4 **EXPOSURE_d:n** (ARC-only)

Sent during exposure delay to indicate exposure progress, indicates the remaining exposure delay *n*, in msec for device *d*.

5.1.5 **FILE:<fully_qualified_path> COMPLETE**

This message is sent upon successful completion of each FITS file written, indicating the fully qualified filename.

Note that in the case of data cubes, this message is in addition to DATAcube (§5.1.1) which would generate a DATAcube: message for each cube, plus a FILE: message when all cubes have been written and the file is closed.

5.1.6 **LINECOUNT:n** (Archon-only)

Sent during detector readout to indicate read progress, indicates number of lines read, *n*.

**5.1.7 NOTICE: *message***

This tag is used for general informational, non-error but important messages. Unlike the activity log, this tag is used sparingly. For example, if a user neglects to set something where a default must be assumed, the system may alert the user via an async message using this tag.

5.1.8 PIXELCOUNT: *n* (ARC-only)

Sent during detector readout to indicate read progress, indicates number of pixels read, *n*.

5.2 ARCHON NATIVE COMMANDS

All Archon native commands will produce an asynchronous status message of the following format:

```
CMD: BEGIN
CMD: <reply>
CMD: ...
CMD: END
```

where *CMD* is the native command and *<reply>* is the reply from that command, which may be carried onto multiple lines. For any reply which contains multiple responses, each will be returned on a separate line, and the :BEGIN and :END denotes the beginning and ending of the reply. Examples of these are shown in Section 7.1.

6. FITS HEADERS

The software maintains two FITS keyword databases, one for user keys and a second for system keys. The user keyword database is manipulated with the key command (§4.3.26). System keys are maintained by the server and cannot be modified by the user.

Although system keys cannot be directly modified or deleted, if a user key has the same name as a system key, the user takes precedence and will become the key/value used in the FITS header.

6.1 SYSTEM (BUILT-IN) PRIMARY KEYWORDS

The server writes the system keywords shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Automatically-generated primary FITS HDU keywords

KEY	VALUE, Type, or Format	Comment
SIMPLE	T	file does conform to FITS standard
BITPIX	(INT)	number of bits per data pixel
NAXIS	(INT)	number of data axes
NAXIS1	(INT)	length of data axis1
NAXIS2	(INT)	length of data axis2
EXTEND	T F	FITS dataset may contain extensions
CAMD_VER	Mmm dd YYYY HH:MM:SS	camerad server build date and time



FILENAME	(STRING)	this filename
EXPTIME	(INT)	exposure time in <unit> (see §4.3.29)
TM_ZONE	T F	time zone, "local" or "GMT" (see §3.2.1)
SHUTTEN	T F	shutter was enabled
SHUTFORC	0 1	shutter force level, {0 1} for {closed open}. only present when shutter has been forced. See §4.3.36
GAIN nn	(INT)	gain for AD channel nn . Archon-only.
OFFSET nn	(INT)	offset for AD channel nn . Archon-only.

6.2 SYSTEM EXTENSION KEYWORDS

For multi-extension data cubes, each extension's header will contain the keywords shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Automatically-generated secondary FITS HDU keywords

KEY	VALUE	Comment
XTENSION	IMAGE	file does conform to FITS standard
BITPIX	(INT)	number of bits per data pixel
NAXIS	(INT)	number of data axes
NAXIS1	(INT)	length of data axis1
NAXIS2	(INT)	length of data axis2
PCOUNT		required
GCOUNT		required
EXTNAME	(STRING)	"name" of the extension is the extension number {1,2,3,...}
HDUVERS		version of format
DETSIZE		CCD size (pixels)
CCDSEC		detector section
ROISEC		region of interest
AMPSEC		amplifier section
TRIMSEC		trim section
DATASEC		data section
BIASSEC		bias section
DETSEC		detector section



6.3 HEADER DATA COLLECTION TIMING

The `writekeys` command (§4.3.41) controls when the FITS header keywords are written.

7. NATIVE CONTROLLER COMMANDS

Anything received by the server which is not a recognized command listed in Section 4.3 will be interpreted as a native detector controller command. A native command is a command which is "native" or inherent to the particular detector controller and is sent directly to the controller using the controller's specific syntax.

This functionality is illustrated by the green box in Figure 1. Although the figure shows a path completely circumventing the detector controller server, they are certainly received by the server; this is meant to illustrate that these commands have no corresponding "handling" function and are passed directly to the controller by the server and any return value comes directly from the controller. Other than proper formatting, the server does not interact with the command nor the return value.

In particular for the AstroCam controller, when the server returns `DONE` or `ERROR` that indicates the server's success or failure to send the command and receive a return value only. Therefore it is entirely possible for a native command to return an error and the server still report "`DONE`" (as opposed to "`ERROR`"). The client must examine the controller's return value to determine whether the controller returned an error or not.

Since the server does not interact with native commands or their return values, this means that if a native command is sent which changes the image dimensions, for example, then the server would not know about the new dimensions. Therefore, it's possible to produce undesirable behavior and in general, use of native commands is typically limited for use by detector engineers for engineering and testing purposes. However, in some cases (such as the three query-only native Archon commands outlined in §7.1.1, §0, §7.1.3) native commands might be very useful for reading values directly from the controller which might be needed for a FITS header. Stated another way, query-only native commands are safe to use, while native commands that cause a change in the controller should be used with extreme caution.

For the STA/Archon controller (§7.1), the server will add the required preamble and check only whether or not the return value contained an error. For the ARC (Leach) controller (§7.2), the server will enforce only that the maximum number of arguments is not exceeded, and that the command has exactly 3 letters.

7.1 STA/ARCHON

This section is not meant to be an exhaustive list of Archon commands but only an example, and will list the three native query-only commands that might be of value for most users. Please see the Communications section of the Archon manual for additional details.

Commands to the Archon controller are of the form:

>xxCOMMAND

Commands begin with a greater-than symbol, followed by a two hexadecimal digit reference number, followed by the command itself, and terminated with a newline character ("`\n`" or ASCII 10, 0x0A). *The detector controller server creates all of this preamble (in blue) for the user; the user need only to send COMMAND to the server.*

Archon's response to this command will be tagged with the supplied hexadecimal reference number `xx`. The server will verify that a response with the corresponding reference was



received and will return that response to the user. Lengthy responses will be sent to the async message port only, in a format suitable for parsing by client applications.

The example commands described here are `FRAME`, `STATUS`, `SYSTEM`.

7.1.1 FRAME

The output from the native `FRAME` command is written to the async message port in the following format, minus the comments in grey:

```
FRAME:BEGIN
FRAME:TIMER=x                ; Current hexadecimal 64-bit internal timer
FRAME:RBUF=d                 ; Current buffer number locked for reading
FRAME:WBUF=d                 ; Current buffer number locked for writing
FRAME:BUFnSAMPLE=d          ; Buffer n sample mode, 0: 16 bit, 1: 32 bit
FRAME:BUFnCOMPLETE=d        ; Buffer n complete, 1: buffer ready to read
FRAME:BUFnMODE=d             ; Buffer n mode, 0: top, 1: bottom, 2: split
FRAME:BUFnBASE=d             ; Buffer n base address for fetching
FRAME:BUFnFRAME=d            ; Buffer n frame number
FRAME:BUFnWIDTH=d            ; Buffer n width
FRAME:BUFnHEIGHT=d           ; Buffer n height
FRAME:BUFnPIXELS=d           ; Buffer n pixel progress
FRAME:BUFnLINES=d            ; Buffer n line progress
FRAME:BUFnRAWBLOCKS=d        ; Buffer n raw blocks per line
FRAME:BUFnRAWLINES=d         ; Buffer n raw lines
FRAME:BUFnRAWOFFSET=d        ; Buffer n raw offset
FRAME:BUFnTIMESTAMP=x        ; Buffer n hexadecimal 64-bit time stamp
FRAME:BUFnRETIMESTAMP=x      ; Buffer n trigger rising edge time stamp
FRAME:BUFnFETIMESTAMP=x      ; Buffer n trigger falling edge time stamp
FRAME:BUFnREATIMESTAMP=x     ; Buffer n trigger A rising edge time stamp
FRAME:BUFnFEATIMESTAMP=x     ; Buffer n trigger A falling edge time stamp
FRAME:BUFnREBTIMESTAMP=x     ; Buffer n trigger B rising edge time stamp
FRAME:BUFnFEBTIMESTAMP=x     ; Buffer n trigger B falling edge time stamp
FRAME:END
```

7.1.2 STATUS

The output from the native `STATUS` command is written to the async message port in the following format, minus the comments in grey:

```
STATUS:BEGIN
STATUS:VALID=n               ; n = 1 if remaining status fields are valid
STATUS:COUNT=n              ; Number of times system status has been updated
STATUS:LOG=n                  ; Number of log entries available
STATUS:POWER=n                ; Power status. Possible values:
                                ; 0: Unknown — _usually an internal error
                                ; 1: Not Configured — _no configuration applied
                                ; 2: Off — _power to the CCD is off
                                ; 3: Intermediate — _some modules have enabled
                                ;    power to the CCD, some have not
                                ; 4: On — _Power to the CCD is on
                                ; 5: Standby — _System is in standby
STATUS:POWERGOOD=n            ; n = 1 when system power supply is good
STATUS:OVERHEAT=n             ; n = 1 when system is overheating
STATUS:BACKPLANE_TEMP=f       ; Floating point backplane temperature in C
```



```
STATUS:P2V5_V=f          ; +2.5V system supply voltage in V
STATUS:P2V5_I=f          ; +2.5V system supply current in A
STATUS:P5V_V=f           ; +5V system supply voltage in V
STATUS:P5V_I=f           ; +5V system supply current in A
STATUS:P6V_V=f           ; +6V system supply voltage in V
STATUS:P6V_I=f           ; +6V system supply current in A
STATUS:N6V_V=f           ; -6V system supply voltage in V
STATUS:N6V_I=f           ; -6V system supply current in A
STATUS:P17V_V=f          ; +17V system supply voltage in V
STATUS:P17V_I=f          ; +17V system supply current in A
STATUS:N17V_V=f          ; -17V system supply voltage in V
STATUS:N17V_I=f          ; -17V system supply current in A
STATUS:P35V_V=f          ; +35V system supply voltage in V
STATUS:P35V_I=f          ; +35V system supply current in A
STATUS:N35V_V=f          ; -35V system supply voltage in V
STATUS:N35V_I=f          ; -35V system supply current in A
STATUS:P100V_V=f         ; +100V system supply voltage in V
STATUS:P100V_I=f         ; +100V system supply current in A
STATUS:N100V_V=f         ; -100V system supply voltage in V
STATUS:N100V_I=f         ; -100V system supply current in A
STATUS:USER_V=f          ; User system supply voltage in V
STATUS:USER_I=f          ; User system supply current in A
STATUS:HEATER_V=f        ; Heater system supply voltage in V
STATUS:HEATER_I=f        ; Heater system supply current in A
STATUS:FANTACH=n         ; Fan speed in RPM (Rev F only)
STATUS:MODm/TEMP=f       ; Floating point module m temperature in C
STATUS:MODm/LVLC_Vn=f    ; LV(X)Bias only: Floating point module m low
                        ; voltage low current n voltage reading in V
                        ; n = 1 to 24 maps to LV1 to LV24
STATUS:MODm/LVLC_In=f    ; LV(X)Bias only: Floating point module m low
                        ; voltage low current n current reading in mA
                        ; n = 1 to 24 maps to LV1 to LV24
STATUS:MODm/LVHC_Vn=f    ; LV(X)Bias only: Floating point module m low
                        ; voltage high current n voltage reading in V
                        ; n = 1 to 6 maps to LV25 to LV30
STATUS:MODm/LVHC_In=f    ; LV(X)Bias only: Floating point module m low
                        ; voltage high current n current reading in mA
                        ; n = 1 to 6 maps to LV25 to LV30
STATUS:MODm/HVLC_Vn=f    ; HV(X)Bias only: Floating point module m high
                        ; voltage low current n voltage reading in V
                        ; n = 1 to 24 maps to HV1 to HV24
STATUS:MODm/HVLC_In=f    ; HV(X)Bias only: Floating point module m high
                        ; voltage low current n current reading in mA
                        ; n = 1 to 24 maps to HV1 to HV24
STATUS:MODm/HVHC_Vn=f    ; HV(X)Bias only: Floating point module m high
                        ; voltage high current n voltage reading in V
                        ; n = 1 to 6 maps to HV25 to HV30
STATUS:MODm/HVHC_In=f    ; HV(X)Bias only: Floating point module m high
                        ; voltage high current n current reading in mA
                        ; n = 1 to 6 maps to HV25 to HV30
STATUS:MODm/TEMPA=f      ; Heater(X) only: Floating point temperature
                        ; sensor A reading in K
STATUS:MODm/TEMPB=f      ; Heater(X) only: Floating point temperature
                        ; sensor B reading in K
```



```
STATUS:MODm/TEMPC=f      ; HeaterX only: Floating point temperature
                          ; sensor C reading in K
STATUS:MODm/HEATERAOUTPUT=f ; Heater only: Floating point heater A
                          ; output in V
STATUS:MODm/HEATERBOUPTUT=f ; Heater only: Floating point heater B
                          ; output in V
STATUS:MODm/HEATERAP=d    ; Heater only: Heater A P term contribution
                          ; to PID loop (signed integer)
STATUS:MODm/HEATERAI=d    ; Heater only: Heater A I term contribution
                          ; to PID loop (signed integer)
STATUS:MODm/HEATERAD=d    ; Heater only: Heater A D term contribution
                          ; to PID loop (signed integer)
STATUS:MODm/HEATERBP=d    ; Heater only: Heater B P term contribution
                          ; to PID loop (signed integer)
STATUS:MODm/HEATERBI=d    ; Heater only: Heater B I term contribution
                          ; to PID loop (signed integer)
STATUS:MODm/HEATERBD=d    ; Heater only: Heater B D term contribution
                          ; to PID loop (signed integer)
STATUS:MODm/DINPUTS=bbbbbbbb ; LV(X)Bias and Heater(X): reports the status
                          ; of DIO1 to DIO8 (each is 0=low or 1=high)
STATUS:MODm/MAG_Vn=f      ; HS only: Floating point module m magnitude n
                          ; voltage reading in V
STATUS:MODm/MAG_In=f      ; HS only: Floating point module m magnitude n
                          ; current reading in mA
STATUS:MODm/OFS_Vn=f      ; HS only: Floating point module m offset n
                          ; voltage reading in V
STATUS:MODm/OFS_In=f      ; HS only: Floating point module m offset n
                          ; current reading in mA
STATUS:MODm/DINPUTS=bbbb  ; HS and LVDS: reports the status of
                          ; DIO1 to DIO4 (each is 0=low or 1=high)
STATUS:MODm/VCPU_OUTREGn=d ; Modules with DIO: VCPU output register n
                          ; (unsigned 16-bit integer)
STATUS:END
```

7.1.3 SYSTEM

The output from the native SYSTEM command is written to the async message port in the following format, minus the comments in grey:

```
SYSTEM:BEGIN
SYSTEM:BACKPLANE_TYPE=n      ; n = 1 for an X4 backplane, n = 2 for X12
SYSTEM:BACKPLANE_REV=n      ; Backplane PCB revision, 0 = A, 1 = B...
SYSTEM:BACKPLANE_VERSION=n.n.n ; Backplane firmware, major.minor.build
SYSTEM:BACKPLANE_ID=x       ; 16 hexadecimal digit backplane unique ID
SYSTEM:MOD_PRESENT=x        ; Hexadecimal bit field: a 1 in the LSB
                          ; indicates a module is present in slot 1
```



```
SYSTEM:MODm_TYPE=n           ; Reports module type for slots 1...n.
                               ; 0: None
                               ; 1: Driver
                               ; 2: AD
                               ; 3: LVBias
                               ; 4: HVBias
                               ; 5: Heater
                               ; 7: HS
                               ; 8: HVXBias
                               ; 9: LVXBias
                               ; 10: LVDS
                               ; 11: HeaterX
                               ; 12: XVBias
                               ; 13: ADF
                               ; 14: ADX
                               ; 15: ADLN
                               ; 16+: Unknown
SYSTEM:MODm_REV=n             ; Module m PCB revision, 0 = A, 1 = B...
SYSTEM:MODm_VERSION=n.n.n     ; Module m firmware, major.minor.build
SYSTEM:MODm_ID=x               ; 16 hexadecimal digit module m unique ID
SYSTEM:END
```

7.2 ARC (ASTROCAM)

The ARC detector controller firmware utilizes "3-letter" commands that can have up to four 24-bit arguments. The ARC-22 Timing Board will in most cases reply to these commands with an ASCII 'DON' (0x444F4E) on success or an ASCII 'ERR' (0x455454) on error, although some commands can produce other errors or return values. Table 4 shows return values which are mapped to their ASCII string counterparts so that when the camera server encounters one of these return values, the associated string will instead be returned; all other return values are returned by decimal (base 10) value.

Table 4. ASCII string return values for specified ARC return codes.

ARC value	return	string returned
0x00455252		ERR
0x00444F4E		DON
0x544F5554		TOUT
0x524F5554		ROUT
0x48455252		HERR
0x00535952		SYR
0x00525354		RST
0x00434E52		CNR



The 3-letter commands that are accepted by the controller are wholly dependent on the firmware that is loaded into the timing board and therefore any combination of 3-letter commands could exist; therefore this section can neither completely nor accurately describe all of the native 3-letter commands for your particular firmware. There are however, some commonly used, almost "standard" commands which are typically flashed into all ARC-22 timing board EEPROMs; these will be described here.

7.2.1 **POF** — Power Off

usage: POF

Turn off the biases and clocks.

7.2.2 **PON** — Power On

usage: PON

Turn on the biases and clocks.

7.2.3 **RDM** — Read Memory

usage: RDM <addr> <val>

Read from memory address <addr>. This is flashed into the on-board EEPROM so it is available even without uploading firmware.

7.2.4 **SBN** — Set Bias Number

usage: SBN <boardid> <dac#> <BOARD> <adu>

Sets the output DAC number <dac#> on board ID <boardid> to the voltage specified by <adu>.

The ID number of the board <boardid> is {0:15}.

<dac#> is the DAC number {0:7}.

<BOARD> is the string name of the board, "CLK" or "VID" and can be substituted with the hex value of those strings, 0x434C4B or 0x564944, respectively.

<adu> represents the voltage in A/D units, {0:4095} scaled to the max output voltage. E.g. for a 3.3V system, <adu> = 4095 x voltage / 3.3.

7.2.5 **SMX** — Set Multiplexer

usage: SMX <boardid> <mux1> <mux2>

The clock driver board has two multiplexed outputs. This specifies the MUX values to be output to the clock driver board. <boardid> is the board ID of the clock driver {0:15} and <mux1> and <mux2> are the clocks outputs {0:23}.

7.2.6 **TDL** — Test Data Link

usage: TDL <number>

Test fiber optic data link.

Writes a number to the timing board which returns the same number; used to test the operability of the fiber optic data link between the host and the timing board. This is flashed into the on-board EEPROM so it is available even without uploading firmware.

7.2.7 **WRM** — Write Memory

usage: WRM <addr> <val>



Write `<val>` to address `<addr>`. Note that the Y:memory starts at address 0x400000. This is flashed into the on-board EEPROM so it is available even without uploading firmware.

8. EXTERNAL TRIGGERING OF EXPOSURES (ARCHON-ONLY)

The following sections describe the functionality of external triggering of exposures from the client's point of view, and is written for the user of this software. However, the detector controller server requires specific Archon firmware programming in order to support this functionality. The specific firmware requirements will be detailed in Section 9.1, which is written for the ACF programmer's point of view.

8.1 TRIGGER INPUT OVERVIEW

The Archon controller backplane provides an external trigger input which resets the timing cores when active. The trigger input is nominally 3.3V at 2mA active high, meaning that the timing cores are held in reset as long as the trigger input is held high, although the logic can be programmed to be the inverse of this (*i.e.* held in reset while trigger input is low). See the Archon manual for full details.

Through appropriate ACF programming and setting of parameters, the Archon controller can be made to take different desired actions upon reset, allowing for an external signal to trigger different types of events. For example, the Archon could be programmed such that an external trigger takes a single exposure, or a sequence of triggers takes a sequence of frames, etc.

External triggering of exposures requires supporting Archon firmware and expects certain parameters. These parameters are defined in the configuration file by the keywords `TRIGIN_EXPOSE_PARAM`, `TRIGIN_UNTIMED_PARAM`, and `TRIGIN_READOUT_PARAM`. Only the parameters in use need be defined³. The values which enable these states may optionally be set in the configuration file. If the `*_ENABLE` and `*_DISABLE` configurations are left undefined then by default they are set to 1 and 0, respectively. See *Configuration* §3.2.

8.2 SINGLE TIMED EXPOSURE, EXTERNAL-TRIGGER

A single, timed exposure can be initiated using an external trigger. In this scenario, an exposure delay is defined with the `exptime` (§4.3.14) command, then the external trigger exposure is enabled by sending the `"trigin expose"` (§4.3.39) command. After configuring the `trigin` for `expose` it is expected that the Archon continues its normal idling until an external trigger has been received, which resets the timing core. When the timing core comes out of reset, it jumps immediately to the exposure routine where it proceeds with the exposure delay, sensor readout, buffer read and write to disk, just as if the software `"expose"` command had been sent.

³ For example, if using only "untimed" triggering, then `TRIGIN_EXPOSE` does not need to be defined.



8.3 MULTIPLE TIMED EXPOSURES, EXTERNAL-TRIGGER

Multiple timed exposures can be initiated using a sequence of external triggers by sending the "trigin expose *N*" (§4.3.39) command, where *N* is the number of external triggers, and exposures expected. This works in the same fashion as for the single timed exposure described in the previous section, except that after each exposure the Archon is automatically "re-armed" for the next hardware trigger. This enables a sequence of *N* hardware-triggered exposures without having to prepare each one individually with a separate "trigin expose" command for each.

8.4 UNTIMED EXPOSURE, EXTERNAL-TRIGGER

A single, untimed exposure can be initiated with an external trigger. An untimed exposure has no pre-determined exposure delay but instead is started and stopped by two distinct external trigger events.

8.4.1 Start-of-Exposure

The start-of-exposure trigger is configured and enabled by sending the "trigin untimed" command (§4.3.39). After configuring the trigin for a single untimed exposure, the Archon continues its normal idling until an external trigger has been received, which resets the timing core. When the timing core comes out of reset, it opens the shutter and jumps immediately to a wait-routine where the clocks are stopped as if it was waiting for an exposure delay. It will wait here forever, or until another configured TRIGIN pulse arrives, or until an `abort` command is received.

8.4.2 End-of-Exposure

The end-of-exposure trigger is configured and enabled by sending the "trigin readout" command (§4.3.39). After configuring the trigin for readout, the next trigger input resets the timing core and jumps to a subroutine which closes the shutter and calls the readout subroutine, before returning to the regular idle routine. The detector controller server running on the host will detect the completion of a new Archon frame buffer, transfer the image buffer to the host, and write it to FITS file.

9. FIRMWARE REQUIREMENTS

The server software has certain expectations when interacting with the detector controller firmware, which are described here. The following is intended as reference for the firmware programmer.

9.1 STA/ARCHON

9.1.1 External Triggering of Exposures

Archon has an external trigger input which is connected to the timing core reset when `TRIGINENABLE=1`, or ignored when `TRIGINENABLE=0`. The trigger-in is always ignored when Archon is synchronized to an external clock.

When enabled, the external TRIGIN resets the timing core. One can write an Archon controller start-up function which takes different actions on reset depending on the state(s) of one or more parameters; then by setting the appropriate parameter(s) prior to a TRIGIN-



induced reset, the external trigger effectively induces the desired action(s). It is the responsibility of the Archon programmer to write the supporting firmware.

9.1.1.1 `trigin expose [N]`

The "`trigin expose [N]`" command sets the parameter defined in the configuration file by `TRIGIN_EXPOSE_PARAM` to 1 (or *N*, when an optional number of exposures is provided). It also sets the parameter defined by `TRIGIN_UNTIMED_PARAM` to the value defined by `TRIGIN_UNTIMED_DISABLE` and the parameter defined by `TRIGIN_READOUT_PARAM` to the value defined by `TRIGIN_READOUT_DISABLE`.

9.1.1.2 `trigin untimed`

The "`trigin untimed`" command sets the parameter defined in the configuration file by `TRIGIN_EXPOSE_PARAM` to 0, the parameter defined by `TRIGIN_UNTIMED_PARAM` to the value defined by `TRIGIN_UNTIMED_ENABLE` and the parameter defined by `TRIGIN_READOUT_PARAM` to the value defined by `TRIGIN_READOUT_DISABLE`. After setting these parameters the server is idle and is not waiting for any specific input or action. It is assumed that an external trigger will trigger the exposure on the Archon but this does not require any intervention from the server. The "`trigin readout`" is used to end the exposure.

9.1.1.3 `trigin readout`

The "`trigin readout`" command sets the parameter defined in the configuration file by `TRIGIN_EXPOSE_PARAM` to 0, the parameter defined by `TRIGIN_UNTIMED_PARAM` to the value defined by `TRIGIN_UNTIMED_DISABLE` and the parameter defined by `TRIGIN_READOUT_PARAM` to the value defined by `TRIGIN_READOUT_ENABLE`. It is assumed that the "`trigin readout`" command is immediately followed by a hardware trigger which causes the Archon to read out into an internal frame buffer; the server immediately begins waiting for this readout and will fetch the completed frame when ready and write it to disk.

9.1.1.4 `trigin disable`

The "`trigin disable`" command sets the parameter defined in the configuration file by `TRIGIN_EXPOSE_PARAM` to 0, the parameter defined by `TRIGIN_UNTIMED_PARAM` to the value defined by `TRIGIN_UNTIMED_DISABLE` and the parameter defined by `TRIGIN_READOUT_PARAM` to the value defined by `TRIGIN_READOUT_DISABLE`. After setting these parameters the server is idle.

9.2 **ARC (ASTROCAM)**

9.2.1 **X:STATUS Register**

10. **APPENDIX A – EMULATOR**

10.1 **OVERVIEW**

A separate software program exists which allows emulating a detector controller. This allows testing and development of host software such as the COO Detector Controller Server,



scripts or other client applications that may use the detector controller server, without the need of having a live detector controller.

The emulator is a stand-alone program apart from the detector controller server, although it was designed to work in conjunction with the detector controller server. It is essentially a "software-controller" -- a piece of software that behaves like a controller behaves. One would connect the emulator just as if connecting to an actual controller.

The emulator performs no logging (just as a detector controller does not) but it will write some messages to standard error, mostly error messages but a few progress messages are shown during potentially long operations such as exposure and readout delays.

There are no changes made to the detector controller server to use the emulator; the same software is used when connecting to the emulator as would be when connecting to a real detector controller. Only the configuration file (§3.2) needs to be changed, in order to instruct the server to connect to the emulated controller instead of the actual controller.

Currently, the emulator only emulates an Archon controller; ARC ("Leach") controller emulation has not yet been implemented.

10.2 COMPILATION

Although the emulator is a stand-alone program it is included with the detector controller server package, and shares some of the same code for convenience. The emulator is automatically built along with the detector controller server package when the "make" command is used (which defaults to "make all"). Alternatively, "make emulator" will compile only the emulator software. See also *Build Instructions*, §3.6.2.

10.3 CONFIGURATION

The emulator uses the same configuration file used by the detector controller server. Two additional configuration keys are required, as shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Emulator configuration keywords

KEY	Description
EMULATOR_PORT	Port number for emulator
EMULATOR_SYSTEM	System file representing Archon modules (Archon-only)

For example,

```
EMULATOR_PORT=8001
```

```
EMULATOR_SYSTEM=/home/user/Software/sandbox/emulator.system
```

The EMULATOR_PORT is a port number that the emulator will listen to. Specifying the emulator port like this, as opposed to having the emulator "borrow" the port number from the missing hardware, is done to make it possible for multiple instances of the emulator to run on the same computer (which might be useful for emulating multiple Archons, for example). The EMULATOR_SYSTEM file is described in the following section (§10.4).

Note that when running the emulator with the detector controller server, the ARCHON_IP keyword must point to the address of the machine which is running the emulator (or



"localhost" if run locally) and the `ARCHON_PORT` keyword must be the same as the `EMULATOR_PORT` chosen above. This is because the detector controller server is now going to communicate with emulator instead of the Archon. For all intents and purposes, the emulator *is* an Archon.

10.4 ARCHON MODULE EMULATION

The Archon controller accepts a number of different types of modules which are addressed by their slot number. To properly emulate the hardware, the emulator must be configured with the specific hardware that is to be emulated. This is done with the file specified by the `EMULATOR_SYSTEM` keyword. Note that there are no requirements on the filename for this file but by convention it is suggested that ".system" be used. The .system file is an ASCII text file formatted as follows:

```
[SYSTEM]
BACKPLANE_REV=x
BACKPLANE_TYPE=x
BACKPLANE_VERSION=x.x.xxx
MODi_REV=x
MODi_TYPE=xx
MODi_VERSION=x.x.xxx
MODj_REV=x
MODj_TYPE=x
MODj_VERSION=x.x.xxxx
:      :      :
:      :      :
```

etc. where (*i, j, ...*) are the slot numbers, and x represents the respective revision, type and version of the specified modules.

This file can be generated manually, by hand; or, if a live Archon is available with the desired hardware configuration, the detector controller server command `systemfile` (§4.3.37) can generate the required file.

10.5 RUNNING

It is suggested that the emulator be run in the foreground of its own terminal window because it writes messages to standard error which may be useful to watch. Alternatively, it can be run in the background and standard error can be redirected as best suits the operator. If the program were compiled as,

```
[developer@localhost camera-interface]$ cd build
[developer@localhost build]$ rm -Rf *
[developer@localhost build]$ cmake ..
[developer@localhost build]$ make
```

then the emulator could then be run with:



```
[developer@localhost build]$ ../bin/emulator <file.cfg>
```

where <file.cfg> is the configuration file to be shared with the detector controller server.

10.6 EMULATION (OR, "WHAT DOES IT EMULATE?")

10.6.1 Archon

10.6.1.1 Command List

The following commands provide full, emulated responses:

```
SYSTEM
STATUS
TIMER
FRAME
FETCH
WCONFIG
RCONFIG
LOADPARAM
FASTLOADPARAM
```

The following commands are accepted and return immediately as though they were completed successfully:

```
FETCHLOG
LOCKn
CLEARCONFIG
APPLYALL
POWERON
POWEROFF
LOADTIMING
LOADPARAMS
PREPPARAM
FASTPREPPARAM
RESETTIMING
HOLDTIMING
RELEASETIMING
APPLYMOD
APPLYDIO
APPLYCDS
POLLOFF
POLLON
```



10.6.1.2 Timing

The requested delay (`exptime`, §4.3.14) is accurately emulated. The COO Detector Controller Server uses the Archon's own internal timer to time the exposure delays (`TIMER`, see Archon manual). Since the emulator emulates the `TIMER` command, it automatically can be used for timing exposure delays.

The emulator doesn't read, analyze, or in any way try to execute the waveforms, but it does try to mimic the frame time when filling its internal buffer with "pixels" just as the Archon would when reading a real device, in order to provide a reasonably accurate timed behavior. The frame-read time is already specified in the configuration file (`READOUT_TIME`) so the emulator uses this for timing. The emulator assumes that `READOUT_TIME` was specified as an upper limit for time-out purposes and produces lines at a rate commensurate with a frame time 90% of the specified `READOUT_TIME`, rounded *down* to the nearest 100 μ sec.

Since the reading of data is performed via TCP/IP (from the emulator to the host software) just as it would from the actual Archon, the timing here should be inherently accurate.

10.6.1.3 Image Data

An image of the dimensions specified by the ACF file is created and can be read by the `FETCH` command. Currently the data is "junk", but a future enhancement would be to fill this buffer with something meaningful.

10.6.1.4 Parameters and Configuration Memory

The emulator uses internal databases to store parameters and configuration keys in the same fashion that Archon does. This means that `RCONFIG` and `WCONFIG` access actual memory and, perhaps of more general interest, the detector controller server commands `getp` (§4.3.18) and `setp` (§4.3.34) also access actual memory. The user can therefore interact with their ACF file and parameters in the same fashion as is done on an actual Archon.

10.6.2 ARC

Not yet implemented.

11. APPENDIX B – OPEN ISSUES

Description	Affected Sections



12. APPENDIX C – TEST COMMANDS

A "test" command (§4.3.38) allows for some development-level tests which I intended to hide because they are not intended to be run by a typical user, but decided to document them anyway. Send the command:

```
test testname
```

where *testname* is from the following list:

testname	description
amplist	Log a list of all amplifier sections defined in the configuration file.
busy [<i>yes</i>]	If optional <i>yes</i> argument provided, override the archon busy flag to test system responsiveness when the Archon is busy. Log busy flag if no argument provided. [Archon-only]
fitsname	Show what the fits filename will look like.
builddate	Log the build date.
async [<i>msg</i>]	Queue an asynchronous message. If the optional message <i>msg</i> is not supplied then "test" is queued.
modules	Log (and return) a list of all installed Archon modules. [Archon-only]
parammap	Log all parameters found in the ACF file. [Archon-only]
configmap	Log the configmap entries by section in the ACF file. [Archon-only]
bw < <i>nseq</i> >	Bandwidth test. This tests the exposure sequence bandwidth by running a sequence of <i>nseq</i> exposures, including reading the frame buffer -- everything except for the fits file writing.
timer < <i>nseq</i> > < <i>wait</i> >	Test Archon time against system time. This will send a pair of Archon <code>TIMER</code> commands <i>nseq</i> times with a delay of <i>wait</i> μ seconds between pairs. Within each pair, after sending each <code>TIMER</code> command the system time is also noted (i.e. get archon time1, get system time1, get archon time 2, get system time2). For each pair the difference between Archon and system times is stored, i.e. $\Delta_{\text{Archon}} - \Delta_{\text{System}}$. After <i>nseq</i> pairs, the average and standard deviation of these deltas are reported. [Archon-only]