

# Algorithmic C (AC) Datatypes Release Notes

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# **Bit-Accurate Datatypes**

## Changes in 3.9.2

# Out of bound array write on ac\_int % operator for wide operands

Fixed an out of bound array write access for the % operator of  $ac\_int$  when the second operand requires fewer integers to represent than the first operand and at least one of the operands requires more three or more integers to represent. For example if the first operand is an  $ac\_int < 24$ , true > (requires one integer to represent) and the second operand is an  $ac\_int < 70$ , true > (requires three integers to represent), then the issue could be encountered due to an out of bound write on the array that holds the result.

# Runtime error reported on Undefined Behavior Sanitizer on left shifts when first operand is of builtin type int

The *ac\_int.h* and *ac\_fixed.h* implementations have been updated to not use behavior that C++ 11 considers as *undefined* for the signed integer left shift *operator* <<. Prior to C++ 11, shifts were interpreted as a bit pattern. The fix is to cast the first operand to *unsigned* before performing the left shift and casting it back to *signed* when required.

The new version should not run into the *ubsan* runtime errors with respect to the undefined behavior for left shifts.

# Changes in 3.9.1

## Mixed operators for ac\_int and ac\_fixed

In previous versions, the mixed operators with  $ac\_int$  and  $ac\_fixed$  were defined under the namespace ac::ops with other types and were made available with "using namespace ac::ops with other types;".

Starting with v3.9.1, the operators are no longer under a namespace. To revert to the old behavior define the macros below before including any of the AC Datatype header files:

```
#define AC_INT_NS_FOR_MIXED_OPERATORS
#define AC_FIXED_NS_FOR_MIXED_OPERATORS
```

This change fixes very subtle issues on the operators not getting matched and implicit conversions for ac\_int to *unsigned/signed long long* getting used instead. The old version also exposed a bug in GCC 4.9.2 (GCC 6.2.0 and above does not have that bug).

Whether the operator is found could affect behavior though in most cases the behavior might be the same. There are two cases of concern:

- 1. Shift left:  $x \le n$ , where x is an ac int and n is any C++ integer type.
  - 1. If the operator is found:

- 1. the result of the shift is only as wide as x
- 2. the result is well defined even for any n
- 2. If the operator is not found (x is implicitly converted to signed/unsigned long long):
  - 1. the result type is 64 bits wide which means that some bits that otherwise would have been lost would be kept.
  - 2. the result is undefined for negative n or n > 63
- 2. Operations that would produce result values that need more than 64 bits. This is only likely with wide multiplications. If the operator is not found, the result will be returned as a *signed/unsigned long long* instead of a wider *ac int*.

#### **Detailed description of the issue**

It turns out the presence of another unrelated *operator* << (for example for std::ostream), can stop the compiler from considering operators defined in other namespaces even if they are made available with the using statement in a namespace that is being considered for lookup.

Some references on this C++ behavior:

https://en.cppreference.com/w/cpp/language/unqualified\_lookup

https://en.cppreference.com/w/cpp/language/adl

The following example exposes the issue with v3.9.0 and earlier versions. When the operator is found, the program prints f0, when it is not (when macro EXERCISE\_ISSUE is defined), the program prints ff0. Starting with v3.9.1, the *operator* << (const ac int< W, S> &, int) is always found and the program prints f0.

```
namespace ns {
   struct my_type {};

#if EXERCISE_ISSUE
   // The presence of the ostream << operator breaks the visibility to
   // the function ac::ops_with_other_types::operator << (const ac_int<W,S> &, int)
   std::ostream& operator<<(std::ostream& os, const my_type& dt) { return os; }
#endif

void foo() {
   ac_int<8, false> x = 0xff;
   int y = x << 4;
   std::cout << std::hex << y << std::endl;
}

int main() {
   ns::foo();
}</pre>
```

#### **Set Slice**

Some compilers like CLANG have optimizations that can treat uninitialized variables as don't cares even though the result is deterministic. For example  $x \wedge x$  is always zero even if x is uninitialized. CLANG optimizations will treat that expression as a don't care instead of zero.

The set slc methods in ac int and ac fixed use XOR to write the appropriate slice. If the full slice is being

assigned, the *set\_slc* now uses the assign operator instead of relying on the XOR functionality to write the bits. A common example:

```
ac_fixed<8,4,true> x;
x.set_slc<8>(0, ac_int<8,true>(127));
```

For the code above, CLANG optimizations may leave x with the wrong value, with AC Datatypes v3.9.0 and earlier, because x is uninitialized when the set\_slc is performed. Starting with v3.9.1, the result should be correct since all bits of x are being assigned.

## Changes to bit\_fill in ac\_int

Some users encountered problems due to the mixed operator under the namespace problem described earlier.

The implementation now has explicit casts to avoid any potential issues in case the macros to revert to the old behavior are used.

## Arithmetic assign operators for ac\_float

The arithmetic assign operators +=, -=, \*= and /= were missing the return statement. The return type was also changed to a reference.

## Changes in 3.9.0

#### Updates to ac channel

- Added *bind* methods for binding to SystemC *sc\_fifo\_in*<*T*> and *sc\_fifo\_out*<*T*>.
- Cleaned up implementation to remove SYNTHESIS specific exceptions.
- Changed from calling "throw" to calling ac\_assert when the read() method is called on an empty channel. There are two ways the user may affect this behavior:
  - 1. Define the macro AC\_USER\_DEFINE\_ASSERT to be the name of a function that will be called:

```
AC_USER_DEFINED_ASSERT(condition, file, line, ac_channel_exception::msg(code)) Note that this macro is also used in ac_int.h and redefines the behavior of AC_ASSERT.
```

2. Define the macro AC\_ASSERT\_THROW\_EXCEPTION to change the behavior from the default *assert* to a *throw*. This macro will not have any impact if the macro AC\_USER\_DEFINE\_ASSERT is defined.

## Fixes/Updates to ac\_float

• Changed behavior of additive operators/methods to perform normalization before performing rounding. This is consistent with the IEEE floating point standard. For example the following two operations give the same answer:

```
r.add(op1, op2)

r = op1.to ac fixed() + op2.to ac fixed()
```

- Fixed issues with constructors from *ac\_float* where *ac\_float* is un-normalized (normalization had not been attempted).
- Removed the "normalize" argument for the constructor from ac\_fixed. The constructor will attempt to normalize the ac\_float that is constructed.
- Factored code that deals with normalization, rounding and overflow saturation. The *leading\_sign* method of *ac\_fixed* is used instead of the *normalize* method of *ac\_fixed*.

#### Fix of AC ABS macro

Fixed issue with AC ABS: it should be -(a) instead of (-a) as "a" may contain any expression.

## Added hex and oct handling for ostream operator <<

Added handling of *std::ios::hex* and *std::ios::oct* for ostream operator <<.

## Fencing for macro defines for true and false

The check if the keywords true and false are macro defined now results on a warning instead of an error. If either keyword is macro defined, it is explicitly undefined to prevent issues. The reason for this change is that there are header files from CLANG that have "#define true true". This seems like poor practice from CLANG as it prevents doing a legitimate check to fence against other macro defines that may have subtle effects.

## **CLANG Warnings**

Fixed clang warnings in ac int, ac fixed and ac float.

# Changes in 3.8.1

#### Fixed trace functions to work with SystemC 2.3.2

The trace functions defined in ac\_sc.h where updated to work with SystemC version 2.3.2. The SystemC standard lacks a general API to trace a class as anything other than tracing its datamembers. For now, the implementation of trace makes use of some SystemC implementation details that are not exposed in the API, but have been changing in different versions of SystemC.

## Shift operator for ac\_fixed with C integer types

The shift operator with the second argument being any of the C integer types, used to return the type of the first argument, but with default template arguments for the Q (quantization) and O (overflow) modes). Now it returns the type of the first argument which is consistent with other versions of the shift operator.

## Removed operator %= for ac\_fixed with ac\_int

The mixed operator %= with second argument being ac\_int was incorrectly defined and would fail to compile since the operator %= is not defined for ac\_fixed. It has been removed.

## GCC parentheses warnings

Addressed GCC warnings related to parentheses.

## Changes in 3.7.2

#### Fix for to\_string Method

Fixed width of string returned by *to\_string* for a variable of type *ac\_int* or *ac\_fixed* that can happen when *to string* is called before the variable has been initialized.

## Workaround Fix for Visual C++ 2015 Bug

Implemented workaround solution to bug introduced in Visual C++ 2015 that incorrectly errors out on a typedef that depends on an enumeration in the struct *int range* that is part of the *ac int.h* implementation.

## **Warnings**

Addressed new clang++ warnings for  $ac\_int.h$  and  $ac\_fixed.h$  that appear with newer versions of clang. Also addressed warnings that appear with clang -std=c++11. Version 4.0 of clang was used for checking warnings.

## Changes in 3.7.1

This version corrects an issue with *ac\_float* that was introduced in v3.6. The *ac\_float* that is needed to represent an unsigned *ac\_fixed*, *ac\_int* or native C unsigned integer type did not take into account that an additional bit is required. This issue affects the mixed operators of *ac\_float* with other types.

## Changes in 3.7

Changed license to Apache License Version 2.0.

## **Changes and Enhancements in 3.6**

#### **Bit Fill**

Utility functions to initialize large bitwidth *ac\_int* and *ac\_fixed* with raw bits have been added. What is meant by "raw bits" is that its argument is treated as an unsigned bit pattern, without a fixed point and no rounding or

overflow handling is performed. The functions are called *bit\_fill\_hex* and *bit\_fill*. The *bit\_fill\_hex* accepts a hex string. It **should only** be used to initialize **static** constants since it is significantly slower than alternative methods. The *bit\_fill* accepts and array of integers and it should be the preferred alternative to initialize large *ac\_int* and *ac\_fixed* with raw bits.

They are available both as member functions of *ac\_int* and *ac\_fixed* and as global functions in the ac namespace that return the type specified as a template parameter (the type T needs to be either an *ac\_int* or an *ac\_fixed*):

```
void ac_int<W,S>::bit_fill_hex(const char *str);
void ac_fixed<W,I,S,Q,O>::bit_fill_hex(const char *str);
template<typename T> T ac::bit_fill_hex(const char *str);
template<int Na> void ac_int<W,S>::bit_fill(const int (&ivec)[Na], bool
bigendian=true);
template<int Na> void ac_fixed<W,I,S,Q,O>::bit_fill(const int (&ivec)[Na], bool
bigendian=true);
template<typename T, int N> T ac::bit fill(const int (&ivec)[N], bool bigendian=true);
```

The bit\_fill\_hex function accepts a hex string as an argument which could be shorter or longer than what is required to fill all bits of the ac\_int or ac\_fixed. If it is shorter, it is zero padded to fill the remaining most significant bits. If it longer, the extra most significant bits are truncated. The hex string should be a literal constant string and should only contain hex digit characters (0-9, a-f, A-F). Other characters trigger and assert. Because the initialization is done at runtime and this initialization technique is inherently slow, its use to initialize non-static variables is discouraged.

The bit fill function accepts two arguments:

- The first one is an integer array that contains the bit pattern. It could be longer or shorter than what is required to fill all bits. If it is shorter then the remaining most significant bits are zero padded. If it is longer then what would be the extra most significant bits are truncated. The array is not required to be an array of constants.
- The second is a *bool* argument *bigendian* that defaults to **true**.

which means that the bits in the array element with index 0 become the most significant 32 bits of the bit pattern. If the argument is **false**, then the bits in the array element with index 0 become the the least significant 32 bits of the bit pattern.

The following example illustrates the use of bit\_fill\_hex and bit\_fill that do the equivalent functionality:

#### **Bit Complement**

The **bit complement** member function has been added for *ac int* and *ac fixed*:

```
ac_int<W, false> ac_int<W,S>::bit_complement() const;
```

```
ac fixed<W, I, false> ac fixed<W,I,S,Q,O>::bit_complement() const;
```

It returns an unsigned version of the same W (and same I for ac\_fixed). This a bit complement of the raw bits as compared to the complement operator ~ that returns an arithmetic value of -x-1 for ac\_int and -x-2<sup>I-W</sup> for ac\_fixed. The following example illustrates the difference:

## **Restructured and Enhanced Type Infrastructure**

The type definitions for  $ac\_int\_represent < T > :: type, ac\_fixed\_represent < T > :: type and <math>ac\_float\_represent < T > :: type$  have been added to facilitate finding a minimal destination type that can represent the source type T.

#### **Static Const Members**

For consistency, the static const members *e\_width* was added to *ac\_int* and *ac\_fixed* and the *o\_mode* was added to *ac\_fixed* and *o\_mode* was added to *ac* 

#### **Warnings**

Warnings that are disabled for GCC and that affect clang are now also disabled for clang.

#### **Documentation**

A new section titled *Reference Guide for Numerical Algorithmic C Datatypes* has been added. This section summarizes all the user visible available functionality for all the numerical datatypes in a consolidated way.

#### **Corrected Problems**

The return type for  $ac::frexp\_f$ ,  $ac::frexp\_d$ ,  $ac::frexp\_sm\_f$ ,  $ac\_frexp\_sm\_d$  was adjusted to move the fixed-point one position to the right (the width has not changed). For example the  $ac::frexp\_sm\_f$  now returns the mantissa as  $ac\_fixed < 24, 1, false >$  instead of  $ac\_fixed < 24, 0, false >$ . The change was made because while it was consistent with the system function frexp, it requires an exponent of  $ac\_int < 9, true >$  instead of an  $ac\_int < 8, true >$  since the exponent has range of -125 to 128. The implementation excluded the exponent value of 128 (assert in simulation) which was not correct.

The new return type is consistent with the IEEE representation of normalized numbers as 1.m where the returned mantissa includes the implied most significant '1' bit. With that representation the exponent range is -126 to 127 which can be stored in an *ac int*<8,*true*>.

The *ac\_float* type that is used to represent a float or a double was also change accordingly. A float is now represented as an *ac\_float*<25,2,8> instead of an *ac\_float*<25,1,8>.

## Changes and Enhancements in 3.5

The return type of the << and >> operators for *ac\_fixed* was changed to the type of the first operand. Prior to 3.5, the returned type was that of the first operand, but with default parameters for rounding and overflow (AC\_TRN, AC\_WRAP). This makes it consistent with the changes that were done in 3.1 to shift-assign <<= and >>= operators. For example:

Setting bits (using operator [], or set\_slc) and the shift and shift-assign operators should be avoided with AC\_SAT\_SYM. Forcing symmetric saturation on the example above can be done by casting to non-symmetrically saturated type:

```
a = (ac_fixed<4,4,AC_TRN>) a; // -8 is saturated to -7
```

#### **Corrected Problems**

Warnings about parentheses have been addressed. Also the disabling of specific GCC warnings on sections of *ac int.h* and *ac fixed.h* have been updated so they will work with GCC versions 5.0 and above.

## Changes and Enhancements in 3.4

The following enhancements were made in 3.4:

- Added support for the SystemC 2.3.1 maintenance release.
- The sc\_trace() functionality for AC Datatypes has been upgraded to support the System-C 2.3.1 distribution. No changes to user code is required.
- Fixed clang++ warnings in ac\_int.h and ac\_fixed.h.
- Fixed *gdb* pretty print (*ac\_pp.py*) to work around an issue with early versions of *gdb* (for example *gdb7.2-56*).
- Changed the constructor of ac\_float from ac\_fixed (indirectly also affect constructor from ac\_int).

  The change now takes into account the differences of the I parameter of the source ac\_fixed and the target ac\_float. This change enables better normalization that considers not only the range of the target exponent (given by E of the ac\_float), but also the difference between the source and target parameter I ("exponent bias").
- Removed normalization call from the '\*' operator since result will be normalized (at most off by one 1-bit shift) if inputs are normalized. Also removed normalization call from construction from *float*

and *double* since it is assigning to *ac\_float* types that are assumed to capture it without loss of precision and the source is already assumed to be normalized.

Also fixing one constructor when normalization is set to false.

• Fixed issue of *ac\_float* overflowing when getting assigned/constructed from a larger bitwidth *ac\_float* (could affect constructors from *ac\_int* and *ac\_fixed* as they use the constructor from *ac\_float*). An extra bit of precision needed to be used to account for rounding in an intermediate computation.

## **Changes and Enhancements in 3.3**

## Added ac\_channel class

When describing a hierarchical system using C function calls, the AC (Algorithmic C) channel class simplifies the synthesis and modeling with a minimal impact on coding style and C simulation performance.

The ac\_channel class is a C++ template class that enforces a FIFO discipline (reads occur in the same order as writes.) From a modeling perspective, an ac\_channel is implemented as a simple interface to the C++ standard queue (std::deque). That is, for modeling purposes, an ac\_channel is infinite in length (writes always succeed) and attempting to read from an empty channel generates an assertion failure (reads are non-blocking).

# **Changes and Enhancements in 3.2.1**

#### **Enhancements**

The following enhancements were made in 3.2.1:

• The headers were updated to reduce warnings with GCC.

# **Changes and Enhancements in 3.2**

The following enhancements were made in 3.2:

- Added Reduce Methods. Added reduce methods and reduce(), or reduce() and xor reduce() to ac\_int.
- **Default Constructor**. Added a way to guarantee that un-initialized AC Datatypes (ac\_int, ac\_fixed, ac\_float) are adjusted to be in their numerical range. It is done by defining the macro AC\_DEFAULT\_IN\_RANGE before the first inclusion of the AC Datatype header.

#### **Corrected Problems**

The following fixes were made in ac\_sc.h:

- Fixed sc trace issue with wrong VCD produced for signed AC Datatypes.
- Fixed compilation error when systeme is included rather than systeme.h.

• Fixes for SystemC version check and inclusion.

## **Changes and Enhancements in 3.1**

## Changes to ac\_fixed with Symmetric Saturation

The constructor of ac\_fixed was changed when the overflow mode is set to AC\_SAT\_SYM and the argument is also an ac\_fixed with overflow mode set to AC\_SAT\_SYM. This change assumes that if the argument is of overflow type AC\_SAT\_SYM, it is already symmetrically saturated and therefore there is no need to repeat the symmetric saturation.

This should not change the behavior compared to previous releases of this package unless any of the following operators/methods are used that might invalidate the symmetric saturation property:

- modifying a bit (assigning to a bit reference)
- modifying a slice (set slc)
- shift-assign (<<=, >>=)

In order to preserve the symmetric saturation property of ac\_fixed with overflow mode set to AC\_SAT\_SYM, it is advisable to avoid the above methods on variables of that type. For example:

This change was done for the following reasons:

- Minimize the need for symmetric saturation to reduce the overhead in simulation and the hardware required to implement this functionality. If the above methods are avoided, this saturation was entirely superfluous.
- The compiler is allowed to optimize copy constructor calls ("constructor elision" or "Return value optimization") so it was necessary to change the copy constructor to not perform any saturation during the copy constructor call. The change does not only affect copy constructors, but in more general situations that is easy to describe (if the argument is ac\_fixed with AC\_SAT\_SYM it is assumed to be symmetrically saturated).

Another change is that the shift-assign operators will not perform any saturation. This change only affects scenarios where the first operand is an ac\_fixed type with overflow mode set to AC\_SAT\_SYM. For example:

The reason for the change is that this was the only exception to the rule that shift assign operators do not have any cost in terms of saturation or rounding.

## **Reducing Unnecessary Warnings**

Certain functionality in ac\_int/ac\_fixed intentionally uses uninitialized variables to emulate a don't care value (AC\_VAL\_DC). This can create many warnings when -Wall is used with GCC. The compiler version GCC4.6 introduced a feature that allows locally disabling warnings on sections of code. The header files ac\_int.h and ac\_fixed.h have been enhanced to use this feature.

## **Pretty print in GDB**

Newer versions of GDB allow pretty printers to be provided as python scripts. A file ac\_pp.py is now available that provides pretty printer capabilities for ac\_int, ac\_fixed, ac\_float and ac\_complex. Some parameters provide control on the radix format (decimal, hexadecimal or binary). The header comments in the script provide the information on how to use it.

#### **Corrected Problems**

None.

# Changes and Enhancements in 3.0

A new quantization mode, AC\_RND\_CONV\_ODD has been added. This quantization mode rounds towards odd multiples of the quantization. Refer to the Algorithmic C Datatype documentation for details.

#### **Corrected Problems**

The following customer reported problem was fixed in this release.

• **DR 756512** GCC4.3 -Wall verbosity increased significantly for Catapult headers. See "Excessive Compiler Warnings" on page 13.

## **Known Problems and Workarounds**

# **Excessive Compiler Warnings**

Newer versions of GCC and Visual C++ introduce many additional warning messages when the -Wall option is used.

The header files *ac\_int.h* and *ac\_fixed.h* are updated to avoid such warnings. For example, one of the new warnings for GCC advises the use of parentheses in expressions such as:

A && B || C

Prior to this change, the workaround was to use the -Wno-parentheses option in GCC.

Warnings in Visual C++ have also been addressed by either a source change or disabling the warning locally (does not affect code that includes the header files). However, Visual C++ 10 still reports numerous warnings when using the -Wall option. The warnings are mainly of the type C4514 "unreferenced inline function has been removed" and appear despite the fact that both ac\_int.h and ac\_fixed.h explicitly disable that warning number (appears to be a bug in Visual C++ warning system). Such warnings are also reported for system header files that are part of Visual C++.

# **Supported Compilers**

The ac\_int, ac\_fixed and ac\_complex classes rely heavily on template mechanisms to achieve efficient simulation runtimes. We recommend that you use the following versions of GCC (GNU Compiler Collection) and Microsoft compilers.

#### GCC 3.2.3 or later

It is also important to run the compiler with optimizations turned on in order to get the best runtime performance:

```
c++ -03 -I$MGC_HOME/shared/include test.cxx -o test
```

Optimization level O3 is recommended, although O1 in most cases delivers most of the benefit (20x runtime improvement has been seen by going from O0 (no optimization) to O1).

You can obtain gcc compilers from the GNU web site: http://gcc.gnu.org.

#### Microsoft Visual C++ 2008

To download and install Microsoft Visual C++ 2008, go to the Microsoft web site  $\frac{1}{2000}$  http://msdn.microsoft.com/visualc and follow the instructions on the web page. You can also download and install a free version called "Visual C++ 2008 Express"